



Construction of Sunni-Shia Thought and Its Manifestation Towards Geopolitics in Indonesia

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<https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.1054>

Abstract

This article aims to discover the construction of Shia thought and geopolitics in Indonesia. Today, it is undeniable that Shia is a sect that is considered heretical and rejected by Indonesian society. This is not necessarily substantive, considering that the contradiction between Sunni and Shia has occurred since long ago. The rejection of Shia in Indonesia could be due to the truth claim over Sunni, which is the sect embraced by Indonesian society. This work applied a qualitative methodology with a social approach. This approach aims to construct research results using social phenomena in the field. The primary data in this research comprised of books and scientific articles that were accessed for analysis in the literature review method. The raw data was analyzed using content analysis techniques. The results showed that Shia thought in Indonesia became contradictory due to different interpretations. Generally, most Indonesian people who follow the Sunni sect reject Shia as a legitimate sect. On the other hand, the geopolitics of Shia in Indonesia still needs to run because its existence has not been recognized. Public rejection of Shia makes the position of Shia in Indonesia relatively stagnant and makes it challenging to experience growth.

Keywords: Shia, Sunni, thought, geopolitics, Indonesia

Introduction

The number of Shia followers in Indonesia today is quite widespread; this argument is strengthened by Tempo's data, which suggests that the number of Shia adherents in Indonesia reaches 500 people (Tempo, 2012). Furthermore, the Chairman of the Association



of Jama'ah Ahlul Bait Indonesia (IJABI), Jalaluddin Rahmat, argues that the data above is still the lowest estimate. The emergence of Shia in the community has become a pretty famous polemic because Sunni groups always assume that Shia and Islam are known to be very different.

The differences between Shia and Sunni thought include several vital things, including worship, politics, and the concept of leadership. In the context of Indonesia, this is considered substantive and can jeopardize the Islamic climate in Indonesia. Judging from some countries, this difference only leads to a manageable amount of problems. Ironically, Indonesians are still unable to accept Shia thought openly, so until now, Shia is still not considered to be legitimate as a sect.

According to the Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), since 1984, Shi'ah has not been a sect that is considered heretical. However, many Shi'a teachings could be more suitable for implementation, especially the concept of Imamate (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2022). On the other hand, the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemenag RI) also initiated a cooperation program between Shi'a and Sunni, considering that Saudi Arabia treats Shi'a like any other ordinary people (Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2015). Cumulatively, both have never forbidden Shi'a to exist in Indonesia.

People's thinking and knowledge about Shia bring up limitations. Nevertheless, Shia in Indonesia continues to transform in the development of thought. At this level, Shia developed political thought in such a way as to be able to be manifested in the Indonesian state. Shia thinking that is considered radical raises caution in the community in developing Shia politics itself. Until now, the conflict between Shia and Sunni in Indonesia continues. This opposition should be reduced with an open mind to bring up various considerations regarding the Shia sect. In the beginning, Shia only emerged as a sect that recognised the sovereignty of Caliph Ali, but also as the first Caliph and his descendants as leaders on Earth (Hasim, 2012).

No matter how afraid people are of the existence of the Shia sect, some books in pesantren are still used even though the Shia produces them. Some interpretation books are the Kitab Hadis Subulussalam and the al-Mizan interpretation book. The fear of the community is considered not to be essential because the rejection of Shia is generally due to the Sunni teachings attached to the community. Through the above explanation, the author draws several problem formulations related to Shia's development in Indonesia: 1) How is the construction of Shia thought and geopolitical manifestation in Indonesia? 2) What is the position of Shia in the middle of the Sunni majority in Indonesia?

Literature Review

Previous literature has found that at least four main arguments or "gates" influence individuals' decision to convert from Sunni to Shia in Indonesia (Imran et al., 2023). In addition, the Shia community in Indonesia has recently transitioned from a closed Islamic community to an open one. This emergence has been visible since 2000, with the establishment of the first Shia civil society (Syarif, 2023). Meanwhile, conversion to Shia in Indonesia is often seen as a search for authentic Islam. Converts believe that since the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the actual teachings of Islam have been distorted, and they find authenticity in Shia beliefs and practices (Zulkifli, 2009).

Furthermore, there is evidence of sectarianism and anti-Shia sentiment in contemporary Indonesia. Some Sunni figures, particularly within the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) organisation, have developed strong ties based on their opposition to Shia beliefs (Kayane, 2020). Therefore, the Shia presence in Indonesia is an essential area of study due to the limited literature and information available on the Shia community. Research on this topic can shed light on the traditions, power dynamics, and challenges the Shia community faces in Indonesia



(Iryana et al., 2018). A different study demonstrated the existence of cultural acculturation between Shia and Sunni groups . This study described and explained these two groups' communication and interaction dynamics (Hariyanto et al., 2021).

Furthermore, a prior study argued that specific theological differences between Sunni and Shia Islam affect Indonesia's political and social landscape (Porter, 2012). Furthermore, this study focused on the political orientation of Kiai, the religious elite in Nahdlatul Ulama, and showed that their political orientation is oriented towards pragmatism and community interests (Yani et al., 2022). A different study explores the lack of institutional initiatives for dialogue between Sunni and Shia Muslims and its implications (Krause et al., 2019). Finally, this article analyses the widening gap between Sunni and Shia Muslims in Pakistan, which may provide insights into the broader context of sectarianism in the region (Rahmat & Yahya, 2022).

Methodology

This article used a qualitative research type by describing the approach with conceptual studies that stand on the type of literature review (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The analysis process was carried out by looking at several studies of Islamic thought to form a perspective oriented toward a social approach. Denzin and Lincoln, in Rorong (2019), argued that a view that stands on a descriptive perspective tends to focus on how to view reality (usually social or psychological reality), which in its order always refers to structured approaches. The author used the literature reviewed in this paper because it could be reviewed to potentially understand the theoretical perspective in the research area of interest.

A literature review can evaluate sources and advise the reader on the most relevant ones. This literature review used the dimensions of the foundational literature as support for new insights towards a valuable contribution. The data contained in this article is oriented towards two points, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data in this article are scientific articles, scientific books, and books of tafsir that are directly related to the discussion. The secondary data in this study was expert opinions and the results of the analysis of interviews with several religious leaders and lecturers of Islamic studies. The results of the data were analyzed using content analysis techniques. According to Krippendorff (2018), the content analysis does not limit the text in the definition to written products but also "other meaningful matter", which at this level will formulate data with the context of in-depth discussion.

Results and Discussion

The Development of Sunni and Shia in Indonesia

The development of the Sunni sect in Indonesia began through the early spread of Islam by Arab traders. Islam grew through Islamic kingdoms such as Aceh, Demak, and Banten. During the Dutch colonial period, Sunni Islam survived, and Islamic boarding schools played an important role. After independence, Sunnis remained the majority in Indonesia (Zuhri & Wahyudi, 2021). Several historical, social, and political factors can explain the success of Sunnis in becoming the mainstream in Indonesia. The spread of Islam by Arab traders since the 7th century created the basis for the development of the Sunni school. Early contact with Sunni teachings provided the foundation for the growth of Muslim communities in Indonesia (Iqbal, 2014).

Sunnis could adapt to local cultures and traditions in Indonesia. This allowed Sunni teachings to be better integrated into Indonesian society. More than 85 per cent of Indonesia's population is Muslim, and most identify as Sunni. The Sunni majority has provided numerical stability and social support for the sect. Then, from a political perspective, the presence of Sunnis as the majority sect has helped maintain social and political stability in Indonesia. The presence of the Sunni majority has contributed to national integration (Humaini, 2019; Widyadara, 2015).



On the other hand, the development of Shia in Indonesia went through four stages or waves, namely: Along with the entry of Islam into Indonesia, after the Iranian Islamic Revolution, through Indonesian Islamic intellectuals who studied in Iran, and the stage of openness through establishing the Indonesian Ahlul Bait Jamaah Association organisation.

According to Jalaluddin Rahmat (an Indonesian Shia figure), the development of Shia in Indonesia has four phases (periodisation). The first phase, Shia, entered Indonesia in the early days of Islam in Indonesia through the early propagators of Islam, namely through the Persians who lived in Gujarat. Shia first came to Aceh. The first king of the Samudra Pasai Kingdom was located in Aceh. Marah Silu embraced the Shia version of Islam using the title Malikul Saleh. However, later in the era of Sultan Iskandar Tsani, power was held by Sunnah (Sunni) scholars. At that time, the Shia went into hiding, not revealing themselves until the second wave of Shia influx into Indonesia, namely after the Islamic revolution in Iran.

Still, in Jalaluddin Rakhmat's book *Alternative Islam*, Shia is the right way out of the problems of Muslims. It cannot be denied that Rakhmat's argument is rational, considering the differences in madhhabs. Rakhmat argues that all the madhhab imams have the exact source of knowledge. Unfortunately, the followers of each school of thought convict other followers and claim validation for what they believe (Rakhmat, 2021). On the other hand, MUI's fatwa refers to the prohibition of the Shia sect to exist in Indonesia. This MUI argumentation is agreed by Ma'ruf Amin, where there are many deviations of thought from the Shia group, including (Ulum, 2013):

1. Believing in 12 Imams as recipients of revelation.
2. Thinking that the Qur'an is no longer original.
3. Praying only three times per day.
4. There is no Friday prayer obligation.
5. Hajj was no longer obligatory but was directed towards Karbala.
6. Cursing the companions (especially the first three caliphs before Ali).
7. Aurat is limited to vital body parts only.

In Indonesia itself, what is widely known by the public is that Shia is a cult rejected for its existence. It cannot be denied that in the historical record, there were 80 years when the Umawiyah rulers launched insults and swearing against Ali, which was done openly, even in the public pulpit. On the other hand, al-Khatib also pointed out that in Egypt, the opposite happened. Al-Hakim bi Amrullah, the Egyptian leader who adhered to Shia teachings, called on the people to curse the caliphs before Ali (Khatib, 1986). Thankfully, during Umar bin Abdul Aziz (d. 720 CE), this swearing was stopped and replaced with humanist messages prohibiting insults. The Qur'an itself does not have specific literature regarding the school of kalam, such as Sunni or Shia validation, because the Qur'an itself is general so that all humans can digest it. In Q.S. al-Baqarah verse 2 Allah says:

This Book (Qur'an) has no doubt in it, a guide for the righteous.

According to Ibn Katsir (1999), the above verse indicates that it is impossible for a verse to support a false belief or a misguided sect. The Qur'an has refuted the falsehoods of these sects. Then, in Q.S. al-Anbiya verse 18 Allah says:

Indeed, we have hurled the right against the wrong, and the right destroys it, and immediately the wrong disappears.

This verse is general but can be used as an argument to mediate between Shia and Sunni. Some sects considered heretical are also gathered from several factors, such as denying the nature of God, understanding the last day, major sins and so on. In this level, Asma wa sifatayah (names and attributes of God), there is no fundamental difference from the



perspective of Sunni and Shia. So, at the level of theological understanding, Sunnis and Shias have no fundamental differences.

The insults that have occurred since long ago and even mutual slander between Sunnis and Shiites cannot be denied. If the background of this insult is realised, it will create an opportunity for both parties to understand each other better and harmonise. Ironically, knowing the situation, some people take advantage of this momentum to escalate the dispute to create further segregation between the two. The feud between Sunni and Shia ultimately has not found the 'path of waste'. Claims of truth from both sides have led to segregation between religious sects, and unfortunately, there has not been an attitude of *tasamuh* between the two. Resistance between Sunni and Shia is a natural process of inter-religious sensitivity. Until now, despite the rejection, the development of Shia in Indonesia is still ongoing.

Sunni and Shia Concepts of Thought

The concept of Sunni thought includes several vital principles and beliefs in Islam. Here are some essential concepts in Sunni thought (Anshori, 2022; Nurrohman, 2018; Shabir, 2017):

1. **Tawhid (Monotheism):** Sunnis believe that God is the only one who deserves to be worshipped, and nothing is equal or comparable to Him. Belief in *tawhid* is the primary basis for understanding Islam.
2. **Source of Law:** Qur'an, Sunnah/ Hadith, *Ijma'*, Qiyas and *Ijtihad*.
3. **Aqidah (Belief):** Sunnis recognise the basic tenets of belief, such as faith in Allah, angels, scriptures, messengers, the Day of Judgement, and destiny. However, Sunni groups have variations in views on some aspects of *aqidah*.
4. **Four Schools of Law:** Sunnis are divided into four primary schools of law: Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i, and Hanbali. Each school has a slightly different approach to the interpretation and application of Islamic law, but all schools recognise the primary sources of Islam.
5. **Akhlaq (Ethics):** Ethics and morality are essential to Sunni thought. Sunnis underline the importance of good behaviour, fairness and integrity in all aspects of life.

Although not a uniquely Sunni feature, elements of Sufism are present in many Sunni traditions and schools. Sufism emphasises religion's spiritual and profound aspects, seeking to achieve a closer relationship with God. Meanwhile, concepts of thought in Shia cover a wide range of aspects, including theological, political, social, and cultural. Some of the key concepts in Shia thought to include (Abd, 2015; Sofjan, 2013)

1. **Imamat:** The belief that the leadership of Muslims after the death of the Prophet Muhammad should only be held by Imams descended from Ali bin Abi Talib and Fatimah Az-Zahra, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad.
2. **Tawassul:** The acknowledgement that Shia imams can be used as intermediaries in prayer and worship to Allah SWT.
3. **Taqiyyah:** Defending beliefs by hiding religious identity and avoiding persecution.
4. **Ziyarat:** The practice of visiting and making pilgrimages to the graves of religious figures, including Shia imams.
5. **Jihad:** Belief in the importance of struggle to achieve truth and justice, including physical and non-physical struggles.
6. **Mahdi:** Belief in the coming of Imam Mahdi, the last Imam in Imam Ali's lineage, who will come to lead Muslims and bring justice to the world.
7. **Adl:** Belief in the justice of Allah SWT in all aspects of life.
8. **Ijtihad:** The concept of developing religious thought and interpretation allowed in Shia.
9. **Karbala:** An essential event in Shia history, the battle of Karbala in 680 AD, where the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, Husayn bin Ali, was killed by Umayyad forces led by Yazid.



Due to the longstanding spread of Shia in Indonesia, some rituals in the Shia tradition influence the pattern of religious rituals among the Indonesian Islamic community. One is the practice of celebrating Muharram, commonly celebrated by Shia followers to commemorate the killing of Husein ibn Ali, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. Husein was killed in the Battle of Kabala on 10 Muharram 61 A.H. Tabot or tabuik, if traced, comes from the word ark in Arabic box. A chest embodies the word ark in the celebration as a symbol of the coffin of the Shia imams who were cruelly murdered during the reign of Bani Umayyah.

Rituals among Sunnis, such as the tradition of grave pilgrimage and making domes on graves, are Shia traditions. This tradition was born in Indonesia as the Shafi'i madhhab, although it differs significantly from the Shafi'i madhhab practised in other countries. The development of pantheism (unity of being, mystical union, Manunggal ing Kawula Gusti) in Java and Sumatra is a view of theology and mysticism (falsafi tasawuf) that is in sync with the Shia aqidah (Arkanudin, 2021).

In addition, there are differences between Sunnis and Shias that often become polemical in nature in Indonesia (Itmam, 2013):

1. Sharia differences: Firstly, Shia denies the nature of nuzul (the descent of God) for God to the world's heavens and punishes the disbeliever who establishes this. Then, they attribute to their Imams the attributes of Allah and name them by the names of Allah.
2. Differences concerning tawhid: Firstly, the Shia believe that their planets and stars influence their happiness, misery, and fate of entering heaven and hell. Then, the Shia believe that the creed of Laa ilaaha illallah and Muhammad Rasulullah must be accompanied by the testimony that Ali is the wali of Allah. They constantly repeat it in their adhan (call to prayer) after every prayer and when they mentally treat the dead. Furthermore, Shia believe that Allah sent Jibril to bring revelation to Ali, but Jibril mistakenly gave revelation to Muhammad.
3. Shia differences with the Qur'an: Shia believes that the Qur'an that exists today is not the Qur'an that was revealed to Muhammad (peace be upon him); instead, it has been changed, added to, and subtracted from. Furthermore, they believe that some verses were taken up to heaven when the phenomenon of apostasy occurred.
4. Shia differences regarding Ahl al-bait: Firstly, according to the Shia, the first thing that will be asked of the deceased in his grave is the love of Ahl al-bait. Secondly, the Shia say that Ali can bring the dead to life. Then, Shia scholars say that the dust and mud on the grave of Al Husayn is a cure for all diseases.
5. Different perspectives on the companions of the Prophet Muhammad: Firstly, the Shia believe that whoever curses Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, 'Aisha, Hafsa (may Allah be pleased with her) after every prayer has indeed approached Allah with the most excellent approach. Secondly, the Shia believe that all people apostatised after the death of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) except for four people: Salman Al Farisi, Abu Dhar Al Ghifari, Miqdad bin Aswad, and 'Ammar bin Yasir. Thirdly, the Shia believe that Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) spent much of his life worshipping idols and that his faith was like that of the Jews and Christians. Fourthly, they say that 'Uthman ibn Affan, at the time of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him), was one of those who outwardly manifested Islam but concealed hypocrisy. Then, the Shia believe that whoever departs and rejects the three caliphs - namely Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman - every night, if he dies on that night, he will enter heaven.
6. Different views on the wives of the Prophet Muhammad: Firstly, the Shia believe that 'Aisha bint Abu Bakr and Hafsa bint 'Umar are disbelievers. Secondly, Shia believes that one of the gates of hell is for 'Aisha RA. Then, Shia says that 'Aisha was an adulteress.



7. Shia belief in the Imamate: Firstly, Shia believe their Imams are intermediaries between Allah and His creatures. Secondly, they make no distinction between Allah and their Imams. Thirdly, they believe that their Imams do not speak except by revelation. Fourthly, the Shia believe their Imams have a position that prophets and angels cannot attain. Fifth, the Shia believe that the reckoning of the deeds of all creatures on the Day of Judgement will be to their Imams. Sixth, the Shia believe that visiting the graves of their imams and saints is an obligation and that those who do not do so are disbelievers.

Shia thought encompasses many complex concepts and beliefs. As is the case with all religious sects, different Shia groups have variations in their views and practices. These differences in thought have always been considered substantial and could threaten the Islamic religious climate in Indonesia and adversely affect stability. This difference in thought is the forerunner of the rejection of the MUI and several prominent scholars in Indonesia against the Shia sect. In addition, compiled from other sources, there are several allegations of rejection of the Shia sect, including the spread of false hadith, anti-caliphate before Ali and allowing taqiyya (identity camouflage in non-Muslim areas).

In addition, the Shia also understand that the imam they believe in is ma'shum or preserved from sin until Musa al-Khazim. On the other hand, Sunnis understand that no imams are preserved from sin because this trait is specific to prophets. People's fears about Shia are not substantive and relevant, considering that people's knowledge only covers negative things. It should be noted that Shia has various schools. At this level, the study of Shia must be researched more profoundly and socialized to the community with the aim of tolerance and coexistence and harmony.

Geopolitical Manifestations of Shia in Indonesia

Geopolitics is the study of the relationship between geography, policy, and power on a regional or global scale. Some topics that are often discussed in geopolitics include (Saptari, 2021; Sartono & Prakoso, 2019; Uddin, 2021):

1. International trade and trade routes
2. Conflicts over territory and natural resources
3. National security and defense strategies
4. Diplomatic relations between countries
5. Regional integration and economic blocs
6. International systems and international organizations

Sunni geopolitics refers to the interaction and role of Sunni Muslim-majority states in global and regional political arenas. It involves diplomacy, conflict, collaboration, and political influence on Sunni states. The following are some of the aspects associated with Sunni geopolitics (Latif et al.; Alhazmy, 2016; Wardoyo, 2017):

1. Saudi Arabia: Saudi Arabia is a Sunni state with a significant geopolitical role. As the host of Islam's two holy cities, Mecca and Medina, Saudi Arabia has an essential position in the Muslim world. Saudi Arabia has also played a role in conflict and stability in the Middle East region.
2. Arab League: This organisation comprises Sunni-majority countries in the Arab region. The Arab League has facilitated political and economic cooperation between its member states.
3. Syrian conflict: Many Sunni-majority countries are involved in the Syrian conflict, directly or through support to Sunni rebel groups fighting against the Alawite (Shia branch) ruling regime.



4. Yemen: The conflict in Yemen also involves Sunni and Shia dimensions. The Saudi-led coalition supports the internationally recognised Yemeni government, while the Shia-supported Houthis receive Iranian support.
5. Diplomacy and Foreign Relations: Sunni states have diplomatic relations and cooperation in various fields, including trade, security and energy. They also have a role in pan-regional issues, such as Palestine.
6. Role in International Organisations: Sunni countries have a role in international organisations such as the United Nations (UN) and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC). They also influence raising issues relevant to the Muslim world.

It is important to note that Sunni geopolitics involves diverse approaches and interests among these states. While some countries may have common interests, some differences can give rise to conflict or competition. As for Shia, there is no specific concept of geopolitics as a political doctrine or strategy because Shia, as a religious sect within Islam, does not have a geopolitical doctrine or strategy separate from Islam itself. However, historically, Shia has played an essential role in regional politics in several Middle Eastern countries such as Iran, Lebanon, Iraq and Bahrain. As a majority Shia country, Iran has fought for its position as a regional leader in politics and religion. Iran has tried to influence political policies in several Middle Eastern countries, particularly in Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq, which have Shia-majority populations or close allies with Iran. In this sense, Iran can be considered a regional geopolitical actor fighting for its influence and interests.

In addition, conflicts between Sunnis and Shias in some Middle Eastern countries, such as Syria and Yemen, have affected regional and international geopolitics. Such conflicts involve the support of various regional and international powers and are often a source of tension between them. However, it is essential to note that the conflict between Sunnis and Shias is not a conflict inherent in the teachings of Islam itself but is somewhat influenced by political, economic, and social factors in Middle Eastern countries. Therefore, it is essential to consider the historical and political context when discussing the geopolitics and conflict between Sunnis and Shias in the region.

At this level, the authors found some data on Shia political thought in Indonesia that is considered to be at odds with the Sunni political concept. The first difference lies in the concept of Islamic politics. Shia assumes that leadership is part of the interests of faith. Whereas according to Sunni, leadership is part of the interests of shari'at. In addition, Shia assumes that the leader must be a direct descendant of the Prophet, while Sunni does not consider this a necessity. Each sect's geopolitical and theological contributions, namely Shia and Sunni, have complex nuances and differences. The following is a brief overview of the geopolitical manifestations and theological contributions of the two sects:

Table 1. Comparison of Geopolitics and Theology

Stream	Geopolitics in General	Theological Role
Shia	In modern history, Iran became the geopolitical centre of Shia. Iran's Islamic Revolution 1979 overthrew the monarchical regime and established a republic based on Shia principles. Iran supports Shia movements in various countries, such as in Lebanon through the Hezbollah group and in Iraq by supporting Shia groups.	With this kind of geopolitics, spiritual leadership and the authority of the Imams who are considered to have a spiritual inheritance from the Prophet Muhammad and have a role in directing the ummah. This concept gave Shia a unique theological dimension and resulted in various traditions and sub-streams within Shia Islam.
Sunni	Some Sunni-majority states, such as Saudi Arabia, have played a geopolitical role by supporting Sunni	Sunnis respect the authority of clerics and religious leaders but do not have an imamate structure as in Shia. The concept of ijihad (legal



groups in regional conflicts, such as Syria and Yemen. Organisations such as the Arab League also reflect geopolitical collaboration between Sunni-majority states. interpretation) plays a vital role in Sunni, allowing flexibility in legal interpretation and adaptation to changing times.

Both schools have played an essential role in the development of Islamic theology and made unique contributions to understanding the religion. However, theological and geopolitical differences have sometimes fuelled conflicts and disputes between these two sects. Cumulatively, Shihab (2007) explains that Sunni and Shia differences do not mean feud. Shihab views that there is an opportunity for both groups to work together because differences are inevitable. The author also argues that God deliberately created differences and people can sit side by side if there is a will. Some religious leaders have tried to elaborate on the various madhhabs, although they have yet to find common ground. The author believes this unification is a form of collaboration to strengthen Muslims spiritually despite some differences that exist.

Conclusion

Through the above explanation, it can be concluded that the geopolitical concept between Sunni and Shia has quite evident differences. The differences continue at the theological level so that the Indonesian people, who are Sunni, feel irrelevant to the concept offered by Shia. The strength of this article is that the authors have critically examined the existing problems and then described them in depth so that this research hopeful succeeds in uniting different perceptions. Unfortunately, this research only relies on conceptual analysis through existing literature. The author recommends especially to the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Indonesian Ulema Council to bring about collaboration and synergy between Sunni and Shia. The rejection of Shia is still based on superficial and non-substantive assumptions. This may be realized because there is no difference between Sunni and Shia regarding the name and nature of God.

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Conflict of Interest Statement: *The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.*



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