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The struggle of the Shi'is in Indonesia

Zulkifli, Z.

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THE STRUGGLE OF THE SHI'IS IN INDONESIA

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Co-Promotor:	Dr. N.J.G. Kaptein
Referent:	Prof. dr. D. Douwes (Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam)
Overige leden:	Prof. dr. H.L. Beck (Universiteit van Tilburg) Prof. dr. M.S. Berger Prof. dr. W.A.L. Stokhof

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Leiden-Sukabumi, 2009

A Note on Transliteration

For Arabic words, I have used the system of transliteration adopted by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* but diacritics have been reduced for simplification. For the plural forms of Indonesian words I do not add 's' and therefore such words as *ustadh* and *santri* may be singular or plural. But I maintain the plural forms of some Arabic words like *'ulama'* (*'alim*, singular) and *maraji'* (*marja'*, singular). For names of persons, I follow exactly the way they are written by themselves. For the translation of Qur'anic verses, I use Abdullah Yusuf Ali's *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an*, New Edition with Revised Translation and Commentary, 1991.

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INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with the Shi'is[1] in Indonesia, and their position as a minority Muslim group within the overwhelming Sunni majority, and the ways in which they act to gain recognition in the country. For the purposes of this study Shi'ism is confined to *Ithna 'ashariyya* (also known as Twelver or *Ja'fari* Shi'ism). This is a *madhhab* (school of Islamic thought) which believes in the twelve Imams who succeeded the Prophet Muhammad and has adopted a specific set of practices as a consequence of this belief system. Shi'ism is a minority denomination of Islam and Shi'is, constituting around 10 percent of the world's Muslim population, have frequently been stigmatised by the Sunnis who form the majority. While most Shi'is reside as a minority group in Muslim countries, they form a majority in Iran (around 90 percent), Iraq (60 percent), and Bahrain (60 percent). The Shi'is in Iran came to the world's attention with the Islamic revolution of 1978-1979 and the subsequent establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Following the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 the Shi'is there have played an increasingly significant political role in the country and a moderate form of Shi'ism, adhered to by Ayatollah Ali Sistani, has formed a powerful web of networks that is expected to strengthen civil society in southern Iraq.

Scholars, not only in the Muslim world but also in the West have generally focussed their attention on Sunnism. In the Muslim world Shi'ism is often seen as a heterodox schism deviating from the true teaching of Islam with regard to theology and jurisprudence. Western scholars of Islam who used to rely on Sunni interpretations of Shi'ism have contributed to misperceptions about the nature of Shi'ism. Kohlberg[2] reveals that this lack of appropriate understanding of Shi'ism can easily be found in the writings

[1] In this thesis, I hardly ever use the term Shi'a and when it is used it refers to its generic meaning namely partition. I use the term Shi'ism to denote the denomination as opposed to Sunnism. The term Shi'i is used both as adjective and noun. As noun, Shi'i means an adherent of Shi'ism and an addition of 's' is used for its plural form and its compound noun.

[2] Kohlberg (1987)

of the prominent Hungarian scholar Goldziher and others. Shi'ism did not become a subject of central research until the Iranian revolution forced scholars to understand its ideological foundation which is strongly rooted in Shi'i tenets.[3] This led to the association of Shi'ism with radical and revolutionary movements. Much attention has been paid to Shi'ism in Iran, creating an impression that Shi'ism is identified with Iranian society and culture. Indeed, as a result of Iran's ambitious attempts to export its version of revolution to other Muslim countries, studies of Shi'ism outside Iran tend to be an attempt to measure the effects of the Iranian revolution on Shi'i communities in Iraq, the Gulf states, Lebanon, Syria, and South Asia,[4] as well as on Sunni communities in Southeast Asia[5]. However, more than a quarter of a century on, no revolution following the Iranian model has occurred elsewhere, even in countries such as Iraq and Bahrain where the Shi'is constitute a majority, and where Iran has allegedly supported Shi'i movements. What is striking is that in the eight-year war between Iran and Iraq (1980-1988), Iranian Shi'is doing battle against Iraqi soldiers were fighting their co-religionists. Nakash has shown historical, economic, and political features of Iraqi Shi'i society that are significantly different from that of Shi'is in Iran.[6] This clearly indicates that a monolithic perspective on Shi'ism does not aid understanding of the diverse realities of Shi'is. A study on Shi'ism necessitates consideration of social, political, and cultural aspects unique to a certain society, region and history for the simple fact that the Shi'is "employed a wide range of strategies in different times and places."[7]

While the Sunnism that predominates the Indonesian population has been widely studied by scholars from a variety of aspects and approaches, the reality of Shi'ism in Indonesia and its related historical, sociological, political, and religious aspects is hardly known among scholars and even the majority of Muslims themselves. This study attempts to address this imbalance and understand the reality of the Shi'is in Indonesia by describing the main aspects of the social and religious life of this minority Muslim group including the formation of the Shi'i denomination, an examination of its prominent leaders, beliefs and practices, *da'wa*, education, publication, organisation, and the Sunni responses to it. An understanding of the nature of this Muslim group is crucial for our understanding of Indonesian religion and society at large.

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[3] Kohlberg (1987:41)

[4] See collections of articles edited by Kramer (1987)

[5] Esposito (1990) and Menashri (1990)

[6] Nakash (1994)

[7] Kramer (1987:2)

Previous Studies on Shi'ism in Indonesia

Despite the fact that the Shi'is in Indonesia constitute a minority group amidst the overwhelming Sunni majority, a number of scholars, (including Muslim scholars), historians and social scientists have written articles or books concerned with certain aspects of Shi'ism in this region. In particular, historians and Muslim scholars studying the Islamisation of the Indonesian archipelago have dealt with the development of Shi'ism in the country. Here we find two opposing views with regard to whether it was Shi'ism or Sunnism which came first to the area that is currently called Indonesia: The first theory, widely accepted among historians, social scientists, and Indonesian Muslim scholars, such as Hamka[8] and Azra[9], neglects the existence of Shi'ism and generally affirms that Sunnism was the first branch of Islam to arrive in Indonesia and continues to predominate the Muslim community today. In contrast, proponents of 'Shi'i theory' such as Fatimi,[10] Jamil,[11] Hasymi,[12] Azmi,[13] Aceh,[14] and Sunyoto[15], believe that the Shi'is have been present in Indonesia since the early days of Islamisation of the region and that, in fact, its adherents have played an important part in this process. Their theory is based on several elements of Shi'i tradition practiced by Muslim communities in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago, as well as on Arabic, Chinese and local written sources and the existing material cultures. Proponents of this theory generally admit that most Shi'i traces have vanished over the course of time and as a result of the huge impact Sunnism has had on the country.

Fatimi, Azmi, and Aceh establish the view that Shi'ism came to the Malay-Indonesian world before Sunni Islam had such a tremendous influence on the region. Like their opponents, the proponents of 'Shi'i theory' believe Aceh Province to be the first place in Indonesia that experienced Islamisation. Abubakar Aceh speculates that Arabs, Persians or Indians coming from Gujarat, India -all followers of Shi'ism - were among the first propagators of Islam in the archipelago.[16] Kern shares a similar opinion that Islam came from Gujarat to the Malay-Indonesian archipelago and

[8] Hamka (1974)
[9] Azra (1992, 1995)
[10] Fatimi (1963)
[11] Jamil quoted in Hasyimi (1983) and Azra (1995)
[12] Hasyimi (1983)
[13] Azmi (1981)
[14] Aceh (1977, 1985)
[15] Sunyoto (n.d)
[16] Aceh (1977:31, 1985:21)

argues that the influence of Shi'ism in Gujarat had not been less than in other areas of India.[17] On the contrary, Fatimi points to the kingdom of Champa, in parts of present day Vietnam and Cambodia, a place from which the Shi'is came to the Malay-Indonesian areas of Southeast Asia. According to Fatimi, there is a strong possibility that there were "Muslim settlements in the neighbourhood of Champa in the second half of the 8th century" which adhered to Shi'ism.[18] Based on a variety of sources, Fatimi also tries to show the close (though often neglected) relationship between the Chams and the Malays, throughout history from the 7th century onwards.[19] Following Fatimi's viewpoints, Azmi tries to connect Fatimi's description with the development of Muslim kingdoms in Aceh. He goes on to point out that the Shi'is then spread through trading centres in Southeast Asia, including Perlak in Northern Sumatra which is said to have become the first Muslim Sultanate in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago.[20]

The first Shi'i king of the Perlak sultanate was said to be Sultan Alaiddin Sayyid Maulana Abdul Azis Shah who reigned from 840 until 864. But, during the reign of the third king, Sultan Alaiddin Sayyid Maulana Abbas Shah (888-913), the Sunnis began to spread and exert influence on the Perlak population.[21] In this regard, writers such as Azmi, Jamil and Hasjmy, who base their theories on local sources, conclude that the Shi'is not only arrived in the early days of Islamisation but, during this period, had considerable political power in the archipelago. It was at this time that the Shi'is and the Sunnis became embroiled in a long and bitter political struggle. These scholars suggest that around the end of the 10th century, as a result of four years of civil war between the Shi'is and the Sunnis, the Perlak sultanate was divided into two: The Shi'i coastal Perlak and the Sunni hinterland Perlak. Both territories had their own kings. It is suggested that the two kingdoms were united in the face of an attack from the Sriwijaya kingdom. During the long war which ensued, the Shi'i king died and this marked the end of the Shi'i sultanate in Aceh. Sriwijaya ceased its attack, and the Sunni Perlak sultanate continued to exist until its collapse in 1292.[22] Sunyoto, acknowledging the existence of the Shi'i Perlak sultanate that was in place for nearly a century, points out that the collapse of the sultanate led Shi'i followers to migrate to other regions. Some moved to Pasai, an area dominated by the Sunnis, Sunyoto suggests that the result-

[17] Kern (2001:85)
[18] Fatimi (1963:47-53)
[19] Fatimi (1963:53-55)
[20] Azmi (1981:198)
[21] Azmi (1981:198)
[22] Azmi (1981:199-200), Hasjmi (1983:45-47)

ing interrelationship between the two branches of Islam led to a specific formulation of Shi'ism and Sunnism. He goes on to claim that while officially the Muslims in Pasai followed the *Shafi'i* school of jurisprudence, they also practiced several Shi'i rituals and ceremonies such as the commemoration of the martyrdom of Husayn (*'ashura*), the celebration of the fifteenth day of the eighth month in the Muslim calendar (*nisf Sha'ban*), the commemoration of the dead on the first, third, seventh, fortieth, and so on, and the annual death commemoration (*hawl*).[23]

Sunyoto goes on to apply his theories to the Muslims in Java. He suggests that such Shi'i traditions were taught in Java by some of the so-called *Wali Sanga*[24] (Nine Saints) who were known to have propagated Islam and founded Islamic tradition among the population of the island. According to Sunyoto, two of them in particular, Sunan Kalijaga and Syaikh Siti Jenar, were responsible for popularising Shi'i traditions among the people of Java. He admits, however, that in contrast to Shaykh Siti Jenar and Sunan Kalijaga, the majority of *Wali Sanga* expounded Sunni Islam. A moderate figure, Sunan Bonang, attempted to bridge the two opposing groups. Sunyoto emphasises that this moderate, 'third way' - that is culturally Shi'i but theologically Sunni - had a great impact on the formulation of Islam in Java.[25] Basing his ideas on a local Javanese source, *Babad Tanah Jawi*, Muhaimin points out that Shaykh Siti Jenar, also known as Lemah Abang, was said to follow Twelver Shi'ism upholding "a doctrine that claims that the Imam should be the supreme political figure in the state". This doctrine, also adhered to by the Persian Sufi martyr Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 922),[26] is the Sufi *wujudiyya* doctrine. Muhaimin suggests that Siti Jenar came to Java from Baghdad and he is said to have converted a number of rulers and their subjects on the island.[27] Similarly, Rachman tries to trace Shi'i philosophical and operational elements in Java. He points to the belief in the arrival of the Imam Mahdi, the twelfth Imam within Shi'i Islam, a belief which has been traditionally and historically predominant in Java. Even though Rachman agrees with the rather speculative views that the Islam that first came to the archipelago was Sufi Islam, he supports the

[23] Sunyoto (n.d:27-29)

[24] The names of the Nine Saints are often said to be Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Sunan Ampel, Sunan Bonang, Sunan Derajat, Sunan Giri, Sunan Kudus, Sunan Muria, Sunan Kalijaga, and Sunan Gunung Jati (Zuhri 1981:247-352). Many studies such as Salam (1960), Sunyoto (n.d.), Fox (1991), and Van Dijk (1998) have been devoted to the role of *Wali Sanga* in the propagation of Islam in Java.

[25] Sunyoto (n.d:105-108)

[26] Mansur al-Hallaj was a famous Persian Sufi, teacher and writer of Sufism who was executed in Baghdad in 922 for famously saying '*Ana al-Haqq*' namely 'I am the Truth'.

[27] Muhaimin (1995:176)

hypothesis that there was peaceful interaction between Sunnis and Shi'is. This interaction "greatly and equally contributed to the emergence of the unique Islamic community in the region."[28]

Another issue relevant to the study of Shi'ism in Indonesia is the widespread commemoration of *'ashura*, the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Husayn, the third Imam within Shi'ism, at Karbala, Iraq, on 10 October 680 (10 Muharram 61AH).[29] The *'ashura* ceremony is generally celebrated throughout Indonesia with the cooking of *'ashura* porridge (*bubur sura*), however on the west coast of Sumatra - in Bengkulu and Pariaman - a so-called *tabut* (in Iran, *ta'ziya*)[30] ceremony takes place instead. Snouck Hurgronje provides us with an interesting account of the ceremonies related to the *'ashura* festivals held in Aceh as well as in Bengkulu and Pariaman at the end of the 19th century. He suggests that the carnival originated during one of two waves of Shi'i influence in Indonesia in the late-17th and early 18th centuries, at a time when the British brought the *Sipahis* (Sepoys) from India.[31] Djajadiningrat remarks that the widespread ceremonies in Indonesia relating to the martyrdom of Husayn clearly indicate the Shi'i influence on Indonesian Islam.[32] Kartomi[33] and Feener[34] have provided historical accounts of the *tabut* ceremony in Pariaman and Bengkulu respectively. Kartomi uncovered evidence of substantial Shi'i elements in the coastal Sumatran towns including the annual *tabut* festival. She observes that there are very few Shi'i families in the towns of Pariaman and Bengkulu. The Shi'i families that are there claim to be descendants of British Indian soldiers who came to the area at the end of 17th and early-18th century. Kartomi also suggests that "their beliefs and practices are tolerated, even assisted by local imams (prayer leaders), who pray and chant in the Shi'i manner on each occasion that a *tabut* festival is held."[35] The above scholars maintain that there have been changes to the practice of *'ashura* commemoration. Snouck Hurgronje points out that a wave of Islamic orthodoxy from Mecca was to purify Islam in the Dutch East

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[28] Rachman (1997:56-57)

[29] On *'ashura* commemoration by the Shi'is in Indonesia today, see Chapter Three.

[30] **In the broad sense,** *tabut* (or *tabot*) in Bengkulu and Pariaman refers to the tradition surrounding the commemoration of the martyrdom of Husayn, the Prophet Muhammad's grandson. The annual observance takes place from the first to the tenth of Muharram. In the narrow sense, it refers to the decorated cenotaphs carried in procession during the observance.

[31] **Snouck Hurgronje (1906:202-207)**

[32] Djajadiningrat (1958:380)

[33] Kartomi (1986)

[34] Feener (1999a)

[35] Kartomi (1986:141)

Indies of sundry heresies including the *'ashura* ceremonies.[36] Aceh holds a similar view. "International relations between Indonesia and Muslim countries, especially Mecca and Egypt, make traces of the Shi'i beliefs vanish in the Indonesian Muslim community."[37] Kartomi also points out that since 1974 the *tabut* ceremony has been diverted towards attracting tourists and this has meant a loss of "the essential elements of passion, which is a distinguishing feature of Shi'ism."[38]

Other studies related to Shi'ism in Indonesia are concerned with the existing literature in the region. In scrutinising the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah*,[39] a major Shi'i literary work, (which was translated into Malay from Persian not much later than the 14th century), Brakel attempts to review some remarks on the relationship between the *hikayat* (Malay epics) and the Shi'i character of early Islam in Indonesia. He points out that the possibility for such a Shi'i text to be received into the body of Malay literature implies a definite role for Shi'i influences in the formation of early Indonesian Islam.[40] Brakel writes:

> The mere fact that a Shi'a text of the more extreme kind was received into Malay literature at all, to thrive there up till the present day, is already of great significance. It provides strong proof not only of the strong links between Malay and Persian literature, but no less of the heretical character of early Indonesian Islam.[41]

Similar studies were made by Baried. After examining 17 Malay stories that are said to contain Shi'i elements[42], Baried concludes that these stories are rough and imperfect data, as "they constitute only fragments of stories about Ali and his family."[43] She argues that these 'fragments' fail to

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[36] Snouck Hurgronje (1906:205)

[37] Aceh (1985:33)

[38] Kartomi (1986:159)

[39] Muhammad bin al-Hanafiyya is a son of Ali by a Hanafi woman and regarded by Mukhtar bin Abu Ubaid al-Thaqafi, the initiator of Kaysaniyya sect, as the person said to have taught that the imamate was transferred from Husayn bin Ali to Muhammad bin al-Hanafiyya. After the death of Muhammad bin al-Hanafiyya, the Kaysaniyya split into a number of groups. For this Shi'i sect, see Momen (1985:47-49).

[40] Brakel (1975:58)

[41] Brakel (1975:60)

[42] The seventeen Malay stories that she studies include *Hikayat Nur Muhammad, Hikayat Bulan Berbelah, Hikayat Raja Khaibar, Hikayat Pendeta Raghib, Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyah, Hikayat Ali Kawin, Hikayat Fatimah Berkata dengan Pedang Ali, Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Ali, Hikayat Nabi Mengajar Anaknya Fatimah, Cerita Tabut, Hikayat Amirul Mukminin Umar, Hikayat Raja Khandak, Bustanussalatin, Hikayat Nabi Bercukur, Hikayat Nabi Wafat* and *Hikayat Abusamah* (Baried 1976:63-65).

43 **Baried (1976:65)**

indicate real Shi'i elements and that the corpus in fact represents all the existing Malay documents that clearly indicate Shi'i elements. This very limited study, which is based on synopses from old manuscripts catalogues, can only produce a general statement rather than a conclusion. In order to discover any real elements of Shi'ism in the Malay literature, all existing Malay documents would need to be carefully scrutinised to "bring light that Shi'i elements exist in stories other than those of which the contents have bearing on Shi'i narratives."[44]

In some of his studies Wieringa remarks that through a fairly extensive range of Malay-Indonesian literature one can find Shi'i traces in Indonesian Islam which are not recognised by common readers. He affirms that traces of Shi'ism were gradually purged over time (particularly from the 19th century onwards), due to close contacts with Middle Eastern Islam. Wieringa regards this as "a de-Shi'itization of Malay *hikayat* literature."[45] He concludes that the prominent position of Ali and Fatima in Malay *hikayat* literature has to be understood in the context of early Islamisation of the Malay-Indonesian world: Stories were provided for new Muslim converts at a time when Indonesian Islam was still tinged with Shi'ism, but gradually the Shi'i elements of the stories were neutralised to such an extent that they became acceptable for Sunni Muslims.[46]

Another topic relevant to the study of Shi'ism in Indonesia is the position and role of the Sayyids (those who claim to be descendants of the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fatima) in the Islamisation of the Malay-Indonesian world. Scholars such as Aceh believe that the *Sayyids* played a major role in the spread of Shi'ism in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago. They point to the fact that a great number of sultans in Aceh used the title *Sayyid*. Aceh suggests that most of these sultans were Shi'is or at least sympathetic to this branch of Islam and, consciously or unconsciously, they included the Shi'i doctrines and worldview in the propagation of Islam.[47] Scholars such as al-Baqir,[48] and Al-Attas[49] also suggest that the *Wali Sanga* and other leading figures were *Sayyids*. Al-Baqir cites the *Sayyid* construction of a grave for the Muslim saints in Indonesia. This was clearly contrary to Sunni tradition, but it was acceptable within Shi'ism. This, according to al-Baqir, indicates that the first propagators of Islam in the archipelago were Sayyids who upheld Shi'i beliefs despite the fact that

[44] Baried (1976:65)
[45] Wieringa (1996:106)
[46] Wieringa (1996:107)
[47] Aceh (1985:35)
[48] Al-Baqir (1986)
[49] Al-Attas (1999)

some of them practiced *Shafi'i* Islamic jurisprudence.[50] Similarly, Pelras mentions the Shi'i influence on Sayyid Jalaluddin al-Aidid who brought Islam to South Sulawesi, (and the areas of Cikoang Laikang and Turatea in particular), at the start of the 17th century. This Muslim propagator was a son of Sayyid Muhammad Wahid of Aceh and Syarifah Halisyah. He left Aceh for Banjarmasin where by the end of the 16th century he was delivering teachings heavily tinged with the Shi'ism. Al-Aidid then travelled to Goa in India, where he met with opposition from the ruler, so he moved back to Indonesia, to Cikoang, where he converted the still pagan nobility and population. His arrival is still commemorated every year on the occasion of the *mawlid* festival.[51] Al-Baqir, Al-Attas, and Ibrahim[52] have tried to trace the early historical development of the Sayyids that lasted from the 9th to the 13th centuries. They point to the leading historical figure, Ahmad al-Muhajir, (the 8th generation from Ali), and his grandson Alawi bin Ubaidillah who after performing the *hajj* in 930 left Basrah for Yemen. The Sayyids in Southeast Asia mainly came from Yemen. Protracted debates still exist between scholars who believe these Sayyid figures were Sunni and those who believe they were Shi'i who practiced *taqiyya* (dissimulation of religious faith).[53]

Azra has strongly criticised those who propound the great influence of Shi'ism in Indonesia prior to the Iranian revolution of 1979. He rejects the existence of the Shi'i sultanate in Aceh, along with the idea of political struggles between the Shi'i and Sunni sultanates in Aceh. In his view, the principal weakness of the above writers, particularly Jamil, Hasjmi and Parlindungan,[54] is their uncritical and unverified use of local sources and their comparison with other contemporary sources, specifically with regard to the historical development of Islam in the world during the period in question. Azra argues that there is no indication of political and ideological conflicts between Sunnis and Shi'is in the historical evidence of Islam in the Middle East before the 16th century. He suggests that descriptions of conflicts are likely to be based on Sunni-Shi'i conflicts in a later period, which are projected to the past and additional support being sought in local sources. While Azra's criticism on the existence of political conflict can be historically justified, I believe there is ample indication that the minority Shi'is were present in the past Indonesia.

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[50] Al-Baqir (1986:51)

[51] Pelras (1985:113)

[52] Ibrahim (2000)

[53] For a description of this practice, see Chapter Three

[54] Parlindungan (1965)

Azra also rejects views that the celebration of *'ashura* and *tabut* are clearly influenced by Shi'i traditions saying they are devoid of Shi'i theological and political ideology.[55] Furthermore he points to a significant Persian influence on Malay-Indonesian Muslim literature. A great number of early Malay-Indonesian Muslim literatures comprise translations or adaptations of Persian texts. Even, *Taj al-Salatin*, one of the earliest historical works in Malay is a translation of a lost Persian original that may have been brought to the archipelago from India. Similarly, another important Malay history entitled *Sejarah Melayu* includes a great number of Persian verses and contains terminology foreign to Malay-Indonesian. However, Arabic influences in Malay-Indonesian literature should not be neglected. Azra admits that the relatively high degree of Persian influence upon Malay-Indonesian literature has led to lengthy debates among scholars as to whether Shi'i doctrines were also found among Muslims in the archipelago.[56] In this debate, however, Azra takes a negative stance arguing that Persian is not always identifiable with Shi'ism, suggesting that "Shi'i religious thought has hardly ever spread in the archipelago, let alone has strong influence."[57] Based on a variety of written sources, examining the influence of Shi'ism in the field of politics, literature, and religion, Azra concludes, "It is clear that certain Islamic practices in the Malay-Indonesian archipelago which are associated by some people as Shi'ite, are essentially just similarities, empty from the theological framework and political ideology of Shi'ism."[58] According to Azra, Shi'ism as a school of religious and political thought, only attracted followers in Indonesia after the Iranian revolution and through translations of Iranian scholars and thinkers such as Ali Shari'ati, Muthahhari, and Khomeini.[59]

Interest in studying Shi'ism in Indonesia has increased recently. In addition to the above debates concerning the arrival and the influence of Shi'ism in Indonesia in the historical context, two studies on the contemporary development of Shi'ism in Indonesia have appeared. First is a preliminary study on Shi'ism and politics in Indonesia conducted by a research team at the Indonesian Institute of Sciences led by Abdurrahman Zainuddin. It is published under the title *Syi'ah dan Politik di Indonesia* (Shi'ism and Politics in Indonesia).[60] Zainuddin *et al.* attempt to explore the impact of contemporary Shi'i thought on the political life of Mus-

[55] Azra (1995:13)
[56] Azra (1992:86-87)
[57] Azra (1995:12)
[58] Azra (1995:17-18)
[59] Azra (1995:17-18)
[60] Zainuddin *et al.* (2000)

lims in Indonesia. They commence by briefly introducing Shi'ism and its development up to the Iranian revolution of 1978-1979 and noting the contemporary Shi'i concept of *wilayat al-faqih* (guardianship of the jurist). This is followed by a comparison of the political thought of Ayatollah Khomeini (the then leader of Iranian revolution) and Ali Shari'ati (a famous intellectual considered to be. an ideologue of the Iranian revolution) that derives from the unique nature of Shi'i political thought which unites religion and politics. While Khomeini maintains that during the occultation of the twelfth Imam, the jurists (sg. *faqih*) are entitled to rule the Muslim community, Shari'ati criticising the 'ulama' proposes that what he calls " the reformed intellectuals" should play a major role in government. The book then attempts to explore the impact of the revolution on the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. The book tries to explain the implications of this development on the political life of Indonesian Muslims, and appeals for dialogue between the two Muslim groups in order to prevent conflict. It also includes Azra's critical article and interview notes with Indonesian Shi'i intellectual Jalaluddin Rakhmat, which were previously published in *Ulumul Qur'an*. Many criticisms have been directed towards this book, such as those by Nurmansyah[61] who questions the significance of the comparison between the political thought of Khomeini and Shari'ati and accuses Azra of ignorance of Shi'i history. In my opinion, one of the most noticeable weaknesses of the book is its failure to examine the identity and reality of the Shi'is in Indonesia.

Another study by Syamsuri Ali focuses on the intellectual discourse and social relations among the Indonesian alumni of *hawza 'ilmiyya* ('college of learning') of Qum, Iran, and how this relates to the transmission of Shi'ism in Indonesia.[62] In this pioneering research, Ali provides us with important information on the educational institutions and figures that send students to Qum, biographies of Qum alumni, their intellectual discourses on aspects of Shi'ism, and their role in establishing Shi'i institutions and local associations in Indonesia. However, Ali's work comes with a caveat: The scope of his account of Qum alumni is limited, particularly in terms of actors and regions discussed. The same is admitted by Jalaluddin Rakhmat who is a co-promoter of the thesis as well as the most prominent

[61] Nurmansyah (2001)

[62] Ali (2002). This is a draft PhD thesis that was examined in *ujian tertutup* (exams not open to the public) in 2002 by the Graduate Programme, UIN Jakarta, but was not promoted until April 2004, the time that I received a copy of the thesis. I thank Prof. Azyumardi Azra for informing me of its existence and his attempts to make a copy available to me. I also thank Fuad Jabali and Idzam Fautanu for their efforts.

Shi'i intellectual in Indonesia.[63] Ali's research focus excludes the important role of *ustadh* and intellectuals of non-Qum alumni. As a result, the true nature of Shi'ism in Indonesia is not revealed in Ali's account. Despite this caveat, Ali's study has made an important contribution to the study of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

Although there have been a considerable number of studies relevant to Shi'ism in Indonesia, as yet the nature of the Shi'i denomination in the country -its leading figures, beliefs and practices, institutions, organisation as well as the reactions from the majority community – is still to be fully revealed. This study will deal with these aspects in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of Shi'ism, within the context of the Sunni majority in the country, as well as the complex nature of Indonesian religion and society.

Theoretical Framework

In analysing the Shi'is in Indonesia as a minority Muslim group amidst the overwhelming Sunni majority, this study employs the theory of stigma[64] proposed by sociologist Goffman.[65] I follow Stewart's steps in his study of the Twelver Shi'i response to Sunni legal theory. Stewart maintains the applicability of this theory to Shi'is, "who have lived as a stigmatised minority dominated by a potentially hostile majority in most areas of the Muslim world and during most periods of Muslim history."[66] According to Goffman's theory, stigmatised groups tend to adopt strategies that fit into a social system dominated by the majority. While Sunnism has become a norm in the Muslim world, Shi'ism is considered 'abnormal' and Shi'is have to implement strategies in order to gain recognition from the Sunni majority.

Methodology

This study is based on fieldwork and library research. Two periods of fieldwork (both lasting eight months) were conducted in several cities and towns in Indonesia, mainly Jakarta and Bandung. Each period lasted eight

[63] Rakhmat, interview, (2/7/2002)

[64] Stigma may be defined as "the situation of the individual who is disqualified from full social acceptance" (Goffman 1986:n.p.). Goffman classifies three types of stigma: first, the physical deformities; second, blemishes of individual character perceived as weak, unnatural, treacherous or dishonest; third, "the tribal stigma of race, nation, and religion" (Goffman 1986:4). Stigma on Shi'ism is included in the third category.

[65] Goffman (1986)

[66] Stewart (2000)

months: first, from June 2002 until January 2003, second, from October 2003 until May 2004. I interviewed Shi'i figures and adherents, observed and participated in a number of religious activities at Shi'i institutions, visited their libraries, engaged in dialogue with them, and collected Shi'i and anti-Shi'i books, periodicals, pamphlets, cassettes, VCD's, and others. I also gathered information from the websites of organisations and institutions. My relationship with the Shi'is was such that I was welcome to participate in their activities and have conversations with them in a way that allowed me to collect as 'natural' data as possible. To facilitate my interaction with members of I took a three-month Persian course at the Islamic Cultural Centre of Jakarta (January-March 2004). To collect data on Sunni responses, I visited the office of DDII (*Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia*, Indonesian Islamic Missionary Council), the office of LPPI (*Lembaga Pengkajian dan Penelitian Islam*, Institute of Islamic Studies and Research) in Jakarta, centres of Persis (*Persatuan Islam*) in Bandung and Bangil, the library of MUI (*Majlis Ulama Indonesia*, Council of Indonesian 'Ulama') in the Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta, of the Office of Research and Development and Training, Department of Religious Affairs, (*Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Departemen Agama*) in Jakarta, and of UIN *Syarif Hidayatullah* in Ciputat, Banten, and UIN *Sunan Gunung Djati* in Bandung.

The Structure of the Study

This study is presented in nine chapters, in addition to introduction. Chapter one describes major elements and factors in the formation of the Shi'i community in Indonesia. This is followed, in chapter two, by a description of the type of leaders in the Shi'i community and portraits of Husein al-Habsyi, Husein Shahab and Jalaluddin Rakhmat. Chapter three examines the characteristics of Shi'ism as a *madhhab* as it is understood and practiced by the Indonesian Shi'is themselves. This includes outlining the concept of *ahl al-bayt*, the doctrine of imamate and the Mahdi, the *Ja'fari* jurisprudence, aspects of Shi'i piety and the teaching and practice of *taqiyya* (dissimulation of faith).

Chapters four, five and six deal with the Shi'i efforts to spread their teachings to Indonesian society and to gain recognition for Shi'ism as a valid interpretation of Islam. They examine institutions founded by the Shi'is and include analysis of the fields of *da'wa*, education, and publications. In the chapter on *da'wa* I shall describe characteristics of Shi'i institutions and the ways *da'wa* has been conducted. This includes their stated ideals, types of *da'wa* activity, and *da'wa* training. The chapter on educa-

tion presents different portraits of educational institutions organised by leading Shi'i figures. Another important means of disseminating Shi'ism is publication and this is dealt with in chapter six with a look at Shi'i publishers, their products - Indonesian translations, works by Indonesian Shi'i figures and periodicals – and the impact of such publications.

Chapter seven scrutinises IJABI, (*Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia*, the Indonesian Council of Ahlulbait Associations), the mass organisation established by the Shi'is as a means of gaining legal recognition from state authorities. An historical account of its establishment, its ideological foundation, its development, and negative reactions to the organisation are presented in this chapter.

The study of Shi'ism in Indonesia will never be well-understood unless a description of the varied responses of the Sunni majority to the Shi'is is covered. Chapter eight includes analysis of the general attitude of large Sunni organisations (both traditionalist and reformist) to Shi'ism, and the responses of the Council of Indonesian 'Ulama' and the Department of Religious Affairs. It also presents a description of ways in which anti-Shi'i groups propagate the fight against Shi'ism. This is followed by an examination of the moderate attitudes of influential Muslim intellectuals which have paved the way for the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. Chapter nine provides a conclusion for this study.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FORMATION OF THE SHI'I COMMUNITY

The precise number of Shi'i devotees in Indonesia is not known. Many notable Shi'is have tried to estimate the number even though there are no reliable sources to call upon. Several years ago the Lebanese Shi'i scholar Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya (d. 1979) mentioned the figure of one million Shi'is in Indonesia.[1] The same number was cited in 2003 by Andi Muhammad Assegaf, head of the Fatimah Foundation in Jakarta.[2] In 1995 Ahmad Baragbah who leads *Pesantren Al-Hadi* in Pekalongan,Central Java estimated there to be 20,000 Shi'is in Indonesia.[3] While in 2000, Dimitri Mahayana, the former chairman of the national Shi'i organisation, IJABI (*Ikatan Jamaah Ahlubait Indonesia*), predicted a figure of 3 million.[4] All of these estimates are without basis and therefore cannot be relied upon. It is almost impossible for researchers to provide the quantitative data necessary to produce reliable statistics. In 2000 the Islamic Cultural Centre of Jakarta (an institution sponsored by Iran) attempted to provide a database of all Shi'i *ustadh* (religious teachers) and adherents in Indonesia. The project failed due to many Shi'is simply not returning the distributed questionnaire. Despite the lack of quantitative data, it is certain that the Shi'is only constitute a very small proportion of Indonesia's Muslim population. Even though Shi'ism had been evident in Indonesia in the past, the majority of Shi'is are actually converts from Sunnism following the victory of Iranian revolution of 1979. This chapter seeks to identify the elements and factors which contributed to the formation of the Shi'i community in Indonesia. I begin by tracing the genesis of the Shi'i community, that is, the existence of the Shi'i group among Arab descendants and examining the way the

[1] Mughniyya (1973:204)

[2] *Gatra* (6/12/2003:59)

[3] Nurjulianti and Subhan (1995:21)

[4] *Pikiran Rakyat* (2/7/2000:9)

Shi'is have maintained their existence throughout history. Secondly, I deal with the emergence of the Qum alumni and their teaching methods in Islamic education in Qum, Iran. This is followed by a description of the emergence of the Shi'i campus group. A brief description of conversion to Shi'ism will conclude this chapter.

A. The Arab descendant

The Arab descendant group has been a significant element of the Shi'i community in Indonesia in terms of both quantity and quality. Quantitatively, the group constitutes a large proportion of the community. Qualitatively, the most prominent Shi'i *ustadh* (religious teachers) in Indonesia have been Arab descendants, particularly *Sayyids*. Furthermore, the Arabs are considered to be the original members of the Shi'i community in Indonesia, despite the exact date of the arrival of Shi'ism in Indonesia remaining unclear.

The Shi'i have existed among the Arab community in the region that is now called Indonesia at least since the late-19th century. Since this period there have been close relations between Hadramaut (an historical region in the South Arabian peninsula) and the Malay-Indonesian world. Riddle suggests that European visitors to Hadramaut in the early decades of the 20th century witness extensive contacts with the Malay world. He regards this period – one of continued growth in Arab migration - as a turning point for Hadramis, both in their country of origin and in Southeast Asia. The Hadrami Diaspora in Southeast Asia contributed to religious life in the Malay world as people who left Hadramaut became imams and teachers,[5] and it is among the Hadrami migrants or Indonesian-born Arabs, particularly Sayyids, that we can identify adherents of Shi'ism in this region. Muhammad Asad Shahab (1910-2001), a famous Shi'i *Sayyid* writer and journalist, mentions that several prominent Sayyid leaders and scholars belonged to Shi'i families, namely, al-Muhdar, Yahya, Shahab, al-Jufri, al-Haddad, and al-Saqqaf. In addition, there were Shi'is among other Arab clans in the Dutch East Indies.[6] However, we certainly cannot generalise that all members of the aforementioned Sayyid clans were Shi'is. In fact, the majority of them were, and still are, Sunni. Moreover, as outlined below, some members of these families belonged to anti-Shi'i groups.

The fact that some Sayyid families belonged to the Shi'i branch of Islam was not widely acknowledged among the Sunni majority. The Sunni

[5] Riddle (1997:224-225)

[6] Shahab (1962:43-54). Abubakar Aceh for instance notes the presence of Sayyid Shi'is from the Bilfaqih family in Kutaraja (Banda Aceh) in the early 20th century (1985:33).

'*ulama*' and leaders in this region regarded the Sayyids to be adherents of Sunnism along with the majority of the population. A number of them were even assumed to be Sunni scholars and leaders as they had so much knowledge of Sunni teachings and were involved in the religious life of the community. This can be seen as due to their practice of *taqiyya* (concealing of religious faith), a teaching also permissible within Shi'ism.[7] Publicly, they practiced the obligatory rituals, in accordance with the regulations formulated within the Shafi'i jurisprudence (a Sunni school of jurisprudence). But inwardly these Sayyids believed in the Shi'i fundamentals of religion.[8] Only a few openly observed aspects of worship in accordance with the Ja'fari (a Shi'i school of)jurisprudence.

From the Shi'i minority group of the Arab community, came several prominent '*ulama*' and leaders who played major roles in the social, religious, and political fields. Before the first half of the 20th century, we find three eminent Shi'i leaders in the Dutch East Indies. The three represent different Sayyid clans from the Arab community. The first and foremost Shi'i scholar Sayyid Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Muhdar (1861-1926) came from the al-Muhdar clan. Very little is known about the life of this figure. We are informed that he was born in Quereh, Hadramaut, Yemen, around 1861 and received his religious education in his homeland. He came to the Dutch East Indies at the age of 24, living first in Bogor, West Java, and later in Bondowoso and Surabaya, East Java. He engaged in teaching and *da'wa* activities and was said to have taught and propagated Islamic teachings in several religious gatherings in Surabaya, Bondowoso and other towns in East Java, Pekalongan (Central Java), Bogor, and Batavia (now Jakarta). In 1908, he was involved in the establishment of *Jam'iyya al-Khairiyya al-'Arabiyya*, a sister organisation of the pioneering *Jam'iyya Khair* (the Benevolent Society) of Jakarta, which built Islamic schools (*Madrasa al-Khairiyya*) in Surabaya and Bondowoso. However, these schools were not Shi'i in character.[9] Muhammad al-Muhdar passed away on 4 May 1926 in Surabaya where he was buried.[10]

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[7] We will deal with the teaching of *taqiyya* and other teachings of Shi'ism understood and practised in Indonesia in Chapter Three.

[8] This is not an unusual case. In the history of Islam in the Middle East, from the 10th to the 17th century, for instance, Shi'i jurists performing *taqiyya* not only studied with Shafi'i teachers but also participated in the Sunni legal education system. Some were recognised as professors of Sunni law, served as legal authorities in Sunni circles or wrote books within the Sunni tradition (Stewart 1998:109).

[9] Zainal Abidin al-Muhdar, interview, (27/8/2002)

[10] Shahabuddin (2000:114)

During his life Muhammad al-Muhdar was said to have expressed his devotion to Shi'ism through certain teaching and preaching activities. For instance, he was said to have been critical of *al-Sahih* of Bukhari, the most authoritative Sunni *hadith* collection.[11] Such criticisms are common among Shi'is but rarely found among the Sunni community. Among the Shi'is in this region (both past and present), Muhammad al-Muhdar is considered to be a prominent Shi'i scholar who contributed to the spread and perpetuation of Shi'ism. Besides teaching and *da'wa*, he composed a number of literary works which contain some principal Shi'i doctrines such as the doctrinal designation of 'Ali bin Abi Talib as the first appointed Imam to succeed the Prophet Muhammad. These works, however, were never published.[12]

The second prominent Shi'i figure in the Dutch East Indies was Sayyid Ali bin Ahmad Shahab (1865-1944) who greatly contributed to the educational, religious, social, and political development of Indonesian society. Born in Batavia to a Sayyid father, Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Shahab and a Sundanese mother,[13] Ali Ahmad Shahab learned basic Islamic knowledge with his father and other Sayyid scholars in the region. Widely known as Ali Menteng, he was one of the leading Arab figures in the Dutch East Indies at the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries. He was a scholar,[14] activist, and successful merchant. He was also one of the founders of *Jami'at Khair*, the first Muslim organisation in the Dutch East Indies established in Jakarta in 1901. Ali Ahmad Shahab was elected general chairman of *Jami'at Khair* in 1905 when it gained legal recognition from the Dutch East Indies government.[15] He was one of the most vocal opponents to the Al-Irsyad (the Guidance) an organisation founded because of the long standing *Alawi-Irshadi* conflicts which have occurred since the second decade of the 20th century.[16] Ali Ahmad Shahab

[11] Zainal Abidin al-Muhdar, interview, (27/8/2002)

[12] Shahab (1962:43-45), Hamzah Al-Habsyi, interview, (15/10/2002)

[13] Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Shahab (d. 1891) was a wealthy Sayyid who financed the building of a number of mosques in Batavia and in Hadramaut (Shahabuddin 2000:43-44). Ali Ahmad Sahab's mother, Nursatri came from Cianjur, West Java (Salam 1992:17).

[14] Ali Ahmad Shahab wrote some books (published and unpublished) in Arabic, including *al-Thalatha al-Abtal* (the Three Heroes), *Tarbiyyat al-Nisa'* (the Education of Women) and *al-Sa'ada al-Zawjiyya* (the Felicity of Marriage) (Salam 1992:13-20). He contributed to periodicals such as the reformist journal *al-Manar* (the Minaret), the daily *al-Mu'ayyad* (The Reliable) published in Cairo, *Thamarat al-Funun* (The Fruits of the Arts) in Beirut and *Utusan Hindia*. His contribution to *al-Manar* suggested that modern schools should be established in Hadramaut.

[15] Assegaf (1993:9)

[16] Mobini-Kesheh (1999:60). Al-Irsyad was founded in 1914 by mainly non-Sayyid Arabs (including Ahmad Surkati following his resignation from his position as an inspector

was the main informant of the British Consul-General in Batavia until the 1920s and he used this position to provoke the British into taking action against Al-Irsyad. He convinced the British to use their influence and control over the ports of India and Singapore and prohibit the travel of Al-Irsyad followers to Hadramaut and also intercept their remittances.[17] He also influenced the Qu'ayti sultan in Hadramaut who established alliances with the British. Apparently he was relatively successful in this regard, as Al-Irsyad people had difficulty visiting Hadramaut because the British government refused to grant them passports. Their relatives in Hadramaut also faced similar obstacles.[18]

Like other leading Muslim figures in this region, Ali Ahmad Shahab was heavily influenced by the spirit of Pan-Islamism. He established contacts with Sultan Abdul Hamid of the Ottoman Empire. He visited Turkey where he met with the Sultan to discuss arrangements regarding providing education for Sayyid pupils from Dutch East Indies in Istanbul. A result of this mission, three Sayyid boys namely Abdulmutallib, his own son, Abdurrahman al-Aydrus and Muhammad bin Abdullah al-Attas entered the Galatasary Lyceum, a modern education establishment in Istanbul.[19]

Ali Ahmad Shahab was not recognised as a Shi'i among the majority Muslim population in the Dutch East Indies. However, his son, Muhammad Asad Shahab, affirms that he not only adhered to Shi'ism in terms of

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of *Jami'at Khair*. The Sayyid dispute between *Jami'at Khair* and *Al-Irsyad* concerned at least three related issues namely *kafa'a* (compatibility or equality between partners in marriage), kissing hands of the Sayyids, and the use of the title 'Sayyid'. Whilst *Jami'at Khair* supported these measures, *Al-Irsyad* strongly opposed them. (Mobini-Kesheh 1999:92-107). A large number of studies have been done regarding the conflicts including Noer (1973), Kostiner (1984), Haikal (1986), De Jonge (1993), and Mobini-Kesheh (1999).

[17] Freitag (1997:124-125)

[18] Noer (1973:67)

[19] Freitag (2003:210-211). Since the late-19th century a number of wealthy Sayyids sent their children to Constantinople to pursue their education. Before Ali Ahmad Shahab, Sayyid Abdullah al-Attas sent his four children to Turkey, Egypt, and Europe to attain modern education. In 1898 four Arab boys from Java arrived in Constantinople for learning and this became a cause of consternation among the Dutch authorities. Following this episode, the Dutch urged the Turkish government to discourage people from Java from studying in Constantinople. In response the government rejected a request from the Consul-General in Batavia for 30 boys from Batavia and Singapore to be sent to Constantinople (Van Dijk 2002:68-69). In spite of this, the following two years saw the number of boys from Java who were studying in Constantinople increase to 17. However, their educational achievements cannot be regarded as successful due to their lack of education in the Netherlands-Indies. Moreover, "they were not model students, who could be paraded as paragons" (Van Dijk 2002:69). By 1901, only eight students remained in Constantinople. Four had died, two had returned to Asia, two had travelled to other countries in Europe and one was missing (Van Dijk 2002:69).

belief and practice but also became a famous propagator of this *madhhab*.[20] We do not have information as to whether Ali Ahmad Shahab was a student of Sayyid Abu Bakr Shahab,[21] an influential Shi'i Hadrami teacher in Southeast Asia in the period. Not much is known about the ways in which Ali Ahmad Shahab propagated Shi'i teachings, but it is understood that it was exclusive, limited only to his family and close associates. Ali Ahmad Shahab had many disciples to whom he granted a licence to practice and teach certain prayers, including prayers transmitted through the purified Imams. One of the prayers to be recited every morning says, "...grant us with means of subsistence, you are the best who grant it. Grant mercy to the most glad of your creatures, that is, our Prophet Muhammad, his household as the ship of salvation and to all propagating Imams."[22] The last phrase clearly indicates the Shi'i character of the prayer.

The third famous Shi'i scholar was Sayyid Aqil bin Zainal Abidin (1870-1952) of the al-Jufri clan. Born in Surabaya in 1870, he was five years younger than Ali Ahmad Shahab. Aqil al-Jufri first learned Islamic knowledge from his father. When he was seven years old, his father sent him to Mecca to study with Shafi'i 'ulama'. He was said to have memorised the all chapters of the holy Qur'an at the age of ten. This is considered to be a very great religious-intellectual achievement. Aqil al-Jufri's teachers of the Qur'an were Muhammad al-Sharbini[23] and Yusuf Abu Hajar. He studied Arabic syntax under 'Umar Shatta and 'Abd al-Rahman Babasil. 'Abd al-Rahman al-Hindi al-Haidar and other Shafi'i scholars taught him the Qur'an exegesis of *al-Jalalayn*[24] and *hadith*, particularly collections by Muslim (d. 875), Abu Daud (d. 889), and al-Nasa'i (d. 915). In this period, Aqil al-Jufri was probably an adherent of Sunnism. Then, in 1899 he moved to Singapore. Here he studied *al-Durr al-Manthur*[25] and *al-Amali*

[20] Shahab (1962:47)

[21] Shahabuddin (2000:78)

[22] Shahabuddin (2000:155)

[23] Muhammad al-Sharbani al-Dimyati (d.1903) was widely considered to be the grandmaster in the field of Qur'anic studies. A number of Indonesian students,including Shaykh Mahfuz al-Tirmisi (d. 1919), learned from al-Sharbani al-Dimyati (Rachman 1998:39).

[24] *Al-Jalalayn* is a concise Qur'an exegesis book written by Jalal al-Din al-Mahalli (d. 1459) and his student Jalaluddin al-Suyuti (d. 1505). It is a well known text in the Sunni Muslim world.

[25] *Al-Durr al-Manthur fi al-Tafsir bi al-Ma'thur* (the Scattered Pearls in the Traditional Qur'an Exegesis) is the famous exegesis of al-Suyuthi (d. 1505) and frequently cited in Shi'i works.

('the Dictations') of Shaykh al-Saduq al-Qummi[26] under the renowned scholar Abu Bakr bin Shahab (1846-1922). In addition Muhammad bin Aqil bin Yahya (1863-1931) taught Aqil al-Jufri the *fiqh* book entitled *al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* (the Indissoluble Bond) by Sayyid Muhammad Kazim Tabataba'i Yazdi[27] and consequently Aqil al-Jufri took this prominent Shi'i legist as his *marja' al-taqlid* ('source of imitation').[28] These Shi'i scholars may well have been influential in Aqil Al-Jufri's conversion to Shi'i *madhhab*. Three years later, he returned to Mecca where he joined the Shi'i congregation of 'Ali al-'Amri al-Madani and other Shi'i scholars.[29] He also made contacts with prominent '*ulama*' of the world, including Ahmad Zawawi of Mecca.

After several years living in Mecca, Aqil al-Jufri went to Jambi, Sumatera, where he married a daughter of Sayyid Idrus bin Hasan bin Alwi al-Jufri. Afterwards, he moved to Mecca and stayed there until 1921 at which point he returned to his hometown, Surabaya, where he remained until his death in 1952.[30] In Java, Aqil Al-Jufri devoted his life to teaching, preaching, and writing. He was also known for his concern for the poor.[31] He tended to adopt a more open approach to the propagation of Shi'ism. As a result, he became involved in open debates with the Sunni '*ulama*' in Surabaya. One particular debate was cut short following physical threats against Aqil al-Jufri. Like Ali Ahmad Shahab, Aqil al-Jufri was said to have been involved in the struggle for Indonesian independence.[32] He also produced some literary works. These unpublished writings, (although it he did in fact have a publisher), affirm his adherence to Shi'ism and the validity of the *madhhab*.[33] In 1924, for instance, together with his brother, Ahmad al-Jufri, he published one of Muhammad bin Aqil's works, *al-'Atb al-Jamil 'ala Ahl al-Jarh wa al-Ta'dil* (The Beautiful Censure to Men of Sarcasm and Modification).

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[26] Shaykh al-Saduq Muhammad bin 'Ali Ibn Babawaih al-Qummi (d. 991) was a leading scholar of Shi'i *hadith*. His famous *hadith* collection *man la yahduruh al-faqih* (For him not in the Presence of Jurisprudent), is one of the four authoritative Shi'i *hadith* collections.

[27] Muhammad Kazim Tabataba'i Yazdi (1831-1919) was born in Kasnu near Yazd, Iraq, and died in Najaf. He became the sole *marja' al-taqlid* after the death of Akhund Khurasani in 1911 (Momen 1985:323).

[28] See below for details on the educational system for Shi'i jurists; on the obligation of laity to follow them see Chapter Three.

[29] Al-Tihrani (1404/1984:1273), Al-Amin (1986:147)

[30] Al-Tihrani (1404/1984:1274), Shahab (1962:52)

[31] Al-Tihrani (1404/1984:1274)

[32] Shahab (1962:52)

[33] Shahab (1962:51-52)

These three Shi'i figures had connections with two Shi'i Hadrami scholars namely Sayyid Abu Bakr bin 'Abd al-Rahman bin Muhammad bin Shahab (1846-1922)[34] and Muhammad bin Aqil bin Yahya (1863-1931). Abu Bakr bin Shahab wrote a large number of books, which contained various branches of knowledge and collections of poetry.[35] His books on logic are still taught at al-Azhar University.[36] The role of Abu Bakr bin Shahab as a travelling merchant, scholar and teacher was important in the international Hadrami networks of the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Abu Bakr bin Shahab was "an important propagator of reformist ideas among Hadramis both at home and in the Diaspora."[37] He travelled to countries in the Middle East, Africa, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. In Southeast Asia he stayed for some time in Surabaya and Singapore for business and to visit relatives as well as to teach. The three Shi'i figures probably studied with Abu Bakr bin Shahab when he visited Southeast Asia region and maintained close connections with him.

Muhammad bin Aqil bin Yahya (1863-1931) was also a student of Abu Bakr bin Shahab. Like his teacher, he was a travelling merchant and scholar. He visited Southeast Asia and stayed for a relatively long period in Singapore. In March 1908, together with Hasan bin Shahab, and other Sayyid leaders he engaged in the reorganisation of the management of *al-Imam* in which he was appointed the managing director of the company.[38] In addition, he devoted himself to teaching and writing. One of his students was Aqil al-Jufri who also printed one of Muhammad bin Aqil's work. However, in Singapore in 1907 he triggered a hostile reaction from the Muslim community in Southeast Asia by publishing his controversial book entitled *al-Nasa'ih al-Kafiya liman Yatawalla Mu'awiya* (Ample Admonitions to Whomever Accords Allegiance to Mu'awiya). The book received public acclaim from Abu Bakr bin Shahab.

This book clearly indicates Muhammad bin Aqil's adherence to Shi'ism. Werner Ende[39] provides an important account of Muhammad bin Aqil's Shi'i inclinations, especially with regard to the permissibility of

[34] His lengthy biography is provided by Muhammad Asad Shahab in *Abu al-Murtada* (1996) on which Freitag (2003) relies for her account of the role of Abu Bakr bin Shahab.

[35] Al-Amin (1986:394-402)

[36] Freitag (2003:187)

[37] Freitag (2003:187)

[38] Hamzah (1991:117), Roff (2002:104)

[39] Ende (1973). Another discussion of Muhammad bin Aqil's book is given by Roff (2002:100-103).

cursing Mu'awiya bin Abi Sufyan[40], the founder of the Umayyad dynasty. However, while Ende is reluctant to affirm that Muhammad bin Aqil was a Shi'i, my reading of Muhammad bin Aqil's own book clearly indicates that he was a Shi'i. The book cites both Sunni and Shi'i sources to prove the enjoinment of the cursing of Mu'awiya and even the killing of him. Muhammad bin Aqil points out that both Sunnis and Shi'is have agreed on the obligation of killing Mu'awiya when there was an opportunity and this is a kind of excellent deed rewarded by God.[41] A clear indication of his adherence to Shi'ism is that he used the term Imam to address the Shi'i Imams and *'alayh al-salam* (peace be upon him) after mentioning the Imams, this is a tradition not present in Sunni Islam. In addition, bin Aqil had two criticisms of Sunnism. First he criticised the consensus in the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence to follow the legists of the tyrannical kings.[42] The second criticism was that the Sunnis reject the Shi'i propagation of the infallibility of the twelve Imams, utter cries of denial, disgrace them, and reject the rational and textual evidence of their existence.[43] These criticisms suggest his adherence to Shi'ism. Furthermore, the quotation below, from the writing of Muhammad bin Aqil, contains some of the aspects of Shi'i teaching that are rejected by Sunni scholars.

> Astonishingly, the large number of people and even some of the scholars think that whoever wipes off his feet instead of washing them in the ablution is a heretic. Similarly, whoever says that good deeds come from God whilst bad deeds come from himself, whoever includes '*hayya 'ala khayr al-'amal*' [come to the best of actions] in the call to prayer, whoever says that Ali is more excellent than Abu Bakr, whoever does not approve religious obligations by slyness, [...] all are erroneous heretics in the views of most of our Sunni 'ulama'.[44]

Inevitably, this book received fierce reactions from Sunni 'ulama' in the region, and particularly from prominent Arab 'ulama' including the famous Honorary Adviser on Arab Affairs to the colonial government and mufti of Batavia Sayyid Uthman bin Abdullah bin Aqil bin Yahya (1822-

[40] Mu'awiya bin Abi Sufyan was the governor of Syria during 'Uthman's caliphate, the third caliph after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. He refused to accept Ali's caliphate that was approved of and accepted by the large majority of Muslims, because he accused Ali of sheltering the murderers of 'Uthman, his cousin. In 657 he led the Battle of Siffin against the Caliph 'Ali, the first Shi'i Imam, but the war ended in a call for arbitration. After the death of 'Ali, he established the Umayyad Dynasty (661-750). Prior to his death, he appointed his son, Yazid, who sent an army to murder Husayn bin 'Ali and his followers on the plain of Karbala on 10 Muharram 61AH (10 October 680).

[41] Muhammad bin Aqil (1907:36)

[42] Muhammad bin Aqil (1907:37)

[43] Muhammad bin Aqil (1907:138)

[44] Muhammad bin Aqil (1907:112)

1914),[45] Muhammad bin Aqil's father in-law, and Hasan bin Shahab, Muhammad bin Aqil's friend. Scrutinising the entire contents of the book, Hasan bin Shahab proved that Muhammad bin Aqil's work was heavily tinged with Shi'i ways of understanding Islam.[46]

The continuity of Shi'ism as a minority *madhhab* in Indonesia in a later period was maintained mainly through informal education in a family or private form. With regard to the teacher-student relationship, Muhammad al-Muhdar and Aqil al-Jufri had a close disciple who then became a prominent Shi'i leader namely Sayyid Hasyim bin Muhammad Assegaf (d. 1970) who lived in Gresik, near Surabaya. It was said that Aqil al-Jufri had bequested him the role of performing the burial ritual on Aqil

[45] In 1911, Sayyid Uthman published his work, *I'anat al-Mustarshidin 'ala Ijtinab al-Bida' fi al-Din* (Guidance for Seekers of Direction in Avoiding Innovations in Religion). Even though Sayyid Uthman himself never mentions Muhammad bin Aqil's work in this treatise, his book was meant to reject Shi'ism in general and the cursing of some companions of the Prophet Muhammad, in addition to demonstrate the invalidity of Wahhabism. He pointed out that Muslim scholars have agreed, in terms of textual and rational proofs, that Shi'ism is the most deceitful path and the Muslim leaders know well the Shi'is' clever ability in deceiving. He went on to suggest that Abdullah bin Saba' was the founder of Shi'ism and wanted to destroy Islam. He mentioned the unbelievers (*zindiq*) who intended to destroy Islam by supporting the development of Shi'ism. Additionally Uthman criticised the fact that Shi'is, who were ignorant in knowledge, never refer to the pious scholars of jurisprudence, *hadith*, and Sufism but to the hypocrite unbelievers (Uthman 1911:22). "Shi'is are a kind of hypocrites whose *madhhab* is dissimulation" (Uthman 1911:22). Sayyid Uthman further cited several Sunni views affirming that the Shi'is wanted to slander the companions of the Prophet or even accuse them of being infidels. He regarded the Shi'is as heretics who twisted facts regarding the companions of the Prophet and denied 'Ali's recognition of the validity of caliphate of Abu Bakr and 'Umar (Uthman 1911:22-25). Several studies have been devoted to the role of Sayyid Uthman as an accommodationist scholar in the Dutch East Indies such as articles by Kaptein (1998) and Azra (1995a, 1997).

[46] Hasan bin Alwi bin Shahab wrote a 153-pages treatise, *al-Ruqya al-Shafiya min Nafathat Sumum al-Nasa'ih al-Kafiya* (the Curative Charm against the Poisonous Spittle of 'the Ample Admonitions') that was completed in 1328H/1908. In the first page of the book, Hasan bin Shahab states that Muhammad bin Aqil's book calls upon the Sunnis, particularly among the laymen, to follow the Shi'i teachings. He emphasises that the Shi'is are known as the religious groups that lie when citing references in order to support their stance. The author mentions one of the reasons as to why he wrote the book, namely the fact that many of his fellow Muslims requested him to write a refutation to *al-Nasa'ih al-Kafiyya* which contains clear errors and deceit regarding the Prophet Muhammad, his companions, followers of the companions as well as the recognised Sunni 'ulama' (Hasan bin Shahab 1908:2-3). He scrutinised the entire content of Muhammad bin Aqil's work that is regarded to be Shi'i and heavily tinged with the Shi'i ways of understanding of Islam.

al-Jufri's corpse according to the Ja'fari jurisprudence. He was known to have practiced the Ja'fari jurisprudence in private and public, even among the Sunni majority. In addition to his close relationship with Shi'is in Indonesia, Sayyid Hasyim bin Muhammad Assegaf made contacts with Shi'i 'ulama' of the world and his fame as a Shi'i figure led to some of these Shi'i 'ulama' and Muslim scholars to visit him. Abubakar Aceh wrote: "In Gresik we met with a famous man named Sayyid Hasyim Assegaf. With him we talked very much about Shi'ism and its books."[47]

When the Shi'i group was without an institutional centre Hasyim Assegaf provided his house as a place for organising Shi'i commemorations. With regard to the role of this Shi'i figure, Muhammad Asad Shahab wrote:

> In Gresik, East Java, a great ceremony of 'Id al-Ghadir[48] is celebrated annually in a big house of the Shi'i figures. In the latest years the ceremony has been carried out in a house of Sayyid Hasyim bin Muhammad Assegaf, one of the Imamiyya Shi'i leaders. Today he has reached the age of eighty but he is still very healthy. The ceremony is attended by a great number of the Shi'is who came to the town from various cities and from distant places. The biography of Our Hero, Master of the Faithful Imam Ali (upon him be peace) and Arabic poems (*qasida*) are read, and sermons are delivered. Then a meal is served.[49]

Kinship has played an important role in the continuity of Shi'ism. Most followers of Shi'ism were the descendants of the aforementioned Shi'i figures and their relatives. Some of them became eminent 'ulama' in several cities and towns in Indonesia. They were active in the fields of Islamic education and *da'wa*. From the al-Muhdar clan, we find two children of Muhammad al-Muhdar who are known as *ustadh*. Muhdar al-Muhdar was very well known in Bondowoso and other towns in East Java whilst Husein al-Muhdar (d.1982) taught Islamic teachings in various religious gatherings in some cities in Java, including Jakarta. These two figures continued to spread the Shi'i teachings among their relatives and limited groups of acquaintances.[50] Some newly-converted Shi'is, (both Arab and non-Arab), in Indonesia in the post-Iranian revolution period had the opportunity to learn Shi'i teachings from Husein al-Muhdar.

The most well-known figures from the Shahab clan are Muhammad Dhiya Shahab (d. 1986) and Muhammad Asad Shahab (d.2001), sons of

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[47] Aceh (1977:33)

[48] 'Id al-Ghadir is one of Shi'ism's religious commemorations held annually on the 18th of *Dhu al-Hijja*, the last month in the Muslim calendar. It celebrates the Prophet Muhammad's designation of Ali as his successor at Ghadir Khumm.

[49] Shahab (1962:26-27)

[50] Zainal Abidin al-Muhdar, interview, (28/7/2002)

Ali Ahmad Shahab. Muhammad Dhiya Shahab was a teacher, journalist, and writer. Like his father, he was a leading figure within the Arab community in Indonesia and had a major role in the development of *Jami'at Khair*, becoming its chief for about ten years (1935-1945). He taught at the schools of *Jami'at Khair* and he also led *al-Rabita al-Alawiyya* (the Alawi League); in doing so he paid great attention to the socio-religious development of the Arabs all over Indonesia. From 1950 to 1960 Muhammad Dhiya Shahab worked at the Department of Information.[51] He wrote a number of scholarly works, most published in Arabic in Beirut, including *al-Imam al-Muhajir*[52] which was written in collaboration with Abdullah bin Nuh (1905-1987).

Muhammad Asad Shahab was also a journalist and prolific writer. He first studied at the schools of *Jami'at Khair* and then moved to the *al-Khairiyya* school in Surabaya, which he completed in 1932. From 1935, he became a correspondent of several newspapers. In 1945, together with his elder brother he founded a news agency named *Arabian Press Board* (APB), which in 1950 became *Asian Press Board*. In 1963 APB merged with the national news agency institute, *Antara*, because President Sukarno wanted a single news agency. Muhammad Asad Shahab was also the founder of the magazine, *National Press Digest*.[53] Like his elder brother, he then worked at the Muslim World League in Mecca from 1965. It is pertinent to note that Asad Shahab introduced the modernist scholar Hamka to various Iranian scholars who contributed to Hamka's acceptance of Shi'i books on Qur'an exegesis including Tabataba'i's *al-Mizan* and Ayatollah Khoei's *al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an* that also become important sources of his *tafsir* book, *Al-Azhar*.[54] As a writer, Muhammad Asad Shahab wrote a large number of Arabic books and treatises, which were published in the Middle East.

With regard to the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia, in the 1960s these two figures established an Islamic foundation known as *Lembaga Penyelidikan Islam* (Islamic Research Institute) and along with it a periodical, *Pembina* ('Cultivator'). The general goals of the institute were to build up a relatively representative library that provided books, journals, magazines and other sources on Islamic knowledge in general and Shi'ism in particular, to translate foreign language books - mainly Arabic - into Indonesian, and to distribute books and periodicals to the Muslim com-

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[51] Salam (1992:18)

[52] The complete title is *al-Imam al-Muhajir Ahmad bin 'Isa bin Muhammad bin 'Ali al-'Uraydi bin Ja'far al-Sadiq, ma lahu wa li naslihi wa li al-A'imma min aslafihi min al-fada'il wa al-ma'athir* published in 1980 by Dar al-Shuruq, Jeddah.

[53] Salam (1986:90)

[54] Hamka (1983:326-327)

munity in Indonesia. Its last goal was to send students to pursue Islamic learning in the Middle East.[55]

They also tried to establish close connections with the Shi'i 'ulama' in Middle Eastern countries with a view to realising the propagation of Islam in Indonesia. A result, they received the support of a number of Middle Eastern Shi'i 'ulama' for the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. Muhammad Kazim al-Quzwaini in Karbala, Iraq, sent books and periodicals to Indonesia, including material which included several fields of Islamic knowledge such as Ja'fari jurisprudence, Qur'an exegesis, *hadith*, and ethics. Similarly, the Grand Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim (d. 1970) in Najaf, Iraq, Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya (d. 1979), Hasan al-Amin and *al-'Irfan*, (the first Shi'i publishing house in Lebanon), gifted a large number of books and other printed materials to Shi'i Sayyids in Indonesia.[56] With the collections of Shi'i works received from these 'ulama' and institutions, the Islamic Research Institute functioned as a centre for the spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia. As a result of its relatively representative collections of Shi'i works, the institute proved to be very beneficial for those wanting to learn Shi'ism. One beneficiary was the late Abubakar who used the institute to publish a series comparing *madhhab*, including *Sji'ah, Rasionalisme dalam Islam* (Shi'ism, Rationalism in Islam). Published in 1965, this was the first sympathetic book on the *madhhab* to be written in Indonesian.[57] The institute became a publisher of several Islamic books.

Visits to the Middle Eastern Shi'i 'ulama' were also made. In Lebanon, in 1956 Muhammad Asad Shahab met with 'Abd al-Husain Sharaf al-Din (d. 1957), Ahmad Arif al-Zayn of al-'Irfan, and Muhammad Jawad Mughniyya.[58] Further, he visited Hibbat al-Din al-Shahrastani in Baghdad, and the Grand Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim (d. 1970), Muhammad Rida al-Muzaffar (d. 1964), and Muhammad Taqi al-Hakim (d. 2002) in Najaf. He reported that the Shi'i 'ulama' showed concern for the condition and development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. This was indicated by their agreement to accept Indonesian students to pursue education in their Islamic institutions. However, according to Asad Shahab, a variety of

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[55] Shahab (1986:322)

[56] Shahab (1962:55)

[57] Siradjuddin Abbas criticises Abubakar Aceh's sympathetic attitude towards Shi'ism and this becomes one of his motivations to write his famous book, *I'itiqad Ahlussunnah wal-Djama'ah* (the Doctrine of *ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama'a*) first published in 1969 by Pustaka Tarbiyah, Jakarta. He dedicates many pages of the book to a discussion of the falsity of Shi'i teachings and its contrast to the true teachings of Sunnism.

[58] Visit to Lebanon is mentioned in Mughniyya (1973:205)

reasons including strict regulations on visas to go abroad meant that this opportunity could not be fulfilled.[59]

Connections between Indonesian Shi'is and Middle Eastern Shi'i 'ulama' were sustained by visits of the latter, (or their representatives) to Indonesia. During such visits information was exchanged and knowledge of Shi'ism was learned. In addition, meetings with individual Shi'i as well as discussions regarding the principal Shi'i teachings were held. In 1962, for instance, a learned Shi'i man from Iraq named Muhammad Reza Ja'fari visited Indonesia to meet Muslim leaders in the country. His itinerary included a visit to *al-Khairiyya* school in Bondowoso. Teachers and students at the *madrasa,* as well as leading Shi'i figures in the country including Muhammad Asad Shahab and Husein Al-Habsyi (1921-1994), were engaged in discussions about the principal teachings of Shi'ism. Hamzah Al-Habsyi told me that the discussion carried on for four days. Following this event, some teachers converted to Shi'ism. Hamzah Al-Habsyi himself, currently a prominent Shi'i *ustadh* in Bondowoso, admitted that he converted to Shi'ism around 1969.[60]

With the, albeit limited, instruments of propagation and its Middle East connections, this small Muslim group could maintain its continuity and attract new members in several cities, towns, and villages across Indonesia. Three figures are worthy of mention owing to their great contributions to the foundation of Shi'i community. The first is Sayyid Abdul Qadir Bafaqih of Bangsri in Jepara (Central Java) who converted to Shi'ism after reading Shi'i books that he had received from Kuwait in 1974. In the village of Bangsri he set up and headed *Pesantren Al-Khairat* where he imparted the teachings of Shi'ism, recorded his instruction, and wrote a number of (unpublished) books.[61] His teachings attracted his students and a number of people from the surrounding *pesantren*, who in turn spread Shi'ism in other areas, such as Bulustalan, South Semarang, in Central Java.[62] His propagation elicited negative reactions from Sunni figures in the region and also attracted the attention of the government and mass media in 1982.[63]

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[59] Shahab (1962:56)

[60] Hamzah Al-Habsyi, interview, (15/10/2002)

[61] Syafi'i (1983/1984)

[62] Hakim and Hadiwiyata (1997/1998:12)

[63] For the reaction from the government, see chapter seven. Some Indonesian mass media which provided reports on the (unusual) fact that Abdul Qadir Bafaqih was a Shi'i are daily *Berita Buana* 25/10/1982, *Sinar Pagi Minggu* 1/11/3100/XIII, *Suara Merdeka* 27,28,29/10/1982, and *Tempo* 20/11/1982.

The second figure is Sayyid Ahmad Al-Habsyi (d.1994), the then leader of *Pesantren Ar-Riyadh* in Palembang, South Sumatera. He established contacts with an Islamic foundation in Tehran called the Muslim Brotherhood. It was Al-Habsyi who sent his students, and renowned Shi'i *ustadh* Umar Shahab and his brother Husein Shahab, to pursue studies in Qum in 1974 and 1979 respectively.[64] In this regard it is also worth mentioning an effort made by the *Pesantren Al-Khairat* of Palu, Central Sulawesi – another sister educational institution of *Jami'at Khair* of Jakarta – that had previously sent students to Qum, as illustrated in the section below. This 1970's link between Shi'i Sayyids and Iranian 'ulama' contributed to a new and important development of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

The third figure is Sayyid Husein Al-Habsyi who established YAPI (*Yayasan Pesantren Islam*, the Foundation of Islamic Pesantren) in Bangil in 1976. He and his *pesantren* have greatly contributed to the spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia.[65] As we can see below, he sent a large number of students – most of whom are Arab descendants - to study in Qum after the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran and most of them have become renowned Shi'i *ustadh* in Indonesia.

The triumph of the Iranian revolution in 1979 is a very important historical moment for the foundation of the Shi'i community, a significant portion of which comes from Arab descendents. The Iranian revolution has contributed not only to many conversions to the Shi'i branch of Islam but also to "a consciousness and awareness of the Shi'is and their history."[66] After the revolution, many Arab descendants, both Sayyid and non-Sayyid, converted to Shi'ism. Aside from the Iranian revolution and the heightened consciousness of neo-colonialism, Al-Attas provides us with two major reasons for the conversion to Shi'ism among the Sayyid community in Southeast Asia. The first reason is a general perception by the Sayyid community that the other religious and ethnic communities in the region are somehow 'backward'. Second, Khomeini, the leader of the revolution, is a Sayyid and the genealogical convergence between Shi'ism and the Sayyids in the region has attracted this group to become Shi'is.[67] The position of the Arab descendant group within the Shi'i community continues to be significant as a result of its educational experience at the heart of the Shi'i educational institution in Qum, Iran. It should be noted however that

[64] Umar Shahab, interview, (9/1/2003)

[65] The position of Husein Al-Habsyi as a Shi'i leader is focused on in Chapter Two, while his *pesantren* is described in Chapter Five.

[66] Al-Attas (1999:335)

[67] Al-Attas (1999:337-338)

while this group pioneered the sending of students to Qum, quantitatively students from other ethnic groups outnumber the Arab descendants.

B. The Qum Alumni

A very important contribution to the formation of the Shi'i community in Indonesia is the emergence of Qum graduates, namely those who pursued Islamic education in *hawza 'ilmiyya* (colleges of learning) in Qum, presently the most important centre of Shi'i Islamic education in the world. Within the Shi'i community in Indonesia the majority of renowned Shi'i *ustadh* graduated from the *hawza 'ilmiyya* of Qum. For this reason, the *ustadh* are frequently identified with the Qum alumni even though a number were actually educated in Egypt or Saudi Arabia. Among the Qum alumni are Umar Shahab and his younger brother Husein Shahab two of the most popular Shi'i figures engaged in educational and *da'wa* activities in Jakarta. They are connected with a number of Shi'i foundations in which *pengajians* (religious gatherings) are held. Another renowned figure, (although reluctant to accept his status), is Abdurrahman Bima who led the Madina Ilmu College for Islamic Studies, a tertiary educational institution located in Depok, Southern Jakarta. In Pekalongan, Central Java, Ahmad Baragbah leads a famous Shi'i *pesantren* called *Al-Hadi*. Frequently, *ustadh* who graduated from Islamic schools in other Middle Eastern countries or even intellectuals from secular universities also went to Qum to take short-term training programmes in order to obtain Islamic knowledge and establish connections with Shi'i leaders and 'ulama'. For example, Hasan Dalil who finished his undergraduate programme in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, took a three-month training programme in Qum. Even the most renowned Indonesian Shi'i intellectual Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his family stayed in Qum for a year so that he could attend learning circles and lectures conducted by ayatollahs. This illustrates the extreme importance of Islamic education in Qum among the Shi'i adherents in Indonesia.

It is unclear exactly when Indonesian students began to pursue Islamic education in Qum, but it is known that some did so several years before the Iranian revolution. They are Arab descendants who live in various parts of the Indonesian archipelago. Ali Ridho Al-Habsyi, son of Muhammad Al-Habsyi and grandson of Habib Ali Kwitang of Jakarta[68], studied in

[68] Habib Ali Al-Habsyi (1870-1968) known as Ali Kwitang was an *'alim* and leader of the Indonesian Arab community. He was the founder of the famous *Majlis Ta'lim* (meeting place of education and *da'wa*) of Kwitang. He was regarded as a *Wali* (friend of God) and his grave has become an important pilgrimage site for Jakarta's Muslims. After its founder died, the *Majlis Ta'lim* was led his son Muhammad (1911-1993) who was close to the

Qum in 1974. Six graduates of the *Pesantren Al-Khairat* of Palu, Central Sulawesi, followed over the next two years. In September 1976, Umar Shahab, an Arab descendant from Palembang, South Sumatra, and today a famous Shi'i *ustadh*, went to Qum and, he says, studied alongside seven other Indonesian students.[69] In his fieldwork in 1975, Fischer also noted the presence of Indonesian students in Qum; among the foreign students, including those from Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Lebanon, Tanzania, Turkey, Nigeria and Kashmir, Indonesians were in a minority.[70]

Since the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, interaction between its government and Indonesian Shi'i 'ulama' has intensified. The victory of the ayatollahs inspired Indonesian intellectuals and 'ulama' to study the ideological foundation of the Iranian revolution, namely Shi'ism. At the same time, an 'export of revolution' occurred, as Iranian leaders and 'ulama' aimed to spread Shi'ism in Indonesia and to attract Indonesian students to study Shi'ism in Iran. In 1982 the Iranian government sent its representatives Ayatollah Ibrahim Amini, Ayatollah Masduqi, and Hujjat al-Islam Mahmudi to Indonesia. Among their activities was a visit to YAPI (*Yayasan Pesantren Islam*, the Foundation of Islamic Pesantren) of Bangil, East Java, where they met with its leader, Husein Al-Habsyi, who became Indonesia's most important confidant to the Iranian leaders and 'ulama'. At the time, Husein Al-Habsyi was probably one of the most prominent Shi'i 'ulama' in Indonesia and played a major role in the development of Islamic *da'wa* and education. Following the meeting, Qum's *hawza 'ilmiyya* agreed to accept ten Indonesian students selected by Husein Al-Habsyi. From then on, until his death in 1994, Husein Al-Habsyi hand-picked many candidates for study at *hawza 'ilmiyya* in Qum and other cities in Iran.

As a result, among the Indonesian students who came to Qum in 1982 were graduates of YAPI. They have become renowned Shi'i *ustadh* in Indonesia. Of the original 10 students, (almost all of whom are Arab descendants), six were alumni of YAPI while four were from other educational institutions. The YAPI alumni include Muhsin Labib (Husein Al-Habsyi's step son) and Rusdi Al-Aydrus who have become Shi'i *ustadh* in Indonesia, while Husein Al-Habsyi's son, Ibrahim Al-Habsyi, continues his learning in Qum today. From outside YAPI, Ahmad Baragbah and Hasan Abu Am-

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then President Suharto and GOLKAR (*Golongan Karya*) political circles. Today it is under the leadership of Muhammad's son Abdurrahman (Abaza 2004), Ali Ridho's brother. Ali Ridho's sister, Farida Al-Habsyi is a well-known Shi'i figure who runs a number of Islamic foundations in Jakarta, including *Al-Bathul*.

[69] Umar Shahab, interview, (9/1/2003)

[70] Fischer (1980:78)

mar have become Shi'i *ustadh* in Indonesia. In the later period, graduates of YAPI and/or those recommended by Husein Al-Habsyi still predominated among the Indonesian students going to Qum. Between 1985 and 1989, Al-Habsyi sent 10 students to Qum and today most of them established or are affiliated to Shi'i foundations in Indonesia and have been recognised as important Shi'i *ustadh*.[71]

Subsequent, graduates of other Islamic educational institutions such as the *Muthahhari* Foundation and *Al-Hadi* were selected to pursue their education in Qum. This corresponds with the growing influence of the Shi'i intellectuals Jalaluddin Rakhmat and Haidar Bagir whose recommendations were now recognised in Iran. In the course of time, the educational background of the Indonesian students studying in Qum has started to diversify. While generally most students go to Qum to complete their secondary education, of late several graduates of tertiary education also intended to pursue their learning there. Among them are alumni of the *Madina Ilmu* College for Islamic Studies in Depok. We also find graduates of secular universities studying religious knowledge in Qum. One example is Mujtahid Hashem, a graduate of the technical faculty of the University of Indonesia (UI). Instead of choosing to expand his knowledge in technology, Hashem travelled to Qum in 2001 to engage in the study of religious knowledge. Whilst there, he was selected to be the general secretary of the Association of Indonesian Students in Iran (*Himpunan Pelajar Indonesia*, HPI).[72]

The number of Indonesian students studying in Qum has increased significantly. By 1990, 50 Indonesian students had reportedly completed their studies or were still studying in Qum. Ten years later the number of Qum graduates in Indonesia numbered more than a hundred. In 2001, 50

[71] They include Musyayya Ba'abud, Zahir Yahya (the leader of *Al-Kautsar* Foundation in Malang, East Java, and formerly the head of YAPI), Miqdad (the head of *Pesantren Darut Taqrib* in Jepara, Central Java), Fathoni Hadi (the founder of the *Al-Hujjah* Foundation in Jember, East Java and currently a staff at Islamic College for Advanced Studies, London-branch of Islamic higher educational institution in Jakarta), Muhammad Amin Sufyan (the head of *Samudera* Foundation in Surabaya), Abdurrahman Bima, Husein Alkaff (the adviser at *Al-Jawad* Foundation in Bandung), Herman Al-Munthahhar (the head of *Amirul Mukminin* Foundation in Pontianak, West Kalimantan), Muhammad Al-Jufri, and Abdul Aziz Al-Hinduan.

[72] *Syi'ar* (Muharram 1425/2004:31-32). This student association was established in August 2000 (http://islamalternatif.com/tentang_kami/hpi.html).

Indonesian students were selected to continue their studies in Qum,[73] and in 2004, I am informed that 90 more students were selected.[74]

In addition to the growing interest of Indonesian students in studying in Iran, the Iranian government, through ICIS - International Centre for Islamic Studies (*Markaze Jahani-e Ulume Islami*),[75]- has stepped up efforts to attract international students. Since 1994 ICIS has been under the supervision of the office of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution headed by the Grand Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, who also appointed its Director. Annually, an ICIS representative conducts a selection process at such Islamic institutions as the Islamic Cultural Centre of Jakarta and the Muthahhari Foundation in Bandung. In addition to academic achievement, Arabic is requisite, as it is an international language for Islamic learning and the language of instruction at certain *madrasa* in Qum. Upon their arrival in Iran, students are also required to follow a six-month training programme in Persian, which is the language of instruction at most of Qum's Islamic educational institutions.

There are two educational systems at the *hawza 'ilmiyya* in Qum: the traditional system, which is the most famous and influential, and the modern system. The traditional system's curriculum includes both transmitted and intellectual religious sciences: *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *usul al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence), *'ulum al-Qur'an* (sciences of the Qur'an), *'ulum al-hadith* (sciences of the Tradition), *nahw* (Arabic syntax), *sarf* (Arabic morphology), *balagha* (rhetoric), *mantiq* (logic), *hikma* (philosophy), *kalam* (theology), *tasawuf* and *'irfan* (Sufism and gnosis). Each subject has its own standard texts,[76] which are studied in *halaqat* (study circles) under the supervision of an ayatollah. The educational programme comprises three levels: *muqaddamat* (preliminary), *sutuh* (external) and *dars al-kharij* (graduation class) or *bahth al-kharij* (graduation research).[77] The three levels must be completed by every *mujtahid* (jurist), a religious scholar who has achieved the level of competence necessary to make religious decisions based on reason from the principal sources of Islam.

At the preliminary stage, which lasts from three to five years, the emphasis is to provide students with various skills in Arabic. The main subjects taught include *nahw* (Arabic syntax), *sarf* (Arabic morphology),

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[73] Ali (2002:201-204)

[74] They were classified in terms of financial support; some will receive full scholarship whilst others will receive only monthly stipends excluding airfare ticket.

[75] A brief account of ICIS can be read in: http://www.qomicis.com/english/about/history.asp.

[76] Nasr (1987:165-182)

[77] Momen (1985)

balagha (rhetoric), and *mantiq* (logic). In addition, there are some optional subjects including literature, mathematics, astronomy, and introductory *fiqh* (jurisprudence) taken from one of the *risalah 'amaliyya* (tracts on practice) of a contemporary *marja' al-taqlid* (an authoritative source in matters of Islamic law). The teaching method at this level involves groups of students getting together around a teacher who will go through the texts with them. Students are free to choose the teacher to become their instructor. Teachers at this level are usually senior students or assistants of *maraji' al-taqlid*.[78]

At the *sutuh* level, which usually lasts from three to six years, students are introduced to the substance of deductive *fiqh* (jurisprudence) and *usul al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence) on which their progress to the next and ultimate level depends. The optional subjects provided at this level are *tafsir* (Qur'an exegesis), *hadith* (Tradition), *kalam* (theology), philosophy, *'irfan* (Sufism and gnosis), history, and ethics. Generally, courses are a series of lectures based on the main texts of the two main subjects and students are free to select which lectures to attend. The students may also attend lectures in the optional subjects. Usually, teachers at this level are *mujtahid* who have just achieved the authority of *ijtihad* and are establishing their reputations.[79]

Although the subjects at the ultimate level, *dars al-kharij*, are *fiqh* and *usul al-fiqh*, the method of learning is different from that of the other two levels. Teaching is conducted by the prominent *mujtahid* who inform students of the schedule and places for their class. Students are free to choose whose class they will attend. It is usual for several hundred participants, including other *mujtahid,* to attend lectures delivered by the most prominent *mujtahid*. The dialectical method is generally implemented in the class; students are free to discuss and are encouraged to argue points with the teacher. At this stage, most students are accomplished in the skill of abstract discursive argumentation and are trained to develop their self-confidence. The culmination of the learning process is the attainment of an *ijaza* (licence) from one of the many recognised *mujtahid*. A student at this level is expected to write a treatise on *fiqh* or *usul al-fiqh* and present it to a *mujtahid* who will consider the student and the work. Based on this evaluation, the *mujtahid* will issue the *ijaza*, which authorises the student to exercise *ijtihad*.[80] In this way, students build their careers based on their relations with certain *mujtahid*-teachers.

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[78] Momen (1985:200-201), Mallat (1993:39-40)

[79] Momen (1985:200-201), Mallat (1993:40)

[80] Momen (1985:202), Mallat (1993:41-42)

When a student receives the *ijaza* that makes him a *mujtahid*, the honorific title of ayatollah (*ayat Allah*, 'sign of God') is usually bestowed upon him. An ayatollah recognised as a *marja' al-taqlid*, (meaning an authoritative source in matters of Islamic law), usually receives the title *ayatollah al-'uzma* (grand ayatollah). The usual title for an aspiring *mujtahid* is *hujjat al-Islam* (proof of Islam). The structure of Shi'i ulama is pyramidal; those of the highest level, the grand ayatollah, are the fewest in number. The traditional system of education is extremely important in Shi'i society, given the major role of *marja' al-taqlid* throughout history.

The modern *madrasa* system is a transformation of the classical system, adopting the modern system of education in terms of gradation, curriculum, classroom learning and rules. Non-traditional *madrasa* 'are set up to serve needs not supplied by the traditional system.'[81] The curriculum consists of religious and secular sciences presented through a slightly simplified version of traditional study courses. Unlike the traditional system, this modern *madrasa* system is not intended to train students to become *mujtahid,* but rather to become Islamic scholars and missionaries. This innovative type of education has provided an alternative for students who, for whatever reason, cannot follow the traditional system in the *hawza 'ilmiyya*. International students, including Indonesians, undertake this modern programme.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has made educational innovations in Qum's *hawza 'ilmiyya* through ICIS, which coordinates programmes for foreign students, assigns students to *madrasa*, and monitors their needs within the framework of disseminating Islamic knowledge and teachings globally. The *Madrasa Imam Khomeini*, for example, offers programmes based on grade systems that include undergraduate and graduate levels equivalent to the tertiary education of the modern educational system. Such innovation makes Qum's *hawza 'ilmiyya* even more leading.

Indonesian students have been through both educational systems. The first group of Indonesian students were enrolled at *Dar al-Tabligh al-Islami*, a modern Shi'i institution founded in 1965 by Ayatollah Muhammad Kazim Shari'atmadari (1904-1987).[82] *Dar al-Tabligh* was known for its foreign students and for arranging their visas and residence permits.

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[81] Fischer (1980:81)

[82] Ayatollah Muhammad Kazim Shari'atmadari (1904-1987) was known as a moderate clergyman. He was one of the *maraji' al-taqlid* in the Shi'i world in 1975, the other being Ayatollahs Khoei and Khomeini in Najaf, Gulpayegani and Mar'ashi-Najafi in Qum, Khonsari in Tehran, and Milani in Mashhad. Conducting his fieldwork in 1975, Fischer noticed mild competition and friendly rivalry among these *maraji' al-taqlid* in setting up schools, hospitals, missionary activities and other activities abroad (Fischer 1980:91).

It organised a five-year programme with a credit system[83] and a curriculum that included both religious knowledge and secular sciences such as psychology, philosophy, sociology, mathematics and English. The language of instruction was Arabic. *Dar al-Tabligh* did not follow the traditional system of learning even though it was strongly entrenched in the traditional *hawza* system.[84] Accordingly, the first group of Indonesian students in Qum followed the formal modern system of education even though they could attend classes or lectures provided by the traditional *hawza 'ilmiyya* system.

After the dissolution of *Dar al-Tabligh*[85] in 1981, owing to its leader's opposition to the concept of *wilayat al-faqih* ('mandate of the jurist') implemented by Khomeini, *Madrasa Hujjatiyya* took over the provision of the same programme for foreign students. Since 1982 nearly all Indonesian students who have gone to Iran attended *Madrasa Hujjatiyya*, including the prominent Shi'i *ustadh* Husein Shahab, who transferred to this *madrasa* after he had studied for two years at Dar al-Tabligh.[86] This *madrasa* was founded in 1946 by Ayatollah Muhammad Hujjat Kuhkamari (1892-1963) who was a student of 'Abd al-Karim Ha'iri (d. 1936), the reformer of *hawza 'ilmiyya* of Qum.[87] Unlike *Dar al-Tabligh*, the *Hujjatiyya* school follows the traditional system of education generally used in the *hawza 'ilmiyya*. The majority of Indonesian students who become Shi'i *ustadh* in Indonesia only complete the preliminary level.[88]

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[83] Fischer (1980:84)

[84] Umar Shahab, interview, (9/1/2003). *Dar al-Tabligh* also carried out a number of Islamic *da'wa* programmes such as trainings for preachers, correspondence courses on Islam, and publishing of Islamic books and journals. It had four journals. *Maktab-i Islam* (School of Islam), *Payam-i Shadi* (Glad Tidings), and *Nasl-i Naw* (New Generation) in Persian whereas *al-Hadi* (the Guide) was in Arabic. Their circulation was extensive; *Maktab-i Islam* reached a circulation of 60,000. With its circulation abroad *al-Hadi* served a link to Muslims and Islamic institutions in other countries (Fischer 1980:84).

[85] Besides his school being dissolved, Shari'atmadari himself was also declared to have been formally demoted from the rank of *marja' al-taqlid* on April 1982 (Momen1985:296).

[86] Husein Shahab, interview, (2/4/2004)

[87] Steward (2001:218)

[88] An exceptional case is Abdurrahman Al-Aydrus known as Abdurrahman Bima since he comes from Bima, Lombok. He spent nine years in Qum for religious study. After graduating from YAPI of Bangil, under the recommendation of Husein Al-Habsyi he went to Qum in 1987 and entered the *Hujjatiyya* school. After accomplishing his *muqaddamat* in 1990, he pursued the *sutuh* level. Then he completed the study of *usul al-fiqh* at the *dars al-kharij*. He was then selected to pursue his learning at Imam Sadiq Institute, founded and headed by Ayatollah Ja'far Subhani. At this institution, he majored in Islamic theology under the supervision of the prominent theologian Ayatollah Ja'far Subhani with whom he continues to maintain a good relationship. He was required to write a PhD thesis for this

The majority of Indonesian students were registered at *Madrasa Hujjatiyya*, but a small number pursued their learning at *Madrasa Mu'miniyya*, which also provided a programme for foreign students. This *madrasa* was founded in 1701 during the reign of Sultan Husayn of the Safavid dynasty. It was rebuilt by the Grand Ayatollah Shihab al-Din Mar'ashi-Najafi (d. 1991) who was known for his role in the establishment of a large library in Qum which holds a magnificent collection of books and manuscripts.[89] *Madrasa Mu'miniyya* formulated its own particular system and curriculum based on its own learning materials, rather than recognised textbooks. In contrast to the *Hujjatiyya* school, the *Mu'miniyya* school prohibited its students from attending religious lectures and study circles in the traditional *hawza* system.[90]

More recently, there has been educational reform in Qum and a large number of Indonesian students have registered at the *Madrasa Imam Khomeini*. Since 1996, this *madrasa* has been organised to become the main educational centre for international students. Established after the death of the Iranian revolution leader, *Madrasa Imam Khomeini* runs a modern system of education in terms of programmes and curriculum although it remains entrenched in the traditional character of the *hawza* system. It organises both undergraduate and graduate programmes in various fields of specialisation within the realm of religious sciences.[91]

Early Qum alumni, such as Umar Shahab, Husein Shahab, and Ahmad Baragbah, have become prominent Shi'i figures and have contributed to the development of Islamic *da'wa*, education and culture in Indonesia. Given these contributions, Qum alumni can be seen as an influential element in the formation of the Shi'i community.

C. The Campus Group

Another significant group within the Shi'i community in Indonesia came from university campuses. Although the emergence of this group is generally seen as a response to the triumph of the Iranian revolution in 1979, there are a few figures who converted to Shi'ism long before this episode. The first figure to be mentioned is Ridwan Suhud, a lecturer at

institute (Ali 2002:246-249). In 1996, Abdurrahman returned to Indonesia where he has been engaged in the field of *da'wa* and education. His activities include the directorship of Madina Ilmu College for Islamic Studies in Depok, Southern Jakarta. In 2000, he enrolled on a PhD programme at UIN in Jakarta.

[89] This is the largest library in Qum and may become an important research site for scholars. Reports on this library may be seen in *Syi'ar* (March 2003:39-40) and http://www.al-shia.com/hatml/eng/lib/lib-najafi_h.htm.

[90] Ali (2002:192-194)

[91] *Syiar* (Muharram 1425/2004:31)

ITB,[92] and appointed as a member of IJABI, the national Shi'i association in Indonesia. Another important figure was K.H. Abdullah bin Nuh (1905-1987) whose adherence to Shi'ism can be seen in the light of his family connections with Ali Ahmad Shahab - he was a maternal relative of the Shahab family. He was also a close friend of Muhammad Dhiya Shahab and Muhammad Asad Shahab. Early in his career, he worked closely with Hadrami descendants in the Dutch East Indies. Before studying in Egypt (1926-1928), both he and his brother, Abdurrahman, had been teachers at Hadramaut School in Surabaya. Later, he became a lecturer at UII in Yogyakarta (1945-1950) and at UI in Jakarta (1960-1967). Aside from being a teacher, K.H. Abdullah bin Nuh was also a journalist and a writer. As a journalist, he worked for APB and the magazines, *National Digest Press* and *Pembina*. He led the aforementioned Islamic Research Institute and its periodical, *Pembina*, for ten years (1962-1972). In this weekly magazine, he provided regular commentary on religion, discussing aspects of Islamic teachings such as Islamic jurisprudence, ethics and Sufism. He wrote a number of books on Islamic teachings, (some of which are not published), and has also translated some of al-Ghazali's works. After 1972, he devoted his life to teaching at his own Islamic foundations in Bogor, West Java - *Majlis Al-Ghazaly, Majlis Al-Ihya, Majlis Al-Husna, and Majlis Nahjus Salam* – which have proved to be influential on the Muslim community in this part of Indonesia.[93]

There has been some controversy as to whether Abdullah bin Nuh was actually a Shi'i. Indonesian Sunnis claim him as one of their own, while some Shi'is who made contact with him regard him as a Shi'i.[94] Although Abdullah bin Nuh declares himself to be a follower of *Shafi'i* jurisprudence, he frequently attended Shi'i rituals and commemorations held in the Iranian Embassy in Jakarta. He also participated in the first World Congress of Friday Imams held in Tehran in 1983.[95] Furthermore, evidence of his adherence to Shi'ism may be found in his work, *Risalah Asyura: 10 Muharam*. In it he provides a short history of Husayn bin Ali, the third Imam, and a discussion of the famous *hadith* of *thaqalayn* (literally 'two weighty matters', namely two safeguards, which commands the faithful to uphold the Qur'an and the Prophet's Household. Having described several versions of the *hadith* from the Sunni collections, Abdullah bin Nuh affirms that they are all valid. He goes on to point out that the *hadith* of *thaqalayn* clearly designates that the faithful should acknowledge

[92] Wisananingrum (2001:74)

[93] Salam (1986:85-86)

[94] Furqon Bukhari, interview, (10/9/2002)

[95] Jamaluddin Asmawi, interview, (2/10/2002)

the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad. He also cites the famous *hadith* of Ghadir Khumm in which the Prophet appointed 'Ali bin Abi Talib as his successor. Abdullah bin Nuh argues that one of the philosophical qualities of *thaqalayn* is the guarantee of salvation for Muslims because the members of his *ahl al-bayt* were the most knowledgeable about the Islamic teaching and practice.[96] He writes: "his [the Prophet Muhammad's] exhortation is not a fabricated matter but it is truly a very required necessity particularly in the period of growth and development of Islam."[97] With regard to the definition of *ahl al-bayt* in the Qur'an (the purification verse), Abdullah bin Nuh rejects the widespread Sunni view that includes the Prophet's wives. Instead he shares the view of the Shi'i 'ulama', that limits the conception of *ahl al-bayt* to 'Ali, his wife Fatima, and two sons Hasan and Husayn.[98] This interpretation of the concept of *ahl al-bayt* is completely in accordance with Shi'i interpretation, as will be shown in chapter three.

The emergence of a number of newly converted Shi'is from university campuses in the 1980s is in part a response to the victory of Iranian revolution. It does not mean however that a fascination with Ayatollah Khomeini's victory automatically results in conversion to Shi'ism. In fact, many Indonesian Muslim scholars, who followed the historical events occurring in Iran during 1978-1979 particularly through mass media[99] remain Sunni. This includes Hamka (1908-1981), a prominent modernist 'ulama' and the then general chairman of MUI (*Majlis Ulama Indonesia*,

[96] Abdullah bin Nuh (1401/1981:13-19)

[97] Abdullah bin Nuh (1401/1981:19)

[98] Abdullah bin Nuh (1401/1981:21)

[99] The events of the revolution attracted the attention of the mass media in Indonesia, particularly Muslim magazines and Muslim-led newspapers. "At the beginning, the prestige of the Iranian revolution was high in the eyes of the Muslim leaders of Indonesia, even if they were Sunni, not Shi'i" (Tamara 1986:24).

the Council of Indonesian 'Ulama'),[100] and M. Amien Rais[101]. Among

[100] Hamka (pseudonym of Haji Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah), is the only Indonesian 'ulama' to write about his views on the Iranian revolution. He pays great attention to what was happening in Iran at the time. In early 1979, for instance, his weekly magazine, *Panji Masyarakat* (the Banner of Society), provided detailed reports, combined with reflective views that basically credit and support the victory of the revolution. Hamka regards the Iranian revolution as one of the greatest historical events in the world and he relates it to the phenomenon of Islamic revival in the 15th century of the Muslim calendar. For Hamka, the Iranian revolution is parallel with other great revolutions in the world, such as the French and Russian revolutions. Hamka believes the most important value of the Iranian revolution is the success of the Iranians in fighting secularism. Initially, Hamka presented his appraisal and admiration of events to Ayatollah Ruhullah Khomeini, in his writings published in *Panji Masyarakat*. In the rubric *"Dari Hati ke Hati"* (From Heart to Heart) of the same Muslim magazine (1/3/1979), Hamka writes an interesting article, "Revolution and Evolution", in which he describes the victory of the Iranian revolution and a profile of Khomeini. This prominent modernist religious scholar emphasises how the power of Islamic faith (*iman*), strongly upheld by Khomeini, succeeded in overthrowing the powerful Shah of Iran, renowned for his powerful army and sophisticated weapons. Hamka believes that it was solid faith which made the army with modern weapons lose its power. It is clear that Hamka, despite his position as a leading Sunni *'alim,* favours the victory of Iranian revolution regardless of the fact that the revolution was based on Shi'i doctrines and that Khomeini and the majority of the Iranian population are Shi'i. However, it can be argued that Hamka's sympathetic view merely concerns the Iranian Islamic revolution, not Shi'ism.

[101] In 1979 Amien Rais wrote a column, published in *Panji Masyarakat* entitled "Avoiding Revolution" (reprinted in Rais 1987), in response to the revolution in Iran. In it he provides a theoretical outline of why a revolution takes place, pinpointing five causal factors of revolution: contradictions between the economic and political systems within a society, widening gap between the haves and the have nots, protracted financial crisis, deepening alienation of intellectuals, and arrogant, stubborn, brutal elites. In his conclusion, Rais affirms that in the Qur'an there are examples of elites being shattered by a disaffected population. He suggests that such examples should be considered valuable lessons for every nation, including Indonesia (Rais 1987:143). Even though Amien Rais barely refers specifically to the Iranian revolution in this article, his theoretical construction is clearly inspired by it. Seven years later, in April 1987, this Chicago-educated political scientist again wrote an article "Seven Years of the Iranian revolution" also published in *Panji Masyarakat*. In this long article, Rais (1987:199-218) sympathetically describes the historical processes of the Iranian revolution, beginning with the shoddiness and corruption of the Shah's regime, which was clearly vulnerable to revolution. Rais then analyses the revolutionary ideas of Iranian leaders and ideologues, namely, Khomeini, Ali Shari'ati, Ayatollah Taleqani and Ayatollah Mutahhari. This is followed by an analysis of the social and political problems faced by Iran, including the Iran-Iraq war. Important to note here is Rais's favourable view of prospects for Iran; he predicted the end to the Iran-Iraq war that would enable Iran to realise its mission. Finally, Rais is highly critical of negative views suggesting critical situations and the disintegration of Iran. Failure of the

the newly converted Shi'is were lecturers, some of whom are prominent intellectuals who have played a major role in the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. A central figure has been Jalaluddin Rakhmat,[102] a lecturer at UNPAD (*Universitas Pajajaran*, Pajajaran University) in Bandung, West Java, who established a Shi'i institution called the *Muthahhari* Foundation in 1988. This foundation has played a significant role in the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. Another Shi'i figure of note is Muchtar Adam (b. 1939) who also lectured at UNPAD and founded *Pesantren Babus Salam* in Ciburial, in the northern part of Bandung. Besides teaching and lecturing at institutions of Islamic education and *da'wa*, he has written several scholarly works. An important figure in the conversion of campus groups is Muhammad al-Baqir (Al-Habsyi) who became familiar with Shi'i teachings through Shi'i works he received from the Middle East long before the Iranian revolution. Born in Solo, 20 December 1930, Muhammad al-Baqir adheres only to certain Shi'i doctrines, however, he practices an eclectic version of Sunni and Shi'i jurisprudence.[103] In the early 1980s, al-Baqir introduced several Shi'i works to intellectuals such as Jalaluddin Rakhmat who became convinced by principal Shi'i doctrines. His most important contribution, however, is his translation of a number of Shi'i works into Indonesian, most of which are published by *Mizan* directed by his own son, Haidar Bagir. One of the most famous translations is *Dialog Sunnah Syi'ah* (Shi'i-Sunni Dialogue).[104] Before these men were banned for propagating Shi'ism, the three had been engaged in delivering religious lectures at the Salman Mosque of ITB.

Islamic Republic of Iran is not an option for Rais as this would mean a setback for the Muslim *umma* lasting for half a century or more. It should be noted that Rais does not discuss at length the importance of Shi'i doctrines in the revolution. In another article (1985), however, Rais, describes the objective conditions pertaining in Iran at the time, stating that: "the revolution itself was founded on the basis of a revolutionary ideology originating in Shi'ah Islam" (1985:37). With regard to Muslim responses to the USA and the Soviet Union, Rais again praises the Iranian revolution, which attempts to restore the self-confidence of the Iranians, freeing them from the influence of the super powers.

[102] I will deal specifically with this figure in the following chapter.

[103] Rakhmat (1997:440). Haidar Bagir notes that his father, Muhammad al-Baqir, never thinks to adhere to Sunnism or Shi'ism in the field of Qur'an exegesis, law, and Islamic thoughts in general (Bagir 2003:73). Al-Baqir's thought on jurisprudence may be found in his two volumes of *Fiqh Praktis* (Practical Jurisprudence) which contain a comparative analysis of the four Sunni schools and the *Ja'fari* jurisprudence. Al-Baqir himself emphasises that although he practices religious rituals in accordance with the Shafi'i jurisprudence, he is reluctant to join a particular Islamic group (1999:32-33)

[104] For a description of the Shi'i publication, see chapter six.

In the 1980s Indonesia's university campuses experienced a rapid 'Islamic revival'[105], which originated from the Salman Mosque. "In Java, Salman-inspired religious activities had become a conspicuous feature of campus life at virtually every major university by the early 1980s."[106] The 'Salman movement' is a puritan movement that teaches the totality of the Islamic worldview encompassing all aspects of human life, It was developed by Imaduddin Abdulrahim and heavily influenced by the ideas of Hasan al-Bana (d. 1949) of Ikhwan al-Muslimin of Egypt and Abul A'la Mawdudi (d.1979) of *Jama'at-i Islami* in Pakistan. Initially impressed with the Islamic revolution, a number of individuals, university lecturers and students, used various publications to focus discourse on Iranian Islamic revolutionary ideas. As I will show later, there was a proliferation of Shi'i works in Indonesian by such Iranian 'ulama' and intellectuals as Ali Shari'ati and Murtada Mutahhari. Some of these Indonesians studied Shi'i teachings intensively and this contributed to their conversion. In this regard, the role of such figures as Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Muchtar Adam, and Muhammad al-Baqir in the propagation of Shi'ism to students was undoubtedly significant.

Since 1980s, Shi'ism has become a new brand of Islam attracting students at Indonesia's renowned universities across the country. Campuses in Bandung, Jakarta, and Makassar (named *Ujung Pandang* during the New Order era) in South Sulawesi have become centres of Shi'ism. In Bandung, students (mainly Salman activists) from universities such as ITB and UNPAD converted to Shi'ism. The most famous is Haidar Bagir who was born in Solo, 20 February 1957, to a *Sayyid* family of Hadrami migrants. He finished his primary and secondary education at the Diponegoro Islamic school which was co-founded by his father, Muhammad al-Baqir. In 1975, Haidar Bagir entered the department of industrial technology at ITB, completing his study in 1982. During his time at ITB he became

[105] A number of Indonesian Muslim leaders have paid more attention to the Islamic revival rather than to the Iranian Islamic revolution. Collections of articles written by them can be seen in Rusydi Hamka and Iqbal E.A. Saimima (eds) n.d. But there has been no single study devoted to the phenomenon of Islamic revival in Indonesia. The same phenomenon in Malaysia was documented by Muzaffar (1987). Muzaffar points out that the Iranian revolution has two meanings for the Islamic resurgence in Malaysia. First, it proves the ability of Islam to establish a state in the modern era, at the same time answering criticisms posed by scholars or leaders who reject the idea of an Islamic state. Second, it shows that "an Islamic state has its own identity" and that the Iranian experience can be an example for Malaysia What he singles out are the facts that in Iran the imams and religious elites played a major role in the politics and administration of the state and in implementing Islamic law based the Qur'an and *hadith* (Muzaffar 1987:36-37). For the proliferation of Islamic revival among university students in Malaysia, see Anwar (1987).

[106] Hefner (1993:13)

an activist at the Salman Mosque and was also on the editorial board of *Pustaka*, an Islamic student journal pioneered by Amar Haryono, an ITB librarian.[107] Heavily influenced by the popularity of Khomeini, Haidar Bagir learned and converted to Shi'i Islam. In 1983, Haidar Bagir founded Mizan, the largest Islamic Publishing House in Indonesia, which has published a number of Shi'i books. Today, Haidar Bagir plays a major role in the spread and development of Shi'ism in the country.

Subsequent generations of university students in Bandung who converted to Shi'ism were mosque activists with close ties to Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Muchtar Adam, Muhammad al-Baqir and Haidar Bagir. A number of them are prominent Shi'i intellectuals and activists in Indonesia such as Dimitri Mahayana (a lecturer at ITB and former chairman of IJABI), Hadi Swastio (a lecturer at the Communication College and former general secretary of IJABI), and Yusuf Bakhtiar (formerly a deputy chief of Muthahhari Senior High School and currently a political activist in the National Mandate Party founded by M. Amien Rais). It is pertinent to suggest that these figures have played, and continue to play, a very important role in the promotion of Shi'ism not only in Bandung but also in the country as a whole. It is not unreasonable to claim that Bandung has been considered an important centre for the spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

The Shi'i converts from universities in Jakarta followed a similar pattern in the sense that they too were engaged in religious gatherings and campus mosque activities. These Shi'i students were found at major universities such as UI, IKIP (now UNJ, State University of Jakarta), UNAS (National University), UKI (Christian University of Indonesia), and Jayabaya University. One of them, Mulhandy from Jayabaya University, admitted converting to Shi'ism in 1983 after he and his colleagues had studied Shi'ism intensively.[108] In the 1980s, students like Mulhandy were actively engaged in religious gatherings during which discussions and lectures on Shi'i thoughts and doctrines were held. At UI, Agus Abubakar Arsal Al-Habsyi, (born in Makassar, South Sulawesi, on 6 August 1960, to a Hadrami migrant family) a Shi'i student well-known in the early 1980s, was active at the Arif Rahman Hakim Mosque of UI. In 1979 he was enrolled at the Physics Department. He cites his intensive learning of Shi'i teachings at the university, plus a familiarity with Shi'ism, (before the Iranian revolution), due to the existence of some Shi'is in a village in South Sulawesi as factors in his conversion.[109] Agus Abubakar's gained a

[107] Peeters (1998:217)

[108] *Panji Masyarakat* (513/1986:19)

[109] *Panji Masyarakat* (513/1986:20)

reputation for being a Shi'i following a debate about Shi'ism with Prof. Rasjidi (d. 2001), who at that time was the imam of Arif Rahman Hakim Mosque. As a consequence, he was forbidden to conduct religious gatherings at the mosque and dismissed from his leadership position at student organisations. However, this did not reduce his missionary zeal. Using various ways and approaches, Agus Abubakar continued to promote Shi'i teachings and convert a number of students.[110] He has been the head of the *Baitul Hikmah* Foundation located in Depok, and he has also engaged in political activities, becoming a national organiser for the Democratic Party (*Partai Demokrat*) which was co-founded by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the current President of the Indonesian Republic. Agus Abubakar is undoubtedly a significant figure in the spread of Shi'ism in Jakarta.

With the increasing number of Shi'i converts in Jakarta, study groups began to emerge. In 1989, the Shi'i students of UI founded a study group named *Abu Dzar,* coordinated by Haryanto of the Faculty of Mathematics and Science and Yussa Agustian of the faculty of Technology. One of their guides was Agus Abubakar. This study group was founded for the purpose of re-awakening Islamic thoughts and introducing Shi'i ideas to students. To achieve these goals, the group carried out discussions, training, and other religious and intellectual activities.[111] A later development of the Shi'i students at UI was an attempt to make HMI (Muslim Student Association) as vehicle for the dissemination of Shi'i thoughts. Rudy Suharto of the Faculty of Mathematics and Science, (currently editor-in-chief of *Syi'ar*, a magazine of the Islamic Cultural Centre in Jakarta), together with other student activists including Didi Hardian of the Faculty of Technology, Kukuh Sulastyoko of the Faculty of Mathematics and Science, and Syaiful Bahri of Guna Dharma university, guided by their seniors, Furqon Bukhori and Zulvan Lindan, succeeded in establishing an HMI branch in Depok. Through this organisation, the Shi'i students of UI undertook various intellectual and religious activities, until 1995 when HMI split into the pro-Shi'i group and anti-Shi'i group, (the latter being legitimated by the national leadership of HMI). In a subsequent development of Shi'ism in Jakarta, the FAHMI (Forum Alumni HMI) was established. This association of UI Shi'i alumni was founded in 1997 by Shi'i activists such as Rudy Suharto.[112]

From Jakarta, we turn to the growth of Shi'ism in Makassar, South Sulawesi, where a relatively large number of Shi'is can be found among

[110] *Syi'ar* (Muharram 1425/2004:35)
[111] *Syi'ar* (Muharram 1425/2004:35)
[112] *Syi'ar* (Muharram 1425/2004:35)

the student population. My research suggests that Shi'ism exists at almost all university campuses in Makassar, and the majority of Shi'is in this city are university alumni. This phenomenon has developed since early 1990, when a number of Shi'i activists in Makassar intensified the propagation of Shi'ism at university campuses. A leading Shi'i figure in Makassar is Surachman who headed the *Al-Islah* Foundation that provided studies and trainings on Shi'ism. As in Bandung and Jakarta, the propagation of Shi'ism in Makassar gained a certain amount of sympathy from other students associations, particularly HMI.[113] The relatively rapid development of Shi'ism in Makassar can be put down to continuous and intensive activities with regard to systematic studies on Shi'i thoughts, including inviting Shi'i religious teachers and intellectuals from Jakarta and Bandung. Intellectuals like Jalaluddin Rakhmat have frequently been invited to give religious lectures on Shi'i thoughts, philosophy and Sufism. In addition, religious teachers, (Qum alumni and others), have taught matters pertaining to Shi'i jurisprudence in this region. Along with the growing number of Shi'i converts, several foundations have been established with the purpose of propagating Shi'i teachings and thoughts. As in other cities, the pioneering propagators of Shi'ism in the area have been campus activists who used to participate in studying and discussing Islam as well as training sessions held in university mosques. This means that Shi'i teachings and thoughts are easily spread through existing networks.[114]

The Shi'is among university students in other cities in Indonesia like Palembang, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, and Malang follow similar patterns in terms of being mosque and/or student organisation activists. In the victorious Iranian revolution and the Islamic revival which followed, these young activists found Shi'i parallels with their own revolutionary ideas. This could also be related to the fact that the majority of them did not have an Islamic educational background and so had a less developed knowledge of Sunni teachings, making them more open to the ideological revolutionary teachings of Shi'ism.

In contrast, Shi'ism has not received the same attention among students at Islamic universities like UIN (State Islamic University), IAIN (State Institute for Islamic Studies) or STAIN (State College for Islamic Studies), branches of which are located in most of the provincial capitals throughout Indonesia. The 1990s saw the appearance of the so-called 'Flamboyant Shelter' an organisation which carried out intensive studies into Shi'i thoughts. It was established by students at Jakarta IAIN and

[113] *Tiras* (1996:30)

[114] See: http://rausyanfikr.tripod.com/divmks.htm

financed by Haidar Bagir.[115] However, we do not find any Shi'i converts among the students. The fact that only a handful of students from Islamic higher learning institutions became Shi'i is pertinent. In contrast to students at 'secular' universities, most students of Islamic universities arrive with a good foundation in Islamic knowledge gained in Islamic schools (*madrasa*) or *pesantren*. While Shi'i works are widely read among these students, their educational background and religious knowledge means they are not easily influenced by the Islamic revivalism on university campus. In addition, at Islamic higher learning institutions, the students continue to gain comprehensive Islamic knowledge regardless of which department they choose. The educational curriculum, contents and sources of the religious knowledge learned at Islamic higher learning institutions are mainly Sunni. That said, the Islamic renewal ideas promoted by the late Harun Nasution (1919-1998), Nurcholish Madjid (1939-2005) and others have had an impact on students at Islamic higher learning institutions. At most they take only some intellectual or philosophical aspects of Shi'ism as contained in the works of such Shi'i scholars as Ali Shari'ati, Murtada Mutahhari and Hossein Nasr. In general, there remain very few Shi'is among students and lecturers at Islamic higher learning institutions.

Interest in Shi'ism among university students corresponds to their rejection of the de-politicisation of Islam by the regime during the New Order period. The Shi'i teaching of *imamate* (leadership) may be seen as an alternative solution to this process, and in this respect most of the Shi'i converts opposed the implementation of *Pancasila* as the sole foundation. The Indonesian Muslim Students Organisation (PII) that was dissolved by the regime in 1987 and HMI MPO (*Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam Majlis Penyelamat Organisasi*, Muslim Student Association the Council of the Saviour of the Organisation) were the two Muslim student associations which most fiercely rejected the implementation of *Pancasila* as the sole foundation for all organisations in Indonesia. Rather than accepting this concept, HMI MPO has maintained Islam as its ideological foundation.[116] In fact, a number of members and leaders of HMI MPO converted to Shi'ism and are important Shi'i figures in Indonesia today, such as Zulvan Lindan and Furqon Bukhori, the current chairman of IJABI (2004-2008). These two figures are considered to have played a major role in the spread of Shi'i teachings among members of HMI. Yusuf Bakhtiar was also a leader of HMI MPO in Bandung. Saifuddin Al-Mandari, the former national chairman of HMI MPO, is also a Shi'i who migrated from Makassar to Jakarta where he has been recently affiliated to the Fitra

[115] M. Deden Ridwan, interview (25/5/2003)

[116] For an account of HMI MPO, see Karim (1997).

Foundation.[117] It seems that some leaders of HMI MPO tried to include the Shi'i principle of *imamate* (leadership) in the training activities of the organisation, emphasising the importance of Islamic leadership. This led some members of the association to study Shi'i teachings and, in turn, to adhere to Shi'ism.

D. Conversion to Shi'ism

The existence and growth of the 'traditional' Shi'i group, Qum alumni, and the university campus group are not entirely unconnected. In fact, they tried to establish contact with one another for a number of reasons, not least that it is natural to seek connection with other members of the same religious denomination. In the process of conversion to Shi'ism, intellectuals and university students tried to establish contact with Shi'i figures known to them. Individuals from the university campus group attempted to learn aspects of Shi'ism with prominent Shi'i *ustadh* among the Arab descendant community in the country. This coincided with the missionary zeal of Shi'i figures to attract new followers. This was how the close relationship between the late Husein Al-Habsyi and Jalaluddin Rakhmat developed, (Rakhmat regards Al-Habsyi as his religious teacher). The position of both the Shi'i intellectual and *ustadh* in Indonesia are associated with Husein Al-Habsyi's role. Today, most Shi'i *ustadh* – Qum alumni and non-Qum alumni – and intellectuals in Indonesia are either Al-Habsyi's students or they had a close connection with him. The relationship between the Shi'i intellectual, the university campus group and the *ustadh* has been a complex one. While all three share a common objective – the propagation of Shi'ism – and they tend to cooperate with each other in this regard, disputes have coloured their relationship.

While the 'traditional' Arab descendants, Qum alumni and the university campus group can be categorised as forming the main segment of the Shi'i community in Indonesia, within these groups there is diversity in terms of social economic status and ethnic origin. In the context of conversion to Shi'ism, these variables do not appear to be determining factors. Those who converted to Shi'ism may come from economically low or upper class society and from any ethnic origin. Moreover, we find a very small number of Shi'i converts from non-Muslim background. Also, those converts with a religious-oriented background, come from both a traditio-

[117] Al-Mandari has provided historical notes on the struggle of members and leaders of HMI MPO against the New Order regime (Al-Mandari 2003), as well as a description of discourses on social revolution among members of HMI MPO (Al-Mandari 2003a).

nalist and reformist Muslim background and from both the mainstream community or minority Muslim sects.

A notable element within the Indonesian Shi'i community is the existence of Shi'i converts from the dissident group background. That is, minority Muslim groups which the Sunni majority consider to believe and practice heterodox teachings of Islam. The dissident Muslim groups, which have spread in almost every region in Indonesia, include *Islam Jama'ah* (Islamic Congregation) that is now named LDII (*Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia*, Institute of Indonesian Islamic Propagation),[118] *Kelompok Islam Isa Bugis* (Islamic Group of Isa Bugis),[119] *Jama'ah Tabligh* (Congregation of Islamic Preaching),[120] and DI/NII (*Darul Islam/Negara Islam Indonesia*, the House of Islam/the Islamic State of Indonesia).[121] Although all these minority groups are in fact Sunni, they are considered heterodox groups that are similar to Shi'ism.

Shi'is with an *Islam Jama'ah* background are found in Jakarta, Palembang, Malang, Makassar, and other cities. A few of them used to be national or regional leaders of the religious sect, and they used this position to convert some of their followers to Shi'ism. On the whole, they continue to occupy an important position within their new group of converts despite

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[118] *Islam Jama'ah* was founded by Nurhasan Al-Ubaidah in Kediri, East Java, in the 1950s and then spread to several cities in Java, Sumatra, and other islands. Since the Jakarta Council of Indonesian 'Ulama' banned it in 1979, it has changed its name to LEMKARI (*Lembaga Karyawan Islam*) or KADIM (*Karyawan Da'wah Islam*), denying that it was simply a new association of *Islam Jama'ah* (Anwar 1989:34-35). Then it changed once more into *Lembaga Da'wah Islam Indonesia* (LDII). A description of this group can be seen in Marzani Anwar (1989:21-73). With regards to political orientation, this group fully supported Golkar, the New Order government's party.

[119] The Islamic Group, *Isa Bugis* first emerged in Sukabumi in the 1960s and has since spread to other areas such as Bandar Harapan in Central Lampung. As its name suggests, it is founded by Isa Bugis from Aceh. Its major concern of Isa Bugis is the study of verses of the Qur'an which are said to be based on the view of the Prophet Muhammad. These verses are then related to empirical reality (Afif HM 1989:75-140). This group used to attract some followers from HMI who called their activity Qur'anic studies.

[120] *Jama'ah Tabligh* was founded in India by Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas in 1930 and is thought to have come to Indonesia in 1952. It has spread throughout the country in both urban and rural areas. Azra (2002:42-43) provides a short description of this movement in Indonesia.

[121] A number of studies on the *Darul Islam* movement have been conducted, but the most comprehensive one is van Dijk's (1981). The division that is most noticed recently has been KW IX (Regional Command IX) led by Abu Toto, frequently associated with Syeikh Panji Gumilang, the founder of the luxurious *Pesantren Al-Zaytun* in Indramayu, West Java. One of my Shi'i informants in Sukabumi, a former member of NII, suggests that Abu Toto and Panji Gumilang are the same person so *Al-Zaytun* is an educational centre of NII. This can also be seen in Al-Chaidar (2000) and Umar Abduh (2001).

being dismissed from the original sect. Another important element in Indonesia's Shi'i community comes from the DI/NII movement. It appears that a large number of Shi'is in the regions of West Java today are former members of this movement, particularly from areas within the Regional Command IX led by Abu Toto. They are scattered in cities and towns including Bandung, Cianjur, Sukabumi, Garut, Serang, and Tangerang. Slightly less in number are former members of *Jama'ah Tabligh* who can be found in Jakarta, Makassar, and other places in Java. The final element is, as Syamsuri Ali observes, former members of the *Isa Bugis* group that may be found in Jakarta.[122]

Conversion occurs when a person or group finds a more reasonable and correct set of religious teachings. The term religious conversion is a complex phenomenon, which involves both intellectual and emotional aspects. Based on Rambo's classification,[123] the conversion from Sunnism to Shi'ism can, to a certain degree, be classified as institutional transition. This involves the change of an individual or a group from one community to another within a major tradition, in this case the change of an individual or a group from the Sunni community to the Shi'i community within Islam. This interdenominational transformation may be called 'internal conversion'. It should be noted that there is no rite of conversion from Sunnism to Shi'ism, unlike the conversion from non-believing to Islam where one has to utter the confession of faith, "there is no god but God and Muhammad is the apostle of God".

The above description of elements within the Shi'i community in Indonesia, pinpoints three interconnected modes of conversion: The first is through education in its broad sense, namely the transfer of knowledge and values. Second, conversion to Shi'ism may take place through kinship and friendship. The third mode is through the reading of Islamic literature. The conversion to Shi'ism by the Arab descendants before the Iranian revolution may be included in the first two modes, but these modes characterise the conversion process among other groups as well. Education has become a very important means of conversion to Shi'ism.

After the Iranian revolution, a number of Shi'i *ustadh* from the *Sayyid* group continue to propagate Shi'i Islam to the Muslim population through traditional Islamic educational institutions. While the majority of *pesantren* play a major role in the maintenance of traditional Sunni ideology (Dhofier 1999), a few also exist which promote Shi'i teachings. This results from the fact that the founders and leaders of *pesantren* tend to

[122] Ali (2002:456)

[123] Rambo (1993:12-14)

be relatively autonomous in organising curriculum contents and teaching materials for students. This autonomy provides an opportunity for a Shi'i religious teacher to found and manage his Islamic educational institution and to inculcate his religious ideology. The most notable example was Husein Al-Habsyi, who attracted followers through his institution YAPI. In some respect he was able to connect the 'traditional' Shi'i group with those who converted after the Iranian revolution. A number of relatives and descendants of 'traditional' Shi'is studied with Husein Al-Habsyi at YAPI, a place which provided Shi'i books and religious guidance. Many of them converted to Shi'ism during their studies at YAPI, and over the course of time, a great number of YAPI alumni have become Shi'i *ustadh,* disseminating Shi'i teachings all over Indonesia. As described above, some have pursued their Islamic learning in Qum and returned as famous *ustadh*. This has revealed a mode of conversion to Shi'ism through *pesantren*. (The conversion during their study in Qum that was experienced by some students is also included in this mode).

While the conversion to Shi'ism among the university campus group more commonly occurs through non-formal Islamic education and self-study, the mode of conversion in *pesantren* has been heavily dependent on the leader of the *pesantren* who introduced Shi'i teachings, gave instructions, and provided reading materials to students who might not otherwise have acknowledged the Shi'i teachings. Unlike the university students who spend the majority of their time learning 'secular' sciences, the *pesantren* students dedicate themselves to gaining Islamic knowledge, and so generally have a more comprehensive knowledge of Islam and Shi'ism. In the residential *pesantren* they not only learn Shi'ism but also practice its teachings in daily life. Despite *pesantren* students receiving stimuli, explanations and guidance from the teacher, just as the university students, their conversion process also requires reading activity.

Conversion to Shi'ism frequently occurs through kinship, namely by blood, by marriage and through friendship. It is common for Shi'is to inculcate Shi'i teachings to their children, and where possible to other relatives and friends. We have previously described how descendants of Indonesian Arab figures have maintained the continuity of their adherence to Shi'ism. Several kin of Husein Al-Habsyi have also become important Shi'i *ustadh* in Indonesia. As for marriage, it is often recommended that a young man seek a Sunni woman to marry for the purpose of increasing Shi'i numbers. This mode of conversion tends to interconnect with the other modes.

According to Woodberry, there have been two ways of conversion to Shi'ism: individual conversion and collective conversion.[124] The conversion to Shi'ism among the intellectuals, university and *pesantren* students tends to be individual while conversion among dissident groups tends to be collective, in the sense that a group of people follow the step of their mentor. Regarding individual conversion among university students and intellectuals, the important modes are through the reading of Shi'i books and participating in discussions at educational institutions. Conversion among the dissident groups frequently occurs as a result of debate between Shi'i figures and mentors of the dissident groups on essential doctrines within Islam such as *imamate.* Ali writes: "but conceptually their belief is defeated by arguments of the Shi'i concept of imamate so that their defeat in the conceptual matter has made them pleasantly convert from the former *madhhab* to the Shi'i *madhhab*."[125]

It is generally agreed that it is the intellectual and philosophical aspects of Shi'ism which first attract the converts in Indonesia. It is even common for some university students and intellectuals only to be interested in the intellectual and doctrinal aspects of Shi'ism, but in the course of time they are labelled as Shi'is despite being ignorant of the true teachings of Shi'ism. In this regard, Rakhmat states:

> The majority of people sympathetic to Shi'ism came from university. Most of them were also attracted to Shi'ism as an alternative for the existing Islamic thoughts. At the time, when many people were interested in for instance critical theory, in Neo-Marxist group, some of the Muslims found a similar matter in Shi'i thoughts, like Ali Shari'ati's. Such 'left' concepts as the oppressed, pedagogy of the oppressed, or corrupt structure, has a similarity, in Islam, with the term *mustad'afin* [the Oppressed], with the mission of the prophets to fight against the tyrants. And those who clearly present the matter are Shi'i thinkers.... But later, from Ali Shari'ati they entered into deeper thoughts.[126]

As previously mentioned, and closely related to this quotation, the Shi'i conception of *imamate* is the doctrine that has been most responsible for attracting university students, intellectuals, and members of dissident groups to Shi'ism. *Imamate* becomes an important topic in discussions and training carried out in *usrah* circles, HMI, and dissident groups. *Imamate* within Sunni Islam is not as crucial as *imamate* in Shi'ism[127] so students

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[124] Woodberry (1992:23)

[125] Ali (2002:456)

[126] Rakhmat (1997:443)

[127] Fuad Amsyari (1993), a lecturer at the Faculty of Medical Science, Air Langga University, the chairman of Al-Falah Muslim Intellectual in Surabaya, and influential in *usrah* circles, explains the necessity of *imamate* for Muslims in Indonesia, maintaining that

and intellectuals must turn to Shi'i books to find comprehensive accounts of this doctrine. This doctrine is legitimated by the fact that Khomeini can be regarded as an Islamic leader, representative of Imam, whose revolution succeeded in overthrowing the oppressive regime. *Imamate* is also very crucial to and strongly upheld within the teachings of some dissident groups, particularly *Islam Jama'ah* and NII. Converts from these groups admit that a reason for becoming Shi'i is because they find the doctrine of *imamate* to be more correct and authoritative in Shi'ism than in their former teachings. To give an example, Muhammad Nuh, (65 years old), told me that he used to be the regional leader of *Islam Jama'ah* in South Sumatra, Lampung and Bengkulu and active in the propagation of its teachings in the regions. His conversion to Shi'ism took place after participating in discussions on *imamate* with Shi'i *ustadh* in Palembang, including the afore-mentioned Qum alumnus Umar Shahab. Muhammad Nuh explained that he has accepted the Shi'i view of *imamate* as being in accordance with Bukhari's *al-Sahih,* the most authoritative Sunni *hadith* collection and also the primary source of the doctrine of *imamate* in *Islam Jama'ah,* (the concept of *imarah* is frequently used in the same meaning. At the same time, Nuh is aware that the teaching of imamate in *Islam Jama'ah* is intentionally manipulated by the founder of the group for his own personal purposes. Other Shi'i ex-leaders of *Islam Jama'ah* from other regions share similar views. The same holds true for Shi'is ex-members of NII who also uphold the doctrine of *imamate* and this corresponds with the fact that the leader of the *Darul Islam* movement is usually considered Imam.[128]

Those who are interested in the doctrinal and intellectual aspects of Shi'ism but continue to practice Sunni jurisprudence cannot be characterised as being converts in the general sense. To be considered Shi'i, one needs to follow the code of conduct as outlined in *Ja'fari* jurisprudence. According to Jalaluddin Rakhmat, when converts did make the shift in orientation from intellectual and doctrinal aspects to jurisprudence, it occurred for political reasons and as a reaction to slander and attack from Sunnis, particularly in publications promoted by Saudi Arabia.[129] In Rakhmat's observation, the main motivation of this Shi'i group for learning jurisprudence is to prove the invalidity of anti-Shi'i views. I was also told

it does not specifically belong to the Shi'i doctrine but that it is strongly based on Sunni sources. According to Amsyari, Muslims who do not comprehend the totality of Islamic teachings (*kaffah*), have neglected the Islamic teaching on *imamate*.

[128] According to the constitution of the Islamic State of Indonesia, *Qanun Asasi*, (article 12, clause 1), "the head of state was the *Imam*, who must be a native Indonesian, of the Muslim faith, and faithful to God and His Prophet" (van Dijk 1981:93). A comprehensive account of this constitution can be found in van Dijk's book (1981:93-97).

[129] Rakhmat (1997:445)

that people who had not previously considered themselves as Shi'i were motivated to learn every aspect of Shi'ism due to being labelled as Shi'i followers by anti-Shi'i groups. With some inevitability, these people go on to become true followers of Shi'ism by practicing almost all aspects of Shi'i jurisprudence. It is important to note that others attempted to understand Shi'I jurisprudence for religious reasons, namely for the purpose of appropriately practicing Shi'i rituals in daily life according to *Ja'fari* jurisprudence. In this regard, the return to Indonesia of the Qum alumni has been fortuitous. Educated at the *hawza 'ilmiyya* of Qum, and now religious teachers able to give instruction on this particular issue, they now established relations with the university campus group of Shi'is.

For converts, Shi'i Islam is more reasonable and correct than the Sunni Islam they once adhered to. They tend to perceive positively both Shi'ism as a set of religious doctrines and the Shi'is as a historical reality, united in an integrated religious system. Zainuddin and his colleagues,[130] offer several perceptions on this minority school of Islam as an explanation for why they converted to Shi'ism. First, with regard to the Shi'i doctrine of justice that is closely related to the doctrine of *imamate*, the Shi'is found this doctrine appropriate in their struggles against the authoritarian regime and in the establishment of a just government. Second, they believe the position of *'aql* (reason) to be much stronger in Shi'ism than in Sunnism. The Shi'i teachings are considered to have provided more opportunities and motivations to use *'aql* in developing various fields of knowledge. Third, they point to the continued development of knowledge, thought and philosophy since the early history of Shi'ism, marked by the emergence of Imams and 'ulama' opposing the oppressive regimes, the religious view on the necessity of *ijtihad* (serious efforts to formulate religious law), and the dominant position of philosophical tradition. Fourth, they highlight the reality of modern Indonesian society and the emergence of unqualified 'ulama' and religious teachers, in contrast to the Shi'i 'ulama', particularly in Iran and those occupying the position of *marja' al-taqlid*, who are selected on the basis of their moral conduct and intellectual achievement. Fifth, they believe that anti-Shi'i views and judgements on Shi'ism are frequently slanderous and speculative and are not based on the true teachings of Shi'ism and historical facts.

Viewed from these perspectives, and taking into account the social and psychological characteristics of converts and the social-political context of Indonesian society, conversion to Shi'ism can be seen as a protest against the political regime and the religious establishment. Converts ac-

[130] Zainuddin *et al.* (2000:97-103)

cept Shi'ism because they found "the anti-government aspect of Shi'ism and its struggle against oppression and tyranny appealing."[131] In other words, Shi'ism is seen as the religion of protest while Sunnism, more often than not, tends to legitimise the political regime. With less emphasis on *'aql* and the emergence of unqualified religious authorities, Sunnism is no longer seen as an ideal *madhhab* able to provide solutions to social and political problems or guidance in spiritual and intellectual quests.

Conversion to Shi'ism continues albeit at a slow rate. Shi'i institutions have been established and various methods are implemented in order to promote this minority *madhhab*. Within the social and political context of Indonesian society under the leadership of the New Order government, the origins of the Shi'i community lie at the end of the 19th century, at a time of intense Islamic reform, and they culminate with the victorious Iranian revolution of 1979. Different groups have emerged, the main ones being the 'traditional' group, Qum alumni, and the campus group. In terms of ethnic identity, two major groups are present - Arab descendants and indigenous Indonesians. Viewed from the perspective of history and the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia, the Arab descendant-indigenous divide has, to a certain extent, been factual although classification based on ethnicity may result in ethnic stereotyping. To sum up, three groups have played a major role in the formation of the Shi'i community in Indonesia and from these groups emerged prominent figures, who were - and still are - considered to be leaders of the community, and the religious elites who have played a major role in the development of the Shi'i community in Indonesia. This will be described in the next chapter.

[131] Nakash (1994:45)

CHAPTER TWO

LEADERS

Currently there is no single person that is recognised as a leader by all of the Shi'i groups in Indonesia. This lack of a central figure originates, in part, in the formation and development of the Shi'i community in Indonesia as described in the previous chapter. Indonesian Shi'i leaders can be classified into two groups: *ustadh* and intellectual. This classification corresponds with the divide between 'ulama' and intellectual in the Muslim world in general and in the history of Indonesian Islam in particular. The first group, namely the *ustadh* or 'ulama', (also known by various popular terms including *kyai* in Central and East Java, *ajengan* in West Java, *tengku* in Aceh, and *tuan guru* in some parts of Sumatra, Kalimantan and Lombok), are, on the whole, products of traditional Islamic educational institutions. The 'intellectual' group on the other hand graduated from secular universities. The position of both groups has been discussed by scholars such as Steenbrink[1]. The divide between the two, and more specifically attempts to bridge the gap between them in terms of knowledge and leadership, has been of great concern to Indonesian Muslim intellectuals. In this chapter I will examine the general characteristics of both groups. This is followed by a look at the roles of Husein Al-Habsyi and Husein Shahab as *ustadh* and that of Jalaluddin Rakhmat as the most prominent Shi'i intellectual. The portrait focuses on apparent determinants of leadership namely educational background, profession, leadership experience, and scholarship.

A. *Ustadh* and Intellectual

Traditionally the term *ustadh* (*ustadz* in Indonesian) means religious teacher. It commonly denotes those who teach religious knowledge in traditional institutions of Islamic learning (*pesantren*), formal Islamic schools (*madrasa*) or at religious gatherings (*pengajian*). For Indonesian Muslims,

[1] Steenbrink (1985)

and within the leadership structure of *pesantren,* the term *ustadh* usually refers to teachers who are yet to achieve the higher position of '*ulama*' (namely become men of religious learning and prestige[2]) or *kyai* (the leader of *pesantren)*. The position of *ustadh* remains firmly below that of *kyai* in this hierarchy. Among the Shi'is in Indonesia, however, the term *ustadh* denotes both leaders of Shi'i institutions and religious teachers. In fact, the term has been increasingly used to refer to 'ulama' and leaders of certain groups of Muslim society in Indonesia. A case in point is Husein Al-Habsyi, a Shi'i *ustadh* who has achieved the status of ulama.

It is quite possible that the growing tendency to use the term *ustadh* is due to the considerable influence of Arab descendants on the religious, educational and cultural aspects of the Shi'i community. This tendency can also be seen in the so-called 'scripturalist' segment of the Indonesian Muslim community which is experiencing an increasing 'Arabisation'. In communications, scripturalists prefer to use the term *ustadh* in its original Arabic form, meaning 'ulama' rather than the local term *kyai*. This can be disadvantageous from the perspective of international Shi'i intellectual tradition, as the term indicates that the education of Indonesian Shi'i leaders and scholars is not to the same standard of other qualified scholars. The term *ustadh* suggests that the teacher has not achieved the position of *mujtahid* (independent legist) or *marja' al-taqlid* (source of emulation). So in the field of jurisprudence, the *ustadh* in Indonesia become *muqallid* (followers) of certain *marja' al-taqlid* in Iran or Iraq. Nevertheless, the *ustadh* enjoys a prestigious status in the Shi'i community in the country.

Shi'i *ustadh* have two general characteristics of note. First, their education usually takes place at institutions of Islamic learning where various branches of Islamic knowledge are taught. This means that the person is considered to have gained a basic level of Islamic knowledge. Several Shi'i *ustadh* in Indonesia studied at *pesantren* and then went on to pursue their studies at institutions of Islamic learning in the Middle East, namely at *hawza 'ilmiyya* in Qum. A small number of Shi'i *ustadh* - the most prominent of all - pursued their learning at other tertiary institutions in Indonesia or abroad. On the whole this is because their education in Qum only reached the *muqaddamat* (introductory) level. A number of *ustadh* entered the State Islamic University in Jakarta. Among them were Umar Shahab, Abdurrahman Bima, Muhsin Labib, and Khalid Al-Walid who pursued doctorates at this university. We should emphasise that generally the Shi'i *ustadh* specialise in Islamic studies in the classical meaning of the term. This is evident from their involvement in the field of Islamic *da'wa*

[2] Humphrey (1991:187)

and education, which requires a broad understanding of Islam in order to gain or maintain the recognition of their prestigious position in the community. In a nutshell, further education in the field of religious knowledge contributes to establishing and increasing the prominent position of the Shi'i *ustadh* in the community. It should be noted however, that the field of specialisation chosen by this group is different from that taken by the Shi'i intellectual in Indonesia.

Second, the *ustadh* devote themselves to the field of *da'wa* and educational activities at institutions of Islamic learning. Many established and led their own institution. Some affiliated themselves to several Islamic institutions. Their main profession is religious teacher or spiritual guide for the *jama'a* of the Islamic institutions. Only the heads of such institutions receive a regular salary, while the *ustadh* are paid for *da'wa* activities. Most of them rely on endowments or payments from the institutions and their *jama'a* for their living. The *ustadh* are well-respected and they enjoy close relations with the *jama'a* who follow their instruction and guidance.

Like the *ustadh*, the intellectual has a respected position within the community. In every day life, the intellectual is also given the title '*ustadh*' as a sign of honour. "The intellectuals are the aggregate of persons in any society who employ in their communication and expression, with relatively higher frequency than most other members of their society, symbols of general scope and abstract reference, concerning man, society, nature and cosmos".[3] This concept of the intellectual corresponds with the characteristics of Shi'i leaders.

Shi'i intellectuals can be distinguished from the *ustadh* in a number of ways: First, their educational backgrounds differ. On the whole, intellectuals are graduates of 'secular' universities who were trained in various fields of secular sciences. Some prominent intellectuals graduated from renowned universities in Indonesia and in other countries. Jalaluddin Rakhmat completed his tertiary education in Communications at the Padjadjaran University and got his Masters in Science, (also in Communications), at Iowa State University in the US. He then enrolled at the Australian National University to study political science; however he never finished his course. Haidar Bagir completed his industrial technology degree at Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) and his Masters in Philosophy at Harvard University. He is currently writing his PhD thesis on philosophy at UI. Hadi Swastio completed his PhD at a university in the UK. Dimitri Mahayana completed an engineering degree at ITB, a Masters at Waseda University in Japan, and then returned to ITB for a

[3] Shils (1968:399)

PhD in electrical engineering. These intellectuals never received religious education or learned about Shi'ism at any formal Islamic institutions in Indonesia or abroad. On the whole, they studied and converted to Shi'i Islam while students or on graduation from university, where they were active in religious circles and attended lectures at campus mosques or in other Islamic institutions. In other words, their religious knowledge was gained through non-formal education and training carried out in mosques or Islamic *da'wa* institutions. In addition, they gained Islamic knowledge through books and periodicals. As a consequence, they are considered less qualified than the *ustadh* in terms of traditional Islamic knowledge.

Second, the Shi'i intellectuals generally earn their livings in fields independent of the Shi'i community; they lecture at universities and educational institutions and/or are engaged with social, cultural and business institutions. For instance, Jalaluddin Rakhmat is a professor of Communications at Universitas Pajajaran (UNPAD) and head of the *Muthahhari* Foundation, Haidar Bagir is director of the Mizan Publishing House and affiliated with several social and educational institutions, Dimitri Mahayana is a lecturer at ITB, and Hadi Swastio is a lecturer at the College of Telecommunication Science. All these institutions are located in Bandung, West Java. As lecturers or businessmen, the intellectuals, with certain exceptions, never play the role of religious teacher, preacher, or guide in the Shi'i community; they neither lead nor deliver sermons at Shi'i rituals. For these reasons, their connection with the *jama'a* is not as close as the connection between the *ustadh* and *jama'a*. Instead, they build their important and respected position in the community through their strong commitment and contributions - material assistance, strategic insights, and critical thoughts – to establishing the Shi'i community.

We find a small number of intellectuals within the Shi'i community who also take part in religious instruction and guidance. A case in point is Jalaluddin Rakhmat. While generally known as an influential Shi'i intellectual in Indonesia, his activities as both an academic and a religious figure mean that he is actually positioned more as an intellectual-*ustadh* figure.

B. Husein Al-Habsyi (1921-1994)

Husein Al-Habsyi[4] was the most widely recognised leader to play a great role in the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. During his life, his

[4] A study on the biography and role of Husein Al-Habsyi has been published in *Studia Islamika* (Zulkifli 2004).

leadership was recognised by all Shi'i groups within the community. Following his death in 1994, this position has, so far, not been filled by any current Indonesian Shi'i *ustadh* or intellectuals.

Husein Al-Habsyi, or al-Ustadh al-Habib al-Shaykh Husayn bin Abi Bakr al-Habshi as his student Muhsin Husein[5] wrote in an article published in *Al-Isyraq*, (a magazine that belonged to Husein Al-Habsyi's Islamic educational institution), became one of the most famous Indonesian Shi'i 'ulama' after the Iranian Islamic revolution of 1978-1979. This name should not be confused with Husein bin Ali Al-Habsyi, the current President of *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* (Muslim Brotherhood) of Indonesia. Born in Surabaya, 21 April 1921, Husein Al-Habsyi is the second son of an *Sayyid* Arab family. Very little is known about his parents' life. It is said that his father passed away when he was six years old, and so Husein Al-Habsyi went to live with his maternal uncle, Muhammad bin Salim Baraja, a prominent *'alim*, and the then President of the *Hadramawt* school in Surabaya. He had also been an editor of the twice-monthly magazine *al-Iqbal* in the same city. Baraja had strong links with the aforementioned Shi'i figure Abu Bakr bin Shahab.[6] In short, Husein Al-Habsyi was brought up in a religious environment.

Husein Al-Habsyi began his formal education in a well-known Islamic school named *Madrasa Al-Khairiyya*, one of the oldest and most famous Islamic schools in Surabaya, East Java, co-founded by the Shi'i *'alim* Muhammad al-Muhdar. We are told that, at the age of 10 Husein Al-Habsyi was an active participant in religious gatherings, which provided him with instruction in several branches of Islamic knowledge including *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *'aqida* (Islamic doctrine), and *akhlaq* (ethics). At the age of twelve he was said to have been capable of reading such Arabic books as al-Ghazali's *Ihya 'Ulum al-Din* (the Revival of Religious Sciences), one of the most famous ethics and Sufi texts used in Islamic learning in Indonesia.[7] However, there is no complete information about who his teachers were during this period of Islamic education in Surabaya. Reports from his sons and students suggest that, besides his maternal uncle, Husein Al-Habsyi has been influenced by other 'ulama' of Hadrami descendants, including Muhammad Baabud, Abdulqadir Bilfaqih, and Abubakar Asseggaf of Gresik.[8] He also studied with the Moroccan religious scholars Muhammad Muntasir al-Kattani and the Palestinian teacher Muhammad

[5] Muhsin Husen (1997)

[6] Feitag (2003:264)

[7] Bukhori (n.d:10, *Dialog Jumat* 28/5/2004)

[8] Muhsin Husein (1997:3).

Raba'a Hasuna at the *Al-Khairiyya* school, which also hired some religious teachers from Hadramaut, Yemen.

Husein Al-Habsyi's Islamic knowledge was also garnered from institutions abroad. Together with his brother Ali Al-Habsyi, Husein Al-Habsyi went to pursue his Islamic learning in Johor, Malaysia. One influential teacher there was Habib Alwi bin Tahir al-Haddad, the then *mufti* of the Johor Sultanate (1939-1961).[9] In Johor, Husein Al-Habsyi also taught at *Al-Attas* school for a long period of time. His students came from various regions in Malaysia, and some of them were said to have become prominent 'ulama'. It is also reported that he visited Hadramaut for Islamic education before he moved to Saudi Arabia where he stayed for about two years. Husein Al-Habsyi then spent a further year in Najaf, Iraq pursuing his Islamic studies with eminent 'ulama' including Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakim (d.1970).[10] He returned to Malaysia and married his uncle's daughter, Fatima bint Abdurrahman Al-Habsyi, with whom he had several children. After living in Malaysia for several years, Husein Al-Habsyi took his family back to his hometown of Surabaya, where he engaged in Islamic missionary and educational activities.[11]

Husein Al-Habsyi's cultural capital, namely valuable information and educational qualifications,[12] enabled him to establish his position as an important religious scholar and teacher within the Muslim community. With the Islamic knowledge he had acquired in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Middle East, he could become an important *ustadh* at Islamic schools. Moreover, his teaching profession had commenced at an early age, while he was still a student. When he was just 15 years old, he spent two years (1936-1938) teaching at his alma mater, the *Al-Khairiyya* school.[13]

There is also a period in Husein Al-Habsyi's life in which he was politically active. In his thirties, he joined Masyumi (*Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia*, Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims), the largest Muslim party during the Old Order era,(1945-1965). Through this membership, he became acquainted not only with influential Masyumi leaders such as Mohammad Natsir (d. 1993), Kasman Singadimedjo, and

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[9] Alwi Tahir al-Haddad (1884-1962) was a Sayyid *'alim* and leader in the Dutch East Indies before he was appointed as the *mufti* of Johor Sultanate in 1939. He also wrote several books on history, jurisprudence, and doctrine.

[10] Beik (1997:14)

[11] Panitia (n.d:1)

[12] Bourdieu (1986). It refers to "cultural knowledge as a resource of power used by individuals and social groups to improve their position within the social class structure" (Joppke 1986:57).

[13] Zamzami (1999:4)

Sjafruddin Prawiranegara (d. 1989) but also with other political leaders in Indonesia. Husein Al-Habsyi was selected to be a member of *Konstituante* (the Constituent Assembly) in the eighth Masyumi conference in Bandung from 22 to 29 December 1956. Within the Constituent Assembly he was appointed head of the Human Rights Commission.[14]Like the majority of Masyumi leaders, Husein Al-Habsyi was known to have had a very negative attitude towards the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party). This is indicated by the fact that in 1954 Husein Al-Habsyi participated in the establishment of *Front Anti Komunis* (Anti-Communist Front),[15] which was meant to prevent the spread of the communist movement in the Old Order period.[16]

Husein Al-Habsyi's involvement in the political arena did not last long. There were several reasons for this, the most important being that Masyumi was banned by the then President Sukarno in August 1960 as a result of the party's opposition to Sukarno and his guided democracy. Masyumi has also become involved with the PRRI (the Revolutionary Government of Indonesian Republic).[17] Disillusioned with the political development after the break up of the Masyumi, Husein Al-Habsyi ceased from all political activities until his death, devoting himself instead to the field of Islamic education and *da'wa*. For Husein Al-Habsyi, the development of Islam simply could not be achieved through the political practice; he believed it could only succeed through education. Al-Habsyi's sea-change is particularly significant in the context of Indonesia's New Order era, (beginning in 1966), a period which implemented the de-politicisation of Islam. We should bear in mind however that Husein Al-Habsyi's political experiences clearly had an impact on his later position as a Shi'i *ustadh*; he gained important social capital by maintaining good connections with retired political leaders such as Natsir. [18]

Husein Al-Habsyi returned to his position as an *ustadh* at *Al-Khairiyya* school in Surabaya, where he engaged in instructing students and developing the Islamic school. His career progressed not only because of his commitment to Islamic education but also due to his comprehensive religious

[14] Panitia (n.d:1)

[15] *Front Anti Komunis* was a radical wing of Masyumi established in September 1954 and supported by leaders of Masyumi in Java, Sumatra and Sulawesi. Its chairman was Isa Anshary, the then chairman of Masyumi branch of West Java (Campton 1995:41).

[16] Zamzami (1999:6)

[17] Ricklefs (2001:325)

[18] "Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition..." **(Bourdieu 1986:248).**

knowledge, managerial capabilities and his social connections. As a result he was entrusted to become head of a branch of *Al-Khairiyya* located in Bondowoso, East Java.[19] He led this Islamic school for several years. During this period, Husein Al-Habsyi's worldview was said to have been strongly influenced by the ideology of *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* of Egypt, an organisation founded by Hassan al-Banna (d. 1949). The banning of Masyumi and the de-politicisation of Islam under the Suharto regime caused many Masyumi leaders to turn to the ideology of *Ikhwan al-Muslimin*.[20] Husein Al-Habsyi became a follower of the so-called fundamentalist movement and established links with its prominent leaders and other high-ranking 'ulama' in the Middle East such as Yusuf Qaradawi (b.1926) and Muhammad Ghazali. He travelled to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, Libya, Iraq and Iran to meet with these figures and to collect donations, (from individuals and Islamic organisations), for the development of Islamic education in *Al-Khairiyya* and the Muslim community at large.[21] Husein Al-Habsyi attempted to implement the ideology of *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* and his negative attitude towards secularism and Western worldviews in the educational system of *Al-Khairiyya.* However, the strict discipline and rules that had to be obeyed by the students and teachers at the Islamic school resulted in the majority of the staff rejecting this fundamentalist approach. Consequently a conflict ensued between Husein Al-Habsyi and the *madrasa* teachers as well as the *Sayyid* 'ulama' in Bondowoso. He was forced to leave *Al-Khairiyya* and Bondowoso for Bangil, but many of the qualified students, sympathetic to his ideas, followed him.[22]

In 1976, Husein Al-Habsyi founded his Islamic educational institution called YAPI (*Yayasan Pesantren Islam*, Foundation of Islamic Pesantren) in Bangil. This *pesantren* has become an important centre of Islamic learning for the Shi'is in Indonesia. As a learned man with a comprehensive understanding of various branches of Islamic knowledge Husein Al-Habsyi himself formulated the educational programme of the institution. The YAPI principles and approaches to Islamic education followed the *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* model, which combined strict discipline and rules with a strong anti-western attitude. Husein Al-Habsyi considered this to be the best model for achieving his Islamic educational ideals. He believed that an Islamic institution of learning should be free from all western worldviews and secularism. As the leader of the institution responsible for its development and progress Husein Al-Habsyi not only managed the institution

[19] *Dialog Jumat* (28/5/2004)

[20] Van Bruinessen (2002:125)

[21] Muhsin Husein (1997:5)

[22] Muhsin Husein (1997:5)

but he also carried out instruction in several fields of Islamic knowledge, particularly Arabic, *tafsir* (Qur'an exegesis), and *usul al-fiqh* (principles of Islamic jurisprudence). In addition, Al-Habsyi was also proactive in the formation of cadres. He believed this to be an essential part of the framework for establishing and reviving religious and missionary zeal among students so that they would engage in the struggle for Islam and the Muslim *umma*.[23] Over the course of time, YAPI and its leader have become increasingly recognised by 'ulama' not only in Indonesia but also in the Middle East.

Husein Al-Habsyi's struggle in the field of religious education was relatively successful. Under his leadership, this *pesantren* has become the most famous Shi'i educational institution in Indonesia. This is evident from the fact that a number of YAPI alumni were able to pursue their education in countries such as Iran, India, Pakistan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Qatar.[24] This is due to their high standards in Arabic and in the fields of Islamic knowledge as well as the links established with 'ulama' in these countries by Husein Al-Habsyi. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Husein Al-Habsyi was responsible for selecting students to study in Qum, Iran, and until his death on the 14th of January 1994, he was the most important confidant of Iranian leaders and 'ulama' with respect to the development of Shi'i education and *da'wa* in Indonesia. A large number of YAPI alumni, after studying in Iran, went on to become *ustadh* in several Islamic institutions and to engage in *da'wa* in various parts of Indonesia (some are even at YAPI itself).

Husein Al-Habsyi was a popular preacher. He regularly delivered religious lectures and sermons in mosques in Bangil, Surabaya, Gresik, Jember and other towns. He was an excellent orator, capable of captivating his audiences with his comprehension of Islamic knowledge, broad insights into Western thoughts and the latest developments in the Muslim world, and his ability to use modern mass communication techniques in his religious lectures.[25]

Husein Al-Habsyi's commitment extended to undertaking *da'wa* activities and creating Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia's remote outer islands, including West Irian, East Timor, and Maluku, where Islam is less prevalent.[26] In these areas his main aims were to carry out preaching activities in mosques and places of prayer and to make contacts with teach-

[23] Panitia (n.d:2)

[24] Muhsin Husein (1997:5)

[25] Beik (1997:14-15)

[26] Panitia (n.d:2)

ers to discuss the social and religious problems faced by the Muslim community in the regions. In some of these areas he set up *pesantren*, which at first were branches of YAPI but later became independent Islamic institutions. A number of YAPI alumni were sent to teach at these institutions. One such institution is *Nurul Tsaqalain* located in Hila, Central Maluku, and founded in 1989.

When exactly Husein Al-Habsyi converted to Shi'ism remains unclear. His students and children suggest that Husein Al-Habsyi became a Shi'i after the Iranian Islamic revolution of 1978-1979, but there is a possibility that he acquainted himself with Shi'i doctrines before the Iranian revolution. The co-founder of *Al-Khairiyya,*Muhammad al-Muhdar (d.1926), was Shi'i and is known to have taught Shi'i doctrines in Indonesia. Therefore, it is quite possible that certain aspects of Shi'ism spread among teachers and students of the *madrasa*, including Husein Al-Habsyi. Husein Al-Habsyi also learned with the Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Muhsin al-Hakim, a prominent Shi'i scholar and *marja' al-taqlid* in Najaf, Iraq. In addition, the *Al-Khairiyya* school was frequently visited by Middle Eastern 'ulama' discussing certain Islamic teachings, including Shi'i doctrines, with the teachers and students of the *madrasa*. It is also recorded that Husein al-Habsyi was engaged in discussions about certain Shi'i teachings with a Shi'i scholar from Iraq who came to visit *Al-Khairiyya* in the early 1960s.[27]

Husein Al-Habsyi's students, however, suggest that his primary interest was in understanding the nature of Iran's Islamic revolution. According to Muhsin Husein, it was Khomeini's victory over the powerful Shah, and not Shi'i doctrines, that first attracted Husein Al-Habsyi.[28] His interest in the victory sparked his curiosity and a desire for a deeper understanding of the ideology behind the revolution, which was strongly rooted in the doctrine of *imamate*, a fundamental tenet of Shi'ism adhered to by the majority of Iran's population.

According to Muhsin Husein, Husein Al-Habsyi went to great lengths to obtain Shi'i books in order to enhance his understanding of the teachings of Shi'ism. His efforts included making contact with the Iranian embassy in Jakarta and with 'ulama' in Iran. The Iranian embassy in Jakarta distributed books and its magazine, *Yaumul Quds*, for free to Islamic foundations and individuals who requested them. Through these printed materials and his personal communications with Shi'i figures in Iran, Husein Al-Habsyi's knowledge of Shi'i teachings and on the development of Shi'ism in the

[27] Hamzah Al-Habsyi, interview, (15/10/2002)

[28] Muhsin Husein (1997:6)

world was becoming extensive. In addition, he was frequently invited to participate in meetings with the Shi'i 'ulama' in Iran. Husein Al-Habsyi was pushed ever more towards Shi'ism by the hostile attitude and conduct of some Sunni leaders in Indonesia. The Sunni view was that Shi'is were unbelievers. In this regard, Husein Al-Habsyi attempted to defend Shi'i teachings and the followers of this *madhhab* by emphasising that Shi'ism is a true *madhhab* and that its adherents are also Muslim. In fact, as Shi'is are allowed to do in a hostile environment, Al-Habsyi declared himself to be a Sunni.[29]

Since the early 1980s Husein Al-Habsyi was known for openly praising the Iranian revolution. He paid great respect to its leader, Imam Khomeini, in his *da'wa* activities in the mosques of East Javan cities such as Surabaya, Malang, and Bangil, all with the aim of reviving Islamic spirit and religiosity within the Muslim community. By doing so, Husein Al-Habsyi in turn gained the respect of the majority of Muslims in the region, and in particular the Muslim youth who regarded him as an ideal *'alim* and Muslim leader. However, he also experienced hostile reactions from anti-Shi'i groups after he was acknowledged as a Shi'i *ustadh*.

Husein Al-Habsyi's position as an influential *ustadh* can be determined from his intellectual achievements which began at an early age. Besides teaching and leading Islamic schools, he wrote Islamic books and translated books into Indonesian. He was engaged in polemics with one of the most prominent reformist leaders in Indonesia, Ahmad Hasan of the reformist Islamic organisation Persis (1887-1958),[30] who in April 1956 wrote a book entitled *Risalah al-Madhhab* (Treatise on the Madhhab) which suggests that adherence to a school of law like *Shafi'i* jurisprudence is forbidden. Ahmad Hasan also wrote *Halalkah bermadzhab?* (Is following a school of Islamic jurisprudence lawful?) In response to the two books, Husein Al-Habsyi wrote a critical treatise, *Lahirnya Madzhab yang Mengharamkan Madzhab* (the Birth of a School of Jurisprudence which Forbids Schools of Jurisprudence). This text strongly rejects the notion that following a certain school of jurisprudence is unlawful. The polemics continued with the publication of Ahmad Hasan's refutation to Husein Al-Habsyi's criticisms in *Pembela Islam* in January 1957. In April of that year, Husein

[29] Muhsin Husein (1997:6)

[30] Several Studies have been devoted to Persis (*Persatuan Islam*) and its scholars. Federspiel (1970) provides us with a detailed discussion of this reformist Islamic organisation. It was founded in 1923 and Ahmad Hasan, (born in Singapore of Indian origin), joined in 1924. Persis' views on Islamic theology and law are generally similar to that of *Muhammadiyah*, but can, on occasion, be more extreme. Ahmad Minhaji (2001), Federspiel's student, provides a detailed account of Ahman Hassan and his reformist legal thought.

Al-Habsyi wrote yet another critical book, *Haramkah Orang Bermadzhab II* (Is it unlawful for People to Follow a School of Jurisprudence II), in which he affirms that following a particular school is strongly determined by the Qur'an and *Sunna* and the opinions of 'ulama'. In this long-running and, at times, heated debate, both writers accused the other of having insufficient knowledge of Islam and both omitted views that did not support their arguments.[31] Both authors agreed to a public debate on the issue in the hope of achieving a final pronouncement on whether it is lawful to follow a certain *madhhab* in Islam. But the debate never took place. Ahmad Hasan's supporters accused Husein Al-Habsyi of avoiding participating in the debate. Al-Habsyi claimed that Mohammad Natsir, another Persis leader and a close associate of Husein Al-Habsyi from his Masyumi days, had advised him not to engage in the debate as it would provoke religious conflict and disunity in the Muslim community.[32] This claim is supported by O. Hashem, a close associate of Husein Al-Habsyi's.[33]

Husein Al-Habsyi was not a *ustadh* who tends to remain quiet. In 1979-1980, he once again engaged in polemics with the same reformist groups, this time regarding the *mawlid* literature and the concept *Nur Muhammad* (the Light of Muhammad)[34] published in *Al-Muslimun*, the magazine of Persis in Bangil. It should be noted that there have been controversies among Muslim scholars concerning the nature of this concept at regular intervals. It is a term central to Sufi and Shi'i speculations that generally transcend the notion of the Prophet Muhammad as a human being. "The historical Muhammad was thus metamorphosed into a transcendent light, like the sun, around which everything created revolves."[35] Suherman Rosjidi wrote an article criticising the concept *Nur Muhammad* which he saw as awkward and contrary to Islam, reason, and history. Rosjidi also points out that the concept is adopted from Christianity and Hinduism. In reaction to this, Husein Al-Habsyi wrote an article in *Al-Muslimun.* He maintained that the concept *Nur Muhammad* is strongly based in *hadith*.[36] The polemics continued. Another reformist writer, Imron A. Manan, refuted Husein Al-Habsyi's view, claiming that the concept *nur Muhammad*

[31] Minhaji (2001:242). For a description of Husein Al-Habsyi's response to Ahmad Hassan, see Minhaji (2001:241-246).

[32] Minhaji (2001:245-246)

[33] O. Hashem (2002:8-9)

[34] Al-Samarrai points out that the concept might be an invention of Sufis influenced by ideas from Judaism, Christianity or perhaps Zoroastrianism. The concept the Light of Muhammad is believed among some Sufis to have been created before all things (Al-Samarrai 1968:147:147).

[35] Schimmel (1995:23)

[36] *Al-Muslimun* (117/1979)

is not mentioned in the Qur'an and that the *hadith* on it are not sound.[37] Once more Husein Al-Habsyi responded in the same magazine stating that *Nur Muhammad* is mentioned in the Qur'anic verse 5:15 and many *hadith* and is confirmed by the views of a number of 'ulama'. He also asked Manan to justify his claim that the *hadith* are weak.[38] Manan wrote another criticism directed towards Husein Al-Habsyi's article[39] and also to a book written by Abdullah Abdun.[40] *Al-Muslimun* also published an article by Abu Hasyim critical of Manan.[41] Finally, in the same edition the editorial board of magazine decided the debate should be brought to a head and published conclusions and final notes favouring the Persis/Manan view of *nur Muhammad,* upholding the notion that the concept is based on unsound *hadith* that are contrary to the Qur'an.[42]

Husein Al-Habsyi's intellectual activities are then marked by the publication of a number of books with Shi'i characteristics. His 34-page book on the Qur'an exegesis of *Surah Abasa: 1-10* became one of the most controversial books on Sunni-Shi'i relations in Indonesia. Published in 1991 under the title *Benarkah Nabi Bermuka Masam? Tafsir Surah Abasa* ('Did the Prophet Frown and Turn Away? Commentary on Surah 'Abasa'), the central idea of this book is that the Prophet Muhammad, (who is the most perfect human being and immune from major and minor sins), did not frown and turn away from the blind Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum who, asked the Prophet for religious instruction while the latter was in conversation with the Quraysh elite. Husein Al-Habsyi maintains that the one at the meeting who did frown and turn away was Al-Walid bin al-Mughira, a tyrannical infidel from Mecca. This view is in striking contrast to the Qur'an commentary books widely read and distributed in Indonesia. It also opposes the views of the majority of Sunni 'ulama' in the country who believe that the Prophet himself frowned and turned away. For these reasons, the controversy surrounding the book is unsurprising.

There have been intellectual reactions to Husein Al-Habsyi's book, including an article by Ibnu Mursyid in *Al-Muslimun* (January 1992), and a book written by Ja'far Umar Thalib,[43] the former leader of *Lasykar Jihad*.

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[37] *Al-Muslimun* (123/1980)

[38] *Al-Muslimun* (125/1980)

[39] *Al-Muslimun* (126/1980)

[40] The complete title of the book is *Sanggahan atas Tulisan Pengingkar Nur Nabi Besar Muhammad SAW* (A Refutation of the Writing of the Denier of the Light of the Great Prophet Muhammad). Unfortunately I am unable to obtain a copy.

[41] *Al-Muslimun* (127/1980)

[42] *Al-Muslimun* 127/1980:75-77)

[43] Thalib (1993)

In response to these critical essays, Husein Al-Habsyi wrote another scholarly work reaffirming his point of view on the perfection of the Prophet Muhammad. That he was free from bad moral conduct, and this meant he could not have frowned and turned away from his follower Abdullah bin Ummi Maktum when he requested instruction. The work, entitled *Nabi SAWW*[44] *Bermuka Manis tidak Bermuka Masam* ('The Prophet [may God grant him and his household peace and salvation] Smiled, Did not Frown'), was published in 1992.

Further, Husein Al-Habsyi provided us with the ideas of *ukhuwwa Islamiyya* (Islamic fraternity) between the Sunni and the Shi'i in his well-known book entitled *Sunnah-Syi'ah dalam Ukhuwah Islamiyah: Menjawab 'Dua Wajah Saling Menentang' Karya Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi* (The Sunni-Shi'i within Islamic Brotherhood: Responding to 'Two Opposing Faces' of the Work of Abu al-Hasan Ali Nadwi)[45]. Husein Al-Habsyi criticised Ali Nadwi's for distorting the Shi'i teachings, but his book is also directed to those who have made the same mistakes. In this respect, Husein Al-Habsyi has shown some of the weaknesses in the writings of Sunni 'ulama' and intellectuals about Shi'ism. He states that the works do not reflect an appropriate and deep comprehension of Shi'ism and even suggests that they contain serious misunderstandings of the subject. As a consequence, their criticisms do not deal accurately with matters that are actually agreed upon by the majority of Shi'i 'ulama'. A second weakness in the writings of Sunni 'ulama' and intellectuals about Shi'ism is that in their use of sources they cite only the parts upon which they agree. The third weakness is the use of their own interpretations without referring to the existing interpretations of Shi'i *mujtahid* (independent legist). Provocatively, Husein Al-Habsyi concludes that the Sunni interpretations of Shi'i teachings are mainly based on their passion and hate.[46]

Husein Al-Habsyi appeals to Sunni 'ulama' to stop distorting the Shi'i teachings, and stop slandering and judging the Shi'is as a group which deviates from the true teachings of Islam. In his writings, Al-Habsyi advises Sunni 'ulama' and intellectuals to carry out workshops or conferences in

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[44] SAWW is an abbreviation of *Salla Allah 'alayh Wa alih Wa sallam* (may God grant him and his household peace and salvation). Rather then SAW (*Salla Allah alayh Wa sallam*, may God grant him peace and salvation) which is common in Indonesia. SAWW is frequently used among the Shi'is in Indonesia. The concept of the Prophet Muhammad's Household is explained in Chapter Three.

[45] Abu al-Hasan Ali Nadwi is an Indian scholar whose anti-Shi'i work entitled *Dua Wajah Saling Bertentangan antara Ahlu Sunnah dan Syi'ah* was published in 1987 by Bina Ilmu, Surabaya.

[46] Husein Al-Habsyi (1992a:12-13)

which both Sunni and Shi'i 'ulama' participate so that there may be debates to address various polemical matters.[47]

> There can be no doubt that the Shi'i 'ulama' will always be prepared to participate in all of such meetings to prove and present proof of the validity of their *madhhab* so which can satisfy and be satisfied by their Sunni fellows with the basic aims that the Muslim *umma* can be united and the relationship between them become closely and strongly tied. Certainly, we very much expect the realisation of these approaches and demand the unification of fronts instead of breaking up the united fronts.[48]

Husein Al-Habsyi argues that if these conditions are realised both the Sunnis and the Shi'is can live in harmony, tolerance and mutual cooperation. Furthermore, that the minority group has nothing to fear from the majority Sunnis who will always protect them, not oppress them.[49]

Another published work of Husein Al-Habsyi, *Sunnah Syi'ah dalam Dialog* (Sunni Shi'i in Dialogue, 1991), originates from a recorded dialogue he had with students of Universitas Gajah Mada (UGM) and Indonesian Islamic University (UII). In this book, he explains a number of the arguments surrounding Shi'ism that are widely spread among the Sunnis. Arguments such as the accusation that Shi'is are infidels and cursers of the Prophet's companions, also the validity of *hadith* of Ghadir Khum on the appointment of 'Ali bin Abi Talib as the Imam succeeding the Prophet.[50] As with his other works, Husein Al-Habsyi practiced *taqiyya*. Not only did he declare himself to be a Sunni but he also cited Sunni sources in support of the validity of Shi'i teachings. This, he states, was done in order that "attacks directed to the *Imamiyya* Shi'ism can be terminated because there are no differences in terms of principal matters between the two *madhhabs*."[51] In this work, Husein Al-Habsyi also appeals for an end to cursing one another and he devotes great attention to the social, economic, and cultural problems that are faced by Muslims.

Another aspect of Husein Al-Habsyi's intellectual activities can be seen in his translations. This includes a translation of *Pendekatan Sunnah Syi'ah* (the Shi'i-Sunni Approach) and the Barnabas Gospel[52] published by YAPI (*Yayasan Penyiaran Islam*) in Surabaya. Husein Al-Habsyi has also

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[47] Husein Al-Habsyi (1992a:228-229)

[48] Husein Al-Habsyi (1992a:229-230)

[49] Husein Al-Habsyi (1992a:229)

[50] A text of this *hadith* can be seen in Chapter Three.

[51] Husein Al-Habsyi (1991a:3)

[52] Most Muslims consider the Barnabas Gospel to be the most original version of the Gospel.

provided us with an authoritative Arabic-Indonesian dictionary entitled *Kamus al-Kautsar Lengkap*, first published in 1977 by YAPI of Bangil. This 564-page dictionary has been reprinted several times, including twice by Thinker's Library in Selangor, Malaysia.

These works[53] confirm Husein Al-Habsyi's position as a prominent Shi'i *ustadh*. In them we find the religious thoughts which he promoted to his followers. The works also indicate his leading role in the propagation of Shi'i teachings in Indonesia. Arguably though, his greatest contribution to the Shi'i community in Indonesia has been YAPI, an organisation which has become synonymous with the name Husein Al-Habsyi. He has dedicated his knowledge, material, and time to this *pesantren*. But Husein Al-Habsyi's influence has spread beyond YAPI. In the 1980s when the Shi'i community in Indonesia began to develop Husein Al-Habsyi was in his sixties. He wore a turban as a symbol of a man of religious learning. His *habitus*[54] exerted great influence on the Muslim community. He had accumulated economic, social and cultural capital which could be transformed into symbolic capital, that is, the recognition of his position as a renowned *ustadh* and leader of *pesantren* and Shi'i community in Indonesia.

C. Husein Shahab

Today,Husein Shahab is one of the most prominent Shi'i *ustadh* in Indonesia. Born in Palembang, South Sumatra, on 27 December 1961, as his name suggests, Husein is also a *Sayyid*. Both his primary and secondary education was completed in his hometown. He finished *'aliyyah* (religious senior high school) at *Pesantren Ar-Riyadh,* a well-known Islamic educational institution run by Arab descendants in Palembang. During this period, Husein Shahab had a close relationship with the head of the *pesantren* and his teacher, Sayyid Ahmad Al-Habsyi, who also established links with other Sayyid 'ulama',including Husein Al-Habsyi.

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[53] Husein Al-Habsyi's other published book is *Agar Tidak Terjadi Fitnah* ('In Order That Slander Does Not Happen', 1993). It contains his standpoint on a number of polemical topics, and includes his views on the most famous Shi'i *hadith* collection *al-Kafi* (the Sufficient) by Muhammad al-Kulayni (d. 939). Husein Al-Habsyi uses this book to defend the validity and truth of several Shi'i teachings based on both Sunni and Shi'i sources. He concludes with an appeal for the scrutiny of a specific *madhhab* based on its authoritative sources.

[54] The notion of *habitus* can be understood as "a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as *matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions* and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks" (Bourdieu 1977:82-83).

Husein Shahab furthered his learning in the *hawza 'ilmiyya* of Qum, Iran. Husein Shahab's choice of Qum to further his religious education was influenced by his good relations with Ahmad Al-Habsyi, (who maintained links with 'ulama' in Iran), and also information from his brother Umar Shahab, who was also studying in Iran, about the learning system and atmosphere in Qum. Husein Shahab left for Qum in September 1979, [55] his motivations more educational than sectarian. He saw his overseas education first and foremost as a prestigious opportunity, something many students could only dream of. The fact that Qum is a centre for the study of Shi'ism was secondary. During his time at *Pesantren Ar-Riyadh,* Husein Shahab had studied books written by Shi'i 'ulama', such as al-Tabarsi's *Makarim al-Akhlaq*[56] (Perfection of Morality), but it was his learning in Qum which converted Husein to Shi'ism.

Husein Shahab was enrolled at the Islamic educational institution, *Dar al-Tabligh al-Islami,* renowned for its non-Persian students. For about two years Husein Shahab followed the modern system of learning offered by the institution. As previously noted, *Dar al-Tabligh* was dissolved by the Islamic government of Iran. The leader of *Dar al-Tabligh,* the Grand Ayatollah Shari'atmadari, was formally demoted from the rank of *marja' al-taqlid* in April 1982.[57] Husein Shahab himself had a bad experience during the raiding of the Islamic school by the military. Consequently his education in Qum ceased and in 1982 he returned to his hometown, Palembang.[58]

After a year in Palembang, Husein Shahab departed once more for Qum This time he headed for the *Madrasa Hujjatiyya,*another institution offering educational programmes for foreign students, but while he was registered at the dormitory of the institution he did not follow its formal learning programmes. Instead Husein Shahab decided to participate in the learning circles (*halaqat*) that were conducted by 'ulama' in Qum. In this educational and spiritual city, a variety of religious subjects are offered via these learning circles, but *fiqh* has dominated the educational system of *hawza 'ilmiyya*. Husein Shahab started out attending the circles on *fiqh* but then changed his orientation to Islamic philosophy and other intellectual sciences. His participation in the study circles enabled him to study under the guidance of renowned 'ulama' and scholars in Qum. Among his *fiqh*

[55] Husein Shahab, interview, (2/4/2004)

[56] Al-Fadl bin al-Hasan al-Tabarsi (d.1153) is a renowned Shi'i scholar and theologian whose most important work is in the field of Qur'an exegesis, *Majma' al-Bayan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*.

[57] Momen (1985:296)

[58] Ali (2002:218)

teachers were Ayatollah Hasan Zawakhiri and Ayatollah Shaykh Muhammad al-Nuri. He studied Qur'an exegesis under Ayatollah Javadi Amuli (b. 1930),[59] doctrine under Ayatollah Sayyid Adil al-Alawi and Islamic history under Ayatollah Sayyid Ja'far Murtada al-'Amili (b. 1945).[60] Husein Shahab completed his study in Qum in 1986.[61]

Husein Shahab's field of specialisation is Islamic thought. In 1994 he pursued a Masters programme in this field at the International Institute for Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) in Kuala Lumpur, a tertiary educational institution founded and led by Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas. Here he developed his academic interests by conducting research and following lectures delivered by contemporary Muslim thinkers including the renowned liberal Iranian intellectual Abdul Karim Soroush.[62] However, he did not complete the programme because he was forced to leave Malaysia. The Malaysian government forbids the existence of Shi'ism in its country as it is seen as contrary to the Sunnism practiced by the majority of the population.[63] I was informed that during his time in Malaysia, the police pursued Husein Shahab because of his Shi'i beliefs, even though he was not actively promoting Shi'ism. In spite of his untimely departure from Malaysia, many Shi'is in Indonesia believe Husein Shahab actually graduated from ISTAC.

Husein Shahab's career as *ustadh* started about five years after his study in Qum. On his return from Malaysia, (where he had been for three years), he went to Bandung to join Jalaluddin Rakhmat's *Muthahari* Foundation. Between 1991 and 1994, Husein Shahab became an important *ustadh* at the foundation.[64] It should be noted that it is during this period that Rakhmat and his family spent a year in Qum, leaving Husein Shahab to

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[59] Ayatollah Javadi Amuli is a leading theologian, philosopher, and Qur'an exegete in Qum. He was born in 1933 in Amul, Iran where he completed his primary education and entered the *hawza 'ilmiyya*. In 1950 he moved to Tehran to continue his religious study and then to Qum where he was guided by renowned scholars including Ayatollah Burujirdi and 'Allama Tabataba'i (d. 1981).

[60] Born in South Lebanon, Sayyid Ja'far Murtada studied in Najaf (1962-1968) and in Qum, and returned to Beirut where he becomes a theological historian and directs the Islamic Centre for Learning (Rosiny 2001:208-209). His debates and competition with the liberal Muhammad Husayn Fadlullah have been discussed by Rosiny (2001:207-219).

[61] Ali (2002:218-220)

[62] Husein Shahab, interview, (2/4/2004). Born in 1945, Soroush's is increasingly recognised as a liberal thinker. One of his books, *Menggugat Otoritas dan Tradisi Agama (To Challenge Religious Authority and Tradition),* was first published in Indonesian by Mizan in 2002. For a review of this book, see *Kompas* (23/11/2002).

[63] On the social, political and religious behind the prohibition of Shi'ism in Malaysia, see http://www.e-fatwa.gov.my/fatwa_search_result.asp?keyID=194.

[64] Husein Shahab, interview, (2/4/2004)

carry out some of Jalaluddin Rakhmat's duties, including leading religious rituals, delivering sermons and lecturing for various *da'wa* and educational programmes. His writings and preaching transcripts from this period were distributed through *Al-Tanwir*, a *da'wa* periodical of the *Muthahari* Foundation. Since this time, the popularity of Husein Shahab as a Qum alumnus and *ustadh* has been widely acknowledged by Shi'is in Indonesia.

Since 1999, Husein Shahab has chosen to live in Jakarta where the largest numbers of Shi'is reside. With the cultural capital he gained through his religious education in Qum and Kuala Lumpur, Husein Shahab began to establish his career by involving himself in a number of *da'wa* and educational activities in the capital. He became a popular preacher also attracting leaders of Islamic institutions. Consequently, he became a lecturer at several Islamic institutions, both Sunni and Shi'i, including *Paramadina*, *Madina Ilmu* College for Islamic Studies, the IIMaN centre for positive Sufism, *Taqwa Nanjar* Foundation, and *Al-Batul*. In addition, he involved himself with the religious programmes of several national television and radio stations. Husein Shahab is both a popular and a prominent *ustadh* in Indonesia, ever-present in leading national Shi'i activities. He teaches and preaches in more than 20 Islamic institutions. With such extensive *da'wa* activities, Husein Shahab is one of the *ustadh* who lives very comfortably in Jakarta.[65]

In relation to his position as *ustadh* and a leader of Shi'i community, Husein Shahab also participates in the establishment of Shi'i institutions. He is a co-founder of the Islamic Cultural Centre of Al-Huda, (ICC). The activities of this Iranian-sponsored institution include publishing, teaching and preaching. However, Husein Shahab's involvement with organising ICC programmes lasted only a year as in 2001 he resigned his post as a result of misunderstandings concerning the organisation of a workshop rejecting IJABI, an Indonesian national organisation founded by Jajaluddin Rakhmat (on 8th June 2001).[66] After this episode he established the *Fitrah* Foundation in collaboration with Othman Omar Shihab. This foundation has become a teaching centre of Sufism in Jakarta. Husein Shahab also participated in the establishment of Forum *Al-Husainy* in 2004. This forum for *ustadh* and intellectuals living in Jakarta is a new association, active in *da'wa* activities in Jakarta, including a monthly collective *dhikr* and *da'i* training programme.

With regard to intellectual achievements, Husein Shahab has produced several scholarly works. Most deal with his great interest in Sufism

[65] Abaza (2004:183)

[66] My account of this workshop can be seen in chapter five.

and Islamic philosophy. However, his first book, published in 1988, was *Jilbab* (Women's Veil), dealing with what the Qur'an and Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad say about the women's headdress. This work is based on two books, both with the same title - *Hijab* - written by Abu al-A'la Maududi and by Murtada Mutahhari. Husein Shahab's book attempts to provide new perspectives on the existing controversies surrounding the wearing of *jilbab* in the New Order era. Husein Shahab analyses textual evidence, from verses of the Qur'an and *hadith,* as well as using rational arguments to support the obligation for women to wear a *jilbab*. His other book is a practical manual on observing the pilgrimage to Mecca, a pillar of obligatory Islamic ritual. Its title is *Cara Memperoleh Haji Mabrur: Tuntunan Ahli Bayt Nabi* ('Methods of Achieving Beneficent Pilgrimage: Guidance of the Prophet's Family') published in 1995. The book is based on the teachings and guidance of the Prophet and his *ahl al-bayt*.

Husein Shahab's work on Sufism includes the two volumes of *Dialog-dialog Sufi* (Sufi Dialogues, published in 1994, 1995), which in general contain interesting stories narrating questions raised by disciples and answers given by Sufi teachers. His latest book, published in 2002, is *Seni Menata Hati: Terapi Sufistik* ('Arts of Arranging Heart: Sufi Therapy'). This book attempts to provide a Sufi model to 'diagnose' and 'cure' bad moral characteristics, (known as 'heart illnesses'), like miserliness, arrogance, and spitefulness which destroy human nature and obedience to God. By following the Sufi model, one can reach the spiritual stage achieved by Sufi and *wali* ('Friend of God') in the context of becoming *insan kamil* (perfect man).

Husein Shahab's writings on Sufism, Islamic philosophy and other aspects of Islamic knowledge are also published in such periodicals as the Mutahhari Foundation's *Al-Tanwir*, Al-Jawad Foundation's *Al-Jawad* and *Al-Huda* belonging to the ICC of Al-Huda. One of the texts focuses on the life of Fatima, the Prophet Muhammad's daughter, who Shahab considers to be a role model for female Sufis. According to Shahab's analysis of the mystical life of Fatima, she was able to communicate with angels. These communications, compiled by her husband, Imam Ali, are known as *Mushaf Fatima*[67] Further articles on Sufism and other aspects of Islamic knowledge by Husein Shahab can be found in published anthologies like

[67] Husein Shahab (http://aljawad.tripod.com/arsipbuletin/tasawufwanita.htm). The use of the term *Mushaf Fatima* is a source of controversy between the Sunnis and the Shi'is. The Shi'is are accused of having made their own alternative Qur'an. This derives from the fact that in Sunnism the term *mushaf* is used only in relation to the Qur'an, with the existing Qur'an being known as *Mushaf Usmani*.

Kuliah Tasawuf (Lecture on Sufism) and *Belajar Mudah 'Ulmum Al-Qur'an* ('Easy Learning of Sciences of the Qur'an', 2002).

Husein Shahab's scholarship also includes the translation of several books into Indonesian from Arabic and Persian. He translated both the *fatwas* of Ayatollah Abu al-Qasim Khoei (d. 1992) and Ali Akbar Sadeqi's work *Pesan Nabi Terakhir* (The Prophet's Last Message) into Indonesian. But his most popular translation is of Muhammad al-Tijani al-Samawi's *Thumma Ihtadaytu* (Then I Was Guided), first published in 1991 in Malay. Like the Arabic original and English versions which are widely distributed in the Muslim world, the Indonesian version, *Akhirnya Kutemukan Kebenaran* (Finally I Find the Truth), published in 1993, is widely read in Indonesia. It is interesting to note that this book is one of the forbidden books listed in the *fatwa* of Johor State, Malaysia, issued on 19 November 2002.[68]

Husein Shahab's intellectual attainments are unquestionable. He is a prototype of a successful *da'i* (missionary or evangelist). He successfully transforms the cultural and social capital that he has accumulated into the economic capital essential for maintaining his living as *ustadh*. Although he is affiliated to many institutions of *da'wa* and learning, there is no single institution powerful enough to establish him as the most prominent leader of the Shi'i community, replacing the late Husein Al-Habsyi. This distinguishes his position from that of Husein Al-Habsyi which was strongly supported by his *pesantren*.

D. Jalaluddin Rakhmat

The most prominent intellectual within the Shi'i community is Jalaluddin Rakhmat, known as Kang Jalal.[69] His followers frequently write his full name as K.H. Jalaluddin Rakhmat. This indicates the recognition, or is possibly an attempt to legitimise Rakhmat's religious knowledge and leadership, placing him on a par with other religious leaders who are granted the honorific title *kyai*. In Indonesia, most people recognise the prestigious title *kyai* as referring to a man of religious learning, with legitimate authority in the field of religion. Born on 29 August 1949 in Bojongsalam, Rancaekek, a district of Bandung in West Java, Jalaluddin Rakhmat comes from a religious family. His father was a man of religious learning as well as a village chief and a Masyumi activist who then joined the *Darul Islam*,

[68] http://www.e-fatwa.gov.my/mufti/fatwa_search_result.asp?keyID=327 accessed 18/10/2005.

[69] Kang is a Sundanese term which literally means elder brother. It is a common form of address for elder men.

forcing him to move to Sumatra for several years. Jalaluddin Rakhmat attended public school and alongside he studied religious knowledge with a traditionalist religious teacher named Ajengan Shidik. In particular he learned *nahw* (Arabic syntax) and *sarf* (Arabic morphology), known within the *pesantren* tradition as *ilmu alat* ('instrumental knowledge'). Jalaluddin Rakhmat acknowledges that this understanding of Arabic was instrumental in accessing the vast Arabic literature which shaped his religious thought and his thorough knowledge of Shi'ism. This made Jalaluddin Rakhmat's position distinctive compared with other Indonesian Muslim intellectuals who graduated from secular universities. This type of cultural capital contributes to his present position as the renowned Shi'i leader.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat received his formal education at 'secular' schools and universities. After completing his Junior High School (SMP Muslimin III) and Senior High School (SMA II) in Bandung, Jalaluddin Rakhmat was enrolled at the Faculty of Communications Science at UNPAD. In addition, he entered Teacher Training for Junior High School (PGSLP) in the English department and used his diploma to teach at several secondary schools in the city to support himself. His academic career in the field of Communications commences with his appointment as a lecturer at his alma mater. His career continued to develop when in 1980, he won a Fulbright scholarship to further study in Communications at Iowa State University, USA. He finished his Masters in 1982 with a thesis entitled *A Model for the Study of Mass Media Effects on Political Leaders.* Some years later, he enrolled in a PhD programme at UNPAD but he did not finish it. Finally, in 1994 Jalaluddin Rakhmat took Political Science as his PhD major at the Australian National University, but as yet his study is not completed. As with Husein Shahab, he is wrongly perceived to have completed his PhD, a mistake which is beneficial for his position within the Shi'i community.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat has lectured on Communications since the beginning of his academic career. By and large, his lectures attracted great attention from students. His students report that they eagerly looked forward to Jalaluddin Rakhmat's lectures because of his convincing rhetoric and his expertise in the field.[70] But in 1992 he was dismissed from the UNPAD following tensions with what Rakhmat describes as a 'campus bureaucrat'.[71] In the course of his academic career, he has written a number of textbooks on his technical specialisation. The books are considered to have become important references for students of the field. They include

[70] Malik and Ibrahim (1998:143-144)

[71] Malik and Ibrahim (1998:144)

Retorika Modern (Modern Rhetoric, 1982), *Metode Penelitian Komunikasi* (Methods of Communications Research, 1985), and *Psikologi Komunikasi* (Psychology of Communications, 1985). With his lectures and textbooks circulating among students and scholars, Jalaluddin Rakhmat is widely recognised as an expert in the field of communications. It is unsurprising therefore that in 2001, after an absence of almost 10 years, Jalaluddin Rakhmat was asked to return to UNPAD as a lecturer and was then inaugurated as professor of Communications at the university.[72]

Jalaluddin Rakhmat's life history is infused with *da'wa*. This important aspect distinguishes Jalaluddin Rakhmat from most Shi'i intellectuals in Indonesia. Long before his conversion to Shi'ism, Jalaluddin Rakhmat was affiliated to the reformist organisations Persis and *Muhammadiyah*. These two Muslim groups strongly opposed traditional Islamic beliefs and practices. During his studies at secondary school, Jalaluddin Rakhmat joined the youth branch of Persis in Bandung. Later, in 1970, he joined the *Muhammadiyah* training camp *Darul Arqam*, held with the sole purpose of establishing Muhammadiyah preacher cadres. Consequently, Jalaluddin Rakhmat became a fanatical cadre of *Muhammadiyah* which, along with *Majlis Tarjih Muhammadiyah* (its *fatwa* institution), actively carried out *da'wa* activities in diverse areas of West Java. Jalaluddin Rakhmat heavily promoted the reformist ideology of *Muhammadiyah* in his *da'wa* activities. In particular the notion of , 'anti-TBC' (*Tahayul, Bid'ah, Churafat* or superstition, innovation, and myth) provoked strong negative reactions from proponents of traditionalist Islam in the region. But Jalaluddin Rakhmat always considered himself to be successful in carrying out his duties as a *Muhammadiyah* preacher. In the 1970s, Rakhmat's achievements in this reformist organisation led to him being appointed an executive member of the Council of Education, Instruction, and Culture at the Bandung branch of *Muhammadiyah* and also of the Council of Preaching at the West Java provincial branch of *Muhammadiyah*.[73] It should be noted that after becoming a Shi'i, Jalaluddin Rakhmat used his *da'wa* activities to promote religious teachings and practices against specifically traditional ideas such as the importance of *ziyara* (visitation of graves), *tawassul* (uttering certain names of Muslim saints or Imams in supplications), and *tabarruk* ('taking blessing'), all of which are incompatible with the reformist stance.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat's devotion to *da'wa* activities is clear to see in the fact that he maintained these activities during his period of study in America. Together with Imaduddin Abdulrahim and others, Jalaluddin Ra-

[72] Rosyidi (2004:29-32)

[73] Malik and Ibrahim (1998:143), Rosyidi (2004:43)

khmat established *pengajian* circles at the *Dar al-Arqam* mosque in Ames, Iowa. One of his missionary activities was to deliver religious sermons at Friday Prayers. These sermons were then complied and published in the book *Khutbah-khutbah di Amerika* (Sermons in America, 1988). Rakhmat shared a close relationship with Imaduddin Abdulrahim, co-founder of the Salman Mosque at ITB. Abdulrahim encouraged him to become an active religious lecturer at the mosque upon his return from America. Large numbers attended Rakhmat's religious lectures at the Salman Mosque. On one occasion, Imaduddin Abdulrahim was informed that the influence of Rakhmat on Salman activists was so great that the congregation had become divided into two factions: the followers of Jalaluddin Rakhmat and the followers of the Nurcholish Madjid.[74] Jalaluddin Rakhmat's expertise in Communications is frequently cited as having contributed to his considerable successes, preaching and writing in the field of Islamic *da'wa.* Indeed, Jalaluddin Rakhmat is a very popular preacher and his reputation means his religious lectures attract large audiences. His notoriety as a popular Muslim preacher and intellectual spread rapidly, not only in Bandung but throughout the country.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat told us that his lectures at the Salman Mosque often turned into interactive discussions with Salman activists. Following his ban from the Salman Mosque, these lectures took place first in Rakhmat's own home and eventually in the nearby *Al-Munawwarah* mosque in Bandung. To this day he continues to deliver regular sermons at this mosque. He writes:

> Purportedly, the *pengajian* [religious gathering] caused unrest. I was declared persona non grata from the Salman Mosque. Based on the request of *jama'a*, I moved the Sunday's dawn lecture to my small house. The participants were crowded in the narrow room. Some overflowed into outside [the room]. Soon after Al-Muawwarah Mosque was established, they moved again to the mosque. At this time, the room was wider. The members of *jama'a* increased; most were university students.[75]

With an educational background in Communications and experience as a preacher, Jalaluddin Rakhmat attempts not only to implement concepts from the field of science in his *da'wa* activities, but also to formulate these activities from a Communications perspective. His ideas regarding communication and Islamic *da'wa*, two closely interrelated fields, can be found in essays included in two of his volumes: *Islam Alternatif* (Alternative Islam, 1986) and *Catatan Kang Jalal* (Kang Jalal's Notes, 1997). Ra-

[74] Abdulrahim (1986:15)

[75] Rakhmat (1998:xxx)

khmat defines *da'wa* as "a communication activity aimed to realise Islamic teachings in the individual and social life."[76] According to Rakhmat, all the components of communication can be found in *da'wa* including *da'i* (missionary or evangelist), message, media, object, and effect. A d*a'i,* as an agent of *da'wa,* can be a Muslim individual or group, while the object of *da'wa* includes Muslims and non-Muslims. While Rakhmat views the media for both communication and *da'wa* to be the same, the message of *da'wa* is different from that of communication. *Da'wa* should include three elements: *amr ma'ruf nahi munkar* (enjoining good and prohibiting evil), aspects of Islamic *shari'a*, and the empowerment of man from tyranny and injustice. Jalaluddin Rakhmat also emphasises that *da'wa* must have an impact on individuals and social structures in the form of progressive change in the domain of knowledge, attitude and behaviour.[77] Whether all aspects of Jalaluddin Rakhmat's ideas on communication and *da'wa* have been realised in his practice of *da'wa* remains questionable.

One may wonder how Jalaluddin Rakhmat converted to Shi'i Islam. We should remember that he was part of a group of Muslim intellectuals who were fascinated by the victory of the Iranian revolution and its ideology. Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Amien Rais, Dawam Rahardjo and other intellectuals were attracted to the works of revolutionary ideologues such as Ali Shari'ari. These works were considered to be alternative ideological worldviews. But Jalaluddin Rakhmat also admits that he began to engage in intensive self-study of Shi'i Islam in 1984, the year which appears to be a turning point in his religious, intellectual, and spiritual quest. Even though we cannot ascertain the exact time of Jalaluddin Rakhmat's conversion to Shi'ism, it is safe to surmise that it would occur after this period of intensive study of Shi'i literature, discussion, and reflection. A brief account of Jalaluddin Rakhmat's interest in Shi'ism goes like this: In 1984, Jalaluddin Rakhmat together with Haidar Bagir and Endang Saefuddin Anshary attended an Islamic conference in Colombo during which they became acquainted with Shi'i 'ulama'. Jalaluddin Rakhmat himself admits that the intellectual and religious performance of the Shi'i 'ulama' at the conference impressed him very much. What impressed him even more was that the Shi'i 'ulama' gave him a number of Shi'i books. It is worth noting in this regard that before they left for Colombo, the late Mohammad Natsir, (the then DDII chairman, who devoted himself to *da'wa* activities in Indonesia), had warned Rakhmat and his peers not to accept books given out by Shi'i 'ulama'.

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[76] Rakhmat (1997:51)

[77] Rakhmat (1997:51-53)

Prior to the conference in Colombo, Jalaluddin Rakhmat had not been open to learning about Shi'ism, despite regular access to Shi'i books. Upon his return from Sri Lanka however, he began enthusiastically reading the Shi'i books. Jalaluddin Rakhmat says that it was a Shi'i book that really triggered his doubts about the validity and reliability of Abu Huraira as a communicator of the Prophetic Traditions, perhaps surprising when you consider that a large number of *hadith* that he upheld and practiced are narrated by Abu Huraira. From this time, Rakhat continued studying the teachings of Shi'ism, (particularly through Arabic books), and found his religious truth in this branch of Islam.[78] It is highly likely however that Jalaluddin Rakhmat would have been exposed to the works of Shari'ati and al-Musawi's *Dialog Sunnah Syi'ah* before 1984. (Both these works were available in Indonesian from 1983). Haidar Bagir is even of the opinion that Jalaluddin Rakhmat began to study Shi'i works when he was in America.[79] Whatever the exact timings, Jalaluddin Rakhmat admits that after 1984 he came into contact with many people wanting to become Shi'is, a factor which contributed to his prominence as a leading Shi'i figure in Indonesia.

Aside from his intensive self-study of Shi'i works, Jalaluddin Rakhmat was involved in discussions with Shi'i 'ulama' such as Husein Al-Habsyi of Bangil. Rakhmat even calls Husein Al-Habsyi his teacher. He also established links with Shi'i 'ulama' in Iran and other parts of the world. To gain thorough knowledge of Shi'ism, Jalaluddin Rakhmat spent a year in Qum (1992-1993). Initially, he intended to pursue a PhD in Theology at Tehran University, but the process of enrolment was so complex that he later changed his plans.[80] In Qum, Jalaluddin Rakhmat established connections with prominent ayatollahs and attended religious lectures and study circles (*halaqat*) held in the *hawza 'ilmiyya*. This also provided his children with an opportunity to gain educational and religious experience in the shrine city of Qum. Some of them were enrolled at *madrasa* in Qum; his first son, Miftah Fauzi Rakhmat, is currently an important Shi'i *ustadh* at the *Muttahhari* Foundation in Bandung. Even though Jalaluddin Rakhmat is not included in the list of Qum alumni, the links he established with Qum ayatollahs and the Islamic knowledge he gained through attending lectures and study circles enhanced his religious authority and leadership among the Shi'is in Indonesia.

[78] Jalaluddin Rakhmat, interview, (2/1/2003)

[79] Bagir (2003:72)

[80] Rakhmat (1997:457)

In addition to these educational and *da'wa* experiences, scholarship in religious sciences is also seen as an important aspect of religious authority and leadership. In this regard, Jalaluddin Rakhmat provided us with numerous works in the form of books, essays, translations, or introductory notes to other people's works on various aspects of Islamic scholarship. Collections of his essays on religious issues written in the 1980s are published in two of his most well-known books: *Islam Alternatif: Ceramah-Ceramah di Kampus* (Alternative Islam: Campus Lecturers, 1986) and *Islam Aktual: Refleksi Sosial Seorang Cendekiawan Muslim* (Actual Islam: Social Reflection of a Muslim Intellectual, 1991). The former consists of essays presented in seminar and lectures at university campuses. The book includes ideas of Islam as a mercy for all creatures (*rahmatan li al-'alamin*), Islam and liberation of *mustad'afin* (the oppressed), Islam and the establishment of society, Islam and science, and it concludes with a call for readers to follow Shi'i Islam as an alternative. *Islam Aktual: Refleksi Sosial Seorang Cendekiawan Muslim* contains shorter essays that were originally published in national publications such as *Tempo, Panji Masyarakat, Kompas, Pikiran Rakyat* and *Jawa Pos*. The essays reflect on various topics such as Islamic fraternity, communication and mass media, politics, intellectual reform, family, leadership, poverty and social problems, and martyrdom. Notwithstanding its promising sub-title 'reflection of a Muslim intellectual', Jalaluddin Rakhmat himself acknowledges that, in general, the essays are not based on deep thinking, something he sees as in keeping with the character of mass media.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat also wrote books on more specialised disciplines of Islamic knowledge. He has produced two books on *tafsir* (Qur'an exegesis): *Tafsir Bil Ma'tsur* (Qur'an Commentary by Narrated Sources, 1994) and *Tafsir Sufi Al-Fatihah* (Mystical Commentary of the First Chapter of the Qur'an, 1999). "In this area", writes Feener, "Rakhmat adopts the method of interpreting verses primarily in terms of other related ones from the Qur'an itself with material from the Sunnah used as a further means of clarification."[81] This is usually called *tafsir bi al-ma'thur*, (the title of Jalaluddin Rakhmat's first book), or the *tafsir al-Qur'an bi al-Qur'an*, which literally means interpreting certain Qur'anic verses using other Qur'anic verses, and refers to the method developed by the renowned Shi'i scholar 'Allama Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i (1903-1981). In his second Qur'an commentary book, Rakhmat claims: "For the first time in Indonesian, I will include many *hadith* from the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt* (upon whom be peace)."[82]

[81] Feener (1999:183-184)

[82] Rakhmat (1999:xvi-xvii)

Many of Rakhmat's books are about Sufism. Besides the above-mentioned Sufi *tafsir* book, others include *Membuka Tirai Kegaiban: Renungan-Renungan Sufistik* ('Revealing Mystical Veil: Sufi Reflections', 1994), *Reformasi Sufistik* (Sufi Reform, 1998), and *Meraih Cinta Ilahi: Pencerahan Sufistik* ('Achieving Divine Love: Sufi Enlightenment', 1999). All these books are derived from collections of his preaching, in particular the regular Sunday religious gathering at the Munawwarah Mosque, and also from essays published in the media. Jalaluddin Rakhmat clearly recognises the shortcomings in his own works as, more often than not, he offers his excuses in the introductions to their publication. For instance, despite its promising title, Rakhmat acknowledges that his *Membuka Tirai Kegaiban* does not provide its readers with the same in-depth analysis of Sufi teachings as can be found in the books of Suhrawardi and al-Ghazali. Nonetheless, he provides innovative interpretations of certain Sufi teachings by comparing Sufism with psychology. In other articles, he suggests that the teachings of Sufism can lead to emotional and spiritual intelligence, [83] the key to which is the Sufi teaching of patience.

In the field of Islamic history, Jalaluddin Rakhmat wrote *Al-Mustafa: Pengantar Studi Kritis Tarikh Nabi SAW* (The Chosen: An Introductory Critical Study of History of the Prophet [may God grant him peace and salvation], 2002). The book, which is derived from the transcription of his lectures in the *Muthahhari* Foundation, contains an introduction to the critical study of the history of the Prophet Muhammad. In this case, critical study clearly means that criticism should be aimed at Sunni sources, particularly those *hadith* collections narrating occasions or stories that Jalaluddin Rakhmat and other Shi'is believe to be contrary to the noble character of the Prophet Muhammad, (the prophet being the most perfect man and the best example for mankind). In this way, the spirit of this work is similar to that of Husein Al-Habsyi's Qur'an exegesis. In his book, Rakhmat provides a call to reconstruct a proper history in accordance with this principle. But in this introductory work, Rakhmat does not actually give readers an historical description of the life of the Prophet Muhammad, save for providing some examples of interpretations, which he believes are worthy of criticism.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat also writes about the validity of certain religious practices which are contrary to the reformist view. In *Rindu Rasul: Meraih Cinta Ilahi Melalui Syafa'at Nabi SAW* ('Longing for the Messenger:

[83] There are three articles by Rakhmat dealing with Sufism and its relation to emotional and spiritual intelligence, namely "Emotional Intelligence *dalam Perspektif Sufi*", "*Dengan Tasawuf Meningkatkan* Spiritual Intelligence", and "*Sabar; Kunci* Spiritual Intelligence". They are collected in Bihar Anwar (2002).

Achieving Divine Love through Intercessions of the Prophet [may God grant him peace and salvation]', 2001), Rakhmat provides us with various ways of showing love and devotion to the Prophet - vehicles with which to approach God - such as reciting *salawat* (invocation), expecting his *shafa'at* (assistances), *tawassul* (prayer through intermediaries), and *tabarruk* ('taking of blessing'). It is interesting to note that Jalaluddin Rakhmat had strongly opposed all these religious practices before his conversion to Shi'ism. "False intellectual arrogance has distanced me from loving of the Prophet (May God grant him peace and salvation). The modernist ideology penetrating my thought has dried my soul."[84] Through *Rindu Rasul*, he aims to demolish the intellectual 'arrogance' of reformist groups which nullifies these practices, and he appeals for reflective religious views. This book is intended to present the validity and necessity of these religious practices in the framework of loving the Prophet. It is also an appeal for maintaining tradition. And in the wider context of Indonesian Islam, through this book, Jalaluddin Rakhmat may have contributed to maintaining Islamic practices upheld by traditionalist Muslim groups in Indonesia.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat also wrote a book on ethics with a provocative and imperative title, *Dahulukan Akhlak di atas Fikih* (Prioritise Ethics over Jurisprudence, 2002a). The book is intended to solve the long-running problem of Muslim *umma,* namely factions that emerged following the death of the Prophet Muhammad, by implementing the universal divine message of the Prophet on the necessity of noble ethics: "Indeed, I was designated to perfect noble ethics". Jalaluddin Rakhmat presents differences of legal opinion among various schools of Islamic law in the course of history as well as analyses the factions and fanatical attitudes of followers of schools that have created religious conflicts within the *umma*. Jalaluddin Rakhmat suggests that one should renounce his or her own adherence to a certain school of law for the greater good of establishing Islamic fraternity. This scholarly work contains genuine ideas that have received many credits as well as criticisms from both Sunnis and Shi'is in Indonesia.

Notwithstanding his call to abandon particular schools of law for the sake of Islamic fraternity, Jalaluddin Rakhmat wrote several essays on *fiqh* (jurisprudence). Based on these essays, Feener included Jalaluddin Rakhmat as one of the new Muslim intellectuals who has contributed to the development of Muslim jurisprudence in 20th century Indonesia.[85] Like Munawir Sjadzali (a moderate Muslim intellectual and Minister of

[84] Rakhmat (2001:xii)

[85] Feener (1999)

Religious Affairs from 1983 to1993) and Nurcholish Madjid (a moderate Muslim intellectual and founder of the *Paramadina* Foundation), Jalaluddin Rakhmat maintains the necessity for continuous exercise of *ijtihad* so that Muslims can adapt to social and cultural changes. Jalaluddin Rakhmat writes: "*Ijtihad* is difficult but necessary."[86] He hastens to add that certain requirements for *ijtihad* mean that not everyone is authorised to undertake such a difficult task. As follower of Shi'ism, Jalaluddin Rakhmat upholds the view that in terms of jurisprudence Muslims can be classified as *mujtahid* and *muqallid* ('follower'). In Shi'i Islam, the laity should follow a specific *mujtahid* known as *marja' al-taqlid.* This *mujtahid* has the attributes of *faqaha* (comprehension of Islamic knowledge) and *'adala* (noble character, firm conviction, sincerity).[87] Since Jalaluddin Rakhmat is not a *mujtahid*, his response to issues of Islamic law is likely to promote the existing views of several 'ulama', while emphasising the necessity of individual choice and the importance of Islamic fraternity. This can be seen clearly in his book, *Jalaluddin Rakhmat Menjawab Soal-soal Islam Kontemporer* (Jalaluddin Rakhmat Answers Contemporary Islamic Problems, 1998a), which is derived from his spontaneous responses to questions posed by audiences at his lectures at the Salman and Al-Munawwarah Mosques (between 1980 and 1998). By not presenting his own legal opinion, Jalaluddin Rakhmat clearly positions himself as a *muqallid* in the field of Islamic law, and his answers generally reflect his adherence to the *Ja'fari* school of Islamic jurisprudence.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat Menjawab Soal-soal Islam Kontemporer not only contains aspects of Islamic law, but also includes aspects of doctrine, Qur'an exegesis, ethics, history and psychology. Besides questions of Islamic law, the book also addresses such problems as *imamate* (the fundamental doctrine of Shi'ism), family planning and love. In his editorial note, Hernowo points out that the idea of Jalaluddin Rakhmat as a Shi'i intellectual may be opposed by certain groups. But Jalaluddin Rakhmat is very capable of coping with the various responses directed to him. Hernowo surmises that Jalaluddin Rakhmat's success in playing the roles of expert in Sufism, Qur'an exegesis, jurisprudence, and philosophy can be attributed to his powers of logic.[88]

Jalaluddin Rakhmat's works have contributed significantly to Muslim scholarship and this form of cultural capital is an important determinant of Islamic leadership in the Shi'i community in Indonesia. Nurcholish

[86] Rakhmat (1988:173-201)

[87] Rakhmat (1986:240)

[88] Hernowo (1998:xxviii)

Madjid once described Jalaluddin Rakhmat as 'a complete intellectual'.[89] This is true. He produces works not only about his technical field of specialisation and Islamic knowledge but also about psychology, education and others. One of his works, *Rekayasa Sosial: Reformasi atau Revolusi?* (Social Engineering: Reformation or Revolution? 1999a) begins with the explanation of what Rakhmat calls the 'intellectual cul-de-sac', namely intellectual fallacies that have to be overcome before social engineering can begin. "It is impossible that there is change to the right direction if fallacies of thinking still trap our mind."[90] With introductory notes presented by Dimitri Mahayana, the book offers revolution as an alternative to *reformasi,* implemented since the fall of Indonesia's New Order regime in 1998. On revolution, Rakhmat writes:

> When the whole nation runs into crisis, all people demand change. The more unbearable the nation is, the more desirable it is that change soon occurs. Revolution emerges as the best strategy. Reformation is considered too slow, while the stomach cannot wait. When corruption has been entrenched in the whole body of the nation, we need total surgical operation, that is, revolution.[91]

Jalaluddin Rakhmat goes on to explain four theories of revolution based on behavioural, psychological, structural, and political schools. Taking from several definitions of revolution, Rakhmat points out its three characteristics: first, multi-dimensional, comprehensive, and fundamental change; secondly, the involvement of a great mass that is mobilised and moves in revolutionary movement; and thirdly, the use of force and coercion. However, he rejects the third characteristic.[92] Rakhmat also suggests certain circumstances which encourage certain tactics to encourage revolution based on specific theories. For instance, according to the behavioural theory, revolutionary circumstances include: impeding the fulfilment of needs of the majority of people, provoking disappointment and anger of the people when they compare their condition with those supported by the regime.[93] But Rakhmat notes that revolution can only be explained not predicted.[94] His ideas on revolution seem to correspond with his appeals for martyrdom, (which he considers to be the peak of wisdom), contained his other works:

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[89] *Kompas* (31/10/1997:15)
[90] Rakhmat (1999a:3)
[91] Rakhmat (1999a:177)
[92] Rakhmat (1999a:190-191)
[93] Rakhmat (1999a:201)
[94] Rakhmat (1999a:211)

> *Shahid* literally means one who witnesses, one who gives evidence. You believe in the truth of Islam and you prove the belief with willingness to die to erect Islam. You know that all kinds of oppression are acts of destroying the words of God, therefore, you prove your knowledge with willingness to sacrifice in fighting oppression. Death witnessing your belief is martyrdom."[95]

With regard to his leadership, Jalaluddin Rakhmat established the *Muthahhari* Foundation in Bandung in 1988. Co-founders include Haidar Bagir, Ahmad Tafsir, Agus Effendi, and Ahmad Muhajir. The foundation, which promotes the slogan: 'enlightenment of Islamic thought', is engaged in *da'wa*, education and publishing. Since 1992, it has organised SMU Plus (Senior High School with attribute Plus),[96] which has attracted students from various parts of the country. Aside from participating in religious circles, Jalaluddin Rakhmat regularly gives religious lectures at Sunday's *pengajian* held at *Al-Munawwarah* Mosque. As previously mentioned, a number of students who have gone on to become Shi'i intellectuals studied religious knowledge at these religious lectures and circles. The recorded sermons from this *pengajian* form the main content of the missionary periodical *Al-Tanwir,* published by the *da'wa* division of the *Muthahhari* Foundation. The foundation has a publishing wing which has produced a number of books including the works of Jalaluddin Rakhmat and of students of SMU Plus. All these activities have made the institution and its leader famous throughout Indonesia.

In 1997, with financial support from Sudharmono, (ex-Vice President of Indonesia during the New Order era), and his family, Jalaluddin Rakhmat founded *Tazkiya Sejati*, a centre for Sufi studies and training in Jakarta. Rakhmat was its director until he left the institution in 2003 following a conflict with Sudharmono's children, Yanti and Tantyo Sudharmono. From 1997 to 2003, *Tazkiya Sejati* organised more than 20 courses on Sufism, attracting participants from Jakarta's upper-middle class, including businessmen, executives, and retired functionaries.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat's status as a leader is supported by the fact that he pioneered the establishment of Indonesia's national Shi'i organisation, IJABI (*Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia*, Indonesian Association of *Ahl al-Bayt* Congregation) in 2000. Since then, Jalaluddin Rakhmat has become the chairman of the advisory council and the most influential figure

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[95] Rakhmat (1991:298)

[96] The attribute 'Plus' is used because, aside from its concentration on the establishment of morality, the school teaches a number of subjects from the national curriculum of the Department of National Education. For more information about this school, see Chapter Five or http://smuth.net/Profile/03-sejarah.asp accessed 18/10/2005.

in the development of the organisation. In the beginning, Rakhmat and other Shi'i intellectuals co-operated with Shi'i *ustadh* in terms of establishing this organisation, but during the process both groups split. While the Shi'i intellectuals under the leadership of Jalaluddin Rakhmat are generally associated with IJABI (which claims to be the umbrella organisation for all Shi'is in Indonesia), the Shi'i *ustadh* have rejected it as a social and religious organisation. IJABI has enjoyed a stable position because it is legally recognised by the Indonesian government through the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat's educational accomplishments - including expertise in Communications, engagement in *da'wa*, educational experience in the *hawza 'ilmiyya* in Qum –, his connections with Shi'i 'ulama' in Iran and elsewhere, his Islamic scholarship and leadership experience in Islamic institutions are all determinants that have contributed to his position as a leader in the Shi'i community in Indonesia. Clearly the most dominant factors are his scholarship in both religious and non-religious sciences and his expertise and skills in Communications and *da'wa,* attributes recognised by most Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals in Indonesia. Jalaluddin Rakhmat has accumulated considerable cultural capital, however, his social capital is not yet powerful enough to promote him to the position of the top leader of the Shi'i community. Nonetheless, even with the fact that the Shi'i *ustadh* reject IJABI, Rakhmat has considerable status as a national Shi'i leader.

The portraits of the three Shi'i leaders, clearly distinguish the divide between the *ustadh* and the intellectuals in terms of formal educational experience and profession. In terms of scholarship, all three have produced scholarly works in differing quantities. Similarly, they have all established Islamic foundations and, with the exception of Husein Shahab, head them. In terms of formal education and profession, the *ustadh* - with their thorough religious knowledge and engagement in religious guidance - are more likely to be recognised as leaders by the Shi'i community at large. That said, education can be formal and non-formal, and the intellectuals gain religious knowledge by means of non-formal education and publishing. Jalaluddin Rakhmat is a distinctive case in that he experienced both non-formal learning to acquire religious knowledge but also engages in *da'wa*. In this respect Rakhmat can be seen as an intellectual-*ustadh*. While his scholarship is the most recognised among the three leaders, he lacks social capital. It is no exaggeration to suggest that he has become the most prominent Shi'i intellectual in Indonesia, but is yet to be recognised as the top Shi'i leader by all groups of the Shi'i community in Indonesia. He still

lacks support from the majority of Shi'i *ustadh* of Arab descendants and Qum alumni. While no single Shi'i leader is recognised, clearly the foremost of the Shi'i figures in Indonesia is Jalaluddin Rakhmat.

CHAPTER THREE

MADHHAB

As a distinct *madhhab* or denomination within Islam, Shi'ism has a complex set of beliefs and practices which set it apart from Sunnism. This chapter deals with the Shi'i teachings as they are understood and practiced by Shi'is in Indonesia - the religious aspect that determines Shi'i identity in Indonesia. Understanding this aspect enables one to distinguish the Shi'is from the Sunnis in terms of basic religious teachings. The chapter commences with an explanation of Indonesian Shi'i understanding of fundamental concepts such as *ahl al-bayt* and *Shi'a* (*syi'ah*, Indonesian), which characterise Shi'ism as a distinct Islamic denomination. There follows a description of the principal concepts of Indonesian Shi'is, namely the belief in the *imamate* and the *Mahdi*. A further section deals with *Ja'fari* jurisprudence and the specific aspects upheld and practiced among Shi'is in Indonesia. This is then followed by a description of some distinctive aspects of Shi'i devotion. Finally, I examine the Indonesian Shi'i interpretation of *taqiyya* and its implementation.

A. The *Madhhab* of *Ahl al-Bayt*

As a stigmatised minority, Shi'is in Indonesia have utilised and popularised neutral Islamic terms or concepts common to all Muslim groups, even though their interpretation and use of such terms are strikingly different from the wider Sunni interpretation and utilisation. Instead of *Shi'a*, the term *ahl al-bayt*, or more precisely the *madhhab* of *ahl al-bayt*, is more commonly used by Shi'is in Indonesia when describing their brand of Islam. In other words, the Shi'is claim to be the followers of *ahl al-bayt*. (Sometimes they call themselves the lovers of *ahl al-bayt*). The term *ahl al-bayt* is frequently used to distinguish Shi'is and Shi'ism from Sunnis or the Sunni *madhhab,* also known as *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a*.[1] The promotion

[1] Rakhmat (1999:178)

of the term *ahl al-bayt* is important in the context of the development of Islam in Indonesia since the term *Shi'a* has negative connotations for most Muslims who regard *Shi'a* as a Muslim sect that deviates from the orthodox teachings of Islam. "Shi'ism will become correct if the term is replaced with *ahl al-bayt*", says Rakhmat.[2] Increasing use of the term *ahl al-bayt* is expected to result in Shi'i beliefs and practices gaining recognition and for Shi'ism to become accepted as a correct Islamic *madhhab,* alongside the Sunni *madhhab*.

Literally, the term *ahl al-bayt* means 'the people of the House', namely the Household of the Prophet Muhammad. Like their fellow Shi'is in other parts of the world, the Shi'is in Indonesia interpret this concept differently to the Sunnis who also include the Prophet's wives among his *ahl al-bayt*. For Shi'is, the concept of *ahl al-bayt* includes the Prophet Muhammad, his daughter Fatima, his cousin and son-in-law 'Ali and his two grandsons Hasan and Husayn, as mentioned in *hadith al-Kisa'* (tradition of the mantle). These figures are also called *ahl al-Kisa'* (people of the mantle).[3] In several Indonesian Shi'i works we find verses of the Qur'an and *hadith* which are used to defend the Shi'i interpretation of *ahl al-bayt*. The most frequently cited Qur'anic verse is the following: "And Allah only wishes to remove all abomination from you, ye members of the Family, and to make you pure and spotless".[4] This is known as the *tathir* (purification) verse. It is said that before this verse was revealed, the Prophet Muhammad took his two grandsons, Hasan and Husayn, his son-in-law 'Ali and his daughter Fatima under a striped cloak and stated: "these are members of my *ahl al-bayt*". The story goes on to say that Ummu Salama, one of the Prophet's wives, asked the Prophet if she was included in the *ahl al-bayt*. He replied that she was not a member of the *ahl al-bayt*.[5] Thus, it is clear that unlike the Sunni interpretation, for Shi'is, the wives of the Prophet Muhammad are not considered to be members of his *ahl al-bayt*.

A second meaning of *ahl al-bayt* is the same as the meaning of the term *'itra*, a concept which encompasses all twelve Imams from Imam 'Ali to Imam Mahdi.[6] Shi'is base this interpretation of *ahl al-bayt* on the *hadith* in which the Prophet stated that God had given the world two safeguards (*al-thaqalayn*, literally meaning 'the two weighty matters'), namely the Qur'an and the Prophet's *'itra* or *ahl a-bayt.* Upholding these safeguards would prevent people from going astray.. In the *hadith,* the two safeguards

[2] Rakhmat (1998:liv)

[3] Husein Al-Habsyi (1991:57)

[4] QS (33:33)

[5] Elryco (2002:55-56)

[6] Husein Al-Habsyi (1991:58-59)

are inseparable. This interpretation contradicts the famous Sunni *hadith* which mentions the Qur'an and *Sunna*.[7] Shi'i figures in Indonesia have provided many versions of the *hadith* of *thaqalayn*, including:

> Verily, I leave you things, if you keep hold of them, you will never go astray after me, one of which is greater than the other: The Book of Allah is like a rope hanging from heaven to earth, and the other is my *itra*, my Household. These two will never be separated from each other until they encounter me at *al-Hawd*. Therefore, be careful as to how you behave towards my two legacies.[8]

This is considered to be one of the most strongly established *hadith*. It is transmitted through various *isnads* (chains of transmission) and in different versions. Ali Umar Al-Habsyi, a Shi'i *ustadh* who teaches at YAPI in Bangil, East Java and grandson-in-law of Husein Al-Habsyi, provides a comprehensive account of the numerous *isnads* and versions of *hadith* of *thaqalayn*, and affirms its validity and authenticity. On rational proof of the obligation to uphold the Qur'an and the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt*, Al-Habsyi writes:

> The Qur'an and *'itra* are called *al-thaqalayn* [the two safeguards] because both are the very valuable bequest of the Prophet left by him to his *umma*. Both are stores of religious knowledge, secrets of God, and sources of information for *shari'a* law. Therefore, the Prophet (upon whom be peace) frequently ordered his *umma* to take knowledge from them, to uphold the guidance bestowed by them, and to make them mirror in the way of life.[9]

Besides the *hadith* of *thaqalayn*, there are many other textual evidences that are considered to be commands to follow and love the *ahl al-bayt*. Another famous one is called the *hadith* of *safina* (ark) which reads: "My Household among you is like Noah's Ark. Whoever embarks on it will be saved and whoever stays behind will drown."[10] All Muslims are obliged to

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[7] A Sunni version of this popular *hadith* reads: "I leave you two things that you will not go astray as long as you uphold them, the Book of God and the Sunna of His Prophet" (Ali Umar Al-Habsyi 2002:337). Although this *hadith* is widely taught and strongly upheld in the Sunni community, it is not narrated in the authoritative Sunni *hadith* books *al-Sahih* of Bukhari, *al-Sahih* of Muslim, *al-Sunan* of Abu Da'ud, *al-Sunan* of Nasa'i, *al-Jami' al-Sahih* of Tirmidhi, and *al-Sunan* of Ibn Majah (the six books). In the Sunni tradition, the term *Sunna* is commonly understood to be the way or deeds of the Prophet Muhammad. It is used interchangeably with the term *hadith* which means a collection of sayings, conducts, and approvals of the Prophet. Both terms are often translated as 'Tradition of the Prophet'.

[8] Ali Umar Al-Habsyi (2002:44). *Al-Hawd* is the pool in Paradise where Muhammad will meet his community on the day of resurrection.

[9] Ali Umar Al-Habsyi (2002:122)

[10] Alwi Husein (1998:38)

follow and love the *ahl al-bayt* who provide authoritative interpretations of the Qur'an after the death of the Prophet. For Shi'is, only those who follow the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt* are the true adherents of Islam who will gain salvation. Sometimes Shi'i figures in Indonesia use the term 'loving devotion to the *ahl al-bayt*'. This is a strategy implemented with the intention of encouraging the Sunnis in Indonesia to more readily accept the Shi'i presence. But the meaning remains the same, that one should adhere to the teachings of *ahl al-bayt*.[11]

Like their brothers in other parts of the world, the Shi'is in Indonesia uses the term *Shi'a* in an entirely positive sense. They hold the view that the group called *Shi'a* has existed since the days of the Prophet Muhammad, referring to the *hadith* in which the Prophet said: "O 'Ali, you and your *Shi'a* will gain victory".[12] On occasions such as at the revelation of the Qur'anic verse which means "those who have faith and do righteous deeds – they are the best of creatures",[13] the Prophet Muhammad is said to have stated that 'the best of creatures' in this case are 'Ali and his *Shi'a* who will be victorious on the day of judgement.[14] In early Islamic history, prominent companions of the Prophet such as Salman, Abu Dhar, Miqdad, and Ammar are known as 'Ali's *Shi'a*. These four companions are also called *al-Arkan al-Arba'a* (the Four Pillars).[15] Following the death of the Prophet Muhammad, this minority group emerged, in particular in response to the historic event in the *Saqifa* (hall) of Bani Sa'ida in Medina. That is, the election of Abu Bakr as the Caliph and successor to the Prophet Muhammad without involving any members of his *ahl al-bayt,* who were occupied with the burial rites for the Prophet's body. After being informed about the election of Abu Bakr, 'Ali and his followers protested, since they recognised the Prophet's bequest for 'Ali to succeed him as leader of the *umma*. The events at *Saqifa* are considered to be the source of the schism within the Muslim *umma*[16] or the first of the great temptations destroying Islamic unity.[17] Rakhmat quotes several historical accounts providing 'Umar's response to 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas' opposition: "By God, I know that 'Ali is the most appropriate of all to become the Caliph but because of three reasons we sideline him. First, he is too young; second, he is tied with the descendants of 'Abd al-Muttalib ['Ali's and the Prophet's grandfather];

[11] Rakhmat (1998:240-242)
[12] Rakhmat (1986:250)
[13] QS (98:7)
[14] Alatas (2002:2)
[15] O. Hashem (1994:246)
[16] O. Hashem (1994)
[17] Rakhmat (1986a:83)

and third, people dislike prophethood and caliphate united in a single family".[18] In Islamic history, the followers of 'Ali - the Shi'is - considered the election which declared Abu Bakr to be the first caliph succeeding the Prophet to be the usurpation of 'Ali's right to the caliphate and contrary to Islamic teachings. This becomes the religious and political background of the establishment of Shi'ism as a distinct *madhhab*.[19]

By affirming that their adherence to the *ahl al-bayt* or the Imams succeeding the Prophet Muhammad, the Shi'is in Indonesia reject the Sunni accusation that the origin of Shi'ism is the product of Abdullah bin Saba'.[20] They consider Abdullah bin Saba' to be a fictitious character, and point to sources which declare the existence of this figure to be invalid. Another argument goes even further, suggesting that the Shi'is reject the notion of Abdullah bin Saba' as the founder of Shi'ism and even curse him. Logic alone would suggest that it is inconceivable that cursers of a figure are his followers. Adherents of a certain religion or sect naturally praise and side with their founder.[21] The Shi'i intellectual M. Hashem writes: "The accusation towards the Shi'is as adherents of Abdullah bin Saba' is not at all supported by history of human experience and is impossibly accepted by logical reason."[22]

The Shi'is in Indonesia argue that they maintain the true teachings of Islam as taught and practiced by the Prophet Muhammad and his *ahl al-bayt*. In Shi'i publications, *da'wa* activities and gatherings, they emphasise the important role of the Shi'is in the maintenance of continuity, purity and eternity of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. For instance, in the commemoration of *'ashura,* carried out in some cities in Indonesia, they chant slogans about the struggle of Imam Husayn against the corruption of Islamic teachings by Yazid - the second caliph of the *Umayyad* dynasty - , by the Umayyad regime as a whole and even by several companions of the Prophet Muhammad. It is believed that when the Prophet lay dying and ordered his writing materials to be brought to him, he intended to write an exhortation confirming 'Ali as his successor. However, some of his

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[18] Rakhmat (1986:250)

[19] Rakhmat (1986:251)

[20] Abdullah bin Saba' was the founder of a sect called *Saba'iyya*. He was said to have converted from Judaism to Islam. He introduced ideas that tend to be considered *ghuluw* (extremism in matters of doctrine) such as the exaltation of 'Ali, the divine character of 'Ali, and the denial of 'Ali's death. In anti-Shi'i accounts he is considered to be the founder of Shi'ism who allegedly ignited the early disputes between companions of the Prophet, which later divided the Muslim *umma* into Sunni and Shi'i.

[21] M. Hashem (1989:37-39)

[22] M. Hashem (1989:39)

companions, including 'Umar, rejected this command. 'Umar is said to have stated that the Prophet was delirious and that the Qur'an was enough for them. In the Shi'i understanding, Shi'ism is the pure interpretation of Islam that was maintained by and transmitted through the Imams. They believe Sunnism to have been corrupted by most of the Prophet Muhammad's companions since his death.

In addition, Indonesian Shi'i figures such as Jalaluddin Rakhmat identify Shi'ism with the *madhhab* of love; based on a love paradigm, with Imam 'Ali as its founder. Rakhmat calls Shi'ism *madhhab alawi*, a term attributed to Imam 'Ali; he calls Sunnism *madhhab umari*, a term attributed to the Caliph 'Umar. Followers of the *Madhhab alawi* believe that all traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, with regard to doctrine, worship and social interactions, must be followed without exception. According to this *madhhab*, all traditions of the Prophet Muhammad are textual proofs since the Prophet is totally immune from major and minor sins and mistakes. His life was led in accordance with the will of God. All stories and interpretations contrary to this principle are rejected in Shi'i Islam. Among the Qur'anic verses that are often cited in support of this interpretation are: "Nor does he [the Prophet Muhammad] say (aught) of (his own) desire. It is no less than inspiration sent down to him."[23] According to Jalaluddin Rakhmat, *madhhab umari*, by contrast, follows the traditions of the Prophet only in relation to doctrine and worship, and not in the worldly aspects. The *madhhab umari* argues that on several occasions the Prophet made mistakes. Sometimes the Prophet was corrected by his companions and then God sent His injunctions to affirm the opinions of his companions.[24] Based on this fundamental difference, Rakhmat provides three characteristics of *madhhab alawi*: first, since it accepts all traditions of the Prophet Muhammad this *madhhab* does not recognise the separation of religion from worldly matters. Second, as shown by the attitude and actions of Imam 'Ali, *madhhab alawi* emphasises the unity of Muslims. Third, it is the *madhhab* of love. This characteristic can be found in the sayings, attitude and actions of the Imams which stress the significance of the Sufi concept of *mahabba* (love). Love is also included in supplications.[25] "Supplications in *madhhab alawi* are filled with love to God. Only in *madhhab alawi* does love to God reach its culmination".[26] Thus, besides being the authentic tradition of Islam, Shi'ism is considered to emphasise the teaching of love. Related to this attribute, Shi'is in Indo-

[23] QS (53:2-3)

[24] Rakhmat (1999:293-294)

[25] Rakhmat (1999:294-295)

[26] Rakhmat (1999:295)

nesia consider Shi'ism to be the *madhhab* of *ukhuwwa Islamiyya* because of its great concern for the importance of Islamic fraternity. Imam 'Ali is believed to have promoted Islamic fraternity and acted in accordance with this principle. In the Shi'i interpretation, the biography of 'Ali provides a full picture of the implementation of the Islamic fraternity in particular and the love paradigm in general.[27]

Shi'is generally consider themselves to be 'the chosen', in contrast to the Sunni majority. According to Enayat,[28] the ethos of refusing to recognise that the majority opinion is necessarily true has become one of the most important distinguishing features of Shi'ism, in addition to differences in doctrine and jurisprudence. The Indonesian statement, *'alhamdilillah kita sudah Syi'ah'* meaning 'Praise be to God, we are already Shi'i' is an expression of their high religious status. While they acknowledge that the Sunnis are Muslim, the Shi'is regard themselves as the true believers. This view is partly derived from the aforementioned statements by the Prophet Muhammad that command the faithful to follow his *ahl al-bayt*, and also his statement that 'Ali and his followers will be victorious on the day of judgement and will enter paradise. Another argument frequently used by the Shi'i community is that the number of people who uphold the truth is usually small, while the majority of people follow popular teachings that have been propagated by means of political force. This last reason corresponds with the minority position of the Shi'i in the world and in Indonesia.

In short, among the Shi'is in Indonesia terms such as *madhhab* of *ahl al-bayt*, *madhhab alawi*, and Shi'ism have been used in an entirely positive sense to denote their brand of Islam (*madhhab*). Regardless of the terms used, Shi'is believe that they adhere to the true teachings of Islam taught by the Prophet Muhammad and transmitted through the Imams. As a distinct *madhhab*, Shi'ism is built upon the fundamentals of religion (*usul al-din*) and the branches of religion (*furu' al-din*) which contain specific elements which differ to Sunnism.

B. Imamate

Like followers of Shi'ism in Iran and other places in the world, Shi'is in Indonesia believe in the five fundamental elements of religion (*usul al-din*). They do not recognise the concept *rukun iman* (six pillars of faith)

[27] Rakhmat (1991)

[28] Enayat (2005:19)

that is common among the Sunnis in Indonesia[29] and which can be found in most Indonesian Sunni theological works. The basic tenets of Shi'ism include *tawhid* (the unity of God), *'adl* (the justice of God), *nubuwwa* (prophethood), *imama* (the imamate), and *ma'ad* (the resurrection). Shi'is in Indonesia agree with the Sunnis on the three tenets, namely the unity of God, prophethood, and the resurrection. Shi'is share a belief in the justice of God with the *Mu'tazilis*, a rationalist theological stream in Muslim history.[30] From a Shi'i perspective, belief in the unity of God, prophethood, and resurrection may be called the fundamentals of religion, while *imamate* and justice are the fundamentals of the *madhhab*. To become Muslim, one must believe in the fundamentals of religion, while to become a Shi'i one must complement this with a belief in imamate and justice.[31]

Like the Sunnis, Shi'is believe in the oneness of God and his perfect and good attributes. *Tawhid*, *(*belief in Divine Unity), is the core of Islamic teachings and for Shi'is it is the basis of their world view.[32] They also uphold the ideas that all the prophets were appointed by God and that Muhammad is the Seal of the prophets and the Chief of all prophets. Shi'is believe that the Prophet Muhammad is infallible. They share with Sunnis a belief in the Day of Judgement; a day when each person will be brought to life again for punishment or reward. Unlike the Sunnis, however, Shi'is place great emphasis on one of God's attributes, *'adl* (justice). Justice is believed to be an intrinsic quality, divine in nature and essential in Shi'ism. God cannot act in an unjust manner because His nature is just. This tenet maintains the consistency of *'aql* (reason) with Islam because *'aql* can judge the justness and unjustness of an act; thus it receives great emphasis in Shi'i Islam.

Shi'is in Indonesia believe that the Qur'an possessed by Muslims today contains all of God's words as revealed through the Prophet Muhammad and that it is the miracle of God granted to the Prophet. It is believed that God protected the originality of the Qur'an so that there would be no additions or subtractions made to it.[33] They also believe in *hadith* as a

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[29] Abu Ammar (2002:37). The six pillars of faith are the fundamental belief system in Sunni Islam. They comprise a belief in God, His Angels, His Holy Books, His Messengers, and the Day of Judgement and in God's decree known as *al-qada* and *al-qadar* (Indonesian, *takdir*).

[30] In Indonesia, the greatest contribution to the rational theology of Mu'tazilism was provided by the late Harun Nasution (1919-1998). For an intellectual biography of this figure, see Muzani (1994) and for an examination of his theological thoughts see Martin and Woodward with Atmaja (1997) and Saleh (2001:196-240).

[31] Khalid al-Walid, interview, (2/7/2002)

[32] Rakhmat (1986:178)

[33] O. Hashem (2002:158), Alatas (2003:5-17)

principal source of Islamic teachings, second only to the Qur'an. Included in the Shi'i interpretation of *hadith* are sayings of the Imams. Thus, *hadith* is defined as all the sayings and conducts of the fourteen infallibles (the Prophet Muhammad, his daughter Fatima, and twelve Imams) even though the sayings of the Imams are not considered to be independent of the sayings, conducts and agreements of the Prophet.[34] This is a consequence of the fundamental Shi'i belief in *imamate*.

The *imamate* is the essence of religion, without which one's belief is never complete. *Imamate* is the fundamental tenet that distinguishes the Shi'i from the Sunni and, therefore, it is unsurprising that this tenet has received greater emphasis in Shi'ism. In other words, the *imamate* is the principal doctrine that divides the Muslim *umma* into Sunni and Shi'i. Unlike the Sunnis, the Shi'is regard *imamate* as a religious matter and Muslims are obliged to establish it. In addition, they believe that the Prophet Muhammad appointed the Imams as his successors:[35] "Imam or leader is the title given to a person who takes the lead in a community in a particular social movement or political ideology or scientific or religious form of thought."[36] In Shi'ism, the title Imam designates a religious, spiritual and political leader who performs the same duties as the prophet. Unlike the Prophet, however, the Imam does not receive divine injunctions. Similar to prophethood, *imamate* is based on divine appointment. In this respect, *imamate* can be seen as a continuation of prophethood. As the Prophet himself was appointed by God, the Imam must be chosen by God through His Messenger. "Thus, the Prophet is God's messenger, the Imam is the Prophet's messenger."[37]

For Shi'is the existence of the Imam is a necessary condition of human existence. This is based on logic regarding human existence. Human society is in need of constant guidance. The position of a leader or ruler is very significant for the continuation of a society. Without a leader, individual rights and duties cannot be realised and consequently, order will vanish from society. Thus, every man requires a leader or Imam. From the theological perspective, the philosophy of the creation of man by God is

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[34] Alatas (2002:11). Corresponding to the six collections of Sunni *hadith*, there are four authoritative collections of Shi'i *hadith*, namely *al-Kafi fi 'ulum al-din* (The Sufficient in the Knowledge of Religion) by Muhammad bin Ya'qub al-Kulayni (d. 940), *Man la yahduruhu al-faqih* (For him not in the Presence of Jurisprudent) by Shaykh al-Saduq Muhammad bin Babuya al-Qummi (d. 991), *Tahdhib al-ahkam* (Rectification of the Statutes) by Shaykh al-Ta'ifa Muhammad al-Tusi (d. 1068), and *al-Ibtisar fi ma ukhtulif fihi min al-akhbar* (Reflection upon the Disputed Traditions) also by al-Tusi (Chittick 1989:16).

[35] Rakhmat (1999:424)

[36] Tabataba'i (1995:173)

[37] Agus Abubakar Al-Habsyi (1984:7)

based on the goal of perfection. To achieve this goal, human beings need God's guidance through his Prophet, but prophethood was ended with the death of Prophet Muhammad. For this reason, Muslims need the Imam to be the guide and authority in matters such as the religious commandments and to provide commentary and interpretation of the Qur'an. In short, humans need the Imam, as the successor to the Prophet, because only with the guidance of the Imam can perfection be achieved.[38]

In Shi'ism reason dictates that every Muslim not only needs the Imam but is obliged to recognise the Imam as well. The Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals in Indonesia also provide several texts that designate this obligation for people to recognise and obey the Imam. The most popular *hadith* on this matter is: "Those who die without knowing the Imam of his time, it is as if he dies in *jahiliyya* [the time of ignorance before the designation of the Prophet Muhammad]."[39] Interpreting the Qur'anic verses and *hadith*, they claim that all worship and obedience to God is useless without recognition of the Imam.[40] Even though someone might believe in the unity of God, His Prophet, resurrection, divine justice and observe Islamic teachings, "he remains in *jahiliyya* as long as he does not recognise the Imam of the time."[41]

Shi'is in Indonesia believe that the Imam must be the best of all men in order that he may guide people. The Imam is the perfect man. There are at least two qualities to being an Imam: First, to be the most pious man, totally surrendering his life to the will of God. Second, the Imam must be the most knowledgeable man. Only with these qualities can the Imam guide people on how to achieve perfection.[42] Thus, in the Shi'i faith, like the Prophet, the Imam must be immune from mistakes and sins. Inerrancy (*isma*) is the power that prevents someone from committing sins and making mistakes.[43] Husein Al-Habsyi explains three aspects of inerrancy: First, inerrancy is the climax of piety because a pious man who always behaves according to the Will of God can protect himself from committing any sins and mistakes. The power of inerrancy can protect him not only from committing sins and mistakes but also from the desire to commit sins and mistakes. Second, inerrancy is a product of knowledge. Knowledge by nature has the power to protect man from being thrown into transgressions and sins and also from being controlled by passions.

[38] Al-Kaff (http://aljawad.tripod.com/arsipbuletin/imamah.htm)

[39] **Rakhmat (1997:427)**

[40] Ali Umar Al-Habsyi (2002:165-166)

[41] Rakhmat (1998:lvi)

[42] Al-Kaff (http://aljawad.tripod.com/arsipbuletin/imamah.htm)

[43] Husein Al-Habsyi (1992a:175)

Third, inerrancy is a consequence of the perfection gained through *ma'rifa* (gnosis) about God being the source of perfection, allowing one to be open for the power of truth and love. Al-Habsyi believed that piety itself may produce a mystical knowledge that can uncover the supernatural aspects of man and creatures: [44]

> Such absolute perfection when it is gained by an *'arif* [Sufi] will flame in his soul the spirit of yearning and loving encouraging him towards the point in which he does not need anything except God alone. He will seek nothing except obedience to all His commands and prohibitions. He becomes abhorrent of what is contrary to His commands and pleasure and what is bad in His view. At that moment, truly a man (with the perfection he has gained) becomes protected from transgressions, so with it he does not prioritise things other than only God's pleasure.[45]

The Prophet and Imams have the quality of inerrancy. This quality can guarantee the validity, truthfulness and the perfection of Islamic teachings. Shi'is argue that if the Prophet and Imams were not infallible, people would doubt their mission and guidance.[46] This quality means that Imams must be followed and obeyed; obedience is an absolute obligation. Besides reason, many verses of the Qur'an and *hadith* are cited in support of Shi'i views on the inerrancy of Imams. The previously mentioned verse of the Qur'an about the purity of *ahl al-bayt* is understood to designate the infallibility of Imams. As is the *hadith* of *thaqalayn,* commanding people to follow the Qur'an and the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt*. Shi'is argue that the Qur'an is protected from all kinds of distortions and mistakes and that there is no question about the Prophet who received and propagated the Holy Book. If the Qur'an is protected, the *ahl al-bayt,* namely the Imams, are also protected. As the *hadith* above states, neither will ever be separated until the Day of Judgement.[47]

Shi'is then, believe that it is inconceivable for people to choose the Imam, quite simply because they do not have the authority to do so. Only God has the authority to appoint the Imam through the Prophet,[48] because only He knows who the most pious and knowledgeable among mankind is. Based on His justice, God pronounces to mankind about the Imams that he appoints.[49] The Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals in Indonesia refer to textual proofs of the appointment of Imams by God. For example, one

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[44] Husein Al-Habsyi (1992a:175-181)

[45] Husein Al-Habsyi (1992a:181)

[46] Anis (http://fatimah.org/artikel/masum.htm)

[47] Alatas (2002:76-78)

[48] Anis (http://fatimah.org/artikel/masum.htm)

[49] Al-Kaff (http://aljawad.tripod.com/arsipbuletin/imamah.htm)

verse of the Qur'an tells how Abraham was appointed as an Imam and how he asked God to choose Imams from his descendants.[50] In addition, they consider there to be many scriptural texts that, along with the obedience to God and His Prophet, command Muslims to obey Imams. The Qur'an reads: "O ye who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you."[51] In the Shi'i interpretation, the term *uli al-amr* (*ulil amri*, Indonesian) namely "those charged with authority" refers to the Imams.[52]

Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals also point to the appointment of 'Ali as the Imam to succeed the Prophet Muhammad, which they say is specifically stated in the Qur'an and *hadith*. One of the Qur'anic verses reads: "Your (real) friends are (no less than) Allah, His Messenger, and the (Fellowship of) believers – those who establish regular prayers and regular charity, and they bow down humbly (in worship)."[53] In their interpretation, the revelation of this verse was aimed at 'Ali bin Abi Talib. One source for this interpretation is that Abu Dhar, a companion of the Prophet, narrated that when he performed the noontime Prayer in the mosque with the Prophet, a person in need entered the mosque and asking for help, but no one gave him anything. 'Ali, who was in the position of genuflection, pointed his finger to the person who then took his ring and left. God praised 'Ali's conduct and revealed the verse.[54] The verse is well-known as the verse of *wilaya* (spiritual investiture). The term *wali* is identical to the term Imam, namely the holder of authority and leadership. They cite both Sunni and Shi'i sources to confirm this interpretation. Ali Umar Al-Habsyi even claims: "books of Sunni Qur'an exegesis and *hadith* are sufficient to prove the truthfulness of the event."[55]

It is also pointed out that historically the Prophet appointed 'Ali as his successor on many occasions, from the early days of his prophethood until his death. This is also congruent with the Shi'i comprehension that the Prophet had great concern for leadership. In each of his military expeditions, the Prophet appointed a leader and each time he left the city he

[50] QS (2:124)

[51] QS (4:59)

[52] In Sunnism, the term *ulu al-amr* refers to 'ulama' or temporal leaders. In line with the Sunni understanding of the concept, at a conference in March 1953, a number of NU 'ulama' bestowed on President Soekarno the title *wali al-amri al-daruri bi al-shawka* (the ruler who at present is in power) that has to be obeyed according to the Qur'anic verse 4:59 (Boland 1971:133).

[53] QS (5:55)

[54] Rakhmat (1991:v), Ali Umar Al-Habsyi (2002:153-154)

[55] Ali Umar Al-Habsyi (2002:154)

appointed a representative. Thus, Shi'is claim that it is inconceivable that the Prophet passed away without appointing his successor. His successor would certainly be the most qualified person, with the capability to lead and guide the Muslim community, namely 'Ali bin Abi Talib.[56] Many *hadith* affirm the Prophet's appointment of 'Ali. One of them suggests that the Prophet appointed 'Ali at the launch of the Tabuk expedition. He said to 'Ali: "Are you not satisfied that your position besides me is the same as the position of Aaron besides Moses except that there will not be another prophet after me?"[57] However, the most famous scriptural text is known as the *hadith* of *Ghadir Khumm* and is said to have been transmitted through numerous *isnads* and in different versions. One version, transmitted by Ahmad from Bara' bin Azib, reads as follows:

> We were in the company of the Messenger of God (upon him be peace) on a journey, then we stopped at Ghadir Khumm. Then, we were ordered to gather and the place under two big trees was cleaned, then he performed noontime Prayer and afterwards he raised 'Ali's hand while saying: "Haven't you recognised that I indeed have the rightful authority on the faithful more than they themselves do?" They answered: "Yes". He went on to say: "Don't you recognise that I indeed have the rightful authority more than each of the faithful himself does?" They replied: "Yes." Then he said: "Whoever (take) me as his *mawla* (master), 'Ali will be his *mawla* (master). Oh God, love whoever takes him master and hinder whoever hinders him." Bara' said: "Afterwards, 'Umar met him and said, 'Congratulations, Oh son of Abi Talib, you have become the master of all the faithful.'[58]

The Prophet is believed not only to have appointed 'Ali as the Imam to succeed him but also to have mentioned the number and names of all the Imams after him. The number is twelve and they all hail from the Quraysh and from the Household of the Prophet Muhammad. This is mentioned in both Sunni and Shi'i traditions, including the most authoritative Sunni *hadith* collections, *al-Sahih* of Bukhari and *al-Sahih* of Muslim. The Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals in Indonesia use both Sunni and Shi'i *hadith* collections to cite the number of Imams after the Prophet. They quote a *hadith* in *al-Sahih* of Bukhari, transmitted by Jabir bin Samurah who said that he had listened to the Prophet's saying that there would be twelve *amirs* (leaders), all of whom would be of the Quraysh. There is also a *hadith,* in *al-Sahih* of Muslim, which states that the affairs of the believers will run well as long as twelve caliphs lead them.[59] Thus, they believe in twelve Imams and they are usually called twelver *Imamiyya* Shi'is.

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[56] Rakhmat (1986:243)

[57] Alatas (2002:60)

[58] Ali Umar Al-Habsyi (2002:155-156)

[59] Rakhmat (1997:432), Ali Umar Al-Habsyi (2002:205-206)

For the Shi'is in Indonesia, there are sound *hadith* designating that the Prophet publicly announced the names of the twelve Imams and each of them declared his successor. The twelve Imams begin with 'Ali as the first Imam, followed by his two sons - Hasan and Husayn - , followed by the descendants of Husayn until the twelfth Imam Muhammad al-Mahdi, the Awaited, who went into occultation. The twelve Imams are: 'Ali bin Abi Talib al-Murtada (d. 40/661), Hasan bin 'Ali al-Zaki (d. 49/669), Husayn bin 'Ali Sayyid al-Shuhada (d. 61/680), 'Ali bin Husayn Zayn al-'Abidin (d. 95/715), Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Baqir (d. 115/734), Ja'far bin Muhammad al-Sadiq (d. 148/766), Musa bin Ja'far al-Kazim (d. 183/800), 'Ali bin Musa al-Rida (d. 203/819), Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Jawad (d. 220/836), 'Ali bin Muhammad al-Hadi (d. 254/869), Hasan bin 'Ali al-'Askari (d. 260/875), and Muhammad bin Hasan al-Mahdi.[60] Today Shi'is recognise Muhammad al-Mahdi as their last and twelfth Imam, to be obeyed by believers. He is the Awaited (*al-Muntazar*) Imam - his appearance is awaited to establish justice in the world.

The belief in *imamate* is a distinguishing feature of Shi'ism. Besides the distinctive Shi'i interpretation of *hadith*, the belief in *imamate* contributes to their distinctive interpretation of jurisprudence. In a nutshell, whole aspects of the Shi'i *madhhab* can be said to be a consequence of their belief in *imamate*. The complexity of the Shi'i *madhhab* is apparent in the notion of Imam Mahdi, explained below.

C. The Mahdi

Shi'is in Indonesia acknowledge that the belief in Imam Mahdi is a complicated matter. This belief in the appearance of Imam Mahdi is shared by all Muslim, both Sunni and Shi'i. Even Judaism and Christianity uphold a belief in the coming Messiah, the saviour of the world. The concept of Mahdism is recognised in all world religions. In fact, in Indonesia a similar concept - *Ratu Adil* (Just King) – promotes the idea of the coming of a figure who will bring justice and prosperity. However, it should be noted that Sunnism and Shi'ism have different interpretations of the belief in Imam Mahdi. A stark difference concerns the birth of Imam Mahdi. While Sunnis believe that he is not yet born, Shi'is maintain that he is already born, is still alive but that he went into occultation. Moreover, Shi'is devote more attention to the belief in Imam Mahdi than Sunnis, since it forms part of their belief system of *imamate*.[61] The main tenets concerning Imam Mahdi are in respect of his existence and his attributes,

[60] Rakhmat (1986:244), Ali Umar Al-Habsyi (2002:210-211)

[61] Rakhmat (1998:lvii)

namely that he is the son of the eleventh Imam, Hasan al-'Askari, that he is the last Imam chosen by God, that he is infallible and that he has complete knowledge of the Qur'an and *hadith*.[62] Abu Ammar writes: "If in these matters you are still in doubt... you cannot be considered as Shi'i yet."[63]

For Shi'is in Indonesia, Imam Mahdi's name is synonymous with the name of the Prophet Muhammad. His name is mentioned in a *hadith* that states: "Judgement day will not happen until the time of a man from my Household whose name is the same as mine."[64] Under the famous title *al-Mahdi* (the rightly Guided), he is mentioned in many *hadith* as the twelfth Imam. He is also mentioned using the titles *Sahib al-Zaman* (the Lord of the Age) and *Imam al-Zaman* (the Imam of this Time). These titles refer to the interpretation that Imam Mahdi is the Imam of the present period, whom all Muslim believers must believe in. This also follows the obligation for believers to have an Imam. His other titles are *al-Khalaf al-Hujja* ('the Substitute of God's Proof'), *al-Qa'im* ('the One who will arise'), *al-Muntazar* (the Awaited), and *al-Tali* ('the Future').[65]

According to Shi'is, Imam Mahdi was born in Samarra, Iraq, in 256/871. His father, the eleventh Imam, Hasan al-'Askari, took care of him until his martyrdom in 260/875. Imam Mahdi succeeded his father after his death, being appointed as Imam around the age of five. This is one of the complicated issues in the belief in Imam Mahdi. For Shi'is, his appointment is a miracle granted by God. Jalaluddin Rakhmat cites Muhammad Bagir Sadr's view that even though Imam Mahdi was only five years old, the then political regime attempted to isolate him from his followers and kill him. "This is evidence that the Imam was very powerful and bright so that he should be taken into consideration."[66]

Then, by Divine Command, Imam Mahdi went into occultation (*ghayba*, Arabic; *gaib*, Indonesian). The Indonesian term *gaib* is understood by Shi'is to mean "the absence of Imam Mahdi among mankind."[67] Shi'is believe in two parts to the occultation: The first is minor occultation (*ghayba sughra*) and the second great occultation (*ghayba kubra*). During the minor occultation the Imam still made contact with people through his special deputies. (During this occultation, which lasted from 260/875 until 329/942, the Imam is believed to have chosen special deputies through

[62] Abu Ammar (2000:149)
[63] Abu Ammar (2000:149)
[64] Abu Ammar (2000:86)
[65] Rakhmat (2001a:4)
[66] Rakhmat (1998:251)
[67] Al-Walid (2004:11)

whom he could communicate and provide guidance to the community of believers). There were four deputies known as *Nawwab al-Imam* (deputies of Imam) or *al-Sufara al-Arba'a* (Four Ambassadors): The first was 'Uthman bin Sa'id al-'Umari. The second, after 'Uthman's death, was his son, Muhammad bin 'Uthman al-'Umari. On his death Husayn bin Ruh Nawbakhti was then appointed and finally, 'Ali bin Muhammad al-Sammari became the deputy after the death of Husayn bin Ruh Nawbakhti. In Shi'i belief, the minor occultation ended with the death of 'Ali bin Muhammad al-Sammari in 942. This was then followed by the great occultation which 'begins and continues as long as God wills'.[68] The above-mentioned *hadith* on Imam Mahdi is used to support the Shi'i argument for the unknown length of this great occultation. But another popular *hadith,* from the Sunni collection of Abu Daud, tells of the long life of Imam Mahdi and his reappearance to fulfil justice in the world: "If there were to remain in the life of the world but one day, God would prolong it until He sends a man from my Household, his name will be the same as mine, he will fill the earth with justice as it was filled with tyranny."[69]

Reason is also used by Indonesian Shi'i leaders to support their belief and interpretation in the occultation of Imam Mahdi and his longevity. *Gaib* (absence) does not mean non-existence and this becomes a reason for Imam Mahdi's existence. *Gaib* may become absolute or relative. The absence of Imam Mahdi is relative in the sense that he is not absent for exceptional persons,[70] namely those who are trustworthy. Shi'is argue that God hides Imam Mahdi from his enemies, that try to execute him even though his followers long for his appearance. They hide him in order to protect him, because he is the last Imam and Imam for a long period of time and the *imamate* that must exist in all periods continues uninterrupted.[71]

The long lifetime of Imam Mahdi is considered to be consistent with ideas of Divine injunction and reason. Shi'is in Indonesia consider this as another miracle granted by God to Imam Mahdi. They also utilise the Qur'anic verses which assert stories of longevity in the past. As mentioned in the Qur'an, the Prophet Noah was 950 years old[72] and 'the People of the

[68] Al-Jufri (2000:72-73), Rahmat (http://aljawad.tripod.com/arsipbuletin/imam-mahdi.htm)

[69] Ali Umar Al-Habsyi (2002:242)

[70] Rakhmat (1998:249-250)

[71] Abu Ammar (2000:35-38)

[72] QS (29:14)

Cape' slept for 309 years.[73] The Qur'an also states[74] that God rejects the claim that Jesus died on the cross. It is believed that the Prophet Jesus is still alive and he will appear after the appearance of Imam Mahdi to ensure justice in the world. Shi'is argue that it is impossible to reconcile a belief in the validity of these Qur'anic verses and the existence of longevity, with a rejection of the belief in the long lifetime of Imam Mahdi.[75] To question this matter is to question God as All-Powerful. Abu Ammar writes:

> ...Long life is a matter that is very possible to occur and even has occurred. And the matter is not a problem for God, the Almighty. Allah creates all [creatures], certainly He can also look after them. Therefore, whoever doubts this power, he should introspect his faith again and see its distance, how far or near it is from materialist people....[76]

Another reason is also given, related to the duty of Imam Mahdi to ensure justice and prosperity in the world. Imam Mahdi was created to live long. This means that he lives in several different ages, witnessing and experiencing various lives and civilisations. With such a wealth of knowledge and experience, Imam Mahdi can fulfil his duty of solving all the problems of this complex world.[77]

As mentioned above, Shi'is believe that Jesus is alive, but hidden, and that he too will reappear after Imam Mahdi. Shi'is in Indonesia believe that he will perform prayer under the leadership of Imam Mahdi. This means that Jesus also recognises the *imamate* of Imam Mahdi. Several *hadith* are used to support their argument, including one which reads: "How do you react when Jesus reappears and his Imam is among you?"[78]

Closely related to the occultation of Imam Mahdi is the emergence of those who claim to be Imam Mahdi. Shi'i leaders in Indonesia warn their followers about these false Mahdis. One of the latest cases in Jakarta is Lia Aminuddin, the founder of the *Salamullah* sect, who declared herself to be Imam Mahdi. This claim is rejected outright by Shi'is in Indonesia because Imam Mahdi must be a man, must have the same name as the Prophet and must be of his descendants.[79] In the history of Muslim society, there have been many others who alleged to be the Mahdi. Mirza Ghulam

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[73] QS (18:25)

[74] QS (4:58)

[75] Abu Ammar (2000:39-40), Rahmat (http://aljawad.tripod.com/arsipbuletin/imammahdi.htm)

[76] Abu Ammar (2000:40)

[77] Rakhmat (1998:252)

[78] Rakhmat (2001a:6)

[79] Rakhmat (2001a:6)

Ahmad, the founder of the *Ahmadiyya* sect in Pakistan, is considered one such false Mahdi. For the Shi'is, aside from the identity of Imam Mahdi, other criteria such as his infallibility, his perfect knowledge of the Qur'an and *hadith* and his fulfilment of justice in the world are used to judge the claims of these false Mahdis.[80]

Another problem related to the occultation of Imam Mahdi is the emergence of a number of Shi'is in Indonesia who claim to have met the Imam or to have been able to communicate with him. This has become a great concern for Shi'i leaders. In the history of Shi'ism, there have been many stories about those who claimed to have met Imam Mahdi. Shi'i figures in Indonesia believe all such claims to be invalid. Khalid Al-Walid, a Shi'i *ustadh* and Qum alumnus, affirms: "those who claimed to have been able to communicate with Imam Mahdi (upon him be peace) are in general liars."[81] He bases this understanding on what is said to be a letter from Imam Mahdi commanding people to be careful of this matter. A part of the letter reads: "Among my *Shi'a* emerged persons who claim to be able to witness me. Be careful, those who claim to be able to witness me before the emergence of al-Sufyani, they indeed are liars." Khalid Al-Walid concludes that matters emerging as a consequence of the occultation of Imam Mahdi, including claims to have met the Imam Mahdi, are considered as test of faith for Shi'is.[82]

The letter indicates one of the signs of the return of Imam Mahdi, namely the appearance of al-Sufyani who will be assassinated by the Mahdi.[83] The Shi'is consider there to be a number of signs indicating the imminent appearance of Imam Mahdi. Most of the signs are based on both Sunni and Shi'i *hadith*. The main sign may be subsumed in the sentence: "the entire world is overwhelmed by tyranny, injustice, disorder, and slaying. The most popular mark proceeding to the appearance of Imam Mahdi is the appearance of the one-eyed *Dajjal* (the Devil, anti-Christ)". Imam Mahdi is believed to be the figure that will kill the *Dajjal*, part of his duty to ensure justice in the world.[84]

For Shi'is in Indonesia, waiting for the appearance of Imam Mahdi is very important. This means belief not only in the existence and *imamate* of

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[80] Abu Ammar (2000:143-145)

[81] Al-Walid (2004:15)

[82] Al-Walid (2004:15)

[83] There are different opinions about who the Sufyani is. One is that he is a descendant of Abu Sufyan (Ma'awiyah's father) who will appear and command armies before the advent of Imam Mahdi.

[84] Al-Jufri (2000:82-102), Abu Ammar (2000:137-142)

Imam Mahdi but also in his monitoring of all human actions.[85] In waiting, people are obliged to obey all God's commands and protect themselves from all He has prohibited. This is called *taqwa* (piety). Then, people have to be convinced that Imam Mahdi sees all their actions, because it said in the Qur'an[86] that God, His messenger and the faithful see all people's behaviours.[87] In waiting for the Mahdi, they plead to be included under his leadership and guidance, and for God to hasten his reappearance. "Let us pray in order that we are united with our Imam, the Lord of the Age, al-Mahdi. We hope we are part of the followers of Imam Mahdi and finally will be assembled by God in the Hereafter together with him and his ascendant the Messenger of God", said Rakhmat.[88] On the longing for the appearance of Imam Mahdi, Jaffar Al-Jufri writes: "Our Imam, the Mahdi, is the one we very much await in the situation of this kind of age, even there is no figure that we trust except him."[89]

Waiting for the return of Imam Mahdi is considered to be a kind of obedience (*'ibadat*) to God, and is understood as a positive philosophical value, rather than a fatalism that makes people surrender to their disposition. If waiting for the return of Imam Mahdi is considered to contribute to a fatalistic attitude, then this kind of waiting is deviating and destructive.[90] Pious deeds are required in order to establish a better future life. For Shi'is, Mahdism, along with martyrdom, becomes a philosophical basis for the establishment of the future Muslim *umma*. Anguish experienced during this obedience to God is, in reality, aimed at forging an idealistic world view to be witnessed by Imam Mahdi.[91]

The return of Imam Mahdi is seen as a series of struggles between good and evil. "And the Mahdi is the symbol of victory for the pious and the believers."[92] Shi'is in Indonesia support their argument with a scriptural text that God has promised this victory.[93] The return of Imam Mahdi is understood as a realisation of God's promise and His gift to the oppressed who will gain authority and leadership in the world.[94]

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[85] Syuaib (1423:2)
[86] QS (9:105)
[87] Abu Ammar (2000:150-151)
[88] Rakhmat (2001a:7)
[89] Al-Jufri (2001:70)
[90] Abu Batoul (1998:68)
[91] Mulyadi (http://aljawad.tripod.com/arsipbuletin/mahdiisme.htm)
[92] Abu Batoul (1998:68)
[93] QS (24:55)
[94] Abu Batoul (1998:68)

In a nutshell, the recognition of the existence of Imam Mahdi and the belief in his return are essential to the Shi'i *madhhab.* Because Imam Mahdi is considered the only true Imam of this day, this belief has a great impact on the entire Shi'i *madhhab*, including on Shi'i jurisprudence, and in particular those aspects that require the presence of the Imam.

D. *Ja'fari* Jurisprudence

In addition to *usul al-din* (fundamentals of the religion) which must be believed by every Shi'i, there is the concept *furu' al-din* (branches of the religion) which becomes a code of conduct for all Shi'is. This parallels the Sunni concept of *rukun Islam* (the pillar of Islam).[95] Basically, *usul al-din* is included in the realm of Islamic doctrine (*'aqida*), while *furu' al-din* is included in Islamic jurisprudence (*shari'a*). There are seven pillars of *furu' al-din*: Prayer, fasting in the month of Ramadan, *zakat* (alms), *khums* (the one-fifth tax), the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca), jihad (the struggle in the way of God) and *amr ma'ruf nahy munkar* (enjoining to do good and exhortation to desist from evil). These seven pillars are called *'ibadat* (acts of worship) and lead to rewards by God. All Shi'is in Indonesia consider these acts of worship to be obligatory. Another part of the jurisprudence deals with social transactions (*mu'amalat*) such as marriage.

Shi'is in Indonesia consider themselves to be followers of *Ja'fari* jurisprudence. This distinguishes them from the majority of Muslims in the country who are adherents of *Shafi'i* jurisprudence. Indonesia's Shi'i leaders frequently affirm that, in general, *Ja'fari* is very close to *Shafi'i*, stating that the difference between *Ja'fari* jurisprudence, *Shafi'i* and the other three Sunni schools of jurisprudence is smaller than the difference between the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence themselves.[96] In other words, there are parallels, in almost all aspects of jurisprudence, between the *Ja'fari* and the four Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence.[97] Although the term *Ja'fari* jurisprudence originates from the name of the sixth Imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq (d. 148/765), it differs in meaning from the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence which contain sets of jurisprudential opinions or the products of *ijtihad* of the founders. Umar Shahab writes:

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[95] In Sunnism there are five pillars of Islam, namely the confession of faith, prayer, fasting in the month of Ramadan, religious tithe, and the hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca.

[96] Adam (2003:44)

[97] Bagir (1995:3). The four Sunni schools of law are Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali, names associated with its classical jurists: Abu Hanifa Nu'man bin thabit (d. 765), Malik bin Anas (d. 792), Muhammad bin Idris (d. 204/820), and Ahmad bin Hanbal (d. 855).

> The term [Ja'fari] does not totally represent a set of opinions or the product of *ijtihad* of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq. Because in the Shi'i view, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, like other eleven Imams, namely (in a series from the first Imam until the last) 'Ali bin Abi Talib, Hasan bin 'Ali, Husayn bin 'Ali, 'Ali Zain al-'Abidin, Muhammad al-Baqir, Ja'far al-Sadiq, Musa al-Kazim, 'Ali al-Rida, Muhammad al-Jawad, 'Ali al-Hadi, Hasan al-'Askari, and Muhammad al-Mahdi, was not a *mujtahid*, but an Imam who had authority in establishing or producing law, *tashri' al-hukm*.[98]

Commonly considered to be a major point of difference between the Ja'fari jurisprudence and the Sunni schools of jurisprudence is the fact that in Shi'ism the gate of *ijtihad* is not closed, whilst in Sunnism it has been closed since the 9th century. *Ijtihad* is a scholarly inquiry to formulate legal opinions from the principal sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an and *hadith*.[99] Although the gate of *ijtihad* is open to anyone, the Shi'i 'ulama' oblige the laymen to imitate a top *mujtahid* known as *marja'* or *marja' al-taqlid* ('source of emulation') who has achieved the authority to serve as a reference for the laymen.[100] The act of emulating the *fatwa* of *mujtahid* is called *taqlid*. The layman who follows the *marja'* is called *muqallid*. Thus, in *Ja'fari* jurisprudence, Muslims are usually classified as being either *mujtahid* or *muqallid*. A *mujtahid* worthy of emulation must fulfil certain requirements: he must be male and still alive; his product of *ijtihad* must be authorised; he must be just, pious, ascetic, tenacious and free from committing sins. A *marja' al-taqlid* usually publishes his result of *ijtihad* on subjects ranging from acts of worship to political matters. This is commonly called *risala 'amaliyya* ('tract on practice'), and it becomes religious code for his *muqallid*.[101] The relationship between *marja'* and *muqallid* is called *marja'iyya*. Rakhmat explains:

> In Ja'fari jurisprudence, we may only perform religious practices by following a living *marja'*, a living man of Islamic learning. The man of Islamic learning publishes his jurisprudence book. Then, we read his *fatwa* because in the Ja'fari jurisprudence it is obliged to imitate [*taqlid*]. So a laymen must look for his man of Islamic learning whom he must follow. Then, he performs religious practices according to the *fatwa* of the imitated man of Islamic learning. Thus, the Ja'fari jurisprudence is outdated [...] because it still maintains *taqlid*, or the Ja'fari jurisprudence has been progressive, that is, it only relies on someone who has the authority, has specialisation in his field.[102]

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[98] Umar Shahab (2001:x)

[99] Al-Kaff (http://aljawad.tripod.com/artikel/ijtihad.htm)

[100] Umar Shahab (2001:xi)

[101] Umar Shahab (2001:xii)

[102] Rakhmat (1998:383)

Besides this reasoning, there are many textual evidences cited in support of the obligation of *taqlid* for laity. These texts are usually the same as those used to designate the obligation of obedience to the Imams. Another common scriptural text is: "If ye realise this not, ask of those who possess the message."[103] An Indonesian Shi'i writer affirms: "It is very clear that this verse designates the obligation of *taqlid* for the laity that have not achieved the position of *mujtahid*."[104] Although the term *ulu al-amri* and *ahl al-dhikr* (those who possess the message') in these two Qur'anic texts principally refer to the Imams, the Shi'i view is that during the great occultation, they designate the 'ulama' who have thorough knowledge of the Qur'an and *hadith*, namely *wali faqih* or *marja' al-taqlid*.[105] It is believed that, during this occultation, Imam Mahdi instructed the faithful to follow 'ulama' or jurists who are devoted to the field of religion and obedient to all God's commands.[106] Furthermore, there is a well-known *hadith* which states: "The 'ulama' are the heirs of the prophets", justifying the compulsion of *taqlid* for laity. Thus, each Shi'i is obliged to fulfil his religious obligation by practicing either *taqlid* or *ijtihad* in accordance with his position as *muqallid* or *mujtahid*.

All Shi'is in Indonesia are *muqallids.* Most of them take the Grand Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i to be their *marja'*, the present *wali faqih* in Iran.[107] A few follow the Grand Ayatollah 'Ali Sistani from Iraq, [108] and

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[103] QS (16:43)

[104] Abu Qurba (2003:15)

[105] Abu Qurba (2003:16-17)

[106] Shodiq (1998:29)

[107] 'Ali Khamene'i was born in Mashhad, Iran, 15 July 1939. He studied at *hawza 'ilmiyya* of Qum. He was a key figure in the Islamic revolution and close confidant of Khomeini. In 1979 he was appointed by Khomeini to the powerful position of Tehran's Friday Prayer Leader. From 1981 to 1989, he was elected President of Iran and, since Khomeini's death, he has become the Supreme Leader as elected by the Assembly of Experts on June 1989. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ali_Khamenei). In 1994, he was nominated as a *marja' al-taqlid*. For more information visit the website of the office of Supreme Leader (http://www.leader.ir) and his official website (http://www.khamenei.ir).

[108] 'Ali Husaini Sistani was born on 4 august 1930 in Mashhad, Iran, to a family of religious scholars. After studying in his hometown, he moved to Qum where he studied *fiqh, usul al-fiqh* and other religious knowledge under the guidance of renowned ayatollahs, including Hujjat Kuhkamari and Allamah Husayn Tabataba'i. He then moved to Najaf, Iraq, to study under, among others, the Grand Ayatollah Khoei (d. 1992) and Muhsin al-Hakim (d. 1970). He is heavily influenced by the prominent quietist scholar Grand Ayatollah Khoei who made him a *marja al-taqlid* in the 1960s. Before his death in 1992, Khoei named Sistani as his successor. Since the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, he has played an increasingly political role in Iraq (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ali_Sistani). Unlike Khomeini, and his successor Khamene'i, Sistani adheres to a quietist tradition of Shi'ism, envisaging the participation of 'ulama' in the public and legal spheres while dis-

others emulate the Grand Ayatollah Bahjat Fumani from Iran.[109] A very small number follow the liberal Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah from Lebanon.[110] Efforts have been made, particularly among the Shi'i *ustadh* of the Qum alumni, to encourage their followers to imitate 'Ali Khamene'i. This is seen as advantageous because it combines *marja'iyya* and *wilaya* (sovereignty) in one person. The Shi'i writer, Maulana, praises God because, in Khamene'i, Muslims today are blessed with a person who is both *wali faqih* and *marja'* and whose position is *a'lam* (most knowledgeable). Moreover, he states that it is obligatory and customary to follow Khamene'i because of his competence and superiority in knowledge.[111] Ahmad Baragbah points out:

> In Indonesia in particular, we actually do not have any sufficient reason to refer to other *maraji'* than 'Ali Khamene'i. This is just exactly our strength and pride because the exemplary figure is complete.... Thus, to me, it is very odd if there are still persons who question whether there are others more *a'lam* than 'Ali Khamene'i. What are the reasons? The 'ulama' who have obvious commitment in the struggle for Islam and in the interest and benefit of society assert that to choose 'Ali Khamene'i as *marja'* is the most beneficial.... In the meantime, we need the legal opinion on actual matters. And this means that we need a *marja'* who masters new development and society. Others say that we need law regarding international matters. Therefore, it seems that nobody more reasonable and proper than the Grand Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i.[112]

Regardless of the different choice of *marja'*, there is no difference of opinion among *mujtahid* in terms of the basic obligatory ritual practices. In other words, generally the outcome of *ijtihad* differ only in terms of the details of ritual practices. The main items of *'ibadat (*prayers, fasting, *zakat* and the hajj) do not differ from the *'ibadat* as understood and observed by the Sunni majority in Indonesia. The following description deals with se-

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couraging their involvement in the state (Rahimi 2004). Sistani has a website - www.sistani.org - in a variety of languages, including Indonesian.

[109] Muhammad Taqi Bahjat was born in 1915 in Fuman, Iran and began his religious education in his hometown. In 1929 he went to Qum and moved to Karbala and then Najaf, Iraq, to study under renowned 'ulama'. In 1944 he returned to Qum to study under Ayatollah Burujerdi and Hujjat Kuhkamari (http://www.al-shia.com/html/eng/ser/ulama/ola-behj_h.htm).

[110] Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah was born in Iraq in 1935 and studied in Najaf under renowned 'ulama', including the Grand Ayatollah Khoei and Muhsin al-Hakim. He moved to Lebanon in 1966 and is alleged to be the spiritual leader of Hisbullah (*hisb Allah*, party of God). Several studies on his ideals and roles in Lebanon have been conducted. For his theological thought, see Abu-Rabi (1996:220-247). His website is http://www.bayynat.org.lb (in Arabic, English, and French) and contains his *fatwas* and thoughts.

[111] Maulana (1998:32)

[112] Ahmad Baragbah, interview, *An-Nashr* (14/1998:53-54)

veral aspects of *'ibadat* and *mu'amalat* that are understood and performed by the Shi'is in Indonesia, and in particular those aspects which differ from Sunni jurisprudence.

In terms of obligatory prayer, Shi'is in Indonesia share a belief with the Sunnis that there are five kinds of Prayers, consisting of 17 *raka'at* (units of Prayer), which must be observed every day: Dawn (*Subh*), Noon (*Zuhr*), Afternoon (*'Asr*), Evening (*Maghrib*), and Night (*'Isha'*). Like Sunnis, Shi'is consider this obligatory Prayer to be a very important aspect of *'ibadat*, and it is not to be abandoned under any circumstances. For the Shi'is, however, it is permissible to run together the Noon, Afternoon, Evening and Night Prayers. This means that Shi'is may perform obligatory Prayers on three separate occasions in a day. The goal of consolidating Prayers is to lessen the burden for Muslims[113], so that the obligatory Prayers are never missed. The combining of Prayers is seen as more appropriate in the more complex life of modern society. In addition, the observance of daily Prayers by Shi'is in Indonesia tends to be individual rather than congregational. This also corresponds to the fact that they do not place emphasis on the importance of performing the Friday Prayer. Although, like the daily Prayers, the Friday Prayer is obligatory, the significance of observing it is diminished with the occultation of the twelfth Imam. The Shi'i interpretation allows for a choice between observing either the Friday Prayer or the ordinary Noon Prayer, specifically during this occultation of Imam Mahdi, who is the true leader of the Friday Prayer. There are numerous recommended Prayers, (besides obligatory Prayers), so that the number of Prayers in a day totals 51 *raka'at*. Shi'is consider this to be the true teaching of the Prophet.[114]

The main recitations constituting Prayer are similar between Sunnism and Shi'ism, but there are differences in terms of recommended utterances and movements in Prayer. The most marked difference is the position of straight hands during the standing phase of Prayer. While Shafi'i jurisprudence recommends standing with folded arms, this is forbidden in the Indonesian Shi'i *madhhab*. It is said to invalidate the Prayer, except during the practice of *taqiyya*. Another distinctive Shi'i feature is that during the prostration, Shi'is place their forehead on earth or paper, but never on carpet. They believe that prostration must be upon things which grow out of the earth such as wood, leaves or stone. Their preference is for a block of baked mud, taken from the earth of Karbala, known as *turba*. In their view, "the earth of Imam Husayn (upon him be peace) (the earth of

[113] Alatas (2002:114)

[114] Syarif Hidayatullah Husein (2001:90)

Karbala) is sublime earth. Therefore, prostration on the earth of Karbala is more excellent than prostration on common earth."[115]

Another minor difference is in relation to ablution (*wudu'*) as a requirement for the validity of Prayers. The Shi'is wipe the upper part of their feed instead of washing them. Furthermore, in the call to Prayer (*adhan*) they include the phrase 'come to the best of actions', which they consider to be part of the original *adhan,* omitted on the command of the Caliph 'Umar. Another phrase added to the Shi'i *adhan* is 'I bear witness that 'Ali is the Wali Allah' ('friend of God'). This recommended phrase is uttered after the phrase 'I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God.'

A specific kind of '*ibadat* observed by Indonesian Shi'is is *khums*, the one-fifth tax, based on a Qur'anic text.[116] It is considered an individual obligation, because in any material benefits gained by a person there are rights of others as prescribed by God.[117] They pay *khums* as an annual tax of one-fifth of their wealth at the end of every year. Like *zakat* (alms), *khums* is paid to their own *marja' al-taqlid* through his deputies in Indonesia. For example, Jalaluddin Rakhmat and Ahmad Baragbah are representatives of 'Ali Khamene'i. Among the duties of these representatives is the collection and distribution of the *zakat* and *khums*. The *khums* is distributed for Islamic *da'wa* and to orphans, the needy and the *Sayyid* travellers, (who, according to *Ja'fari* law, are not allowed to receive *zakat*). It is pertinent to note that *khums* serves a very important function in the development of the Shi'i community in Indonesia.

In terms of social transactions, *mut'a* (temporary marriage) is a specific practice of marriage in Shi'ism and something which has become a very controversial matter in Sunni-Shi'i relations. Sunnis forbid this kind of marriage, considering it to be prostitution. For Shi'is in Indonesia, this type of marriage is considered permissible as it was practiced during the Prophet Muhammad's lifetime. They argue that it was Caliph 'Umar who prohibited this marriage. Scriptural text is cited in support of the legitimacy of *mut'a*. The Qur'anic verse that most Shi'is in Indonesia memorise in this regard is: "Seeing that ye derive benefit from them, give them their dowers (at least) as prescribed."[118] In addition to this, rational proofs are also provided. For Shi'is, the goal of marriage is to permit sexual relations in accordance with God's commands:

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[115] Ba'abud (2002:45)

[116] QS (8:41)

[117] Turkan (http://aljawad.tripod.com/arsipbuletin/khumus.htm)

[118] QS (4:24)

> Actually, marriage is no more than the fulfilment of biological need of a person that, if seen from the side of living creature (organism), which emerges at a certain age and Islam as a religion that is created by the Creator of mankind understands very much that condition and for it Islam establishes pretty clear and simple regulations, one of which is *mut'a*. This is established merely in order for man to get married and desist from fornication because the biological need has existed since the creation of mankind, it is a characteristic along with another characteristic, namely the reluctance to carry a heavy burden.[119]

The legitimacy of *mut'a* is also demonstrated by the significance of its teaching. It is seen as the preservation of the vital interests of people because, while fornication is strongly forbidden in Islam, in certain circumstances permanent marriage does not satisfy the sexual desires of men and a permanent marriage cannot be undertaken by certain segments of society. *Mut'a* then becomes an alternative. Jalaluddin Rakhmat provides five significances, namely to protect religion (*hifz al-din*), mind (*hifz al-'aql*), wealth (*hifz al-mal*), soul (*hifz al-nafs*) and progeny (*hifz al-nasl*). He argues that *mut'a* serves as an alternative way for numerous people, such as students, who for various reason cannot engage in permanent marriage. *Mut'a* allows them to obey all the commands of Islam and remain free from fornication. According to Rakhmat, children are protected, because a woman married by way of *mut'a* is a legitimate wife. *Mut'a* also protects mankind from mental and physical illness. On the significance of *mut'a* in guarding wealth, Rakhmat points out that *mut'a* ensures that widows will receive material assistance from rich men, who in return can fulfil their sexual desire.[120] This significance is reasonable because marriage for economic motivation is permissible in Shi'i Islam.[121]

Although the procedure of this marriage is simple, Shi'is in Indonesia consider that a marriage contract performed between a man and woman, with a certain amount of dowry, is valid even if there is no witness and *wali* ('man responsible for woman's marriage'),[122] two things which are required in Sunnism. Due to its permissibility and its simplicity, a number of Shi'is in Indonesia practice this type of marriage alongside their permanent marriage. But the practice is secret because *Mut'a* is not legally recognised by the government and religious authorities in Indonesia. A few Shi'is criticise those who frequently practice this kind of marriage for following their sensual impulse while ignoring the significance of morality. They argue that although *mut'a* is legitimate, there is no obligation to

[119] Hidayatullah Husein Al-Habsyi (2002:173)

[120] Anam (1998:59-64)

[121] Hidayatullah Husein Al-Habsyi (2002:176)

[122] Rakhmat (1997:242)

perform it. It seen as on a par with divorce, which is also legitimate, but is certainly not obligatory. The legitimising of *mut'a* is an attempt to preserve the originality of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.[123]

Food is another distinctive aspect of *Ja'fari* jurisprudence practiced by Shi'is in Indonesia. Even though, in general, Shi'is and Sunnis share similar views on the lawfulness of extra food, there are certain foods that are forbidden in Shi'ism. The first instance is that Shi'is do not eat fish without scales. This is because, in *Ja'fari* jurisprudence, only sea animals with scales are lawful. Secondly, Shi'is in Indonesia do not eat food that have been touched by non-believers. This is because in *Ja'fari* jurisprudence non-believers, *khawarij* (seceders from 'Ali's following) and *nawasib* (those who hate the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt*) are considered to be impure (*najis*), and every thing impure is considered unlawful. Jalaluddin Rakhmat explained that he, like many Shi'is, has experienced difficulties living in non-Muslim countries, in respect of food prepared in accordance to *Ja'fari* jurisprudence:

> At the time I was in Germany. I did not want to eat the cooking that has been touched by hands of disbelievers. At first, I chose fruits. When I saw the fruits taken by hands without gloves, I looked for bread. I thought that bread is made in factories. And in an edge of the station in Frankfurt I saw a disbeliever making bread. His hands – without gloves – moulded loafs of bread that will be baked. That day I felt hunger.[124]

The aspects of *Ja'fari* jurisprudence described above clearly indicate features of Shi'i religious life which are different from the Sunni's. By and large, Shi'is in Indonesia practice these aspects of jurisprudence at home or in their own institutions, but most of them still hide such practices from the public. With the teaching of *taqiyya*, this is permissible.

E. Aspects of Shi'i Piety

In addition to aspects of jurisprudence mentioned above, there are other aspects of devotion that constitute a distinguishing feature of Shi'i religious life. Piety is considered to be more than just the formal legal aspect of religion. In this regard, aspects of Shi'i devotion are very similar to aspects of devotion in Sufism and this makes Shi'ism very close to Sufism. The aspects include daily, weekly and yearly preferred rituals. The daily ritual consists of numerous optional prayers, including those conducted

[123] Khalid Al-Walid, interview, (3/7/2002). On the practice of *mut'a* and its consequences, see Marcus and Feillard (200).

[124] Rakhmat (2002:ix-x)

before and after five kinds of obligatory prayers. There are other recommended devotional acts succeeding the obligatory prayers, including reciting certain chapters of the Qur'an, uttering *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and *do'a* (supplication). This activity is commonly called *ta'qib* of prayer and is considered to be a way of achieving the perfection of obligatory prayer.

Besides prayer, *do'a* (supplication) is strongly recommended in Shi'ism and is a feature of religious life in the Shi'i community in Indonesia. The number of supplications in Shi'i prayer are far greater than those in Sunni prayer, partly because there are specific prayers attributed to each of the fourteen infallibles. By reciting prayers the great beauty of Arabic is also emphasised in the Shi'i community. Included among numerous Shi'i prayers is *salawat* (invocation) to the Prophet Muhammad and his *ahl al-bayt.* This is more frequently uttered among Shi'is in Indonesia than among Sunnis. In all Shi'i gatherings, the *salawat* is reverberated. The most common formula is: "O God, bless Muhammad and the family of Muhammad". Besides being commended in some scriptural texts, the recitation of *salawat* is considered to be an expression of love for the Prophet Muhammad. It is believed that the intensive recitation of *salawat* contributes to becoming closer to the Prophet in the hereafter. It is also believed that the Prophet listens to *salawat* being recited and that he is even present among those who recite *salawat,* because the Prophet's soul is considered to be alive.[125]

Another kind of Shi'i prayer is known as the *kumayl* prayer, and it is commonly performed on Thursday nights after the Night Prayer. Nearly all Shi'i institutions in Indonesia organise this weekly prayer activity. It is usually performed in congregation, led by an *ustadh* who also delivers a sermon. This gathering is commonly called *majlis kumayl* (the gathering of *kumayl*), and it lasts for several hours. This prayer is considered to be one of the best supplications of the first Imam 'Ali bin Abi Talib. The prayer is called *kumayl* because it is believed to have been transmitted by Imam 'Ali's faithful companion, Kumayl bin Ziyad.[126] The importance of this prayer in Shi'ism is indicated by the belief that Imam 'Ali told Kumayl bin Ziyad to recite it at least once in his lifetime. It contains praise to God and supplication for forgiveness, lamentations, remorse and admission of sins. Its message is so deep and intense that all those who recite it can hardly remain dry-eyed. During the recitation, all participants of the *kumayl* gathering shed tears and cry collectively.

[125] Rakhmat (1994:289-304)

[126] Al-Muhdhar (1998:1)

In addition, there is a prayer called *tawassul*, which is also well-known among traditionalist Sunnis in Indonesia. "The *tawassul* prayer is the prayer supplicated to the Almighty God by uttering names of purified persons on the side of God or persons having high position on the side of God as intermediaries."[127] It is a prayer to God through intermediaries. A textual proof that is usually cited in support of practicing *tawassul* is: "O ye who believe! Do your duty to Allah, seek the means of approach unto him, and strive with might and main in His cause: That ye may proper."[128] In addition to this verse, many *hadith* are cited in support of the validity of the teaching and practice of *tawassul* as upheld by the Prophet's companions. Rakhmat writes:

> We perform *tawassul* to him [the Prophet] and to all pious servants of God by imitating the example of the Prophet (may God bless him and grant him salvation).[129]

Unlike the Sunni version of *tawassul*, the *tawassul* prayer in Shi'ism is mainly directed to the names of the fourteen infallibles: the Prophet, his daughter Fatima, and the twelve Imams. For Shi'is in Indonesia, making these fourteen infallibles intermediaries in supplication to God is reasonable because no other people are superior to them in terms of piety, knowledge and in the struggle for the establishment of Islam.[130] The *tawassul* prayer can be performed either on Tuesdays, or as a part of other kinds of Shi'i prayers. In the *kumayl* gathering, the *tawassul* prayer is usually uttered before the reciting of the *kumayl* prayer. In the *tawassul* prayer, each name of the infallibles is uttered, from the Prophet Muhammad to the twelfth Imam. Usually, by the time the name of Husayn is uttered, crying and sobbing will have begun in the gathering.

A practice closely related to *tawassul* is *tabarruk*, which literally means the taking of blessing. It relates to the taking of the blessing from the Prophet Muhammad, the Imams and all other pious servants of God. This practice is considered to have a strong basis in Qur'anic texts and *hadith*. One of the Qur'anic verses tells how the Prophet Joseph asked his brothers to cast his shirt over his father's face. His father was the Prophet Jacob who had blind eyes, when the shirt was removed, Jacob's could see.[131] In addition, many kinds of *tabarruk* are considered to have been practiced by the Prophet's companions, including *tabarruk* using water, using the

[127] Al-Muhdhar (1998:42)
[128] QS (5:35)
[129] Rakhmat (2001:188)
[130] Al-Muhdhar (1998:42-43)
[131] QS (12:93, 96)

Prophet's hair, his dress or the sand of his tomb. In *tabarruk* using water, for instance, the Prophet's companions are said to have competed to get the remains of the water used by the Prophet for ablution.[132] *Tabarruk* is believed to give benefits both in this world and in the hereafter. Jalaluddin Rakhmat writes: "The blessing of the Prophet (May God bless him and grant him salvation) guides us to gain prosperity in the world and in the hereafter. It can cure physical and psychical illnesses and save us in the hereafter."[133] *Tabarruk* is also considered to be a way of expressing loving devotion to the Prophet Muhammad, the Imams, and other pious people. With respect to *tabarruk*, Shi'is in Indonesia attempted to make contact with Shi'i 'ulama' from Iran and other. When Ayatollah Ali Taskhiri finished his religious lecture at the ICC of Al-Huda in Jakarta on 20 February 2004, nearly all those gathered tried to shake hands with him. In addition, I was informed that when Jalaluddin Rakhmat visits the Shi'i group in Makassar, South Sulawesi, his sandals and toothbrush are usually taken by members of the group as a way of taking his blessing.

In addition to these practices, there are a great number of commemorations conducted by Shi'is in Indonesia. These include commemorations related to important events such as the births and deaths of the fourteen infallibles. In this regard, Shi'is share with Sunnis the annual celebration of *mawlid* (the Prophet's birthday)[134]. It is a widely observed celebration as it is also a national holiday. For Shi'is in Indonesia, *mawlid* is another way to express their love and devotion to the Prophet. Accordingly, the celebration or commemoration of the births and deaths of other infallibles are also considered to be a way of expressing devotion to them.

The most significant is the commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Husayn. Husayn bin 'Ali, the third Imam, was murdered in Karbala, on 10 Muharram 61 (10 October 680). The commemoration, known as *'ashura,* is held on every tenth of Muharram. It is held in every city and town in Indonesia with a large population of Shi'is. Since *reformasi,* the commemoration is publicly celebrated.

'Ashura is also celebrated among certain Sunni groups throughout Indonesia. However, its pattern differs to the *'ashura* of the Shi'is. The most noticeable difference in Sunni *'ashura* is the cooking and offering

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[132] Rakhmat (2001:209-224)

[133] Rakhmat (2001:225-226)

[134] For the origins and early development of the celebration of this Muslim festival, see Kaptein (1994). One of his conclusions is that the celebration of *mawlid* is originally a Shi'i tradition, first held in the 11th century by a Fatimid caliph in Egypt (Kaptein 1994:28-29).

of *bubur sura* (*sura* porridge),[135](alongside fasting which is recommended in Sunni Islam). Shi'is do not practice the cooking of *bubur sura*, nor do they fast. For Sunnis, the Prophet Muhammad teaches that *'ashura* fasting is thanksgiving for the victory of several prophets of God.[136] For Shi'is, *'ashura* fasting is considered as *bid'a* (religious innovation) and forbidden in Islam. They argue that fasting is a product of false Islamic teachings by the *Umayyad* regime. When the Shi'is commemorated the martyrdom of Husayn as a day of mourning and a symbol of their struggle against tyrants, the Umayyad regime is said to have turned it into a day of thanksgiving, (and they are said to have produced *hadith* to justify this change). In the eyes of Indonesian Shi'is, the Sunni version of *'ashura* fasting is the product of Umayyad regime.[137]

Generally, *'ashura* rituals in Indonesia consist of four main activities: Religious lectures, *ma'tam* (chest-beating), the recitation of *maqtal* (story of the massacre of Husayn and his following) and the recitation of the *ziyara* (visitation) prayer. As it is a mourning commemoration, participants usually wear black cloth. Another attribute is belief in the firm principle and rightful position of Husayn in his struggle for Islam. *'Ashura* banners are carried, frequently saying: "Indeed Husayn is the light of guidance and the ark of victory." Lectures are held, dealing with the struggle of Imam Husayn and its relevance to contemporary conditions of Muslim society. One of the purposes is to encourage the spirit of martyrdom, as modelled by Imam Husayn. *Ma'tam* is chest-beating in accompaniment to a mournful hymn, performed by participants under the direction of an *ustadh*. This is an expression of the sense of sorrow, injustice and readiness to sacrifice. However, this practice is notably absent in the *'ashura* gatherings held by Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his colleagues. The recitation of *maqtal* by an *ustadh* is the climax of grief, shedding of tears and crying. It is the presentation of classical narratives about the brutal massacre, by thousands

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[135] *Bubur sura* is rice flour porridge with coconut milk and contains various foodstuffs including vegetables, beans, peanuts, potatoes, corns, fish, meat, and eggs. In Cirebon, West Java, it is distributed to neighbours and close kin (Muhaimin 1999:109).

[136] The victorious events upheld in Sunnism include God's granting of His grace to Adam and Eve when they requested repentance after being thrown out of paradise; God's endowing of Henoch (Idris) with noble position; Moses' receiving a revelation from God in the Sinai desert; Moses' escape from the Pharaoh's chase and the Pharaoh being drowned in the Red sea; Noah's arrival on land after the long and severe flood; Abraham's escape from being burned by King Namrud of Babylon; Joseph being freed from jail and clearing his name in the rape of Zulaikha, the then Egyptian king's wife; Jacob's recovery from serious eye disease; Jonas' escape from the belly of a sea monster and David and Solomon gaining the positions of king and apostle of God (Muhaimin 1999:108).

[137] Rakhmat (1997:324)

of soldiers of the *Umayyad* regime, of Imam Husayn, his family and loyal supporters, (numbering about 70 people including women and children). The main themes of *maqtal* include the brutality and inhumanity of the tyrants, in particular the Caliph Yazid and his soldiers, versus the courage and adherence to the rightful principles and martyrdom of Imam Husayn and his following. The recitation of *maqtal* in a sad tone and full emotion can produce a very real collective shedding of tears and crying. The last part of the commemoration is the recitation of the *ziyara* prayer, led by an *ustadh* and followed by participants.

Another commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Husayn, widely practiced by Shi'is in Indonesia, is called *arba'in*, namely the 40th day of his martyrdom. It is held on the 20th of Safar (the second month of Muslim calendar), 40 days after the conclusion of the *'ashura* ritual. Unlike *'ashura,* which is also celebrated by certain Sunni groups, *arba'in* is only commemorated by Shi'is. Its pattern is very similar to the pattern of *'ashura* and includes religious lectures, *ma'tam*, the recitation of *maqtal* and the recitation of *ziyara*. Both rituals clearly have similar aims.

'Ashura and *arba'in* are two of the most important Shi'i commemorations held in Indonesia. This is because Shi'is consider the martyrdom of Imam Husayn to be the most significant tragedy not only of the Muslim *umma* but also of mankind at large. The tragedy also indicates the firm adherence to principle and strong loyalty to leaders.

> As a tragedy, *'ashura* is a witness to us about the climax of human tyranny and cruelty of a regime, which have no comparison in history. A grandson whom the Prophet frequently called his son, his beloved, and young master of paradise, was murdered cruelly under the heat of the barren plain of Karbala. The martyrdom of Imam Husayn and the loyalty of his followers are symbols of the existence of golden sons in those days, who strongly opposed a tyrannical regime.[138]

The tragic events of Karbala are seen to contain a great noble dimension, namely the struggle to gain real consciousness of the meaning of life. "Struggle for liberating mankind from oppression is the real life even though the body is already buried."[139] In addition, Imam Husayn's sacrifice is considered to be greater than the Prophet Abraham's sacrifice, in that Abraham was commanded to slaughter his own son whilst Husayn sacrificed his own life in his struggle.[140] Husayn's sacrifice aimed to establish the truth of Islam and justice as taught by the Prophet Muham-

[138] *Suara Ummah* (1/3/2004:72)

[139] *Suara Ummah* (1/3/2004/72)

[140] Mahayana (2003:8)

mad. To follow Husayn's example of sacrifice for truth and justice is one of the lessons acquired from the commemoration of his martyrdom.[141] The appeal for sacrifice is usually emphasised during this commemoration and is illustrated by the famous Shi'i slogan: "Every day is *'ashura* and every place is Karbala,". This slogan is used to encourage the followers of Shi'ism to contextualise the struggle of Husayn in Indonesia. Jalaluddin Rakhmat stated: "Arise, O followers of Husayn, contribute your body and soul to transform the whole archipelago into Karbala and every day into *'ashura*."[142] Similarly, at the end of another *maqtal*, he stated:

> We leave Karbala and return to our present place. They have shed their blood to establish truth and justice. The grandsons of the Messenger of God (upon whom be peace), the infallibles, have sacrificed their life to establish the 'Muhammadist' Islam, [or] *Islam Muhammadi*. Let us resolve to continue their struggles: to establish truth and justice. Let us resolve to vow oath of allegiance to the Messenger of God (upon whom be peace) and his pure Household, to establish Islamic teachings established on the basis of the Book of God and the *Sunna* of His Messenger transmitted by his infallible Household. Let us take pure tenacity to continue this pure struggle until the last day.[143]

Thus, the martyrdom of Husayn is considered to be the heaviest sacrifice in human history, and its commemoration becomes a means of maintaining the spirit of *jihad, (*the struggle in the path of God), which is included as an act of worship within the Shi'i tradition. In addition, there is another interesting element to *'ashura,* that is the establishment and preservation of emotion. Their loving of Husayn and empathy with his sorrow inevitably leads Shi'is to shed tears and cry. Crying itself has become an important feature of Shi'i devotion. It characterises nearly all Shi'is rituals in Indonesia. Crying rituals have even become publicised. For example, national television has shown a programme of prayer, in the month of Ramadan, in which participants and their leader - a prominent Shi'i *ustadh* - cry collectively. For these adherents, crying is something strongly encouraged by the Prophet. "The Messenger of God (May God bless him and his family and grant him salvation) instructed us to make crying customary and to fill our religiosity with lamentations."[144]

The above rituals and commemorations are just some of the aspects of piety observed by Shi'is in Indonesia. In fact, the religious life of the Shi'is in Indonesia is filled with a great many rituals and commemorations in addition to the aforementioned aspects of *Ja'fari* jurisprudence. Nearly

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[141] Al-Kaff (http://aljawad.tripod.com/)

[142] Rakhmat (2003:3)

[143] Rakhmat (1999:322)

[144] Rakhmat (1999:363)

all these rituals and commemorations are a means of expressing of their loving devotion to the fourteen infallibles. These, along with the practice of *taqiyya,* are unique features of the Indonesian Shi'i *madhhab.*

F. *Taqiyya*

Taqiyya (or *reservatio mentalis*, in Latin), which literally means "to shield or to guard oneself,"[145] is one of the most misunderstood teachings of Shi'ism. In general, *taqiyya* is understood to be a "strategy in the dissimulation of faith before enemies to prevent from the occurrence of danger."[146] The practice of *taqiyya* is important in Shi'ism and has become a distinguishing feature of the Shi'is in Indonesia. Most of Shi'is practice *taqiyya,* but they reject the widespread perception that it is unique to Shi'ism. They argue that the practice of *taqiyya* (or having a precautionary attitude) is common among all adherents of religion or *madhhabs* in Islam, particularly when they are under the oppression of an authoritarian regime or group.[147] However, other religious groups refuse to use the term *taqiyya*.

A number of textual evidences are cited in support of the practice of *taqiyya*. The most common is the Qur'anic text which reads: "let not the believers take for friends or helpers unbelievers rather than believers; if any do that, in nothing will there be help from Allah; except by way of precaution, that ye may guard yourselves from them. But Allah cautions you (to remember) Himself; for the final goal is Allah."[148] It is also argued that the practice of *taqiyya* occurred during the life of the Prophet Muhammad. The most famous story is the case of 'Ammar bin Yasir, one of the close companions of the Prophet and 'Ali bin Abi Talib. The story tells how the infidels of Mecca imprisoned some Muslims and tortured them, forcing them to leave their new religion and return to the former religion of idolatry. Among these Muslims were 'Ammar bin Yasir and his father and mother. His parents were killed because of their refusal to obey the infidels. In order to escape from torture, 'Ammar outwardly declared that that he had left Islam and accepted idol worship. After he was freed, he secretly left for Medina. He recounted the story to the Prophet in a state of distress and regret. The Prophet then comforted 'Ammar by reading a verse of

[145] Enayat (2005:175). Enayat points out that the terms usually used, 'dissimulation' or 'concealment', are no satisfactory translations of the standard translation of *taqiyya* in English (Enayat 2005:175).

[146] Alatas (2002:142)

[147] Alatas (2002:144)

[148] QS (3:28)

the Qur'an.[149] This story is considered as the historical background to the revelation of the verse which reads: "Anyone who, after accepting faith in Allah, utters unbelief except under compulsion, his heart remaining firm in faith – but such as open their breast to unbelievers – on them is wrath from Allah, and theirs will be a dreadful penalty."[150]

Shi'is in Indonesia also recognise that the practice of *taqiyya* has its foundations in the history of Muslim society, in which "the Shi'is have been a minority amidst the global Islamic community and have lived mostly under regimes hostile to their creed."[151] The tyranny and cruelty of the *Umayyad* and *Abbasid* dynasties forced the Imams and their followers to dissimulate their real faith, in order to save their existence and the continuity of Shi'ism. *Taqiyya* is the only strategy to be implemented by the Shi'is to avoid the tyranny and cruelty of the regimes.[152]

However, *taqiyya* is implemented by Shi'is in Indonesia not only because of fear, but also for the purpose of establishing Islamic fraternity (*ukhuwwa Islamiyya*). Regarding this type of *taqiyya*, Jalaluddin Rakhmat cited the *fatwa* of Khomeini: "What is meant by *taqiyya mudarat* is the *taqiyya* practised in order to unite the Muslims by attracting the love of opponents and gaining their affection..."[153] The most popular of Khomeini's *fatwa* in this respect is his recommendation that Shi'is perform prayers together with Sunnis. When he was questioned about the validity of observing prayers with the Sunni congregation, Khomeini responded that it is not only valid but it is even recommended. He said that the reward for observing prayers with the Sunni congregation, (and in accordance with Sunni jurisprudence), is the same as the reward for worship with the Shi'is and in accordance to Shi'i jurisprudence. Thus, Khomeini recommended the abandonment of Shi'i jurisprudence for the sake of Islamic fraternity and this has become a legitimate foundation for the practice of this kind of *taqiyya*.[154]

Thus, *taqiyya* may be understood to be a strategy for maintaining the secrecy of the Shi'i identity for various reasons. However, the term *taqiyya* has negative connotations and is equated with lying, hypocrisy or cowardice among the Sunni majority in Indonesia. For this reason Jalaluddin Rakhmat proposed: "we can alter it with the term 'flexible approach and

[149] Alatas (2002:143), Suherman (1998:354)
[150] QS (16:106)
[151] Enayat (2005:175)
[152] Alatas (2002:144)
[153] Rakhmat (1998a:lix)
[154] Rakhmat (1998a:lix)

friendship'...."[155] The best term is probably diplomacy. As a strategy or diplomacy, *taqiyya* is implemented in acts of worship, in *da'wa*, in conversation and dialogue and in writing.

The choice of vocabulary or terms which are commonly acceptable to the Sunni majority characterises the implementation of *taqiyya*. In certain circumstances, Shi'is will avoid giving the impression of having emphasised the contrast between Sunnism and Shi'ism. "I think our concern is not to become a Shi'i or Sunni. Instead, our concern is Islam," said Rakhmat on one occasion.[156] The word Islam is a common term that is accepted by both denominations. On another occasion, in his reply to a question about whether he is a Sunni or Shi'i, Jalaluddin Rakhmat said that "people call me Susyi," namely Sunni-Shi'i.[157] Similarly, when he was asked whether he was a Shi'i, Haidar Bagir answered: "I am the same as others, one who longs for unity of the Muslims."[158] In short, simple questions about Shi'i identity are usually responded to with diplomatic answers by Indonesian Shi'is.

Shi'is in Indonesia try to suppress or modify information not only about their own identity and belief but also about fellow Shi'is, institutions and the community at large. For example, with regard to Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Haidar Bagir stated: "I do not dare say that he is a Shi'i because he is a person who reads, learns and speaks about both Shi'ism and Sunnism. Jokingly, Pak Jalal once called himself Susyi, meaning Sunni-Shi'i. He is a Muslim open to various thoughts, from both Sunnism and Shi'ism."[159] Similarly, when questioned about the place where Shi'is in Indonesia gather, Haidar Bagir replied: "As far as I know there are small institutions. I do not know their precise names."[160] This is a deliberate strategy adopted in order to manage their position as a stigmatised minority Muslim group in Indonesia.

With regard to the practice of *taqiyya*, it is interesting to note that a translation of a personal letter to someone in Iran, (whose name is not disclosed), was published in November 1993 in *Aula*, a magazine of the East Java branch of NU, under the title "a Letter to Someone in Iran". The author of the letter, allegedly Husein Al-Habsyi, used the term "my Master" to address the person in Iran. The central purpose of the letter

[155] Rakhmat (1998a:lix)
[156] Rakhmat (1998:381)
[157] *Tiras* (24/11/1997:67)
[158] Bagir, interview, *Forum Keadilan* (4/5/2003:57)
[159] Bagir, interview, *Forum Keadilan* (4/5/2003:57)
[160] Bagir, interview, *Forum Keadilan* (4/5/2003:56)

was to respond to the master's suggestion that the author should abandon the practice of *taqiyya* and instead declare that he was a Shi'i. The letter provides several reasons for maintaining the practice of *taqiyya:*

> First, I thank you for your correct suggestion to me, which has become my consideration since a long time, that is, since the victory of Imam [Khomeini] over the Shah. Although I postponed doing so [stop practicing *taqiyya*] I do not doubt at all the validity of *madhhab* of *ahl al-bayt* and this is not because I fear people, or if I leave *taqiyya* it is not to get praised by people. Not at all. However, I now consider my environment. The Sunni fanaticism in general is still strong.
>
> To approach them, I want to appear like a Sunni. Because if I show my own belief and respond to attacks from their *nawasib* [anti-Shi'i] 'ulama' they would say: a Shi'i defends Shi'ism. I have succeeded in approaching a significant number of their 'ulama' so that they understand the virtues of *madhhab* of *ahl al-bayt* over the others. I think it as a step forward in our struggle.[161]

Husein Al-Habsyi was known to have practised *taqiyya* in his *da'wa*, dialogue and writing. He always declared that he was a follower of Sunnism. In his dialogue with a group of students from UGM (Gajah Mada University) and UII (Indonesian Islamic University) in Yogyakarta, which was conducted in Solo, Husein Al-Habsyi consistently used the term 'we, *ahl al-Sunna*'. When he was asked to explain matters related to Shi'ism in the first meeting, Husein Al-Habsyi stated: "But what a pity because I am myself not a Shi'i, so it is more accurate if you ask these questions to those who declare that they are Shi'i".[162]

In contrast to the widespread practice of *taqiyya*, some Shi'is in Indonesia, particularly those *ustadh* who are Qum graduates, are more likely to express their religiosity overtly. *Taqiyya* is infrequent among the students and teachers of *Pesantren Al-Hadi* in Pekalongan, (a Shi'i *pesantren* headed by Ahmad Baragbah). Similarly, the Shi'is affiliated to *Al-Jawad* Foundation in Bandung, IPABI in Bogor and the Fatimah Foundation in Jakarta do not practice *taqiyya*. I observed that when leading the Friday Prayer in the *Nurul Falah* Mosque, the mosque's leader, Husein Al-Kaff, performed it in accordance with Ja'fari jurisprudence, whilst nearly all members of the *jama'a* were Sunni and followed Sunni jurisprudence. Husein Al-Kaff points out that it is important for Shi'is to practice all teachings of Shi'ism openly, in front of Sunnis, in order that Sunnis acknowledge the real teachings of Shi'ism, the followers of Shi'ism and their institutions, as well as their contributions to the country.[163] However, this does not mean that these people renounce the permissibility of practicing *taqiyya*. They see

[161] *Aula* (November 1993:60)

[162] Husein Al-Habsyi (1991:6)

[163] Husein Al-Kaff, interview, (19/5/2004)

that misperceptions among the Sunnis will not vanish unless Shi'is show the true expressions of their rituals and practices.

Some Shi'i intellectuals like Jalaluddin Rakhmat, however, are of the opinion that the practice of *taqiyya* should be inspired by the wish to reach Islamic fraternity and that strict obedience to Shi'i jurisprudence has more often than not created tensions between Sunnis and Shi'is in Indonesia. Jalaluddin Rakhmat considers the Shi'i *ustadh* to have implemented the *fiqh* paradigm as opposed to his own *akhlaq* (ethics) paradigm. For him, piety is not based on obedience to a certain school of jurisprudence, but it is determined on the basis of noble character. Regarding *taqiyya*, Rakhmat writes: "*Taqiyya* is the observance of jurisprudence practised by the majority people or jurisprudence that is established by the authority, to avoid disputes and fractions. *Taqiyya* means to leave our school of jurisprudence for the sake of maintaining brotherhood among the Muslims."[164]

Thus, *taqiyya* can be seen as a strategic element of the Shi'i *madhhab,* with the purpose of defending the existence of the *madhhab* and its adherents or for maintaining Islamic fraternity. It is not an exaggeration to suggest that the teaching and practice of *taqiyya* is instrumental in the spread and development of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

Apart from *tawhid* and prophethood, *imamate* is the most fundamental tenet of the Shi'i *madhhab* and it colours all of its teachings. There are twelve Imams succeeding the Prophet Muhammad, including the last Imam Mahdi who went into occultation and whose return is awaited. The Shi'i *madhhab* includes aspects of religious code that are understood and observed on the basis of *Ja'fari* jurisprudence and aspects of piety based on loving devotion to the fourteen infallibles. Integrated in the *madhhab* is the teaching and practice of *taqiyya,* which is influential in the very existence and maintenance of the denomination in the context of the Sunni majority in Indonesia. It is this whole complex system of belief and practice that the Shi'is in Indonesia attempt to propagate by means of *da'wa*, publication and education, as described in the following chapters.

[164] Rakhmat (2002:51)

CHAPTER FOUR

DA'WA

As a missionary religion, Islam, and more specifically the Shi'i branch of Islam, obliges its adherents, without exception, to undertake missionary activities. These activities are subsumed under the original Arabic concept of *'da'wa'*, which literally means 'a call' or 'an invitation'. In Indonesia, as in other countries, *da'wa* has become a complex term, encompassing both the specific idea of *tabligh* (preaching), and the broader idea of "the propagation of Islam not only by preaching and publications, but also by deeds and activities in all areas of social life ... [or] a comprehensive Islamization of society".[1] Throughout this chapter, both meanings of the term are employed. *Da'wa* is a very significant means of struggle by Shi'is in Indonesia for the purpose of gaining recognition. This chapter focuses on how Shi'is in Indonesia carry out *da'wa* by means of institutional agents. In a broad sense, the institution of Shi'ism can be seen as a *da'wa* institution, because of its engagement in *da'wa* activities. This chapter provides a brief description of the general developments of the Shi'i institution, followed by an examination of the ideals of the institution. I will then describe the basic elements of the Shi'i institution. Analysis of these various aspects is significant for understanding the nature of the Shi'i institution as an agent of *da'wa*. Furthermore, I will describe the various kinds of *da'wa* activities undertaken by Shi'is. This also includes details of *da'wa* trainings that have been conducted.

A. General Developments of the *Da'wa* Institution

In the decade following the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979, *da'wa* activities undertaken by Shi'is in Indonesia were generally carried out on an individual basis, with one exception: The role played by the famous educational institution YAPI, founded in Bangil in 1976. For this reason

[1] Boland (1971:193)

it can be said that missionary activities in this period were not institutionalised, in fact they were often conducted 'underground'. This was partly because of the absence of a known institutional centre for Shi'ism. (The government and religious authorities in Indonesia had been unable to identify the existence of this Muslim minority group in the country until the establishment of Shi'i institutions).

Since the late 1980s, leading Shi'i figures in Indonesia have started to establish Shi'i foundations called *yayasan*. The *yayasan* is a legally recognised institution based on relatively loose conditions; a number of people form the executive board of the foundation, a certain amount of money is designated as basic capital, and an address has to be mentioned. Renowned Shi'i foundations in Java, (in chronological order of establishment), include: *Al-Hujjah* (founded in 1987) in Jember East Java, *Muthahhari* (1988) in Bandung, *Al-Hadi* (1989) in Pekalongan Central Java, *Al-Jawad* (1991) in Bandung, *Al-Muntazar* (1992) in Jakarta, *Al-Kazim* (1994) in Cerebon West Java, IPABI (1993) in Bogor, *RausyanFikr* (1995) in Yogyakarta, *Fatimah* (1997) in Jakarta, and the Islamic Cultural Centre (ICC) of Al-Huda (2000) in Jakarta. In addition, there have been a number of Shi'i foundations located in cities and towns in Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and other islands.

Since the late 1980s, Indonesian Islam has witnessed the proliferation of Shi'i institutions. Recent estimates suggest that there are more than 80 Shi'i foundations scattered across the country, mainly centred in cities and towns. Although the exact number is unknown, reliable sources show that there has been a significant development in both the quantity and quality of Shi'i institutions in Indonesia. In 2001, 36 Shi'i foundations and 43 *majlis ta'lim*[2] (which "could be translated as a council or a meeting place for education") were affiliated to the *Yayasan Rausyanfikr* of Yogyakarta.[3] Similarly, some years ago the ICC of Al-Huda in Jakarta published a list of 79 Shi'i foundations[4]. With a few exceptions, all the organisations on the list are inventoried as '*yayasan*' (which means foundation). (In 2004, when I was concluding the research, the number of *yayasan* must be even greater as I have come across a number not included on the ICC list). A small number of these foundations develop into larger multi-functional institutions, carrying out various roles in the community (religious, educational, cultural), but most of them remain small foundations known

[2] Safwan (http://rausyanfikr.tripod.com/makatul/sosio-agama.htm)

[3] Abaza (2004:179)

[4] Formerly, a list of the Shi'i foundations in Indonesia could be seen at http://www.alhuda.or.id/data-yayasan.htm. However, the current homepage of the Islamic Cultural Centre of Jakarta no longer publishes this information.

only to a limited number of people. Sometimes the development of these institutions fluctuates, while some even stop operating. For these reasons it is difficult to provide an accurate figure for the number of the Shi'i foundations in Indonesia.

Given the relatively small number of the Shi'is in Indonesia, the number of Shi'i institutions is relatively large. The existence and geographical distribution of these institutions reveal the scattered geographical distribution of Shi'i adherents throughout the country. It also illustrates their dynamics in various social, cultural, educational and religious activities. Since the establishment of *yayasan* is an integrated part of the missionary process, these Shi'i institutions can be said to reflect the great missionary zeal among Shi'is in Indonesia. They are also evidence of a transformation from individual agent to institutional agent in the field of *da'wa* activity among Shi'is in Indonesia. From a historical perspective, the establishment of such large numbers of institutions marks a further development of Shi'ism in Indonesia, which is more institutionalised than ever before.

With regard to the establishment and development of the Shi'i institution in Indonesia, several points can be revealed: First, there has been a tendency among Shi'i *ustadh* (religious teachers) and intellectuals, (with a few notable exceptions[5]), to establish foundations as a means of disseminating Shi'i teachings. Almost all of Indonesia's Shi'i religious teachers and intellectuals have been or are currently connected to one or more Shi'i foundations. The strong motivation to establish Shi'i foundations is enhanced by the fact that there are relatively simple rules for establishing a foundation in Indonesia: Organisations are required to provide three people, statutes and a certain amount of capital which must be formally recognised by a notary. Since office premises or a building is not required, it is very common for residential properties to be used as a centre for foundations. The proliferation of Shi'i institutions in Indonesia is due to at least two interconnected motivations among their founders. First, most Shi'i religious teachers and intellectuals earn a living in the private sector and they need an institutional platform for their religious aspirations. Since their religious *madhhab* – Shi'ism – is different from the *madhhab* upheld by the majority of Muslims in the country, there is little possibility for them to join existing religious institutions. Theoretically, their involvement in this field is a way of accumulating economic and symbolic capital, both are interconnected. Thus, the second motivation deals with the accumulation

[5] Included in this category is a famous Shi'i religious teacher Husein Syafi'i al-Muhdar of Jember, East Java who accuses those who establish Shi'i foundations of having social and economic interests rather than promoting religious teachings to the Muslim community (Husein Syafi'i al-Muhdar, interview, 12/10/2002).

of social capital, that is, social relations or networks:[6] By means of these institutions, Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals can create more formal communications with other international Shi'i institutions or organisations. Consequently, through their foundations, Shi'is in Indonesia can more easily obtain free Shi'i scholarly works - books and periodicals - printed by international institutions or associations in Iran, Iraq, Kuwait and other countries. Such scholarly works have contributed to the development of Shi'i Islam in Indonesia.

Second, with a few exceptions, Shi'i foundations are located in urban areas throughout the country from Sumatra to West Irian. This closely relates to the growth of the Shi'i group in Indonesia as an urban phenomenon. (Shi'i Islam has developed more among the urban than the rural population, with the majority of Shi'is living in cities or towns). This is also in congruence with the fact that most university graduates and Qum alumni who become Shi'i intellectuals, activists or *ustadh* tend to live in cities or towns. Generally, they establish the centre of the foundation close to, or even in, the founder's own home. This satisfies the demands of the Shi'i community in the city or town in terms of religious instruction and guidance in the teachings of Shi'ism and also provides a base for propagating these ideas to the Muslim community at large. (This also originates from the philosophical basis of the missionary activities of Shi'i foundations which include both internal and external orientations). There is a clear pattern in terms of the greater the number of Shi'is living in a particular city or area, the greater the number of Shi'i foundations which are established there. Thus, Jakarta, home to Indonesia's largest Shi'i community, has the largest number of foundations. In 1995, the journal *Ulumul Qur'an,* mentions 25 Shi'i institutions having been established in Jakarta.[7] This is not to say that there are no Shi'i institutions in rural areas. It should be noted, for instance, that the *Al-Hakim* Foundation, a famous Shi'i institution established by the late Zainal Abidin Al-Muhdar (d. 2003), attracts people from the rural areas and villages close to its centre in Pringsewu, Lampung. However, the establishment of Shi'i institutions remains a largely urban phenomenon.

The third important point regarding the establishment of Shi'i institutions for *da'wa* is that the growing number of Shi'i foundations in Indonesia corresponds to the increasing number of Qum alumni returning to the country. While the establishment of a foundation is not a phenomenon exclusive to *ustadh* or Qum alumni, it is evident that a large

[6] Bourdieu (1986)

[7] Nurjulianti and Arief Subhan (1995:20)\

number of the Qum alumni have begun their own Shi'i foundation. To name a few, Fathoni Hadi established the *Al-Hujjah* Foundation in Jember in 1987, Ahmad Baragbah established *Al-Hadi* in 1989, Abdullah Assegaf founded the *Al-Wahdah* Foundation in Solo in 1994 and Rusdi al-Aydrus established the *Ath-Thohir* Foundation in Surabaya in 2000. Furthermore, the majority of Qum alumni become leaders or *ustadh* at existing Shi'i foundations. Among them are Zahir Yahya at the *Al-Kautsar* Foundation in Malang (East Java), Husein Al-Kaf at the *Al-Jawad* Foundation in Bandung, Abdullah Assegaf at IPABI in Bogor, Muhammad Syuaib at the *Al-Mujtaba* Foundation in Purwakarta (West Java) and Herman Al-Munthahar at the *Amirul Mukminin* Foundation in Pontianak (West Kalimantan). It seems that missionary zeal has motivated these Qum alumni to establish Shi'i institutions in order that *da'wa* activities may be institutionalised and organised.

A fourth point of interest is that the Shi'i foundations were all established by, or belong to, groups of people with friendship or kinship ties. In this regard, these institutions rarely belong to a single person. The *Al-Jawad* Foundation, for example, was established in 1991 by a group of activists who graduated from universities in Bandung, including Ahmad Jubaili, Wawan Tribudi Hermawan, Rivaldi and Yusuf Bachtiar.[8] The same is true of the founders of the *Muthahhari* Foundation three years earlier. In contrast, the founders of the *Fatimah* Foundation are all members of the al-Muhdar family living in Jakarta. Members of the al-Muhdar clan were known as Shi'i adherents in Indonesia long before the Iranian Revolution of 1978-1979. The executive board of their foundation consists of Muhammad Andy Assegaf, Akma Syarif, and Imah Az-Zahra, all children of Abu Bakar Assegaf and his wife Fatimah Syundus al-Muhdar.[9] Ahmad Muhajir al-Muhdar and Alwi Husein al-Muhdar serve as important religious teachers and advisers to the foundation. *Tazkiya Sejati*, also listed among the Shi'i foundations, was founded in 1997 by the family of Indonesia's ex-Vice President Sudharmono in cooperation with Jalaluddin Rakhmat. Due to the practice of various aspects of Sufism, this institution was seen as instrumental in attracting a number of Jakarta's urban upper-middle class to Shi'ism .

Compared with the above-mentioned institutions, the establishment of the ICC of Al-Huda was unique in the sense that it involved the collaboration of several prominent figures in Indonesia with Iran. This can be seen in the make up of its board, which includes Jalaluddin Rakhmat,

[8] Wisananingrum (2001:84)

[9] *Syi'ar* (July 2002:46)

Haidar Bagir, and Umar Shahab as the founding council and the Iranian Muhsen Hakimollah as the director. The ICC is the largest Shi'i foundation in Indonesia, and it employs about 30 staff, some of whom are Qum alumni, to organise its activities. The foundation is highly dependent on its Iranian director not only in terms of authority and responsibility but also for financial resources. Since its establishment, this Islamic centre has functioned as a coordinating body with regard to organising the celebration of Islamic festivals. It also plays an important mediation role among the Shi'i institutions in the country and in relations between Iran and the Shi'i community in Indonesia, a function which used to be fulfilled by the Iranian Embassy in Jakarta.

This description leads us to the fifth point regarding Shi'i institutions: Aside from the coordinating function of the ICC of Al-Huda, some institutions are closely connected and co-operate with each other in the field of *da'wa* while tensions exist been other institutions. Both situations are due to the influential relationships between certain *ustadh* and intellectuals. A pertinent example is that the cooperation between several Shi'i *ustadh* and institutions in West Java has contributed to establishing the regional Shi'i association called KIBLAT (*Komunitas Ahlul Bait Jawa Barat*, The *Ahl al-Bayt* Community of West Java). This umbrella organisation encompasses several Shi'i foundations in the province including *Al-Jawad* of Bandung, *Al-Kautsar* of Bandung, IPABI of Bogor, *Al-Kazhim* of Cirebon, *Al-Mujtaba* of Purwakarta and *As-Syifa* of Garut. However, this regional Shi'i association also excludes the *Muthahhari* Foundation, which is known to have tensions with *Al-Jawad* and its associates. Cooperation, competition and tension have characterised the relationship between *ustadh*, intellectuals, and institutions in Indonesia.

Finally, the existence of Shi'i institutions are very important for the Shi'i community as a whole, particularly in terms of their functions. Firstly, because the existing mosques cannot be used as a place to perform Shi'i rituals and ceremonies, the foundations have provided alternative institutions and spaces for religious expression. Secondly, aside from this religious function, the institutions are also vehicles for Shi'i teachings and places to hold meetings in which they can discuss a variety of problems, including the problems of the Shi'i community or of Muslims in general. Religious instruction and guidance, as well as educational programmes, can be provided in or through the institution. This is its educational function. Thirdly, the institutions are platforms for spreading the teachings of Shi'ism to the Shi'i community at large. A variety of *da'wa* programmes are carried out in or through the institution. In addition, through the publication of periodicals and books, the institution extends this role, beyond *da'wa,* into

the cultural field. In this regard, the Shi'i foundation has become an institutional agent in the reproduction and dissemination of the Shi'i tradition in Indonesia. In a nutshell, the institution is multi-functional within the Shi'i community in Indonesia.

The general development of the Shi'i foundations described above, reveals that their existence is strongly entrenched in the Shi'i community in Indonesia. The religious life of the Shi'i community is heavily dependent on the existence and functions of these institutions. However, the above description does not identify such institutions to be Shi'i in nature. Below we attempt to examine this matter.

B. The Ideals of the Shi'i Institution

To have a comprehensive understanding of the nature and identity of the Shi'i institution, it is worth examining the written ideals that form the philosophical basis of the institution and its programme even, though the these ideals may not always be put into practice. With the exception of IPABI (*Ikatan Pemuda Ahlul Bait Indonesia*, Indonesian League of Ahlul Bait Youth), the names of these foundations never include terms or phrases which explicitly indicate that they are Shi'i. Nevertheless, look more closely and the names often reveal the Shi'i connections. For example, institutions such as Al-Jawad, Al-Muntazar, Al-Mahdi, Al-Mujtaba, Al-Hadi and Al-Kazim are all named after Shi'i Imams. In addition, some foundations take their names from prominent Shi'i learned men such as Mulla Sadra or Mutahhari, while others use terms closely associated with the Shi'i tradition such as the *Babul Ilmi* Foundation ('gate of knowledge'), referring to the phrase used by Ali bin Abi Talib, the first Imam. However, names such as Islamic Cultural Centre of Al-Huda in Jakarta or LSII (*Lembaga Studi and Informasi Islam*, Institute for Islamic Studies and Information) of Makassar give no clue to the Shi'i characteristics of the institutions. In this respect, the *Muthahhari* Foundation is one of the only Shi'i institutions that provides us with a rationale for using a specific name:

Given the fact that a *Mutahhari* is an Iranian Shi'i learned-man, it is follows that many people identify the foundation as Shi'i. In its brochure, the founders of the institution explain that the name chosen has philosophical meanings related to the organisations own goals as well as the historical reality that Muslim society is facing a variety of problems, including the lack of qualified learned men. They describe the establishment of the foundation,[10] as an attempt to address the most fundamental problem

[10] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:17-18)

faced by Muslims, that is, the lack of an 'ulama' figure that can meet the required qualifications to lead and unite the various segments of Muslim society. The founders of the *Muthahhari* Foundation institution see this problem as having originated from a dichotomy in the comprehension of religious and secular sciences in the Muslim world, including Indonesia. On the one hand, there exist traditional 'ulama' that are qualified in the fields of Islamic knowledge but lack sufficient knowledge on contemporary information. Their approach to problem solving becomes irrelevant. On the other hand, there are Muslim scholars who have strong Islamic spirit and comprehend contemporary information yet are 'ignorant' of Islamic knowledge. Their problem solving tends to be superficial. A desire to bridge this divide formed the rationale behind the establishment of *the Muthahhari* Foundation.

Ayatollah Murtada Mutahhari was a reformist Shi'i learned man and professor at Tehran University, who after the victory of the Iranian revolution became a member of the Revolutionary Council and was assassinated on 2 May 1979. The founders of the *Muthahhari* Foundation saw the Ayatollah as a 20th century intellectual-'ulama' who can become a model for all Islamic scholars, as he fulfils three requisite qualifications: His qualification in the fields of traditional Islamic knowledge, a comprehension of secular sciences and a concern for and activities in the social field.[11] With these qualifications, his Islamic thoughts, written in more than 50 books comprising almost all aspects relevant to the needs of Muslims - human existence (individual), society, nature, and history - , are considered strategic for the establishment of an Islamic civilisation and Islamic worldview. Further, in the eyes of the founders of the *Muthahhari* Foundation, he was an open and moderate scholar who promoted a freedom in thought and belief free from sectarianism. Finally, this learned man is praised for his exemplary moral conduct.[12] In short, Rakhmat writes: "From Muthahhari we learned three things: the meeting of traditional Islamic knowledge with modern sciences, openness, as well as combination between intellectualism and activism".[13] In this way, the complex meanings symbolised by the name 'Muthahhari' also characterise the various roles of the institution and its programmes and activities.

As legally recognised institutions, Shi'i foundations possess various stated ideals in terms of goal, vision and mission. By and large, the philosophical bases of the establishment of Shi'i foundations in Indonesia indicate

[11] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:19)

[12] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:19-20)

[13] Rakhmat (1993:6)

their missionary nature and orientation. This is reflected in a comparison of the ideals four of the countries largest: The *Muthahhari* and *Al-Jawad* foundations in Bandung, and the *Fatimah* Foundation and ICC of Al-Huda both in Jakarta.[14] Al-Jawad was established "to practice the teachings of *ahl al-bayt* in daily life individually and collectively as well as to develop and spread them to the society at large". The homepage of the website for the *Al-Jawad* Foundation has the slogan "a deliverer of pure Islamic message" and tells of how it was established to organise various activities directed towards achieving its ideals: First, the construction of qualified skills - intellectual, social, spiritual and professional - among members of the foundation in carrying out *da'wa* about the teachings of *ahl al-bayt*; second, the establishment of media for spreading the teachings of *ahl al-bayt* to the community at large; and third, the collection of economic sources to support the *da'wa* activity. It is clear that these three ideals are concerned with *da'wa* activity by members of the institution as well as with the Muslim community at large.

The *Fatimah* Foundation has goals which essentially resemble those of the Al-Jawad Foundation, but it formulates them in a different way stating: "the goal objective of *Fatimah* Foundation is to create itself a means for the *ummah* [Muslim community] to develop the teachings of *ahl al-bayt*". The *Fatimah* Foundation has adopted the slogan "penetrating religious insights" and has the mission to be 'a servant' of the followers of the Prophet Muhammad and his *ahl al-bayt*. It sees its missionary activity as necessary in order that Muslims in Indonesia can accept the Islamic teachings and practice them in daily life. It is interesting to note that the *Fatimah* Foundation formulates its vision around the idea of five kinds of responsibility: The responsibility to God, to the Prophet Muhammad and his *ahl al-bayt*, to all followers of Shi'ism and to all members of the Foundation; the fifth states: "finally, we are responsible to make our foundation an open one for those seeking truth". All the stated goals, visions and the mission of the *Fatimah* Foundation clearly show that it was established in order to propagate Shi'ism in Indonesia.

The ideals of both the *Al-Jawad* and the *Fatimah* foundations are narrow in the sense that they aim at spreading the teachings of Shi'ism to soci-

[14] With the exception of the ideals of *Muthahhari* Foundation which are taken from its brochure (1993), my analysis of the ideals of the Shi'i foundations is based on information taken from their homepages: http://aljawad.tripod.com/aljawad.htm, http://www.fatimah.org/aboutus.htm and http://www.icc-jakarta.com/statis.php?id=abt (formerly http://www.alhuda.or.id/profile.htm). A brief profile of the *Muthahhari, Al-Jawad* and *Fatimah* Foundations can be seen in separate editions of *Syi'ar:* October 2003:59-61; February 2003:51-52; and July 2002:46), respectively.

ety. The word 'Shi'a' is absent in these ideals for the simple reason that the term has negative connotations in Sunnism and among the Sunni community in Indonesia in particular. Instead, the word '*ahl al-bayt*' which means the family of the Prophet Muhammad is more commonly used because it is considered to be acceptable among both Sunni and Shi'i Muslims. Both *Al-Jawad* and *Fatimah* emphasise the term "teachings of *ahl-al-bayt*". This is in contrast to the formal written ideals of both *Muthahhari* and ICC of Al-Huda in which the word '*ahl al-bayt*' is hardly found. In this regard, two important points can be surmised: First, the ideals of the *Al-Jawad* and the *Fatimah* foundations are directed towards propagating Shi'i teachings to society at large, while the written ideals of both *Muthahhari* and ICC of Al-Huda do not confined solely to the Shi'i version of Islam. Second, the first two institutions tend to implement a strategy of openness and don't practice *taqiyya,* while the other two institutions, as will be shown below, tend to practice *taqiyya*.

The *Muthahhari* Foundation, with its slogan "for the enlightenment of Islamic thought" was established to organise various programmes in the field of da'wa, education and Islamic civilisation, for the Indonesian society at large. As mentioned in its brochure,[15] its general goals are:

1. To take lessons, for the development of Islamic thought and propagation, from an intellectual-learned man who has the qualifications as a figure required for an attempt to formulate Islamic alternatives in solving contemporary problems.
2. To create a vehicle for the growth of scientific attitudes - the depth of knowledge comprehension, width of insight, moderation, and tolerance.
3. To contribute to an attempt to formulate an Islamic worldview and social planning for a future Islamic civilisation.
4. To participate in the production of intellectual-'ulama' and 'ulama'-intellectuals by means of alternative system of education in the fields of Islamic knowledge and other relevant sciences.
5. To contribute to the establishment of unity as well as Muslim unity and brotherhood (*wahdah and ukhuwwah Islamiyah*) free from sectarianism.

Aimed at implementing a *da'wa* programme in its widest sense, ICC of Al-Huda has formulated a more general vision: "to realise Islamic society with spiritual and intellectual enlightenment based on high integrity". The complete missionary ideals of the foundation are:

1. To reconstruct and promote Islamic values in society's life
2. To reconstruct Islamic culture full of spiritual values

[15] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:20)

3. To motivate intellectual enthusiasm based on Islamic values and objectivity
4. To describe and reconstruct Islamic understandings in accordance with the Qur'an and hadith
5. To motivate a love toward Allah, His messenger, the Prophet's family and all human beings
6. To seed good conduct (*akhlaq al-karima*) in every aspects of the nation's and state's life."

The stated ideals of both *Muthahhari* and ICC of Al-Huda share similar concepts such as the promotion of 'Islamic values', 'Islamic civilisation' or 'Islamic culture'. Furthermore, even though both use the term Islam in its wider context rather than Shi'ism in particular, their emphasis is different. For example, ICC of Al-Huda stresses the importance of Islamic brotherhood and unity between Muslim groups. A striking contrast between the two is that, as their names suggest, ICC of Al-Huda is focused more in the cultural field, while *Muthahhari* concentrates more specifically on education and specifically on the production of intellectual-learned men. Compared with the stated ideals of *Al-Jawad* and *Fatimah*, those of Muthahhari and ICC of Al-Huda are much broader, even though all four have missionary characteristics, (albeit different in scope and orientation), and all four share the ultimate missionary goal of realising an Islamic society.

An important point regarding the stated ideals of these four Shi'i institutions in Indonesia, is their lack of interest in the field of politics. The only slightly political aspect is the sixth point of the missionary ideals of ICC of Al-Huda which emphasises the importance of moral values in aspects of life related to the state and nation. This becomes more interesting because Shi'ism itself does not distinguish religion from politics. Viewed from their stated ideals, the Shi'i institutions are concerned only with religion, education and culture, fields which are considered appropriate in the propagation of Shi'i teachings as well as in the realisation of Islamic society in Indonesia. The written ideals of these *da'wa* institutions suggest there will be no involvement in political practice, even though in reality, their leaders and members may individually take part in politics. This illustrates the fact that these stated ideals are just that – ideals – and whether or not they become reality remains to be seen. Besides examining the written formal ideals of Shi'i foundations, we need to understand their institutional elements.

C. The Institutional Elements

In general, the well-established Shi'i institutions in Indonesia possess the following elements: a *ustadh* (religious teacher), *jama'a* (members of

the foundation), a variety of *da'wa* activities and a centre for these activities. These basic elements construct the existence and the function of the institution and should be considered as a unified system. The existence of a Shi'i institution may be recognised on the basis of these four basic elements. In addition, there are also supporting elements that may influence the organisation of *da'wa* activity. In every institution there is an executive board and staff or activists that organise the *da'wa* activity and manage or assist the development of the Shi'i institution. Examples of well-established institutions include *Al-Jawad* in Bandung, IPABI in Bogor, *Al-Muntazar*, *Fatimah*, and ICC of Al-Huda all located in Jakarta, in addition to YAPI (*Yayasan Pesantren Islam*) in Bangil, East Java, *Al-Hadi* in Pekalongan and the *Muthahhari* Foundation, whose formal educational programme will be described and analysed in detail in the chapter on education. With their own buildings and facilities such as an office, library, bookstore and others, the physical portrait of these institutions shows the extent of their involvement in various kinds of activities. ICC of Al-Huda is the largest foundation with a luxurious building, facilities and a large number of staff.

The well-established foundations usually have one or more permanent *ustadh* whose main duty is to provide religious instruction and guidance to the *jama'a*. In this regard, the *ustadh* becomes *muballigh* (preacher) or *da'i* ('propagandist', 'evangelist') in the broad meaning of the term. As mentioned before, in some cases the *ustadh* is a co-founder or owner of the institution. In other cases, while not being a co-founder, the *ustadh* occupies an influential position within the organisational structure of the institution. This concurs with the fact that *ustadh* have a prestigious status within the Shi'i community. In this respect, the term '*pembina*' (adviser) - a position that is usually regarded as being higher than the head of an institution – is sometimes used. The position is comparable to that of the *kyai* (learned man) within the *pesantren* tradition. With this high status, like the *kyai* in the *pesantren*, the *ustadh* is an influential element in the development of the institution. In many cases, the *ustadh*, particularly prominent ones such as Othman Omar Shihab, Umar Shahab, and Husein Shahab, are not affiliated to a specific institution but are hired by a range institutions throughout the country. As mentioned earlier, as a large number of Qum alumni become *ustadh,* they too are gaining influence within the Shi'i institutions in Indonesia.

The position of *ustadh* is crucial for the existence and development of Shi'i institutions. The attitude and thoughts of an *ustadh* are influential in planning and realising the programmes of these institutions, as well as in establishing connections with other institutions. The main duties of

the *ustadh* include: Providing religious instruction and guidance, religious preaching, leading rituals and ceremonies and giving advice regarding the direction of the institution. To carry out these duties, the *ustadh* must possess qualifications such as a thorough religious comprehension and good skills in leading religious rituals and ceremonies as well as in preaching. For this reason, it is not surprising that the position of *ustadh* in most Shi'i institutions are occupied by Qum graduates. As a person considered to have thorough religious knowledge, a *ustadh* is seen by his *jama'a* as a figure whose guidance and advice are to be followed.

The second institutional element is the *jama'a,* which literally means congregation. The *jama'a* commonly consists of adult Muslims, (both male and female), who are motivated to seek religious instruction and guidance. Basically, the *jama'a* are those adults who follow the religious, educational and social programmes provided by the foundation. The programmes themselves are sometimes tailored specifically to the demands and interests of the congregation. Sometimes members of the *jama'a* are also executive personnel of the institution and are involved in the organisation of the programmes. To a certain extent, this characteristic of the *jama'a,* distinguishes the Shi'i foundations as institutions of *da'wa* from the Shi'i institutions of learning such as *pesantren*. There are no formal rules regarding becoming a member of the *jama'a,* except where specific programmes demand specific requirements of participants such as paying expenses. Shi'i foundations commonly attract people living in areas close to the centre of institution. So in Jakarta, for example, the *Fatimah* Foundation has members of *jama'a* from certain areas of South and East Jakarta while *Al-Muntazar* attracts its members from areas in western Jakarta.

Motivations for members of the *jama'a* to join *da'wa* programmes are complex and various, from religious to secular reasons. Motivation to seek religious instruction and guidance cannot be neglected especially in view of the fact that most members of the *jama'a* do not have a sound religious educational background. Furthermore, most of the Shi'is in Indonesia today have converted from Sunnism in adulthood. In this regard, I often heard many *ustadh* stating that Indonesia's Shi'is are in the process of becoming 'ideal' Shi'is. "The Shi'is in Indonesia are still immature", said Husen Shahab.[16] This suggests that they do not yet understand and practice all the teachings of Shi'ism and that they need religious instruction and guidance in this area. Shi'i converts for example, are considered to be heavily influenced by the Sunni teaching and tradition that they used to uphold. In other words, a significant educational motivation originates

[16] Husein Shahab, interview, (2/4/2004)

from the fact that the Shi'is in Indonesia who are still new and young do not follow all Shi'i tradition called *tashayyu'*.[17] The second motivation is a religious one, in that most Shi'i rituals are carried out in Shi'i institutions, spaces which allow them to express their religiosity. This also gives rise to the expression of identity as a distinct religious group among the majority Sunnis. The social and psychological functions of being active in a congregation also form a motivation. Abaza's explanation is particularly relevant to female participants:

> The importance of time spent collectively in 'social gathering', exchanging information, along with tangential activities such as selling and buying takes prevalence. The more I interviewed *da'is*, the more I found that they rely on repetitive sermons and a stylised *habitus* for performance purposes. Indeed for many housewives, the *Majlis* could be a pleasant way of spending time. Perhaps, they thus found comfort in consulting religious lecturers.[18]

The same social and psychological motivation among women to engage in a religious gathering can be seen in other places in the world such as Hyderabad, India, as shown by Howarth who observed that women's gatherings are "important opportunities for women to meet and to form friendship outside their family homes".[19]

All these motivations are interconnected and whatever their motivation, members of *jama'a* contribute to the realisation of *da'wa* programmes. Moreover, the richer members of *jama'a* frequently provide fundamental economic support for *da'wa* activities. In return for their contributions, they occupy important positions within the Shi'i community and the *ustadh* and intellectuals are expected to show them respect.

In this regard, close relationships among members of the institution and between religious teachers and members of the *jama'a* are formed. Members of the *jama'a* not only expect to learn religious knowledge from the religious teachers but also make them their spiritual guide and counsellor who can provide solutions to a wide range of problems including family-related problems. Close relationships between certain *ustadh* and intellectuals with members of *jama'a* are a predictable consequence of the intensive interactions between them. The other side to this is that competition and tension are also inevitable in the relationships between *ustadh*, intellectual, and the *jama'a*.

The relationship between *ustadh* as individuals, foundations as institutions and members of *jama'a* is mutually beneficial to all parties. In

[17] Husein Al-Kaf (1421/2000:2)

[18] Abaza (2004:82)

[19] Howarth (2002:262)

other words, there is an exchange of goods in the field of religion - one material the other symbolic. Frequently, *ustadh* in Indonesia earn their living from the money paid by the *jama'a,* who are sometimes charged for their participation in *da'wa* activities or through the endowments they give for certain programmes or occasions. In some cases, *da'wa* activities depend heavily on the material support of a number of rich members of *jama'a*. These rich members of *jama'a* usually have strong religious and missionary zeal, indicated by their donations of large sums of money and facilities for various types of *da'wa* activities. These persons even make their houses centres for regular *da'wa* activities or provide other houses for *ustadh* to live in. In this regard, competition among the *ustadh* and intellectuals to establish good connections with rich members of *jama'a,* has been a characteristic of the development of the Shi'is in Indonesia. Bourdieu[20] theorises that it is an attempt to accumulate economic capital alongside the struggle to maintain or improve cultural and social capital. Similarly, most institutions depend on the *jama'a* for economic resources. In return, the *jama'a* receive religious instruction and guidance as well as entertainment, cultural goods and the social and psychological benefits of being part of a congregation. This interrelation clearly indicates the important position not only of *ustadh* but also *jama'a* that tends to be overlooked in *da'wa* studies.

The third important element of a Shi'i institution is its programmes and activities. These vary in terms of field, approach and orientation, and depend on several factors. Some institutions tend to place emphasis on one kind of programme while others focus on different ones. This contributes to the significant differences found in the main attributes of certain institutions. For instance, although the *Muthahhari* Foundation carries out a wide range of programmes, its image is frequently characterised by its senior high school. As previously explained, most Shi'i foundations offer programmes that related to the fields of religion, education, culture and *da'wa*. The field of *da'wa* will be examined in further detail below.

The religious programmes basically comprise Shi'i religious rituals, (both obligatory and recommended) and ceremonies. The most famous weekly prayer, commonly called the *kumayl* prayer, is practiced in nearly all Shi'i institution in Indonesia. Other religious rituals take place on an annual basis, including those related to the commemoration of the births or deaths of the fourteen infallibles and other prominent religious leaders, as well as other important historical events in the Shi'i tradition. Some institutions, such as IPABI in Bogor, also conduct the celebration of two

[20] Bourdieu (1986)

great Islamic festivals: *'Id al-Fitr* (the end the fasting month) and *'Id al-Adha* ('sacrifice day') separately from their fellow Sunni. Because of the large number of commemorations there has been cooperation and coordination among certain large Shi'i institutions in the organisation of certain festivals. ICC of Al-Huda in cooperation with other Shi'i institutions usually organises the national commemoration of such great events as *'ashura* and *mawlid* in Jakarta. In this regard, the essential position of the Shi'i institution is its function to provide all members of the Shi'i community in Indonesia with a space to express their religiosity.

The field of education will be discussed in the following chapter, however, it is important to note here that the establishment of TK/TPA (*Taman Kanak-kanak/Taman Pendidikan Al-Quran*, Qur'anic kindergarten) has become a very popular programme in Shi'i institutions. This pre-school education provides very young students with some basic teachings of Islam, including using the so-called *iqro'* method to teach the children how to recite the Holy Qur'an. The *iqro'* method is considered by many in Indonesia to be the easiest way of learning Qur'anic recitation, and with this instruction method and material (six volumes of *Iqro'* and *tajwid*), the students are able to recite the Qur'an in a short space of time. The popularity of this 'modern' method has replaced the traditional method known to Muslims in Indonesia as the '*Baghdadi'* method. Gade describes that while the *iqro'* method is *lebih cepat* (faster) the '*Baghdadi*' method is *lebih dalam* (deeper) in terms of reciting acquisition. She then writes:

> The key practical contrast is that with the 'traditional' method, students learned the names of letters along with their sound qualities and 'spelled out' words with the named letters according to set formulae before vocalising them. With the 'modern' method, students vocalised the letters without first going through the process of parsing the word by spelling. The primary difference Indonesians emphasised between the methods was precisely the practice of 'spelling out' (*ejaan*) within the traditional method, which was judged by many to be too time-consuming.[21]

The popularity of this programme may result from its relatively simple requirements in terms of educational facilities and management. Two or more teachers, usually female, may establish the pre-school institution. This meets with the increasing motivation of Indonesian parents to send their children to Islamic educational institutions. The organisation of such institutions is instrumental in the enhancement of religious knowledge in the field of Qur'anic recitation among Muslim children. This knowledge is a crucial basic religious skill for observing obligatory Islamic rituals. This

[21] Gade (2004:147)

might also be a rationale for leaders of Shi'i institutions, and religious teachers in general, to undertake these programmes.

In the cultural field, some Shi'i institutions in Indonesia are engaged in publishing. Some institutions, such as IPABI and the *Fatimah* Foundation, have established a separate publishing arm under a different name, while others including *Muthahhari*, *Al-Jawad* and ICC of Al-Huda use the same name as the institution. These institutions organise the publication of periodicals and books, both translated texts and Indonesian originals.[22] In addition, large Shi'i institutions such as *Mutahhari*, *Al-Jawad*, *Fatimah* and ICC of Al-Huda organise libraries that are open to the public, providing books in Indonesian, Arabic and Persian, meeting the demand of the Shi'is in the country. Observing these libraries, I found that they hold a large number of Shi'i books, on a variety of subjects, which cannot be found in other libraries in Indonesia, including the libraries of Islamic higher educational institutions. Compared with the existing Sunni institutions, this is a unique trait of Shi'i institutions. It is important to note here that all these fields, but in particular education and culture, may be included in the realm of *da'wa* in its most general sense, namely, they are all missionary efforts to achieve the ultimate goal of realising an Islamic society.

The fourth element of a Shi'i institution is the physical centre of activity. The majority of foundations are small and usually use the founders' residence as a centre for their activities. However, the big foundations generally have their own buildings and facilities. These larger institutions usually have a specific room at the centre for these activities, commonly called the *husainiyya*. The term is derived from the name of the third Imam, Imam Husayn, whose death ritual is a focus in Shi'ism. *Husainiyya* originally means "forum or courtyard where Muharram passion plays and mournings for Imam Husayn are done".[23] This clearly shows the significance of Imam Husayn and his martyrdom in the Shi'i tradition. Usually, the *husainiyya*, office, library and other facilities are located in one complex. A few *husainiyyas* are big while others are small, which may reflect the size of the *jama'a* attending the *da'wa* activities organised by the institution. In this centre of activity the Shi'is gather to observe prayers, to perform religious rituals and ceremonies, to learn religious knowledge or to engage themselves in social activities. In my observations, Shi'is seldom practice daily obligatory prayers collectively at the *husainiyya.* (Shi'is place less emphasis on the congregational obligatory prayers five times a day than their fellow Sunnis). On the whole, weekly, monthly and yearly *da'wa*

[22] This topic will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

[23] Fischer and Abedi (1990:511)

activities are carried out in the *husainiyya*. For the foundations with their own mosque, such as *Muthahhari* and *Al-Jawad*, the routine *da'wa* activities are usually centred around the mosque. By and large, the *husainiyya* functions like a mosque, with the exception that it is not the venue for Friday prayers.

These are the four basic elements that generally constitute Shi'i foundations as institutions of *da'wa* in Indonesia. The four basic elements, combined with the written ideals of the institution, make up the characteristics of a Shi'i institution, from which we may uncover certain elements that are similar to or distinct from Sunni institutions of *da'wa*. The dynamic nature of the Shi'i institution of *da'wa* can be understood through the various types of *da'wa* activity.

D. Types of *Da'wa* Activity

In order to achieve their ideals, Shi'i institutions in Indonesia share similar patterns of activities, which are distinguishable in terms of approach and orientation. Since the concept of *da'wa* is commonly understood in its widest sense - to include all missionary activities aimed at realising an Islamic society -, *da'wa* activities provided by the institutions vary considerably. These *da'wa* activities can be classified into three types: *tabligh* (preaching), *ta'lim* (teaching, training or courses) and social *da'wa*. All three types of activity are frequently interconnected. They may be directed towards either internal or external orientations. The realisation of the three types of *da'wa* by the existing institutions may be formulated in the form of either regular or incidental programmes.

The *tabligh* activity among the Shi'i community in Indonesia, as among the Sunni community, is widely known as *pengajian* (religious gathering), but sometimes also known as *majlis ta'lim* (council for learning). Both terms refer to preaching and learning. In this regard, Mona Abaza has provided us with an interesting analysis of *da'wa* styles among gentrified urbanites in Jakarta, (even though in her article she made several factual mistakes). The *majlis ta'lim* is not "a typical urban phenomenon which only exists in Jakarta"[24], instead it is a religious phenomenon that takes place in both a rural and an urban setting in Indonesia, although it is clearly flourishing in urban areas. With respect to religious gatherings, some Shi'i institutions hold regular and irregular religious gatherings for their *jama'a*.

[24] Abaza (2004:179)

The regular type includes weekly and annual religious gatherings related to relevant religious rituals. The most well-known and widespread weekly religious gathering within the Shi'i community in Indonesia is connected to the religious recommendation for the Shi'is to recite the *kumayl* prayer. The so-called *majlis kumayl,* in which the *kumayl* prayer is uttered and a sermon is delivered, is organised on Thursday evenings. For those foundations with a mosque, such as *Muthahhari* and *Al-Jawad,* this activity is usually conducted in their mosques (*Al-Munawwarah* and *Nurul Falah,* respectively) while for others the gathering takes place in the *husainiyya* or in the residence.

Other weekly religious gatherings are organised based agreements between the *jama'a*, teacher and foundation. Therefore the form, time and place can vary. In *Muthahhari* and *Al-Jawad*, for example, the weekly religious gathering is held on Sundays, so it is known as *Pengajian Ahad* (Sunday's religious gathering). The core of the *pengajian* activity is actually the *ceramah agama* (religious lecture), delivered by a religious teacher. It is followed by a discussion or questions from members of the *jama'a* and answers by the preacher or religious teacher. The topic of the sermon varies, and the decision is completely dependent on the preachers. It is likely that the selection of topic is related to historical events and rituals prescribed by Islamic, and in particular Shi'i, teachings, or in response to events occurring within the community. Sometimes it is based purely on the preference of the preacher. As a consequence, similar sermons may be delivered by preachers on different occasions and in different places. By and large, the weekly *pengajian* in Shi'i institutions seems to have included a variety of aspects of Shi'ism, particularly doctrine, morality and thought.

The regular annual religious gatherings are linked to a relatively large number of religious rituals and ceremonies within the Shi'i tradition. They are commonly associated with the so-called PHBI (*Peringatan Hari-hari Besar Islam*, Commemoration of Islamic Holy Days), a well-known programme run by all Shi'i institutions in Indonesia. Besides the Islamic festivals shared with their fellow Sunnis, there are many other important events commemorated which are distinctively Shi'i. It is very common in Shi'ism, as in Islam generally, for religious rituals and ceremonies to be practiced together with religious sermons delivered by religious teachers. In most congregational rituals, the sermon is an essential element without which the worship is invalid. Here one can see an aspect of *da'wa* naturally inherent in Islam, particularly in the sense of *tabligh*. Given the fact that there are numerous religious rituals and ceremonies within the Shi'i tradition, *da'wa* activities among the Shi'is are flourishing. At such great events

as *'ashura, arba'in,* and *mawlid* which are celebrated on a national level in Jakarta, it is common for a famous *da'i* to be invited to deliver a sermon.

In some of the religious ceremonies, '*ulama*' or intellectuals from Iran are invited to attend. For example, the committee of ICC of Al-Huda invited Ayatollah Ali Taskhiri from Iran to deliver a sermon to celebrate the New Year of the Muslim calendar of 1425, on 20 February 2004. At the event, he spoke about the struggle of Imam Husayn in the maintenance of *Islam Muhammadi* ('Muhammadist Islam') in the period when this religion had been corrupted by the tyranny of the Ummayad dynasty. He suggested that in all ages there are tyrants present that Muslims are obliged to fight against. At the annual religious gathering, for which there is always a large number of participants, every effort is made to maximise the effectiveness of *da'wa* activities. This includes a book fair to which Shi'i publishers from all over Indonesia are invited.

Regarding the topic of sermons delivered in the various types of *da'wa,* on the whole, the topic chosen is put into context with the situation of today's Muslim *umma* in mind. For example, sermons delivered on the occasion of *'ashura* usually deal with the struggle and sacrifice of Imam Husayn, his family and his loyal followers. In the commemoration of *'ashura* held in Jakarta on 2 March 2004, Hasan Daliel Al-'Aydrus delivered a sermon about the rising of the oppressed, as exemplified by Imam Husayn and its significance to the struggle of Muslim *umma*. Similarly, on the occasion of *mawlid*, the sermon usually deals with the loving devotion to the Prophet Muhammad. At the celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday held in the *Munawwarah* mosque, (every year since the establishment of the *Mutahhari* Foundation), Jalaluddin Rakhmat usually emphasises the importance of reciting *salawat* (invocation) unto the Prophet Muhammad. On 19 May 2003, he provided his *jama'a* with a sermon entitled "The Presence of the Messenger of God among us", affirming that the Prophet Muhammad will be present under two conditions: First, when *salawat* (invocation) unto him is uttered and, second, in the place where the orphans and poor gather in a pleasant atmoshpere. Rakhmat relates this topic to his previous preaching among the poor of North Jakarta.[25] These examples illustrate the close relationship between the topic of sermons, the events commemorated and the preacher's effort to contextualise them.

However, specific religious ideologies are promoted in the sermons delivered by Shi'i preachers at weekly and yearly activities, or at other events. Scrutinising the various existing sermons, we find two different tendencies that are congruent with the divide between the *ustadh* and intellectual

[25] *Al-Tanwir* (25/5/2003:4)

groups: The political tendency of the *ustadh* versus the moral or spiritual tendency of the intellectuals is clearly distinguishable in terms of the topics of sermon they deliver. More specifically, the topics related to politics, and *wilayat al-faqih* (mandate of the jurists) in particular, are numerous among the *ustadh* whilst barely present in sermons given by intellectuals. It is evident that, unlike the intellectuals, the *ustadh* emphasise the necessity for Shi'is in Indonesia to adhere to the doctrine of *wilayat al-faqih* principle and the prominent place of jurists in politics through preaching as well as through courses and training. In other words, *da'wa* is an expression of the religious ideology of preachers and institutions.

In addition to varied forms of *tabligh*, the type of *da'wa* activities among Shi'is include courses and training, in which participants receive more intensive instruction and guidance with regard to the teachings of Shi'ism. This type of *da'wa* is congruent with the meaning of the concept *ta'lim,* that is teaching to increase the knowledge of participants.[26] *Ta'lim* is different from *tabligh* in a number of aspects: First, *ta'lim* may require more than one *ustadh* or intellectual instructor. Second, it requires the participants to get involved in a more intensive learning so that they can understand certain topics offered by the programme in depth.

The Shi'i institutions in Indonesia have organised a large number of courses or training programmes, commonly called *Paket Kajian* (a package of courses). It consists of a series of courses on a certain subject, organised over a certain number of meetings. The course or training, which is either regular or incidental, is offered to *jama'a* or other participants so that they may gain a deeper understanding of certain aspects of Islam, and Shi'ism in particular. Names given to the programmes generally depend on subject or topic offered. This type of training is familiar to Muslims in Indonesia, particularly those living in big cities. Large Shi'i institutions such as *Muthahhari*, *Al-Jawad*, *Fatimah* and ICC of Al-Huda have been active in organising a variety of courses. Some programmes are offered to both Shi'is and Sunnis, while others are only open to Shi'is.

Many institutions are concerned with providing series of courses aimed specifically at strengthening the internal Shi'i community, even though the activity itself is open to both Muslim groups. The *Al-Jawad* Foundation, for example, tends to organise courses which are specifically Shi'i in nature, and on the whole it is only followed by Shi'is. Their most well-known programme includes a one-year integrated *Ja'fari* course and aspects of *'aqida* (doctrine), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *tafsir* (Qur'an exegesis) within Shi'ism, in addition to the courses on Arabic and logic. ICC

[26] Nagata (1984:82)

of Al-Huda has also participated in the organisation of such courses as Persian, Arabic, *tafsir* and logic. IPABI has conducted a series of courses and training on the principal aspects of Shi'ism, (which are categorised into elementary, intermediate and advanced level), and on special topics like *wilayat al-faqih,* which are followed by Shi'is from several areas in Indonesia.[27] IPABI also conducted an important national *da'wa* activity in Puncak, Bogor, known as *Training and Silaturrahmi ('friendship').* (It was held from 24-27 July 1997 for men and from 26-29 November 1999 for women). *Ustadh* such as Ahmad Baragbah and Husein Al-Kaf were invited to participate; and these activities were considered instrumental in not only increasing comprehension of religious knowledge but also in establishing close relations between Shi'i adherents, as well as the *ustadh,* in the framework of Islamic brotherhood. [28]

This *ta'lim* type of *da'wa* activity, as well as the aforementioned *tabligh,* is aimed at fulfilling the needs of the Shi'i community rather than those of the wider Muslim society. Shi'is in Indonesia, who are by and large considered immature in terms of Shi'i teachings and tradition, need education and guidance in at least two aspects: First, the basic teachings of Shi'ism and the Shi'i tradition are required for religiosity. This includes the practical knowledge required to perform prescribed and recommended prayers, and other religious rituals, in accordance with *Ja'fari* jurisprudence. Second, subjects of Islamic knowledge such as *tafsir*, *hadith*, logic and Arabic are important for members of the community to understand the doctrinal and historical bases of the *madhhab* which they follow. This type of *da'wa* is about the deepening and strengthening of the teachings of Shi'ism for Shi'i individuals, in order that they are able to practice the teachings of Shi'ism in everyday life. This clearly indicates the internal orientation of *da'wa* activities carried out by Shi'i institutions in Indonesia.

The *ta'lim* type of *da'wa* activity, which is aimed at attracting both Shi'i and Sunni groups, is also undertaken. At least, two goals are achieved by this type of *da'wa*: a deeper and stronger understanding of Shi'ism by its followers as a result of its comparison with Sunnism, and the acknowledgement and recognition of Shi'ism among the Sunni. Since its establishment, the *Muthahhari* Foundation has organised a number of programmes that are directed towards attracting both Muslim groups. The field of Islamic knowledge includes Arabic, *'ulum al-Qur'an* (sciences of the Qur'an), *'ulum al-hadith* (sciences of the Tradition), Islamic history, *usul al-fiqh* (principles of jurisprudence), *'ilm al-Qira'a* (science of the Qur'anic

[27] *Syi'ar* (Ramadan 1423:47)

[28] *An-Nashr* (7/July-August 1997, 14/1999)

recitation), Sufism, *kalam* (theology) and Islamic philosophy. The other science includes logic, Western philosophy, journalism, research methodology, management and organisation, entrepreneurship and communication technology.[29] In accordance with its goal of establishing brotherhood between Shi'is and Sunnis, a comparative perspective of both branches of Islam is provided in the course on Islamic knowledge, so that Sunnis in particular acknowledge Shi'i views on certain aspects of Islam. Furthermore, during this programme, leading Shi'i figures have the opportunity to explain the correct teachings of Shi'ism to Sunnis while, describing the misperceptions about Shi'i teachings and addressing the stereotypes about Shi'is widely held by Sunnis. In so doing, the real teachings of Shi'ism may be well understood by Sunnis.

Included in the *ta'lim* is *da'wa* through Sufism, which is aimed at both Sunni and Shi'i groups. "Sufism is the inner and esoteric dimension of Islam".[30] Given the increasing interest in Sufism among upper-middle class urbanites in Indonesia,[31] foundations such as *Tazkiya Sejati* in Jakarta and its branch in Bandung - IIMaN Centre for Positive Sufism - ,and the *Fitrah* Foundation, have organised courses on various aspects of Sufism. The most famous is *Tazkiya Sejati* in Jakarta which, from 1997 to 2003, organised more than 20 courses on Sufism, attracting participants from the upper-middle class in Jakarta, including businessmen, executives and retired functionaries. The course was usually conducted during weekends to make it more convenient for participants to attend. Since the field of Sufism transcends the borderline between Shi'ism and Sunnism, this course was offered to all Muslims - Sunni and Shi'i - who were taught and guided by both Sunni and Shi'i teachers. Besides Jalaluddin Rakhmat, the director of *Tazkiya Sejati*, prominent Muslim intellectuals and *ustadh* such as Haidar Bagir, Zen Al-Hadi,[32] Othman Omar Shihab,[33] Muchtar

[29] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:24-27)

[30] Nasr (1988:121)

[31] There are at least two indications supporting the great interest of urbanites in Sufism: first, the courses on Sufism attracted a large number of participants; second, huge sales of books on Sufism.

[32] Zen Al-Hadi completed his MA at Al-Azhar University in Cairo. Besides being a *ustadh*, he is known as a spiritual healer in Jakarta.

[33] Othman Omar Shihab graduated from Al-Azhar University in Cairo and is currently a famous *da'i* who often appears as a preacher on several religious television programmes. He is a descendant of the great learned man Sayyid Uthman bin Yahya (d. 1914).

Adam,[34] Abdul Qadir al-Habsyi,[35] and Said Agiel Siradj[36] were invited to teach at *Tazkiya Sejati*. In accordance with the mission of the purification of soul and the belief in siding with the oppressed, the theoretical aspects of Sufism taught at this institution follow the general teachings contained in Sufi books. But certain religious rituals, such as recommended prayers and *do'a* (supplications), follow rules and procedures applied within the Shi'i tradition, and as proscribed in famous Shi'i books such as *Mafatih al-Jinan* (Keys to the Gardens of Paradise)[37]. Another interesting and related activity conducted by the foundation in Puncak, Bogor, has been the practice of *'uzla* (meditation), in which a number of participants perform Sufi rituals as well as listening to religious sermons delivered by *ustadh*. The courses on Sufism are aimed at bringing the participants spiritual enlightenment which will maintain the balance between life in the world and in the hereafter.[38]

The course offered at *Tazkiya Sejati* differed to the course on Sufism organised by Nurcholish Madjid's *Paramadina* in terms of topics and contents. The main characteristic of the programme at *Tazkiya Sejati* was that it provided participants not only with theoretical aspects of Sufism but also with every day rituals observed under Sufism, such as *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and guidance from teachers in order to perform prayers correctly. In this regard, Sila considers *Tazkiya Sejati* to be the most significant institution of Sufism for the upper segments of society, because his ecperience was that many participants at *Tazkiya Sejati* who joined the course on Sufism, had earlier followed courses at other institutions like *Paramadina*. Sila argues that they moved to *Tazkiya Sejati* because they were gaining nothing at previous institutions except perhaps for discussions. In other words, the previous institutions provided only the intellectual aspects of Sufism and not the spiritual aspects. In *Tazkiya Sejati*, "besides receiving contemporary topics of Sufism from Islamic scholars through discussions and seminars, they were taught ways of practising certain *wirid* and acts of worship".[39] Another research by Zubaidah shows that most *jama'a* responded positively to the course on Sufism held at *Tazkiya Sejati* and they

[34] Muchtar Adam is the head of the *Babussalam Pesantren* in Bandung. A more detailed description of him can be found in Chapter Seven.

[35] Sayyid Abdul Qadir al-Habsyi is a lecturer at State Islamic University in Jakarta.

[36] Said Agiel Siradj is a Nahdlatul Ulama leader.

[37] This is a standard collection of Shi'i prayers compiled by Abbas Muhammad Rida al-Qummi (1877-1941).

[38] *Syi'ar* (October/2002:50-51)

[39] Sila (2002:7)

felt that the course had transformed them, sending them into a positive direction in terms of knowledge and religiosity.[40]

An increased interest in Sufism among urbanites in Indonesia has become a reason for other Shi'i institutions to offer the same course. When in 2003, for many reasons, but in particular the conflict between Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his co-founder Sudharmono's children, *Tazkiya Sejati* stopped operating, other institutions such as the *Fitrah* Foundation, run by some prominent Shi'i *ustadh* in Jakarta, continued to offer the course on Sufism. The Fitrah Islamic Spiritual Centre was established by Husein Shahab and Othman Omar Shihab. Popular Shi'i *ustadh* such as Othman Omar Shihab and Zen al-Hadi, who used to teach at *Tazkiya Sejati,* are now active with the Fitrah Foundation and involved in the instruction of Sufism. Similarly, IIMaN led by Haidar Bagir continues to organise a number of activities connected to the teaching of Sufism. Apart from motivating many debates on the relationship between Sufism and Shi'ism,[41] Sufism seems to have united both Sunnis and Shi'is, because participants tend to set aside the existence of either Sunni or Shi'i aspects within the teachings and rituals taught in the course on Sufism. With respect to the propagation of Shi'ism in Indonesia, this approach seems instrumental in introducing certain aspects of Shi'ism particularly to the Sunni.

Another important type of *da'wa* organised by the Shi'is particularly by means of their institution is social activity or social *da'wa*. For Shi'is, this is an implementation of the Shi'i teaching promoting the necessity to side with the *Mustad'afin* (the Oppressed), a famous concept, frequently heard in religious sermons and read in Shi'i sources. In Indonesia, this type of *da'wa* can be included in the concept of *da'wa bi al-hal* (missionary by deed) even though the emphasis of the concept is on the noble moral character (*akhlaq*) of preachers to be an example to the community and show *amal salih* (good behaviour). Therefore, it is frequently considered to be more important than preaching and teaching *or da'wa bi al-lisan* ('propagation by tongue'). Rakhmat, for instance, emphasises that *da'wa* through *tabligh* and *ta'lim,* as taught in the Qur'an and Traditions of the Prophet, is insufficient in terms of the realisation of the Muslim *umma.*.[42] In practice, however, the activity of social *da'wa* necessarily involves *tabligh*.

Several Shi'i institutions have participated in the organisation of various social activities for the lower classes in Indonesian society. Since the very beginning, the *Muthahhari* Foundation has devoted great attention to

[40] Zubaidah cited in Rosyidi (2004:122-123)

[41] Azra (1995)

[42] Rakhmat (1986:65-66)

the empowerment of the Oppressed through activities which are structurally organised under its division called *Imdad Mustad'afin, (*which simply means to give assistance and pay attention to the dispossessed and oppressed).[43] In practice, it provides educational, social and economic assistance to the poor and orphans. This is done by the Foundation for two reasons: First, it aims to generate and improve the self-respect of the poor and other segments of the lower class. Second, it is intended to provide guidance to children of the oppressed, in order that they may compete in the field of education.[44] To realise these programmes, *Imdad Mustad'afin* collects and distributes donations to its members, which in 2000 numbered at least 200 children. An interesting creative project of this division has been the establishment of the Islamic music group known as *Cinta Rasul* (Love of the Prophet). Under the leadership of Abu Ali, (who also heads the division of *Imdad Mustad'afin)* the group's 20 members have produced their own albums. With a variety of *salawat* (invocation to the Prophet Muhammad) as expressions of loving devotion, the group has performed in public, including on religious programmes broadcast on national television.[45]

Within this *da'wa* category, the important contributions made by the Indonesian Shi'i women's institution, OASE (Organisation of *Ahlulbayt* for Social Support and Education), are worthy of mention. Aside from the organisation's involvement in religious education for the poor, by providing a so-called '*kelas akhlaq*' (course on morality) in several schools, the institution has also awarded scholarships to the children of poor families in Jakarta, and provided training for the poor in Jakarta and other places in West, Central and East Java. With its logo 'an eye and tear' OASE aims to assist the lower classes, regardless of their *madhhab*.[46]

Social *da'wa* is also undertaken today by the so-called *Lembaga Dakwah Ukhuwah Al-Husainy* (Al-Husainy Brotherhood Da'wa Institute), a *da'wa* institution, newly formed by the alumni of KKM (*Kuliah Kader Muballigh*, Course for Preacher Cadre). This *da'wa* institution focuses on *da'wa* among the lower classes in urban and rural areas, and provides not only religious instruction but also various social and economic aid. For example, through its monthly programme of *Jumpa Mustad'afin* (Meeting with the Oppressed), this new *da'wa* institution has given financial assistance to poor families in several slum areas in Jakarta, as well as religious instruction and guidance. This type of *da'wa* activity is intended to bring

[43] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:39)
[44] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:39-43)
[45] *Syi'ar* (Ramadan 2004:52-53)
[46] *Syi'ar* (October 2003:54-56)

Shi'i *ustadh* and activists closer to the community. It is also considered to be a manifestation of social responsibility and a way of solving the social and economic problems of the Muslim *umma*.[47]

The social *da'wa* activities described above are regularly undertaken by Shi'i institutions. However, there are others which are conducted alongside the organisation of important religious rituals and ceremonies such as *'ashura* and *mawlid*. The necessity of participating in social *da'wa* activities is emphasised through these rituals and ceremonies. Shi'is in Indonesia have shown the wider society the social dimension of Islamic rituals. The commemoration of *'ashura* in Jakarta on 2 March 2004, for instance, incorporated the organisation of blood donation in cooperation with the Indonesian Red Cross. It was reported that about a thousand people participated. OASE have also organised the same *da'wa* activity. In its brochure, the Shi'i women's association urges Shi'is to side with the oppressed, particularly during *'ashura*. It invites participants in *'ashura* to 'implement their tears of *'ashura* in an action to help the Oppressed who are suffering and dying'. The activity, inspired by the struggle of Imam Husayn and his followers in Karbala, was a part of the involvement of the Shi'is in Indonesia in humanitarian activities.[48]. Similarly, various social activities, including *khitanan massal* (mass circumcision) of poor children - a popular activity in Indonesia - is carried out along with the celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. It is no exaggeration to say that a number of Shi'i institutions in Indonesia attempt to give a social significance to religious rituals. This social *da'wa* becomes more important in relation to the socio-economic condition of the poor in Indonesian society, which is lower than the minimum standard of living.

By and large, social *da'wa* is directed towards all people, regardless of their *madhhab*. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that it is hoped that the recipients of *da'wa* will be converted to Shi'ism. The minimum benefit gained by Shi'i institutions and individuals through this type of *da'wa* is that recipients will not discredit Shi'ism and Shi'is. This recognition of their contribution to the social development of Indonesian society is important symbolic capital. Equally, their close relationship between Shi'is and society can in turn become the social capital required to maintain their existence. In this regard, the preaching and writings of Jalaluddin Rakhmat promote the necessity of having noble morality and conduct. These characteristics form the basis by which people may be judged. Simple adherence to a specific *madhhab* does not form the basis of judgement.

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[47] *Suara Ummah* (4/1/2004:60-70)

[48] *Suara Ummah* (4/1/2004/:70)

From the three types of *da'wa* activities conducted by Shi'i institutions, we may conclude that the most popular and frequently-observed type is *tabligh.* This forms the narrow meaning of the concept *da'wa*. This type is even more prevalent if we look at individual agents of *da'wa*, that is the involvement of Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals in *da'wa* activities in Muslim institutions at large. With a view to intensifying all types of *da'wa*, Shi'i institutions and associations have also paid attention to producing *da'i* cadres through trainings.

E. *Da'wa* Training

Although this study is not meant to examine the effectiveness of *da'wa* activity in promoting Shi'ism and in realising Islamic society, we may suggest that it has contributed the continued recognition of Shi'is by the majority community in Indonesia. Along with this development, Shi'i institutions and organisations have made attempts to provide training for *da'i* cadres who are capable of carrying out appropriate *da'wa* activities with effective strategies. Based on the Muslim theorists on *da'wa*, Poston mentions the training for evangelists as the third phase within the *da'wa* realm, after the phase of conversion and the phase of reinforcing Islam on individuals.[49] In Nagata's observation, the training of new missionaries is also included in all *ta'lim* activities.[50] However, in terms of goal, *da'i* training is different from *ta'lim* activities, because the former is intended solely to produce competent *da'is*. In this regard, the training of *da'i* cadres is considered necessary for the realisation of *da'wa* goals.

At least three programmes of *da'i* training have been conducted. First is KKM (*Kuliah Kader Muballigh*, Course for Preacher Cadre), organised by Forum *Al-Husainy*, a Jakarta-based forum of *ustadh* and activists founded in 2003. Organised in eight sessions, KKM provided its participants (both Sunni and Shi'i) with a course on various *da'wa* topics, including the Management and Methodology of *Da'wa*, *Da'wa* Strategy and Challenge, The Sufi Approach to *Da'wa*, Developing *Da'wa* Paradigm and Empowerment, Psychology and *Da'wa* and Communication, the Role of Preachers in Social Change in Indonesia and topics on Islamic doctrine, history, and the Islamic movement. On the surface, this curriculum does not appear to reflect the Shi'i character of the training, but all lectures were Shi'i and were conducted by prominent Shi'i intellectuals and *ustadh* such as like Haidar Bagir, Umar Shahab, Husein Shahab, Othman Omar Shihab, Zen Al-Hadi, Abdurrahman Al-'Aydrus, Agus Abubakar, Muhsin

[49] Poston (1992:132)

[50] Nagata (1984:82)

Labieb, and Hasan Daliel. Participants were expected to comprehend not only theoretical and practical aspects of *da'wa* but also Islamic theology, history, and the development of Muslim society. The programme, emphasised the importance of Islamic brotherhood, especially between Sunni and Shi'i preachers. The training seems to have attracted great interest from *da'wa* activists and university students in Jakarta, and the courses were oversubscribed.[51]

The KKM course did not formulate either a specific strategy or a manual for missionary activists carrying out *da'wa* activity, however, the participants of KKM have since established the aforementioned *Lembaga Dakwah Ukhuwah*, which has implemented various types of *da'wa* activities, and has been involved in social *da'wa*, including *tabligh* (preaching) and *ta'lim* (learning).

The second training activity was organised by the *Muthahhari* Foundation. In fact, this foundation might be the first Shi'i institution to have paid significant attention to *da'i* training. Until 1993, the foundation conducted a series of four *Kuliah Muballighin* (Lectures for Preachers)[52] attended by numerous participants. The training curriculum included such topics as Principles of *Da'wa*, Rhetoric of *Da'wa*, Psychology of *Da'wa*, Morality and *Da'wa* Strategy, Islam in Indonesia in a Historical Perspective, Development of Islamic Theological Schools, Development of Islamic Jurisprudential Schools, and a Sufi Approach to Islam. Course instructors were prominent religious teachers in Bandung including, among others, K.H. Muchtar Adam, K.H. A.F. Ghazali,[53] Afif Muhammad,[54] K.H. Abdullah Gymnastiar,[55] Dedy Djamaluddin Malik,[56] Husein Shahab, Agus

[51] *Suara Ummah* (1/1/2004:55-56)

[52] *Al-Tanwir* (29/3/1993:8)

[53] K.H. Abdul Fatah Ghazali was a prominent learned man in Bandung and close friend of Jalaluddin Rakhmat who delivered special sermon at the Munawwarah Mosque in memoriam of the learned man who passed away on 6 May 2001.

[54] Dr. Afif Muhammad is a lecturer at Gunung Djati State Institute for Islamic Studies (now State Islamic University) in Bandung. He has written several articles and translated numerous books from Arabic.

[55] K.H. Abdullah Gymnastiar, popularly known as Aa Gym, is a famous *da'i* in Indonesia today and the head of *Pesantren Daarut Tauhid* in Bandung.

[56] Dedy Djamaluddin Malik is currently a member of parliament from PAN. He was an activist at and secretary of the *Muthahhari* Foundation and a former member of the executive board of IJABI. He completed his Masters in Communications at UNPAD with a thesis about the Islamic thoughts of Abdurrahman Wahid, Nurcholish Madjid, Amien Rais and Jalaluddin Rakhmat.

Effendi,[57] and A. Hajar Sanusi.[58] Like KKM, *Kuliah Muballighin* was provided for both Sunnis and Shi'is, with a view to promoting recognition of Shi'ism among the Sunnis.

The third *da'i* training was organised by the national Shi'i organisation, IJABI. In terms of goal, subjects and methods, this training was totally different from the training organised by both the *Muthahhari* Foundation and *Al-Husainy*. This training was confined to members and executives of IJABI only. The elementary *Pengkaderan Muballigh* (Establishing Preacher Cadre) that was conducted over four days (24-27 December 2003) in Bandung warrants special attention here. With about 60 participants, from all over Indonesia, representing the central board as well as the provincial and district branches of IJABI, the activity was considered an important step in the development of the organisation. Activities were centred around a hostel in Bandung where all the participants were housed. The goal was to generate the cadre of IJABI who, with the knowledge and skill gained, would, one, be capable of defending the *madhhab* of *ahl al-bayt*; two, be capable of enlightening the Muslim *umma*, and three, be capable of defending Islam in relation to global political developments.

To achieve this goal, participants were instructed in doctrine of Shi'ism, *'ulum al-Qur'an*, *'ulum al-hadith*, rhetoric and argumentation techniques. All the subjects were at an introductory level and presented via lecture. The lectures delivered were given by Jalaluddin Rakhmat alone, and each was followed by a discussion. The main messages in the lectures were as follows: first, that participants should gain an understanding of the principal teachings of Shi'ism, based on the widespread Sunni material sources and methodology that are considered authoritative within the Sunni tradition. Second, they should employ critical analysis of these Sunni sources with the purpose of defending and supporting the originality and validity of Shi'i teachings. By critical study, they mean to find weaknesses and inconsistencies which show the heterodox aspects of Sunni teachings. Third, they should have skills in rhetoric and argumentation techniques when they discuss or enter dialogue with Sunni figures. It is emphasised that a failure to utilise accurate rhetoric and argumentation techniques will not only contribute to the failure of achieving the goal of *da'wa,* but it will also destroy the originality and holiness of Shi'i Islam. Therefore, these introductory lectures are very significant in the *da'i* training programme.

[57] Agus Effendi is an alumnus of *Pesantren Gontor*. He is a former teacher and executive of the *Muthahhari* Foundation.

[58] A. Hajar Sanusi was an activist and executive of the *Muthahhari* Foundation.

In addition to the lectures, the training activity required all participants to join an entire programme outlined by the committee. Included in the programme was a working group and library study, for which participants were divided into several groups. Each group was given certain topics, including those which are sources of polemics between Sunnis and Shi'is. In the aspect of doctrine, for instance, the topics include 'why do I choose Shi'ism (from both Shi'i and Sunni sources)', *tawhid* (unity of God), al-Mahdi (the guided), *al-raj'a* (return), *al-bada'* (alteration in God's will), *tabarruk* (seeking blessing through persons or things) and *tawassul* (praying through mediators). Each group studied the topic in the *Muthahhari* library, wrote a paper on it and presented it to the class. All the topics were then discussed and debated, and all the papers were digitalised and submitted to the committee.

The atmosphere of this activity was interesting to observe. In general, the training was academic and intellectual. It was free from indoctrination. It provided a space for open and liberal thought and discussion and debate. Participants were free to question and criticise various aspects of Shi'i teachings. This atmosphere suggests that organisers were prepared to defend the originality and validity of Shi'ism as a branch of Islam based on both Sunni and Shi'i sources and to engage themselves in various forms of dialogue with their Sunni brothers.

Interestingly, there was a final exam for all participants. However, participants success in the *da'i* training programme was based not just on the exam results but also on the implementation of a *da'wa* programme upon their return home. Participants were obliged to formulate a *da'wa* programme in the community where they live. Upon their return to the community, the programme was to be implemented and reported to the committee.

The three *da'i* trainings are very important in the development of *da'wa* in Indonesia, even though the impact of the programmes on the realisation of *da'wa* goals remains unknown. Not only have the three *da'i* trainings provided important knowledge and skills for the participants but also motivated and affirmed their missionary zeal. With the missionary spirit, knowledge and skill they may improve and intensify the implementation of *da'wa* programmes and activities. This in turn contributes to strengthening the position of Shi'i adherents and the existence of their faith within the community. The aim of these activities is to achieve recognition from the Sunni majority.

This recognition is a continuous process that takes time, and the *da'wa* process still continues. The organisation of *da'i* trainings reflects the

strong missionary zeal of the organisers, namely Shi'i *ustadh*, intellectuals and institutions, and their great concern for the implementation of effective and successful *da'wa* programmes. In this regard, Shi'ism, like Sunnism, is a missionary brand of Islam.

CHAPTER FIVE

EDUCATION

The growth of Shi'ism in Indonesia can be attributed to the key role of Shi'i religious scholars, teachers and intellectuals who have established *yayasan* (foundation) and other institutions which function in various fields – *da'wa*, educational and socio-cultural. While the previous chapter described the nature and characteristics of Shi'ism's *da'wa* institutions and their activities, this chapter focuses on a relatively small number of institutions, established specifically to function in the field of education. In general, education is understood to be the transfer of knowledge and values from one generation to another. In practice, the realisation of education can be classified in terms of modern institutions of education, that is, the school system, and traditional institutions of Islamic learning, commonly known in Indonesia as *pesantren*. In this chapter I will describe the two types of educational institutions established and run by Shi'i figures in Indonesia.

A. Pesantren

Traditionally, *pesantren* have become "the best means of creating unity of the *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a*"[1] implemented by learned Sunni men in Indonesia. However, the same institutions have been used to teach and propagate Shi'ism. There are at least five *pesantren* considered to have propagated Shi'i teachings to the Indonesian Muslim community: YAPI in Bangil, *Al-Hadi* in Pekalongan, *Dar al-Taqrib* in Bangsri Jepara, *Al-Mukarramah* in Bandung, and *Nurul Tsaqalain* in Leihitu, Central Maluku. The two most famous *pesantren,* YAPI and *Al-Hadi*, will be examined in the first section of this chapter. It is of interest to describe and analyse YAPI as an institution of Islamic learning and to compare it with *Pesantren Al-Hadi*, as well as examining both institutions from the perspective of the *pesantren* tradition. In this way elements of both institutions may be

[1] Dhofier (1999:173)

revealed, not only in terms of the general characteristics of the *pesantren* tradition, but also as characteristics unique to Shi'i institutions of learning in Indonesia. In turn this will shed light on the dynamics of institutions of Islamic learning and in particular the role of Indonesia's Shi'is in this regard.

YAPI, which is an abbreviation of *Yayasan Pesantren Islam,* formally written in Arabic as *Muassasat al-Ma'had al-Islami*, is located in Bangil, a small town within the district of Pasuruan, East Java. Bangil is inhabited mainly by Muslims adhering to different denominations. Scholars of Islam in Indonesia are familiar with the reformist organisation Persis which is closely associated with Ahmad Hasan who spent most of his life in Bangil, even though the majority of the town's population are adherents of the traditionalist Sunni *Nahdatual Ulama* NU, or followers of the Islamic organisation *Muhammadiyah*. The existence YAPI, a Shi'i institution of learning contributes to the religious complexity of Bangil. First established in Bondowoso, another district in East Java, in 1971 by Husein Al-Habsyi (1921-1994) - who also taught at and led a branch of the *Al-Khairiyya* school in the town - five years later, (18 June 1976), YAPI moved to its current location where it has grown and developed rapidly.[2] The institution has become an important centre of Islamic learning for the Shi'is in Indonesia although its head and teachers frequently deny its association with Shi'ism.

Its name resembles the previously mentioned *Yayasan Penyiaran Islam* (Islamic Propagation Foundation) - also abbreviated as YAPI - which was established in Surabaya in 1961. Husein Al-Habsyi, one of the sponsors of YAPI in Bangil, says that the 'original' YAPI - which is devoted to organising social, religious and intellectual activities - inspired him to use the same abbreviation, even though the two institutions have different aims and focus. The Islamic Propagation Foundation moved to Lampung, in southern Sumatra, and then later to Jakarta where its primary programme has been to publish translated and original Shi'i works. Bangil's YAPI became Husein Al-Habsyi's primary concern and a serious attempt to realise his ideals in Islamic education and missionary activity. Al-Habsyi believes the only way that Islamic educational concepts will be implemented is through *pesantren* like YAPI, institutions of Islamic learning in which students can be educated in Islamic teachings, practice them in their daily life and be free from westernisation.[3]

[2] Bukhori (n.d:17)

[3] Zamzami (n.d:102-103)

Thanks to Husein Al-Habsyi's considerable efforts, YAPI has become the most important teaching centre for Shi'is in Indonesia. It is clear that Husein Al-Habsyi's used his experience in the fields of politics and education and his leadership skills to realise his ideals and ambitions in Islamic education, and the construction and development of his *pesantren* in particular. Husein Al-Habsyi's valuable social capital was easily transformed into economic capital for the construction of his institution. His good relationship with some of the Middle East's most learned men, including the prominent figures of *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* (Muslim Brotherhood) meant he was able to visit a number of countries in the Middle East to raise financial assistance. Endowed with a sum of money and a plot of land in Bangil, Husein Al-Habsyi was able to construct a relatively large building which functioned as both a dormitory and a classroom. With this adequate facility, YAPI of Bangil could house students from all over Indonesia and provide them with a good quality Islamic education. Al-Habsyi continued to maintain good contacts with eminent *kyai*, (learned men) in the country in order to garner their moral support for his project. For instance, a well-known learned man from Langitan supported his efforts by entrusting several of his disciples to assist with teaching in the *pesantren*.

As a learned man himself, with a comprehensive understanding of various branches of Islamic knowledge, Husein Al-Habsyi was well qualified to formulate the educational programme of the institution. The principles and approaches of Islamic education practiced in YAPI follows, the *Ikhwan al-Muslimin* model - which emphasises strict discipline and a strong anti-Western attitude - which Husein Al-Habsyi considered to be the best model for achieving his Islamic educational ideals. He believed that an Islamic institution of learning should be free from all Western worldviews and secularism. All students are required to obey the rules of the institution as outlined by the head of the *pesantren,* in order that they are unaffected by aspects of western culture. As the leader of the institution, responsible for its detailed development and progress, Husein Al-Habsyi not only managed the institution but he also taught in several fields of Islamic knowledge, including Arabic, *tafsir* (Qur'an exegesis) and *usul al-fiqh* (principles of Islamic jurisprudence). In addition, he had a specific role of forming cadres and consciousness among his students in order to revive their spirit for the struggle for Islam and the Muslim Community.[4] Today, YAPI and its founder are well known among learned men from, not only, Indonesia but also from the Middle East.

[4] Panitia (n.d:2)

Husein Al-Habsyi's struggle in the field of religious education was relatively successful, as evidenced by the fact that a number of YAPI alumni were able to pursue their education in countries such as India, Pakistan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Qatar.[5] After the Iranian revolution many of them pursued their religious learning in Qum, Iran, possible due to their high level of Arabic and Islamic knowledge, as well as the fact that Iranian scholars were willing to take students recommended by Husein Al-Habsyi. Indeed, Al-Habsyi provided recommendations for a large number of students, including his own, who sought to pursue Islamic learning in Iran. After several years studying in Qum they went on to become teachers in several Islamic schools and foundations in various areas of Indonesia, some even returning to YAPI itself.

As an institution of education YAPI aims to produce students who are capable of becoming Indonesia's pioneering human resource, able to face a wide variety of challenges and problems with wisdom.[6] To achieve this goal, the institution organises several educational programmes, formulates appropriate curriculum contents, provides the necessary facilities and equipment and implements various teaching strategies, methods and techniques.[7] Today, YAPI has three separate complexes. The biggest one is for male students and is situated in the village of Kenep, Beji sub-district, about three kilometres south of Bangil. The second centre of Islamic education is for female students and is located in Jl. Lumba-lumba (Kersikan) close to the town centre of Bangil. The third one, also on the Jl. Lumba-lumba site, is the '*Al-Abrar*' kindergarten. Like the majority of *pesantren* in Java, YAPI separates male and female students. Each complex has its own facilities such as a *pondok* (hostel), mosque or prayer place, classrooms, library, laboratories, and sport centre. With their own educational facilities the three centres can organise their educational programmes to meet their specific goals.

YAPI attempts "to participate in producing intelligent persons, having a correct and firm faith, a wise and critical attitude in order to face a future full of challenge."[8] It shares the same basic elements as other *pesantren*: *pondok*, mosque, *santri* (student), the instruction of Islamic texts, and the *kyai* (Muslim scholar and leader of the institution).[9] The *pondok,* where students live together, protects them from unwanted external influences. Both the Kenep and Jl. Lumba-lumba complexes of YAPI have a *pondok*

[5] Muhsin Husein (1997:5)
[6] *Al-Isyraq* (1/1/1417)
[7] *Al-Isyraq* (1/1/1417)
[8] Pamphlet (2002/2003)
[9] Dhofier (1999:25)

with adequate rooms and facilities, and all students, with the exception of those at the kindergarten, are expected to live in the pondok. (In the academic year 2002/2003 there was about 300 students). In this regard, YAPI only has *santri mukim* students who live in the *pesantren* complex.[10] The *santri* at YAPI come from all over the country, from Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi to Nusa Tenggara and Maluku, reflecting the diverse ethnic groups within Indonesian society.[11] However, my observations suggest that the majority of students at YAPI are the Indonesian Arabs, and most students and teachers wear a white *jubah* (Arab robe). As previously stated, in line with the principles outlined by its founder, all students at YAPI are obliged to obey strict rules and regulations. For instance, students may not leave the *pesantren* complex or hostel without permission, all electronic and printed media deemed to be pornographic is forbidden, they may not watch Western films or listen to western songs and they are not allowed to smoke. These rules are believed to keep the students focused on their study and protected from the influences of western culture.[12]

YAPI has a large mosque in its male complex and a prayer room called a *musalla* in its female complex. As integral elements of the institution, the mosque, and *musalla* function as a centre for training students in such things as the practice of daily prayers, the recitation of the Qur'an, the recitation of the *ratib*[13], *tawassul*, *kumayl* and other prayers and also in public preaching. We may classify several functions of the mosque: first, as a place for the practice of obligatory daily prayers - communal as well as individual - for the students, teachers and staff of the *pesantren* and for Friday prayers for the *pesantren* and the wider community. Second, it is the centre for the practice of recommended rituals such as the recitation of the Qur'an, *ratib*, *tawassul*, and other prayers. Third, it is a place for the students to join in extra-curriculum programmes such as public preaching and *qasidah* (Arabic song with female singers). Fourth, it is the centre for the practice of rituals and ceremonies relating to Muslim holy days, such as the birthday of the Prophet, of Fatima (his daughter) and of the twelve Imams, *'ashura* (the martyrdom of Husayn), and others including the *haul*

[10] Dhofier classifies two types of *santri* within the pesantren tradition: the *santri mukim* who live in the pesantren complex and the *santri kalong*, the students coming from villages surrounding the pesantren who do not live in the pesantren complex (1999:31).

[11] *Dialog Jumat* (28/5/2004)

[12] Zamzami (n.d:112-113)

[13] *Ratib* is certain formula of *dhikr* (remembrance) and prayers formulated by a Sufi teacher. YAPI in which many teachers as well as students are Indonesian Arabs practises that formulated by a famous hadrami Sufi Abdullah al-Haddad so that it is commonly called *Ratib Haddad* as it is very well known among this group.

(death celebration) of Husein Al-Habsyi, the founder of the pesantren. With regard to rituals related to the late Husein Al-Habsyi, the students are urged to perform *ziyara* (visitation) to his grave after dawn prayer on Fridays. The grave itself is located behind the mosque. Thus, with the exception of those secular and religious lessons conducted in the classroom, all other educational and religious activities of the institution are centred in the mosque, which is called *Ats-Tsaqolain* (*al-Thaqalayn*). These educational and religious activities are very important for the students of the *pesantren* in terms of becoming accustomed to Islamic practice and developing religious spirit, and they are expected not only to comprehend various branches of Islamic knowledge but also to practice Islamic teachings in their daily life.[14]

In relation to the position of the learned men and the leadership of the *pesantren*, there has been a clear transformation at YAPI from a charismatic leadership to a rationalistic one. As stated, YAPI originally came under the authority of Husein Al-Habsyi, who as a learned man, founder and leader of the institution, was the most essential element of the *pesantren*, and directly responsible for its development. Today, there is no single person able to match Husein Al-Habsyi's qualifications and charisma or take over his position as a learned man and the leader of the institution. While his third son, Ali Ridho Al-Habsyi, was formally appointed as the leader of YAPI, its programmes and the Islamic foundation are governed by a formal organisational structure. This comprises a chief, a secretary and a treasurer, and the organisation is split into several divisions, including education and *da'wa*, which are responsible for the three educational centres at YAPI. This points to a rationalistic leadership of YAPI.

The central figures, at present, responsible for the development of educational programmes in particular and the foundation in general are - aside from the aforementioned Ali Ridho Al-Habsyi - Muhammad bin Alwi BSA, Ali Umar Al-Habsyi and Muhammad Alwi Al-Habsyi, all YAPI alumni and students of Husein Al-Habsyi. A number of Qum alumni also have important teaching roles at the institution. In the past, the most important figure at YAPI following the death of Husein Al-Habsyi was Zahir Yahya, Husein Al-Habsyi's student, son-in-law, and Qum alumnus. However, a conflict in YAPI, most probably originating from struggles over the accumulation of symbolic and economic capital among certain individuals from Husein Al-Habsyi's clan, led Zahir Yahya and his party to leave the *pesantren*. At one point, Iran became involved in the conflict and was said to have sided with Zahir Yahya. Subsequently, the institution's

[14] Zamzami (n.d:112)

current leadership visited Iran for clarification of their position. Today, it is the abovementioned central figures that collectively attempt to maintain continuity in the process of Islamic learning in the institution and to implement various strategies to preserve its existence and continue its development.

Examined from the perspective of its current educational system, YAPI can be considered a modern institution which has undergone a transformation. Until 1997 YAPI only organised programmes of religious education comprising *i'dadiyya* (preparatory), *ibtida'iyya* (elementary), *thanawiyya* (secondary corresponding to Islamic Junior High School), and *'aliyya* (secondary corresponding to Islamic Senior High School) levels. The curriculum contents of the first three levels, give priority to the study of Arabic including *nahwu* (syntax) and *saraf* (morphology) and several branches of Islamic knowledge such as *hadith*, *tafsir* (Qur'an exegesis), *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *'aqida* (Islamic doctrine), and logic. At the *'aliyya* level, the students were introduced to branches of Islamic knowledge from comparative perspectives such as *kalam* (Islamic theology), philosophy, *'ulum al-Qur'an* (sciences of the Qur'an), *usul al-fiqh* (principles of Islamic jurisprudence) and comparative Islamic jurisprudence. Additionally, at this level there were lessons in translation and *tahqiq* (editing) instructing students on how to read, translate and edit Arabic materials.[15]

Since 1997 YAPI has transformed its educational programme by incorporating both the national curriculum and traditional religious education, "so as to provide the best solution in the field of education sought by the people of high spirituality and intellectual."[16] The transformation occurred with the integration of the religious education at the abovementioned *ibtidaiyya* and *thanawiyya* levels into the programme of Junior High School (SLTP) and Senior High School (SMU). The *'aliyya* level was changed into a special programme for religious education called *takhassus* (specialisation), and was structurally separated from both schools.[17] Following these changes, YAPI now organises a general school, a religious school and *takhassus*. With regard to the first system, YAPI offers a programme of secondary education, providing SLTP (Junior High School) and SMU (Senior High School), both of which teach general (secular) subjects as outlined in the curriculum regulated by the Department of National Education. In order to be formally recognised by the department, the institution must follow specific guidelines and meet the required standard.

[15] *Al-Isyraq* (1/1/1417)
[16] *Pamphlet* (2002/2003)
[17] *Al-Isyraq* (7/2/1418:42)

YAPI also offers a programme combining this national system with its *pesantren* system in the form of a religious school. The curriculum for this programme comprises 60% general subjects and 40% religious subjects. With this formation, graduates of YAPI are expected to possess both basic general and religious knowledge and be capable of successfully pursuing tertiary education at general (secular) or religious universities. In this regard, like the schools belonging to the *Muthahhari* Foundation (which will be described below), YAPI attributes the title 'Plus' to both its SLTP and SMU programmes.

YAPI's religious education programme, (also called the 'mixed' programme), is compulsory for all students at both the secondary levels. It consists of three stages. The first is known as the *mutawassit* (intermediate) level, and is offered to graduates of primary education who, on the whole, do not yet possess the basics of religious knowledge and Arabic. The programme commences from the first to the sixth semester during the Junior High School period, and students are taught the basic fields of religious knowledge as well as reading, speaking, listening and writing skills in Arabic. Arabic is also the language of instruction for the third-year students. The programme also provides first-year students with courses on Qur'anic recitation, *tajwid* (science of the correct pronunciation of the Qur'an) and the memorisation of certain chapters of the Qur'an. The primary textbooks for the Arabic language instruction are *Al-'Arabiyya li al-Nashi'in* (6 volumes) and *Al-Amthilah al-Tasrifiyya*, Arabic morphology written by Maksum Ali.[18] These learning resources illustrate YAPI's focus on the students' comprehension of the Arabic language and its importance for Muslims because – as stated in an institute pamphlet about the admission of new students - about 90% of religious and intellectual sources on Islamic teachings are written in Arabic. It is interesting to note that the mentioned *Al-'Arabiyya li al-Nasi'in* has recently been used to teach Arabic to the students at the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN) and the State College for Islamic Studies (STAIN).

Students of YAPI's Senior High School also receive religious instruction as the institution thus combining both general and religious education to form a single system of education. Those who finish the intermediate level of religious education go on to pursue the *thanawiyya* level, which provides a much deeper understanding of religious knowledge and Arabic and offers a more extensive programme. Having followed both general (SMU) and religious education (*thanawiyya*) the students are considered to have received a level of basic education and the skills to be well-rounded

[18] Sekilas (n.d:6-7)

members of society, regardless of whether they go on to pursue tertiary education or not. The religious education curriculum comprises five subjects: Arabic, the Qur'an or specific chapters of the Qur'an, *tatbiq* (reading Arabic texts without signs), *'aqida* and *fiqh*. The primary source for the Arabic instruction is the book *Durus fi al-'Arabiyya* (Lessons in Arabic), and is the next step up from *Al-'Arabiyya li al-Nashi'in*. The main sources for *'aqida* and *fiqh* are those written by prominent Shi'i learned men and legists, including Ayatollah Nasir Makarim Shirazi's *'Aqa'id wa Mazahib* and Ayatollah Ruhullah Khomeini's *Zubdat al-Ahkam* respectively.[19] The religious education provided by the institution gives the students the ability to disseminate this knowledge to their own communities. Furthermore, they are prepared to continue their religious learning at higher institutions in the Middle East.

In addition to these two programmes, YAPI organises one that is called *tamhidiyya* (preparatory). This programme is designed for students of SMU who graduate from other SLTPs with a basic religious knowledge. The content of its curriculum is similar to that of the *thanawiyya* level, with the exception that the main source for the instruction of Arabic is *Al-'Arabiyya li al-Nashi'in* (6 volumes). The goals expected from this programme are generally the same as those mentioned above. Because *tamhidiyya* students generally join the programme without prior knowledge of Arabic, twelve out of eighteen hours a week are set aside for Arabic instruction, plus four hours for Arabic syntax and morphology.[20]

A unique characteristic of the educational system at YAPI also lies in its exclusive religious programme known as *takhassus*, which simply means 'specialisation', (referring to specialisation in Islamic knowledge). *Takhassus* is provided for those male students intending to concentrate only on the field of Islamic knowledge. Since this programme only concerns Islamic subjects, to a large extent it resembles the *pesantren salafi* within the *pesantren* tradition.[21] *Takhassus* is aimed at producing students who are really capable of developing Islamic views using comparative and critical methods.[22] The programme, which is organised in three levels, can be considered to be a continuation of the above-mentioned *thanawiyya* programme, and many graduates of the *thanawiyya* programme do in fact enrol on the *takhassus* programme. The institution also provides an *i'dadiyya* (preparatory) programme for students who did not come via the

[19] *Sekilas* (n.d:7)

[20] *Sekilas* (n.d:7-8), Ali Umar Al-Habsyi, interview, (5/10/2002)

[21] Dhofier (1999:22)

[22] *Pamphlet* (2002/2003)

thanawiyya programme or for those who lack the necessary level of Islamic knowledge required for learning at the *takhassus* level. The preparatory programme usually takes four semesters and emphasises Arabic language and introductory Islamic doctrine and jurisprudence.[23] In the academic year 2002/2003, 23 students were enrolled on YAPI's *takhassus* programme.

The curriculum content of the *takhassus* programme includes nearly all the subjects from the body of Islamic knowledge comprising Arabic, *tafsir*, *kalam*, *fiqh*, *usul al-fiqh*, Arabic syntax, *balagha* (rhetoric), *Sira* (biography of Prophet Muhammad and his household), *mantiq* (logic) and Islamic philosophy. This differs from the Sunni institutions of learning in that, not only does YAPI provide the instruction of Islamic philosophy but it is also concerned with an intensive study of philosophy. Two scientific activities organised at YAPI illustrate the important position of the study of philosophy and logic at the institution: first, the establishment of the Study Group for the Study of Religion and Philosophy (KSAF); and second, a large number of articles on topics dealing with philosophy are published in the journals of YAPI, including the now defunct *Al-Isyraq* (9 numbers, (1417-1418/1997-1998) and *Islamuna* (1424/2003-present). This is in contrast to the research and studies on the books used in the *pesantren* milieu in Indonesia during the 19th and 20th centuries conducted by van den Berg (1888) and van Bruinessen (1990) which finds an absence of the subject of philosophy. For centuries Sunni learned men and institutions of learning forbid the instruction of philosophy. This is frequently seen as a consequence of the great influence of al-Ghazali's Sufi teachings in the Sunni world, in general, and in the *pesantren* tradition, in particular. The prohibition of the study of logic and philosophy within the tradition of Islamic learning in most Muslim countries has been criticised by scholars such as Abu Ali (a pseudonym). He suggests that institutions of Islamic learning should in fact emphasise the instruction of both these sciences which he believes are essential for students to discuss, analyse and study Islamic teachings correctly.[24]

Another special characteristic of the *takhassus* programme is demonstrated by the primary sources used in the learning process. Like the majority of *pesantren* in Java, the *takhassus* programme uses Muhammad bin Malik's *Alfiya* for the study of Arabic syntax, (an authoritative book within the *pesantren* tradition), and *Al-Balagha al-Wadiha* for the study of rhetoric. Other learning resources include books written by some prominent

[23] *Sekilas* (n.d:8)

[24] Abu Ali (1417:18)

Shi'i learned men from Iran or Iraq such as Ayatollah Muhammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi's *Al-'Aqida al-Islamiyya* (3 volumes) used for the study of *'aqida*, Muhammad Javad Mughniyya's *Al-Fiqh 'ala al-Mazahib al-Khamsa* for the study of comparative Islamic law, Muhammad Baqir Sadr's *Al-Halaqat al-Thalath* for the study of *usul al-fiqh*, Ayatollah Rida Muzaffar's *'Ilm al-Mantiq* for the study of logic, and Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i's *Bidayat al-Hikma* for the study of Islamic philosophy.[25] This clearly reveals the Shi'i tendency of the programme, and is in striking contrast to the majority of *pesantren* in Indonesia.

As a *pesantren* implementing an integrated system of education, YAPI offers an extra-curriculum programme with the purpose of supporting and completing the intra-curriculum programme in the field of Arabic and religious subjects, and the educational system of the institution at large. Given the fact that all the instructional materials in religious subjects are in Arabic, it is imperative that students possess then necessary language skills. To achieve this, the institution implements various learning techniques for Arabic alongside the formal instruction in the classroom, including developing vocabularies, writing essays, speaking in formal activities and in daily life, mastering syntax and morphology. Islamic and Arabic films or other programmes are also presented at the *pesantren*. Religious subjects such as *fiqh*, *'aqida*, *akhlaq* (ethics) and *sira* for the students of *mutawassit*, *thanawiyya* and *tamhidiyya* and subjects including logic, *usul al-fiqh*, and *'ulum al-Qur'an* for the students of *thanawiyya* and *tamhidiyya* are provided in the form of extra-curricula courses that should be completed in every semester. In addition, the institution provides an optional programme for those students wanting to deepen their knowledge of Shi'ism. Another important aspect of the extra-curriculum programmes is the various kinds of arts, sports and other skills, (including computer, English, and journalism), which are provided (albeit differently) for male and female students.

In general YAPI is a modern institution of Islamic learning as a result of this transformation process which has integrated various elements of educational traditions: the element of the national system of education in the form of general school, the *madrasa* system which is a classical system of religious education, the element of *pesantren salafi* in the form of certain standard books for learning Arabic syntax and morphology and also the *takhassus* programme. Not to be forgotten is the element of Shi'ism at YAPI, which manifests itself in the curriculum contents and the instructional materials for religious subjects, and also in the religious rituals and ceremonies practiced at the institution. And like most modern *pesantren*,

[25] *Sekilas* (n.d:8)

this institution of learning requires that all students and teachers use Arabic in their daily life in the *pesantren*. This emphasis on the comprehension of Arabic has been a continuous element since the foundation of YAPI. The integration of diverse elements of education at YAPI not only forms a unique system of learning but also brings other aspects to the *pesantren* tradition which differs from those institutions belonging to the Javanese culture.

With regard to its Shi'i characteristics, as previously mentioned, the leaders and teachers at YAPI are reluctant to openly call it a Shi'i institution of learning. (This is in contrast to the view of scholars such as Zainuddin *et al.* who write : "in Bangil (East Java) was established *Yayasan Pesantren Islam* (YAPI) that also openly displays the Shi'i banner"[26]. However, the current leadership's rejection of the Shi'i label is not entirely without justification as YAPI is not confined to Shi'is students, but is open to all Muslims regardless of their religious streams. Furthermore, there is no obligation for students to adhere to the Shi'i school of thought. As its educational curriculum demonstrates, certain programmes teach the students comparative Islamic theology and jurisprudence with the specific aim of fostering an open and tolerant attitude. These ideals of openness and freedom within Islam, as promoted by Husein Al-Habsyi, form the foundation of the *pesantren:*

> What becomes the basis of all activities and programmes of the Foundation all is a reflection of Al-Ustadh Husein Al-Habsyi's open-mindedness and universal worldview seeing the world of Islam as a system and every Muslim from any religious orientation as a part of the body of Islam. Therefore, YAPI is always proud of its openness and 'integrates' all streams and Islamic organisations.[27]

YAPI's strategy of openness and pluralism can be seen as a consequence of the schism in Islam: the Sunni majority and the Shi'i minority.[28] The same divide is, of course, reflected within Indonesia's Muslim population. Openness and pluralism should be encouraged not only as true teachings of Islam but also to protect the existence of the educational institution and the Shi'is. Two interrelated benefits may be gained promoting these ideals: the recognition of Shi'ism as a valid branch in the realm of Islamic orthodoxy and a tolerant attitude toward the Shi'is in the framework of Islamic unity. This can be interpreted as the strategy of practicing *taqiyya*, a valid teaching in Shi'ism.

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[26] Zainuddin *et al.* (2000:33)

[27] *Al-Isyraq* (1/1/1417)

[28] Zamzami (n.d:113)

Valuable comparisons and also contrasts between the educational system and strategies of YAPI and *Pesantren Al-Hadi* can be made. This Shi'i institution of learning, located in Pekalongan, Central Java, was founded in 1989 by Ahmad Baragbah, who spent five years studying Islamic knowledge in Qum. Ahmad Baragbah, an Indonesian non-*Sayyid* Arab, forged good connections with the late Husein Al-Habsyi who had recommended him for Islamic learning in Qum and supported him in the establishment of the *pesantren*. Despite never having studied at YAPI, Ahmad Baragbah's relationship with Husein Al-Habsyi is considered to be one of student-teacher. Both were supportive to each other's institutions of Islamic learning, especially when faced with internal or external problems.

Compared to YAPI, *Al-Hadi* is smaller in terms of students and teacher numbers, educational facilities and educational programmes. In October 2002, for instance, Al-Hadi had approximately 70 students, (male and female), trained and educated by six teachers, all Qum alumni. (This number is smaller than the number reported by *Ulumul Qur'an* in 1995 which cited the number of students as about 112 and the teachers as nine.)[29] Unlike YAPI, *Al-Hadi* tends to attract students only from the Shi'i community in Indonesia. All students of *Al-Hadi* live in the hostel on the *pesantren* complex. The complex itself, situated among the houses of the densely populated city, comprises two houses and two two-floored buildings. One large house is provided for all the activities of the female students - a hostel as well as classrooms - while the other smaller house accommodates Ahmad Baragbah and his family. The first building houses a mosque on the ground floor, while the first floor contains an office and a hostel for teachers and classrooms and a hostel for male students. Unlike YAPI or other schools in the country, *Al-Hadi* students study sitting on the floor. In short, compared to the educational facilities of YAPI, those of *Al-Hadi* are limited.

Like the majority of *pesantren* in Java, this relatively small Shi'i institution has all the basic elements of the *pesantren* tradition: *pondok*, mosque, *santri*, the instruction of Islamic texts and *kyai*. Students are drawn from all over Indonesia, including Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan and Sulawesi. They live in the *pondok* and have to follow all the activities of the institution. Since there is no entry examination for the *pesantren,* some of the students arrive not having completed their primary education. They can attend a primary school located next to the *pesantren* every morning if necessary, but this is optional. Compared with YAPI, the rules and regulations of this institution appear to be more lenient.

[29] Nurjulianti and Subhan (1995:24)

Al-Hadi's small mosque is multi-functional even though its use is confined to the students and teachers of the *pesantren*. With the exception of the Friday afternoon prayer – the pesantren gives students the choice to perform this prayer at other mosques outside the pesantren – the mosque functions as a centre for education and training activities for students and for the practice of obligatory and recommended religious rituals and ceremonies. However, practice is limited to rituals and ceremonies recommended within the Shi'i tradition, unlike YAPI which still carries out the practice of *ratib* recitation, an aspect of the Sufi tradition. It seems that this *pesantren* is centred on its mosque and it provides us with a model for the practice of Shi'i teachings, as understood by its leaders and teachers. It is for this reason that parents choose to send their children for Islamic learning at this institution. I have even heard reports that a few moved their children from YAPI to *Al-Hadi* because of Al-Hadi's focus on the instruction and practice of Shi'i teachings. In other words, Al-Hadi is an institution of Islamic learning promotes the practice of all aspects of Shi'i teachings.

Unlike YAPI, *Al-Hadi* only provides students with religious education, in a programme which, to a great extent, follows the Shi'i educational system of *hawza 'ilmiyya* in Qum, where its founders and teachers trained. This is particularly true in terms of the subjects and instructional materials. The educational programme is organised in six stages. The subjects offered in this institution of learning are very similar to those of the religious education programme at YAPI and include Arabic, *'aqida*, *fiqh*, *tafsir*, *hadith* and Islamic history. All instructional materials are the standard books used in the institutions of Islamic learning in Qum. The basic teachings of Shi'ism, specifically *'aqida* and *fiqh*, are taught to the students at the first stage, and they are expected, if not required, to practice them in their daily life. Guidance and training is provided regarding the daily obligatory rituals and ceremonies practiced in the *pesantren*, all of which are Shi'i. All the instruction, training and guidance of the Shi'i teachings in *Al-Hadi* attempts to realise the institution's main goal which is to provide its students with the basic knowledge and skills to become Shi'i teachers in Indonesia. Furthermore, with the knowledge its graduates possess, they are able to pursue higher Islamic education at the institutions of Islamic learning in Qum.

Pesantren Al-Hadi and its head Ahmad Baragbah, (as he himself admitted), have connections with Iran via the office of *wilayat al-faqih* and some individual learned men. This *pesantren* follows a similar educational tradition to that practiced in Qum and it was said to send regular reports of its progress to Iran via a representative. Today the Islamic Cultural Cen-

tre of Jakarta observes the *pesantren's* development, including the execution of curricula and activities of students and teachers, in order to ensure progress. Important events occurring in the *pesantren* are all reported to the office of *wilayat al-faqih* in Qum.[30] The *pesantren* also received financial assistance from Iran, as well as educational facilities, particularly books and periodicals.[31] The interrelationship is also indicated by the fact that a number of *Al-Hadi* graduates continue their Islamic education in Qum. Some of them have finished their study and returned to Indonesia; Muhammad in Purwakarta, Ali Al-'Aydrus in Bandung, and Salman Daruddin in Jakarta to name but a few. In addition, representatives of the Supreme Iranian leader (*wali faqih*) and individual Shi'i scholars frequently take the opportunity to visit the *pesantren* during trips to Indonesia. At the same time, Ahmad Baragbah, with the Islamic knowledge he gained in Qum, has been recognised by Iran as an important Shi'i figure in Indonesia, and is expected to play a major role in the spread of Shi'ism. He, along with other prominent figures such as Jalaluddin Rakhmat and Zahir Yahya, was appointed as a representative of the *wali faqih* in the accumulation and distribution of one-fifth tax *khums* in Indonesia. Together with Umar Shahab they were also expected to prepare for the establishment of Shi'i organisations in Indonesia.[32]

The strategies implemented by *Al-Hadi* in the promotion of Shi'ism revealed striking contrasts with those of YAPI. In contrast to the founder and leaders of YAPI, the founder of *Al-Hadi* openly admitted that his institution of Islamic learning is Shi'i.[33] The establishment of the institution of Islamic education was motivated by "Ahmad Baragbah's anxiety over the emergence of misperceptions in the Muslim community in Indonesia of the Shi'i school – especially after the outbreak of the Iranian Islamic revolution."[34] Baragbah believes that the institution is not intended to create religious conflict in multi-religious Indonesia, instead its purpose is to invite fellow Muslims to recognise the existence of Shi'ism as a religious stream within Islam.[35] It is implied that by implementing the abovementioned strategies and expressing all Shi'i doctrinal beliefs and religious practices in all situations, the Sunni community will acknowledge the real Shi'i teachings, including those aspects similar or different to Sunni Islam, and in turn the Shi'i community will be recognised. Consequently

[30] Ahmad Baragbah, interview, (21/10/2002)
[31] *Tiras* (3/2/1996:29)
[32] Ahmad Baragbah, interview, (21/10/2002)
[33] *Tiras* (3/2/1996:29)
[34] Nurjulianti and Subhan (1995:29)
[35] Nurjulianti and Subhan (1995:24)

all misperceptions and libels will disappear, a goal shared by both YAPI and *Al-Hadi*.

Although reactions to the chosen strategies are very negative – as will be explained in chapter eight - *Al-Hadi* continues to maintain this course in its struggle for recognition. The *habitus*[36] of Ahmad Baragbah as a young graduate of the institution of Shi'i learning in Qum is integral to the exercising of these strategies. It seems that the *habitus* was acquired during the 1980s when he was young and full of missionary zeal. Jalaluddin Rakhmat describes Ahmad Baragbah and other *ustadh* of the Qum alumni as young graduates with very strong missionary zeal, determined to save the world by applying the *fiqh* approach. According to Rakhmat, their orientation in *fiqh* is what the Shi'is in Indonesia need.[37] In a more accurate expression, returning from their Islamic education, with the knowledge and experience gained at the heart of Shi'i learning, they attempted to provide an exemplary model for the total practice of Shi'i teachings. Baragbah once stated that, in general , the fellow Muslims have not yet fully implemented Islamic doctrines in real life.[38] Additionally, until these were indeed implemented, there had been no attempt by the existing Shi'i figures to outwardly express the Shi'i teachings in all their forms.

Unlike Husein Al-Habsyi who already occupied the position of learned man in the Muslim community, as a young graduate in religious education, Ahmad Baragbah was still in the process of acquiring his status. In Bourdieu's view he did this by implementing strategies that would accumulate, in particular, symbolic capital that could easily be converted into economic capital. In doing so, Ahmad Baragbah used very different strategies to those of Husein Al-Habsyi, who needed only to maintain the various kinds of capital he had already gained. Even though both men shared the same goal – to bring about the recognition of Shi'ism and the Shi'i community in the Sunni-dominated country - Ahmad Baragbah clearly struggled to accumulate the same kind of capital as Al-Habsyi.

B. Schools

Alongside the Islamic foundations such as YAPI and Al-Hadi which establish educational institutions in the form of pesantren, there are other

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[36] See for the notion of *habitus* Chapter Two, nt. 54 above.

[37] Rakhmat (1997:446-447)

[38] This statement was made during his speech to the Al-Jawad Foundation in Bandung which was then published in *Buletin Al-Jawad*. The article is entitled "Menanamkan Sikap Persaudaraan Kaum Muslim (To plant the spirit of brotherhood among Muslims)" (http://aljawad.tripod.com/arsipbuletin/muslim.htm).

foundations which have established school programmes. The first and most famous is the *Muthahhari* Foundation, founded on 3 October 1988 in Bandung by Muslim intellectuals. According to the foundations legal document, the first executive board includes Jalaluddin Rakhmat (chief), Agus Effendi (vice chief), Haidar Bagir (secretary), and Ahmad Muhajir (treasurer). Like YAPI, its founders, in particular Jalaluddin Rakhmat, frequently reject the notion that the institution is Shi'i, however it is still considered to be an important centre for the spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia. An historical account tells that the establishment of the foundation was born of the good relationship between Jalaluddin Rakhmat and Husein Al-Habsyi who also provided financial capital for the institution.[39] It is not by accident therefore, that both Husein Al-Habsyi and Jalaluddin Rakhmat shared similarities strategies in the promotion of Shi'ism.

The *Muthahhari Foundation* with its slogan "for the enlightenment of Islamic thought" was established to organise various programmes in the field of research, education and information for the Indonesian society at large. As mentioned in its brochure,[40] its general goals are to develop Islamic thought, to formulate an Islamic worldview, to participate in the field of education and *da'wa*, and to contribute to the promotion of Islamic unity as they have been shown in the intellectual and activist portrait of Murtada Mutahhari.[41] To achieve the above goals, the *Muthahhari* Foundation has organised several programmes that are classified into three categories: a specific programme that organises critical studies and the advancement of Muthahhari's thoughts; a general programme comprising all efforts aimed at developing Islamic thoughts and education; and an additional programme which serves as a link between the foundation and the community at large.[42]

In order to implement, in particular, its educational programmes. the foundation established the *Lembaga Pembinaan Ilmu-Ilmu Islam* (Institute for Establishment of Islamic Knowledge) abbreviated as LPII. This institute is headed by Jalaluddin Rakhmat. As a division within the structure of the foundation, LPII organises several programmes with the purpose of overcoming the dichotomy between *'ulama'* and intellectual (as discussed in chapter 1). Besides giving an opportunity for intellectuals to learn fields of Islamic knowledge and for 'ulama' or religious teachers to learn secular sciences and modern information, the institute aims to provide a forum

[39] Wisananingrum (2001:81-82)

[40] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:20)

[41] For more information on the ideals of the Muthahhari Foundation and a brief biography of Murtada Muthahhari, see p.126-127.

[42] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:21-22)

which incorporates both 'ulama' and intellectuals, who collectively can find solutions to the problems of Muslim society. LPII also sees its role as advancing a modern curriculum in the field of Islamic knowledge in accordance with the needs of the Muslim society.[43]

In the beginning LPII organised courses on both Islamic and secular sciences for university students in the form of a *Pesantren Mahasiswa* (a traditional institution of Islamic learning for university students). The *santri* (students) were divided into two groups: regular and non-regular. Regular students joined a two-year programme. Like the *santri mukim* within the *pesantren* tradition, these regular students were university students or graduates of non-Islamic universities and were treated as *santri* with no basic Islamic knowledge. The curriculum these students followed included Arabic, *tafsir*, *hadith*, Islamic history, ethics, comparative Islamic jurisprudence, Islamic philosophy and western philosophy. Resembling the *santri kalong* within the *pesantren* tradition, the non-regular *santri* only enrolled in a specific lecture series held on a certain day and week. They were offered courses in Islamic and secular sciences, from which they chose their subjects according to their interest. Diverse subjects were offered including, in the field of Islamic knowledge: Arabic, *'ulum al-Qur'an*, *'ulum al-hadith*, Islamic history, *usul al-fiqh*, *'ilm al-Qira'at* (science of Qur'anic recitation), Sufism, *kalam* and Islamic philosophy. The secular science course included logic, Western philosophy, journalism, research methodology, management and organisation, entrepreneurship and communication technology.[44] During a sermon at *Darut Tauhid* (an institution founded and headed by Abdullah Gymnastiar) in September 1992, Jalaluddin Rakhmat said that his *pesantren* was established in order to provide traditional Islamic knowledge to the educated who attended campuses within a Western system of education, such as students of ITB, UNPAD, IKIP. At the same time he was teaching the *santri* of traditional *pesantren* certain modern sciences. He then states "Overall, we would like to become a bridge for intellectual and *pesantren* groups as well as to develop a non-sectarianism attitude."[45]

However, the *pesantren* programme for the regular *santri* did not run as well as was expected. According to an internal report, the programme only managed to recruit 30 students and was sustained for less than a year.[46] In contrast, the series of courses for the non-regular students, with its diverse

[43] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:23-24)

[44] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:24-27), *Kompas* (29/3/1992), *Editor* (49/4/1991)

[45] *Al-Tanwir* (19/1992:3)

[46] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:27)

curriculum, was more successful and continued to develop. Forced to re-assess their plans, in 1992 Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his associates established a new school which has since becomes the main activity of the *Muthahhari* Foundation. This new school - SMU Plus (Senior High School Plus) – is now one of the most desired in Bandung, if not in Indonesia. As previously mentioned the attribute 'Plus' is used because the programme combines a number of subjects from the national curriculum with Islamic instruction and a focus on fostering moral conduct.[47] The school has attracted an enthusiastic response from people throughout Indonesia, and parents - both Sunni and Shi'i - from Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan and other islands send their children to study at SMU Plus. While the *Muthahhari* Foundation provides accommodation for those first year students from outside Bandung who need it, unlike the traditional *pesantren* system, SMU Plus is not a boarding school. This transformation has enhanced the popularity of the *Muthahhari* Foundation and its leaders including Jalaluddin Rakhmat, who is now the chief of the foundation and head of the school.

SMU Plus can be regarded as an alternative model for secondary education in Indonesia and also an attempt to bridge the gap between *'ulama'* and intellectuals as explained above. It has also shown unique characteristics in comparison to other senior high schools (SMU) in the country. This is demonstrated in its curriculum content which integrates the SMU curriculum outlined by the Department of National education with basic computer science, intensive Arabic and English, and fields of Islamic knowledge (*dirasa Islamiyya*) such as *'ulum al-Qur'an*, *'ulum al-hadith*, *usul al-fiqh*, and comparative *fiqh*. Unlike regular high schools, which teach about five and a half hours a day, SMU Plus requires students to attend for eight and a half hours a day (from 7am to 3.30 pm), six days a week, in order for them to complete all the educational activities. To achieve its goals, the school has provided its students with a library containing a significant number of collections in Indonesian, Arabic, Persian and English and other facilities such as laboratories.

Various extra-curricula activities are also provided so that the students may improve their skills. One example is the so-called 'X-day', (usually Wednesdays), when students are expected to take part in the extra-curriculum programme at school in accordance with their interests. Activities on offer include Achievement Motivation Training (AMT), various study clubs (computer, English, Arabic), photography, advertising, calligraphy, theatrical arts, graphic design, and various kinds of sport. The students are also provided with comparative study and a spiritual camp. This spiritual

[47] (http://smuth.net/Profile/03-sejarah.asp accessed 18/10/2005)

camp deserves special attention here. This activity requires students to observe the life of oppressed people located in a certain area, interview them, and write reports about the group. Spiritual camp also requires certain Islamic rituals and prayers to be practiced. The aim of the activity is for students to incorporate spiritual aspects of religion in their daily life. It should be noted that the students of SMU Plus are active in both a wide range of social and religious activities, including those offered by the *Muthahhari* foundation, and these activities are seen as an important element of the educational system implemented by the school.

At least four philosophical principles form the basis of SMU Plus's intensive educational programme. These four philosophical reasons are formulated from a so-called 'quantum learning' (an accelerated learning programme) invented by Bobbi DePorter and Mike Hernacki.[48] The first principle is that since human potential is unlimited, education - which is a process towards perfection - should be able to maximise this potential. Second, the relationship between teacher and student should be considered a partnership rather than a 'subject-object' relationship. The third principle of this educational philosophy is that since man is approaching towards God, both teacher and student attempt to realise God's qualities, as expressed in his 99 names, in themselves. Fourth, education is a process with both physical and psychological aspects, both influencing each other, and so both aspects need to be incorporated in teaching methods. On the basis of these philosophical principles, the institutional objectives of SMU Plus are: First, to develop the students' intellect by implementing critical methods based on the philosophical principle that humans possess unlimited potential; second, to develop creativity by implementing exercises based on the belief that education attempts to maximise students' potential; and finally, to develop moral conduct by implementing *riyada* (Sufi ritual) on the basis of the philosophical principle that humans possess the spiritual capability to approach God.[49]

It is clear that the methods of quantum learning, modelling and *riyada* have been implemented at SMU Plus in an attempt to maximise the students' potential. Jalaluddin Rakhmat emphasises that these methods entail: maximising the effect of the physique on the psyche, maximising the effect of the psyche on the physique and guidance towards mystical experience. In quantum learning, to maximise the affect of physique, students are provided with pleasant physical and social environments, which

[48] *Quantum Learning* by DePorter and Hernacki was translated into Indonesian and published in 1999 by Kaifa, an Offshoot of Mizan.

[49] Rakhmat (1997:351-359), *Bandung Pos* (24/5/1994)

increase self-esteem. They carry out physical exercise to generate self-confidence, and also undertake exercises in critical thinking, utilising music and so on. The so-called modelling method involves presenting examples of people with excellence as role models. These role models have a psychological influence on students who, when they find their appropriate model, will imitate their behaviour. These and other techniques used at the school are designed to generate self-confidence and positive thinking among the students. In respect of the *riyada* method, students are guided to practice religious rituals such as *dhikr* (remembrance of God's names) and prayers which foster the notion that their teachers resemble *murshid* (Sufi teacher) within the Sufi tradition.[50]

Another characteristic of the educational method implemented by SMU Plus which sets it apart from other schools in Indonesia its emphasis on reward rather than punishment. The teachers at SMU Plus do not criticise their students because criticism is seen as a destructive influence on the learning process. The students are trained to have a positive self-image and are shown appreciation and rewarded for achievements in order that their potential is maximised.[51] In this regard, the school has developed, various types of rewards in respect of achievements in certain subjects and skills. For example, the Quarterly Award (the best score in each class), the Grade Award (the best score at each level), the Annual Award (the best in all levels), and the Achievement Award (presented to those who gain achievements in academic, moral, and extra-curriculum activities).[52] With this goal of maximising the students' potential in mind, the school continues to implement new findings in the field of education, such as the principles of multiple intelligences[53] and accelerated learning, in order to improve the quality of the learning process.

The implementation of the above, methods and unique curriculum, supported by a number of teachers who graduated from ITB, UNPAD, IKIP, IAIN and Middle Eastern schools, and combined with excellent educational facilities, are all factors which make the educational programme of SMU Plus successful. Since its foundation, its students have gained achievements in various kinds of educational competitions and a large number of its graduates have enrolled at well-known state universities in Indonesia. For its achievements, the school has received praises and credits

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[50] Rakhmat (1997:359-365), Rakhmat (1999:33-35)

[51] Rakhmat (1999:35)

[52] Yulina (1997:44)

[53] Howard Gardner pinpoints eight kinds of intelligences that may be possessed by individuals, namely linguistic, logic-mathematic, spatial, musical, kinetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic (Hernowo 2001:160-162).

from the government, particularly the Department of National Education, and members of Indonesian society. In 2001 the Department declared SMU Plus to be a model for the establishment of personality and moral conduct (*akhlaq*) of students in Indonesia.[54] Rakhmat himself admits that a number of senior bureaucrats and eminent leaders of religious organisations send their children to the school.[55] A large number of heads and teachers from educational institutions throughout the country - from primary, secondary and tertiary levels, state as well as private - have visited the school owing to its reputation as a good school.[56]

The *Muthahhari* Foundation's success in establishing the school led it to create another branch of the same school in Jakarta, in order to attract the interest of the population there, with a particular eye on the upper-middle class Jakartans. However, while the original school in Bandung attracted significant numbers of students, the branch in Jakarta was less successful. For various reasons, the most significant being an internal conflict, the Jakarta branch of SMU Plus closed in the middle of 2004. Some of its students were transferred to a new school called *Lazuardi* that belongs to Haidar Bagir, a co-founder of the *Muthahhari* Foundation.

In addition to the establishment of the Jakarta branch, in 2000 the Foundation also set up a Junior High School Plus (SLTP Plus) in Rancaekek, a district of Bandung. This branch resembles the *pesantren* system as it provides a dormitory for its students. Syamsuri Ali observes that, unlike the SMU Plus, in the subject of Islamic jurisprudence, students at SLTP Plus are only instructed in the Shi'i teachings.[57] In most other aspects of the school – its philosophy, principles of curriculum and methods, the SLTP Plus attempts to follow the path of SMU Plus. As a relatively new school though, it is yet to attain the same level of achievements as its sister institution. The development of these institutions reveals the dynamics of the *Muthahhari* Foundation and its participation in the field of education in Indonesia, a field that still deserves great attention not only from the government but also from private institutions.

Throughout its history and development, the *Muthahhari* Foundation has not only been concerned with education - although its success in this field seems to have overshadowed its other influential activities - it is also involved in cultural and social activities. For example, between 1990

[54] *Al-Tanwir* (4/11/2001)

[55] *Al-Tanwir* (4/11/2001)

[56] *Al-Tanwir* has continuously reported all the visits and comparative studies by educational institutions throughout the country.

[57] Ali (2002:176)

and 1997, the foundation published 17 issues of *Al-Hikmah*, the journal of Islamic studies, and the bulletin *Al-Tanwir*.[58] In addition, under the auspices of the previously mentioned 'specific' programme, the foundation has produced studies of the life and scholarly works of Murtada Mutahhari, including translations and a biography written by Haidar Bagir, both produced in collaboration with the Islamic publisher Mizan.[59] The foundation is considered to be one of the most active organisations regarding the spread and promotion of Muthahhari's thoughts to the people of Indonesia. Like YAPI, the foundation has also expanded its role as a publisher of Islamic books, producing at least twelve books including biographies, prayers, Islamic thoughts written by Ali Shari'ati, Mutahhari, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, and even a student team from SMU Plus.[60]

Another important contribution of the Foundation is its function in the social field, and specifically its social programme for the poor and orphans, the group that is commonly called the oppressed. Since its inception, the *Muthahhari* Foundation appears to have paid great attention to the education of this unfortunate group for two reasons: First, the foundation's aims include generating and improving the self-respect of the poor and other segments of the lower class. Second, it is intended to guide children of the oppressed that they may compete in the field of education, from primary to tertiary level.[61] Furthermore, as a Shi'i institution, the *Muthahhari* Foundation functions in the religious field and organises public religious rituals. Every Thursday evening the so-called *kumayl* supplication is performed collectively at the *Al-Munawwarah* Mosque. Other rituals and ceremonies to celebrate certain important historical events according to the Shi'i tradition, particularly *'ashura*, have involved the participation of not only members of the Foundation and its students but also other participants from outside Bandung. Seen from this perspective, the foundation is, without doubt, Shi'i and functions to preserve (aspects of) Shi'i tradition in Indonesia.

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[58] A description of this journal can be seen in Chapter Six.

[59] Its title is *Muthahhari: Sang Mujtahid Sang Mujahid* (Bagir 1988)

[60] The full name of the publisher is Muthahhari Press, *Warisan Intelektual untuk Kesucian and Pencerahan Pemikiran* (Muthahhari Press: Intellectual Legacy for Purity and Enlightenment of Thought) and it is headed by Jalaluddin Rakhmat's second child, Miftah F. Rakhmat. Its publication of two works by a student team of the SMU Plus shows the creative activity of its students. The first book is *Pintu Ilmu: 1001 Filsafat Hidup Pencinta Ilmu* (The Gate of Knowledge: 1001 Philosophies of Life of Knowledge Lovers) and the other is a translated book entitled *Mukhtasar Shahifah Husainiyyah: Nasihat, Kisah and Doa Imam Husein as* (the Abridged *Husayniyya* Psalm: Advice, Story, and Prayers of Imam Husayn).

[61] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:39-43)

This portrait of the *Muthahhari* Foundation clearly reveals its role in the spread of Shi'ism in the country. Its strategies are similar to those adopted by YAPI, and they both share a mission to promote the existence of Shi'ism as a legitimate school within Islam to the Muslim community. Both are engaged in the struggle for recognition. At SMU Plus the religious subjects are comparative and the students - children of both Sunni and Shi'i parents - are taught the skills of critical thinking and to utilise this critical analysis in regard to certain important religious thoughts and practices. In other words, the students are taught to have freedom in religious thought and expression, and to believe in the principle of plurality in religious thought and practice, in particular with respect to the Sunni-Shi'i divide. That said, the religious rituals and prayers practiced by the teachers are generally Shi'i, (though the students are free to continue to perform rituals, particularly obligatory prayers, in accordance with their own beliefs). In this regard, there are maximum and minimum targets of the *Muthahhari* Foundation: the maximum is the conversion of the students to Shi'ism, whilst the minimum is acknowledgement of Shi'ism by the students and a tolerance of its followers. Other activities of the foundation illustrate its clear role in the fulfilment of the religious needs of the Shi'i community, as well as the promotion of Shi'ism to the Muslim society at large.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat, the central figure in the Foundation, has similar strategies to those of Husein Al-Habsyi, in developing his institution and promoting Shi'ism. He continues to promote the importance of Islamic brotherhood between Sunni and Shi'i, stating in an interview in 1995 that the dichotomy between Sunni and Shi'i is no longer relevant. He maintains that the establishment of the Foundation is not only a bridge between the intellectuals and the *pesantren*, but also a means of promoting Islamic brotherhood and the principle that achievements, instead of *madhhab*, should become the basis of judgement.[62] In respect of the importance of actions, Rakhmat's response to a letter written by student's parents questioning the position of the *Muthahhari* Foundation in relation to Shi'ism needs direct citation.

> If I am questioned whether I am a Shi'i or Sunni, I will only answer that I am a Muslim. I do not want that the Muslim society is divided into *madhhab* and streams, except only to knowledge. Everyone has status in accord with his/her deeds, says God in the Qur'an. Neither his *madhhab* nor group. That is also what we teach to the children studying at our school.[63]

[62] *Al-Tanwir* (19/1992:4)

[63] *Al-Tanwir* (200/2001:6)

These factors listed above clearly challenge the existing Sunni-Shi'i divide within the Muslim society in Indonesia.

Another institution of learning that shares many similarities with both *Mutahhari* and YAPI is *Lazuardi*, an institution that has been established recently in Jakarta. The founders of the *Lazuardi Hayati* Foundation are Haidar Bagir, Lubna Assagaf, Alwi Shihab, Nizar Shihab and Abdurrahman Mulakhela. Haidar Bagir heads the foundation which started in 1994 as a kindergarten led by his wife. Today, *Lazuardi* comprises a playgroup, kindergarten, primary school, and Senior High School.[64] The philosophical basis, curriculum and methods implemented in Lazuardi's schools are similar to those of the *Muthahhari's* SMU Plus. With the exception of the playgroup and the kindergarten which are very popular, these relatively new schools are yet to establish their reputations with the people of the country.

Shi'is in Indonesia have been active in tertiary education as well. *Madina Ilmu* Islamic College, located in Sawangan Depok in South Jakarta, (on a site next to Lazuardi's SMU), was established to produce scholars with the skills and capabilities to advance and spread knowledge as well as to implement this knowledge in Indonesian society. At first the college planned to offer a programme of economics, however, it could only organise a department of Islamic education and *da'wa,* based on the core curriculum of Islamic higher learning as outlined by the Department of Religious Affairs and the local curriculum of its own formulation.[65] Like the aforementioned schools, this college, under the leadership of Abdurrahman al-'Aydrus, has adopted principles of openness and pluralism. It is open to students regardless of their *madhhab*. It tries to attract students, both Sunni and Shi'i, under the guidance of a number of lecturers. Since its establishment in 1997, the college has produced a number of graduates, some now work at existing Shi'i foundations or schools while others have pursued their learning in Qum. However, for several reasons – not least a difference of opinion regarding whether or not it should present itself as a Shi'i college - its development seems to have fluctuated.

At graduate level there exists ICAS (Islamic College for Advanced Studies)in Jakarta, established in cooperation with the University of Paramadina belonging to the late prominent intellectual Murcholish Madjid. As it is a branch of a London-based institute, it uses English as its medium of instruction. Reflecting the great interest among Shi'is in the subject of

[64] For information on the Lazuardi foundation, visit http://www.lazuardi.web.id/aboutus.htm

[65] *Selayang Pandang* (n.d:5)

philosophy, ICAS offers a Masters programme in Islamic philosophy and in Sufism. It is interesting to note that most of ICAS's Indonesian staff are Shi'i. Its director, Muhsin Mirri, is Iranian. Even though ICAS is open to students from all schools of thought or religious convictions, most of its students are Shi'i. This newly established school has not yet produced graduates.

In sum, despite their small numbers, Shi'is in Indonesia have participated widely in the field of education from pre-school to tertiary level. The institutions of learning that they have founded reveals that this religious group, and in particular its prominent figures, view education as an important field that should be participated in and developed. In general, the institutions of education belonging to Shi'is in Indonesia either take the form of the traditional *pesantren* or belong to the modern school system. In some respects, there have been attempts to adopt elements of both systems and integrate them into a single system - a creative idea and endeavour in the educational field. With respect to their connections with Iran, the existing institutions of learning, (perhaps with the exception of Lazuardi's schools), have, or used to have, good connections with the Iranian government or with Iranian learned men. With the exception of *Al-Hadi*, they attempt to provide Indonesian Muslims - regardless of their *madhhab* - with the educational programmes required for their children to develop their potential and skills. With regard to religious orientation, with the exception of *Al-Hadi*, the institutions implement open strategies in order to introduce Shi'i teachings with the purpose of educating students that Shi'ism is a valid and legitimate *madhhab* within Islam. Recognition among the Sunni in the country is without question an important issue for Indonesia's Shi'is, and they appear to consider education as the key to achieving this goal.

CHAPTER SIX

PUBLISHING

Publishing has been an important means of struggle for Shi'is in Indonesia to spread the teachings of Shi'ism, and the development of Shi'ism and publishing in Indonesia have gone hand in hand. The publication of Shi'i books and periodicals can, to a certain extent, be considered to be a means of *da'wa,* but it also demonstrates the contribution of Shi'is to the intellectual and cultural life of Indonesia. Our discussion in this chapter is divided into five parts: First, I shall give a brief description of the general characteristics of Shi'i publishers in Indonesia. The second and third parts deal with translations of Shi'i books and look at their central content, as well as the books written by local Shi'i figures. Fourth, I shall describe the Islamic periodicals published by Shi'i institutions of learning and *da'wa* in Indonesia, and finally, I shall explain the impact of publishing on the Shi'i community and its relationship with the religious authorities in Indonesia.

A. The Shi'is' Publishers

Over the past two decades, in congruence with the increasing number of Shi'i adherents there have been more than sixty publishers[1] in Indonesia producing hundreds of Shi'i titles and publications. Shi'i books, in the broad sense, are any books written by Shi'i 'ulama' and intellectuals containing the teachings of Shi'ism, as well as Shi'i thoughts. The steady growth in the number of the publishers and of Shi'i literature is a new and striking phenomenon in the history of Islam in Sunni-dominated Indonesia, and it has, to some extent, taken Muslim scholars and the country's religious and

[1] This figure is derived from catalogues of the libraries of the *Muthahhari* Foundation, the *Fatimah* Foundation, the *RausyanFikr* Foundation, the *Al-Jawad* Foundation, and the ICC of Al-Huda.

political authorities unaware. In response to the proliferation of Islamic literature and Shi'i works - and the Indonesian Muslim population's thirst for this material - the late Indonesian liberal Muslim thinker Harun Nasution (1919-1998) wrote an article, for *Tempo*, (possibly the most famous Indonesian magazine), which celebrated its 60th anniversary in 1987 with a discussion of Islamic literature. Nasution's essay deals with the origins, doctrines and development of Shi'ism, and its inclusion in this special edition of *Tempo* indicates the significance of Shi'i publications to the development of Islamic literature in Indonesia. Similarly, about a decade later Azra acknowledged the growth of Shi'i publishers and literature as an unusual phenomenon in Islamic discourse in Indonesia.[2] There is a clear link between the large number of Shi'i publishers, the wealth of Shi'i literature and the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

That said, the vast majority of these Shi'is' publishers are little-known or even unknown to the community of mainstream publishers in Indonesia, as the member of IKAPI (*Ikatan Penerbit Indonesia*, the Association of Indonesian Publishers).[3] Many small publishing houses are not registered with this professional organisation, and they do not take part in the book fairs attended by mainstream publishers. It is also the case that a number of these Shi'i' publishers appear on the market with a number of books and then disappear again, usually because their businesses cannot compete in and survive the market.

Two types of Shi'is publishers in Indonesia can be classified: The first is purely commercial: Publishers whose core activity, since establishment, has been the publishing of books. This category includes Shi'i-owned publishing houses who produce both Shi'i and non- Shi'i books. The three most important and well-known publishers in this category are Mizan, Pustaka Hidayah, and Lentera. All have become well-established publishing houses and registered members of IKAPI. There are numerous others publishers in this category, some of them no longer active. The second classification includes Shi'i institutions who undertake publishing as a part of their wider activities, including *da'wa* and education. In this regard, several big institutions such as ICC of Al-Huda, Muthahhari, Al-Jawad, YAPI (*Yayasan Penyiaran Islam*), YAPI (*Yayasan Pesantren Islam*) of Bangil and Al-Baqir of Bangil fall into this category. In addition, Shi'i institutions involvement in the field of cultural production is also realised through

[2] Azra (1999)

[3] Iwan Setiawan, the deputy head of IKAPI, quoted in *Republika* (28/3/2004:5) states the total number of Islamic publishers as 50. Watson (2005:179) proves that this is an underestimation and the number is much greater.

the establishment of separate publishing houses such as Pustaka Zahra, belonging to the Fatimah Foundation and Cahaya, belonging to IPABI.

Quantitative data illustrates the popularity of the established publishing houses as producers of Shi'i works. In terms of the quantity of Shi'i books published in Indonesia, figures provided by *RaushanFikr,* (a Shi'i foundation based in Yogyakarta), show that until 2001 the top four publishers were: Pustaka Hidayah with 60 titles, Mizan with 56 titles, Lentera with 50 titles, and YAPI (*Yayasan Penyiaran Islam*) of Jakarta with 31 titles.[4] It is interesting to note that although Mizan is one of the largest of all publishing houses and even the most popular Shi'i publisher, its position is below that of Pustaka Hidayah. These rankings may change with the appearance of new Shi'i publishing houses such as Pustaka Zahra and Cahaya, who have been very active in recent years - figures until March 2004 show that Pustaka Zahra produced more than 50 titles and Cahaya more than 40.

The most active Shi'i institution engaged in producing cultural materials is the Iranian-sponsored Islamic Cultural Centre of Al-Huda (ICC). Figures until March 2004 show that ICC of Al-Huda has published more than 30 books, including the Qur'an. This act of publishing the Holy Book may have been an attempt to discredit the accusation, made in many Sunni polemical writings, that the Shi'is have their own Qur'an, and that it is very different to that used by Sunni Muslims. The content does not differ at all from the copies printed by other publishers in Indonesia. Other Shi'i institutions are also engaged in publishing but on a smaller scale. Muthahhari Press, Al-Jawad, YAPI of Bangil, Al-Baqir of Bangil and Al-Kautsar of Jakarta, for instance, have produced less than 20 titles each. This illustrates the limitations of Shi'i institutions in the field of publishing, which is not altogether surprising when one considers that for most Shi'i institutions, publishing serves purely as a missionary activity.

There is stark contrast between the two types of publishers in terms of main orientation and management. While those publishers we have classified as purely commercial have a strong business orientation, those who fall into the second category can be said to be *da'wa* oriented, only interested in undertaking publishing as a part of their *da'wa* programmes. In respect of management. the 'commercial' publishers tend to be rational and modern, while those in the second group can be described as traditional. Both categories can be distinguished in terms of the types of books they publish. While the commercial puclishing houses produce only a small portion of the Shi'ite literature compared to their total number of

[4] Shafwan (http://rausyanfikr.tripod.com/makatul/sosio-agama.htm)

publications, the Shi'i da'wa institutions tend to confine themselves to the production of Shi'i works. Furthermore, those books produced by the commercial publishing houses tend to be directed at attracting a wider readership than those of the Shi'i da'wa foundations. In other words, the latter are only likely to publish Shi'i works, only really of interest to the Shi'i community in Indonesia, or works that are considered relevant to their *da'wa* programmes. This also corresponds with the purpose of *da'wa*, which is non-profit in orientation.

In order that we may fully understand the two categories of publishers mentioned above, there now follows profiles of Mizan and YAPI (*Yayasan Penyiaran Islam*):

Mizan is one of the biggest and most dynamic Islamic book publishers in Indonesia today, and it has played a great role in the development of Islamic intellectual life in the country. In 1982, Haidar Bagir, together with his friends Zainal Abidin and Ali Abdullah, graduated from the industrial department of ITB. With financial support from Bagir's maternal uncle Abdillah Toha and Toha's associate Anis Hadi, the three established a publishing business in Bandung. Mizan emerged with a distinctive product range, in striking contrast to the character of the Islamic books produced by such great Islamic publishers as Al-Ma'arif of Bandung. Its distinctiveness is the Shi'i nature of its books, something which has both popularised and stigmatised the publishing house. The popularity of Mizan in Indonesia goes hand in hand with the popularity of its co-founder and chief director, Haidar Bagir.

Though Mizan cannot formally be classified as a Shi'i publisher, since its foundation it has been closely associated with Shi'ism and is regarded as having made a significant contribution to the development of this branch of Islam in Indonesia for a number of reasons: First, since the early years of its establishment, Mizan has published a number of Shi'i works. However, it should be noted that these works are only a fraction of Sunni works it has produced. Second, that Mizan published works written by Shi'i *'ulama'* and scholars, providing a platform for the teachings of Shi'ism in Indonesia, was a controversial step given that to the majority Muslim population the word 'Shi'i had - and indeed still has - negative connotations and is regarded as heterodoxy. These brave efforts were clearly counter to the long-running tradition of Sunni Islam in the country. Moreover, Mizan's first book, (and one of its bestsellers), *Dialog Sunni Syi'ah* (Shi'i-Sunni Dialogue) translated from *al-Muraja'at* "summed up the purpose of Mizan [...] and intended to present a more 'balanced' view of Shi'ism".[5] Haidar

[5] Peeters (1998:218)

Bagir admitted that one rationale for publishing this book was the fact that this *madhhab* is so often misunderstood by large numbers of Muslims in Indonesia.[6] Mizan went on to publish numerous works of Shi'i scholars including those by Ali Shari'ati, Mutahhari, Khomeini and Husayn Tabataba'i. Today Mizan is still regarded by many Indonesian Muslims as a Shi'i publisher and in fact some Islamic *da'wa* and educational institutions, such as *Pondok Gontor* in Ponoroga, East Java, actually forbid their students to read its publications, despite the fact that it has become a very well developed publishing house with leaders determined to promote its inclusive philosophical principles.

The formulated goal of Mizan is very broad, that is, to provide information on Islamic thought and the Islamic world in a balanced way and from a variety of standpoints. Haidar Bagir explains that books published by this publishing house have to fulfil at least two criteria: first, the research contained within the book has to be both scientific and verifiable; second, it has to contribute to developing the role of Muslims as *rahmatan li al-'alamin* ('mercy for inhabitants of the world'). Mizan's writers are not all Muslim, and include authors from various religious backgrounds, and even Western scholars. Haidar Bagir bases this principle on the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad and Imam 'Ali that urge man to take *hikma* (wisdom) from any sources. Haidar Bagir quotes the saying of the Prophet Muhammad: "Wisdom is a lost thing belonging to Muslims. Pick it up wherever you find it". He goes on to quote Imam 'Ali: "Look at what is said, not who says it".[7] Haidar Bagir goes on to say:

> Because, for us, Islam is a universal religion and its universality can only be obtained if it is seen as an inclusive open religion. In other sides, we believe that all the openness can be embraced wholeheartedly without our obligation to sacrifice Islam on the surface, because the universality should certainly mean that the Islamic teachings have to be understood coherently and that they do not lose their basic principles. Well, if there is something that is said to be authenticity of a religion, this is what is meant by: coherency. Included in it is of course coherency with literal meanings of Islamic texts. For us, this means that the openness should be 'guarded' – a term which, because I fail to find its substitute, with a heavy heart I am forced to use – by our belief in a responsible and reliable interpretation of the principles of Islamic teachings: the Qur'an and Sunna of the Prophet.[8]

On the basis of this principle, Mizan can be seen as promoting religious pluralism in Indonesia. The portrait of its publications reflects its vision with regard to religion and human civilisation. It is an Islamic publishing

[6] Bagir (2003:71).

[7] Bagir (2003:34-35)

[8] Bagir (2003:35)

house which produces not only scholarly works of non-Muslim writers but also those of thinkers from different Islamic orientations. As Haidar Bagir suggests, all civilisations and religions in the world history interact with one another and they develop in certain historical contexts within which certain elements are adopted. Thus, Mizan rejects 'exclusivity' on the grounds that it is "the same as an a-historical and unrealistic attitude".[9] These ideas are the basis of Islamic thought that might be considered 'the *Madhhab* of Mizan', '*mazhab tengah*' (middle *madhhab*), which is open to development and revision.

With its inclusive and realistic religious attitude, the last 20 years have seen Mizan develop enormously in terms of both quality and quantity. It publishes titles in nearly all fields of knowledge and has established several offshoot subsidiaries as a way of attracting a wider readership for its books. Each of these subsidiairies specialises in a particular genre. The subsidiary Hikmah, for example, publishes books on religiosity and Sufism, Misykat on supplications, Harakah on Islamic movement, Kaifa publishes 'how-to' books, Arasy titles on *fiqh*, Qanita is for women issues and Teraju publishes academic books. In addition, Mizan has pioneered the e-book and direct selling through ekuator.com. Hernowo, who has worked for Mizan since 1984, attests to the rapid development of the publishing house, which he believes is the result of attempts to implement a *hadith* commanding to seek wisdom.[10] This also corresponds with Haidar Bagir's statements above.

Having described Mizan, I turn to YAPI, which is the oldest of all the Indonesian publishers mentioned. YAPI, a Shi'i foundation established in Surabaya in 1962 long before the Iranian revolution, is first and foremost a publishing house.[11] Its goals include the organisation of intellectual and religious activities and the publication and distribution of Islamic works. YAPI's co-founders, who still lead the foundation today, are two brothers from the Sayyid family - Omar Hashem (b. 1935) and his elder brother Muhammad Hashem. Husein Al-Habsyi, who later established *Yayasan Pesantren Islam* (also abbreviated YAPI), was also one of its sponsors. The Hashmem brothers are renowned translators and writers of a number of works. Muhammad Hashem, who formerly worked at the Iranian Embassy in Jakarta, is a prominent translator of a large number of English originals. His younger brother, O. Hashem, is probably the most famous polemical Shi'i writer in Indonesia today. For many years, YAPI was cen-

[9] Bagir (2003:46)

[10] Hernowo (2003:15)

[11] O. Hashem (2002:12)

tred in Bandar Lampung where Dr (medical) O. Hashem worked for a local government clinic. Currently the institution, and its leaders' residence, is located in Jakarta.

In terms of YAPI's Shi'i characteristics, there is a clear distinctions between those products published in the pre-Iranian revolution era and those produced afterwards. In short, no Shi'i work is to be found among the intellectual products of YAPI during the pre-Iranian revolution period. (However, it had established connections with Muslim leaders and scholars in the world, including the Grand Ayatollah Muhsin al-Hakim who sent the institution a printing machine in 1970). Figures up until 1970, put the intellectual products of YAPI at more than 43 books and brochures that include translations and original writings.[12] During this pre-revolution period, YAPI was known for a series of polemic pamphlets against Christianity written by the institutions founders O. Hashem and Muhammad Hashem.[13] This series included titles such as Muhammad Hashem's *Tantangan dari Gua Qumran* (Challenge from the Cave of Qumran, 1965), *Darah dan Penebusan Dosa* (Blood and Confession, 1965), *Jesus dan Paulus* (Jesus and Paul) and O. Hashem's *Keesaan Tuhan: Sebuah Pembahasan Ilmiah* (Monotheism: A Scientific Discussion, 1962) and *Djawaban Lengkap kepada Pendeta Dr. J. Verkuyl* (Complete Answer to the Priest Dr. J. Verkuyl). Closely related to these polemical works is the publication of the translation of the Barnabas Gospel by Husein Al-Habsyi. Both M. Hashem and O. Hashem wrote and translated several works on other topics that were published by YAPI, including O. Hashem's *Marxisme dan Agama* (Marxism and Religion, 1963) and *Menaklukkan Dunia Islam* (Conquering the Islamic World, 1968) or M. Hashem's translation of the words of 'Ali bin Abi Talib entitled *Pedoman Pemimpin* (Guidance of Leaders, 1968). Aside from the fact that YAPI tended only to publish the works of its owners, since its establishment it has proven itself to be a dynamic institution in the field of cultural production.

The shift in the character of YAPI's publications after 1979 clearly reveals not only the individual conversion of both M. Hashem and O. Hashem to Shi'ism but the conversion of YAPI as an institution. Most of the Shi'i works published by YAPI are translations from English, in addition to several original books written by the brothers. Their close relationship (and that of the foundation) with the Iranian Embassy in Jakarta gave them access to Shi'i materials requiring translation into the

[12] *Pembina* (16/1/1970)

[13] Boland (1971:227-228). On polemics against Christianity by Muslim apologetics including O. Hashem, see Ropi (1999).

vernacular. Like the cultural products of Mizan, some of the Shi'i books published by YAPI caused controversy. O. Hashem's *Saqifah*, for instance, received bitter criticism from anti-Shi'i groups.[14] Since YAPI is a non-profit institution with limited material and human resources, its products are less attractive in presentation and style when compared with those of Mizan. In addition, in contrast to Mizan's professional modern management, YAPI is organised as a family-run business. It is unsurprising therefore that a number of its titles were republished by the established Shi'is' publishing houses in the hope of gaining wider circulation and to increase the chances of cultural and economic success. That said, YAPI has made enormous contributions to the development of the religious life of the Shi'i community in Indonesia.

It is an important point to note that all the publishers and individuals involved in this field of cultural production are connected. It is through these networks of individuals and institutions that their products have been able to reach members of Indonesia's Muslim society. Included in this is the circulation of books and periodicals through the network of existing Shi'i institutions which are scattered throughout the country. The importance of this role has become ever more significant due to the fact that many of the cultural products of Shi'i institutions cannot be found in mainstream bookstores. In fact, larger Shi'i institutions such as ICC of Al-Huda, Fatimah, Muthahhari, and Al-Jawad have established their own bookstores, located within their complexes, to distribute and sell Shi'i works. Another channel for reaching readers is through the libraries which most of the big Shi'i institutions provide for the public. These libraries are filled with collections of books and periodicals published by the aforementioned publishers, in addition to collections of imported books in English, Arabic and Persian. In general, the established publishing houses utilise a variety of channels to reach their consumers, the most common being through bookstores, and their publications are generally available in big and small bookstores in cities throughout the country.

It is clear that both types of publishers profit from the significance of networking in terms of their existence and development. With regard to the publication of Shi'i works, an international network - through which material can be produced and distributed - is a necessary element, given that many Shi'i works are translations of foreign originals; and this international network is vital for accessing foreign books to be translated into Indonesian.

[14] For this, see Chapter Eight.

The Iranian connection, through which foreign Shi'i books are imported, is a significant part of this international network, and is clearly revealed in the content, message, and style of the cultural products produced by the publishers. Both the publishing houses and Shi'i institutions necessitate the international network in order to maintain and increase this field of cultural production.

B. The Translation of Shi'i Books

The translation of Shi'i literature has become an important aspect of the intellectual and missionary development of Shi'is in Indonesia. Tamara has observed the proliferation of translations of works by Middle Eastern authors. This is a new phenomenon in Indonesian Islam, first seen in the 1980s as a consequence of the Iranian revolution.[15] What is obvious is the Shi'i nature of the content or message of these translations. Scholars such as Von der Mehden and Meuleman also note the increase in translations of Shi'i texts in the country.[16] Azra describes the phenomenon as a dramatic development in the field of translation of religious works into Indonesian, because it "has never taken place in Islamic discourse in Indonesia before".[17] Most Shi'i books, published by Shi'i publishing houses in Indonesia, have been translated from English, Arabic or Persian originals, with English books constituting the greatest number, (even though originally, of course, these books were written in Arabic or Persian). In general, the authoritative Shi'i texts are still written in foreign languages, inaccessible to most Indonesian Shi'is and Sunnis, so translation is the most effective way for publishing houses to produce Shi'i works.

It is impossible to recount all the translated books produced by Shi'i publishing houses in Indonesia, but in accordance with the purpose of demonstrating the unique characteristics of those Shi'i works circulated in the country it is necessary to pay attention to their authors. On the whole, those authors whose works are translated into Indonesian are modern Shi'i *'ulama'* or intellectuals from Iran or other Middle Eastern countries. Most of them are *'ulama'* who hold the title Ayatollah (*ayat Allah*, 'Sign of God'), or Grand Ayatollah, and who were educated in the traditional *hawza* system of Islamic education. These authors include 'Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din al-Musawi (1873-1957), Ruhullah Khomeini (1902-1989), 'Allama Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i (1903-1981), Murtada Mutahhari (1920-1979), Muhammad Baqir Sadr (1935-1980), 'Ali Khamene'i, Nasir

[15] Tamara (1986:24)

[16] Von der Mehden (1993); Meuleman (n.d)

[17] Azra (1999:223)

Makarim Shirazi (b. 1924), Ja'far Subhani (b. 1922) and Ibrahim Amini (b. 1925). All these men are authoritative *'ulama'* whose devotion to Shi'i Islam and religious knowledge are recognised throughout the Shi'i world. There are also authors who are scholars with both traditional and modern education, the most popular being 'Ali Shari'ati (1933-1977), who gained a PhD in France, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr (b. 1933) who earned his doctorate in the United States. This group of authors is known as the intellectuals.

The author with the most works translated into Indonesian is Mutahhari with no less than 50 titles. followed by Shari'ati with 25 translated works. Then we find the works of Ruhullah Khomeini, 'Allama Tabataba'i, Muhammad Baqir Sadr and Hossein Nasr, each of whom have published between 10 and 15 titles. As for other Shi'i scholars, their works translated into Indonesian are still limited in number but they are likely to increase.[18] It should be noted that in many cases there is more than one translation of a certain work. The six most popular authors - in the quantitative sense - represent not only the positions of *'ulama'* and intellectuals but also the position of revolutionary and moderate religious and political thought. The general characteristics of the works of Khomeini, Sadr, Shari'ati, and Mutahhari, for example. are revolutionary; while the works of Tabataba'i and Nasr can be classified as moderate and sober. With the exception of Sadr, all the abovementioned scholars are Iranian. It should be noted, however, that other Shi'i *'ulama'*, including the Lebanese 'Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din and the Tunisian Muhammad Tijani al-Samawi, have produced works that have been very influential in the dissemination of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

Taking into consideration the above estimates, it is clear that Mutahhari and Shari'ati - who were said to have worked together in the establishment of the *Husainiyya-yi Irshad*, (a style of religious institution meant to attract the educated young[19]), - have been very influential in Indonesia. Both of them, together with the abovementioned Iraqi, Muhammad Baqir

[18] This is based on catalogues from Mizan and Lentera Publishers, and from the libraries of the Muthahhari Foundation, Fatimah Foundation, RausyanFikr Foundation, Al-Jawad Foundation, and ICC of Al-Huda.

[19] Mutahhari was one of the founding members of the institution in 1965 and invited Shari'ati to join it in 1968. By 1969-70, Shari'ati's lectures were becoming increasingly revolutionary and attracting unfavourable attention from *'ulama'* and the state. Mutahhari accused Shari'ati of being a Wahhabi, and tried to persuade him to moderate his position. In 1971 Mutahhari withdrew from the *Husainiyya-yi Irshad* and even after the death of Shari'ati in 1977 he wrote to Khomeini about him, "complaining of his dishonesty, slander of the clergy and deviation, and requesting a ban on his works until they have been revised or corrected" (Martin 2000:79).

Sadr, are considered to be martyrs. It appears that the position of Mutahhari is more important to Shi'is in Indonesia than that of Shari'ati, in all likelihood because Mutahhari was an ayatollah and considered to be a model for those Islamic scholars who qualify as *'ulama'-intellectual.*[20] Shari'ati, however, is considered to be an intellectual, but he is a special one, namely a *rawshanfikr* (reformed intellectual). Muthahhari's status is also illustrated by the fact that a Shi'i institution in Indonesia was established under his name; and one of the reasons for establishing *Yayasan Muthahhari*, was to publish a series of Muthahhari's works and thoughts, via the institution's journal *al-Hikmah*. This has contributed to increasing Mutahhari's popularity in Indonesia. Nearly all his works, which reach more than 50 titles, have been translated into Indonesian. These works cover nearly all fields of Islamic knowledge: doctrine, Qur'an exegesis, morality, jurisprudence, history, Sufism and the field of philosophy (in which there are the most titles). A circle of Shi'i intellectuals is responsible for introducing Mutahhari's thoughts to an Indonesian audience. For instance, Haidar Bagir has provided us with a short intellectual biography of Mutahhari,[21] and Jalaluddin Rakhmat - in lengthy introductory notes to a translation of Mutahhari's work - supplies a short biography and details his principal thoughts.[22] For these intellectuals, Mutahhari is considered a model for *'ulama'*. There is little doubt that alongside Haidar Bagir, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, is one of the Indonesian Shi'i intellectuals responsible for the spread of Mutahhari's thoughts and works in Indonesia.[23]

However, it is Shari'ati who seems to have had a greater impact on Muslims in Indonesia, both Sunni and Shi'i. Mutahhari's thoughts simply have not gained the same level of appreciation as Shari'ati's from Muslim intellectuals in the country and so we can deduce that Shari'ati may have attracted a larger and broader readership than Mutahhari. As Madrid has shown, Shari'ati occupies the second position, after Nurcholish Madjid, as the most cited author among students in Yogyakarta.[24] "I was surprised that Shari'ati would be more frequently cited and with more fervour than Mawdudi", said Madrid.[25] The broad influence of Shari'ati's books is also illustrated by the fact that, unlike Mutahhari, Shari'ati has attracted the interest of several Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia, both Sunni and Shi'i. Through their writings, Muslim intellectuals, including Amien

[20] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:19)
[21] Bagir (1988)
[22] Rakhmat (1984)
[23] Rakhmat (1991, 1993)
[24] Madrid (2001:64)
[25] Madrid (2001:65)

Rais, Dawam Rahardjo, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Muchtar Probotinggi, Hadimulyo and Haidar Bagir, have provided us with both appreciative and critical analysis of Shari'ati's thoughts.[26] In addition, aspects of Shari'ati's thoughts have been thoroughly analysed by Azyumardi Azra.[27] In contrast, Mutahhari's thoughts have yet to attract the same level of interest. Von der Mehden attributes the considerable influence of Shari'ati's thoughts on the circle of intellectuals to "Shari'ati's views of an egalitarian Muslim society and attacks on corrupt religious leadership".[28] Furthermore, Shari'ati provides his readers with a self-portrait and puts himself in the role of a *rawshanfikr*, the very role that Indonesian Muslims intellectuals wish to imitate in the Indonesian social, political, and religious context.

Iran's Ruhullah Khomeini and Iraq's Muhammad Baqir Sadr, whose intellectual works were translated into Indonesian, were *maraji' al-taqlid* ('sources of emulation'), philosophers, and leaders of Islamic movements. Whilst Khomeini succeeded in his revolution, Sadr's brief rise in 1979-1980 resulted in his execution in April 1980. The texts of Khomeini translated into Indonesian include work in the field of Qur'an exegesis and *hadith,* including the four volumes of *40 Hadis Nabi SAW* (Forty Prophetic Traditions), published by Mizan and *Rahasia Basmallah dan Hamdallah* (Secrets of Basmallah [the first verse of the first chapter of the Qur'an] and Hamdallah [the second verse of the first chapter of the Qur'an]), also published by Mizan in 1994. In relation to his position as a *marja' al-taqlid* for Indonesian Shi'is, several jurisprudence books written by Khomeini are available in Indonesian, including the two volumes of *Mi'raj Ruhani* (Spiritual Journey) and *Puasa dan Zakat Fitrah* (Fasting and Fitra Alms[29]), and *Fiqih Praktis Menurut Mazhab Ahlul Bayt* (three volumes of Practical Jurisprudence according to the *Madhhab* of *Ahl al-Bay*t) as published by the Al-Jawad Foundation in Bandung and Al-Huda in Pekalongan respectively. These last two books also incorporate some *fatwas* of 'Ali Khamene'i, currently a *marja' al-taqlid* for many of Indonesia's Shi'is. Regarding the *fatwa* collection of 'Ali Khamene'i, a book entitled *Fatwa-fatwa Ayatullah Al-Uzhma Imam Ali Khamenei* (Fatwas of the Grand Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i) was published in Indonesian by Al-Huda in Jakarta at the end of 2004. The translations of these books are instrumental to the religious practice of Indonesian Shi'is because they help them fulfil the obligation

[26] Rais (1991), Rahardjo (1983), Rakhmat (1988), Probotinggi (1986), Hadimulyo (1985), Bagir (1989)

[27] Ridwan (1999)

[28] Von der Mehden (1993:89)

[29] *Fitra* alms is an obligatory alms that must be paid at the end of the fasting month of Ramadan.

within Shi'ism to follow a living *mujtahid*. Khomeini's political thought, which has made a great contribution to the political history of Islam, was later translated into Indonesian with the title *Sistem Pemerintahan Islam* (Islamic Government System), and published in 2002 by Pustaka Zahra. This significant work was originally a series of lectures delivered by Khomeini in Najaf in 1969-1970. Subsequently it was published in Persian in the autumn of 1970 and then in Arabic in 1976 in Beirut as part of a five-volume *fiqh* book entitled *Kitab al-Ba'i* (the Book of Purchases).[30] In this book Khomeini argues that Islam is capable of establishing laws for the government and administration of a just society and that since the occultation of Imam Mahdi, a cleric is responsible for justice and ruling over an Islamic society, based on the Islamic *shari'a*. It is important to note that Khomeini's political concept of *wilayat al-faqih,* as stated in this book, has become the main ideological foundation of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Despite the fact that Khomeini, as a learned man and Islamic leader, was - and still is - the ideal figure for Shi'is in Indonesia, there has so far been no comprehensive study in Indonesian of this important man and his religious and political thought. To fill this gap, as previously described, Haidar Bagir - under the pseudonym of Yamani - has written two books: The first on the Sufi aspect of Khomeini's thought[31] and the second on Khomeini's political philosophy in comparison with al-Farabi.[32] In addition Sihbudi has written a political biography of Khomeini.[33]

Khomeini's political thought is paralleled by Sadr's *Sistem Politik Islam* (Islamic Political System), published in 2001 by Lentera in Jakarta. The subjects covered in Sadr's works, translated into Indonesian, are broader than Khomeini's since, as well as politics, they also include doctrine, Qur'an exegesis, economy, philosophy and jurisprudence. Further, Sadr's works, particularly those on philosophy and economics, seem to have attracted a wide readership in Indonesia, both Sunni and Shi'i. Unlike Khomeini, who was popular as a Shi'i leader, not all Indonesian Muslims recognise Sadr as a Shi'i thinker. Moreover, no serious study of Sadr has been conducted in Indonesian, in spite of the fact that he was a prominent scholar, influential among both Sunni and Shi'i Muslims throughout the world.

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[30] Martin (2000:115). An English translation of this book is available at http://www.wandea.org.pl/khomeini-pdf/hukumati-i-islami.pdf).

[31] Yamani (2001)

[32] Yamani (2002)

[33] Sihbudi (1996)

From these four radical and revolutionary figures, we move to the perennial (traditional) philosopher[34] Seyyed Hossein Nasr who migrated to America in 1979 where he served as professor of Islamic studies at Temple University in Philadelphia until 1984 and today holds the same position at George Washington University. Nasr's works, attract a wide readership among Muslims in Indonesia. His focus is mainly on Sufism and Islamic philosophy. However, in fact Nasr's work appears to be more influential the Sunni community in the country. Furthermore, Nasr's perennialist ideas are particularly influential among the circle of Indonesian Muslim neo-modernist intellectuals, who discuss several aspects of his ideas through seminars and writings. In June 1993 Nasr was invited to Indonesia to participate in a series of seminars which were reported in the national media, (including *Republika*,[35] *Tempo*[36] and *Panji Masyarakat*[37]), and reviewed by Azra.[38] In addition, several articles and theses on certain aspects of Nasr's thoughts have been published. It should be noted that many of Nasr's books are published by Sunni-owned publishing houses,[39] something which can perhaps be explained by his close relations with the Shah of Iran before the outbreak of revolution. However, it does not mean that appreciation of Nasr's scholarly works is absent among Shi'i circles. In fact, several Indonesian translations of his works are published by the Shi'i publishing house Mizan and can be found in the journal *Al-Hikmah*, published by the Mutahhari Foundation. Sunni appreciation and acceptance of Nasr's ideas can be explained by the fact that in most of his works Nasr uses the perennial approach to Islam - and to its philosophical and spiritual aspects in particular - making him appealing to those interested

[34] The perennial philosophy (*philosophia perennis*, Latin) can be understood as universal knowledge which is based on universal principles and gained through tradition that exists at the heart of all religions. It aims to return the human being to its genuine nature - the primordial self (Nasr 1992).

[35] Its two reports were titled "Prof. Seyyed Hossein Nasr: *Agama Masa Depan Peduli Lingkungan*" (Prof. Seyyed Hossein Nasr: the Religion of the Future Caring about the Environment) (*Republika* 29/6/1993) or "Seyyed Hossein Nasr: *Juru Bicara Islam di Barat*" (Seyyed Hossein Nasr: A Spokesman of Islam in the West) (*Republika* 20/8/1993).

[36] *Tempo* presents an interview with Nasr in "*Kembali ke Tradisi yang Utuh*" (Return to the Complete Tradition) (*Tempo* 10/7/1993).

[37] "Nasr *Menegur Manusia Modern*" (Nasr Admonishes Modern Man) (*Panji Masyarakat* 761/1993).

[38] Azra (1993:106)

[39] The first translation of Nasr's books into Indonesian was done by the prominent intellectual Muslim Abdurrahman Wahid and his brother Hasyim Wahid under the title *Islam dalam Cita dan Fakta* (*Ideals and Realities of Islam*) published by *Lembaga Penunjang Pembangunan Nasional* (LEPPENAS), Jakarta (1981).

in Islamic philosophy and Sufism. This perennialist approach also reveals the striking contrast between Nasr and Iranian revolutionary thinkers such as Khomeini, Shari'ati and Mutahhari. Given this information, we can conclude that there is little connection between the publication of Nasr's works and the spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia, even though his Islamic philosophical thought can be viewed as being part of the Shi'i intellectual tradition.

It is noteworthy that Nasr's great teacher of Islamic philosophy is 'Allama Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i, one of the foremost philosophers and scholars among the 20th century Shi'i *'ulama'*, some of whose works, (including aspects of doctrine and Qur'an exegesis), are translated into Indonesian. Tabataba'i's comprehensive introduction to Shi'i Islam - entitled *Islam Syi'ah* (Shi'i Islam) - was translated into Indonesian from the English version (translated from the original by Nasr) and published by Grafiti Press in 1989. However, it is neither translated by a Shi'i scholar nor produced by a Shi'i publishing house[40]. In my opinion, Tabataba'i's greatest contribution to the development of Islamic discourse in Indonesia is to be found in the field of Qur'an exegesis. In addition to several related books and articles, his single most important work is the monumental commentary on the Qur'an, *al-Mizan* (the Balance). However, only certain aspects of the Shi'i teachings contained in this exegesis have been translated into Indonesian. This Qur'an commentary has become an important source for the most prominent Indonesian exegete Quraish Shihab and his *tafsir* books, including his magnum opus, *al-Mishbah* (the Light, 2000). The publication of this work led anti-Shi'i groups in Indonesia to declare Quraish Shihab, (at the time Suharto's Minister for Religious Affairs), a Shi'i and to castigate him.[41] The influence of Tabataba'i can also be found in Jalaluddin Rakhmat's books. In the introduction to his *Tafsir Sufi Al-Fatihah* (Sufi Commentary of the First Chapter of the Qur'an), Rakhmat - who studied in Qum with Tabataba'i's student, Muhammad Taqi Misbah Yazdi - writes about his admiration of Tabataba'i and his commentary: "In the Islamic world today, particularly among the lovers of the *ahl al-Bayt*, no one studies *tafsir* without being influenced by his writings."[42] It is important to note that although Tabataba'i' was a great philosopher, there is no Indonesian translation of his philosophical works, with the exception of his popular booklet on philosophy and Sufism, *Hikmah Islam* (Islamic Philosophy) published by Mizan in 1984.

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[40] The book was translated by Djohan Effendi.

[41] This can be seen in a footnote in Chapter Nine.

[42] Rakhmat (1999:xii)

From the works of the six most prolific Shi'i authors, we discover that they have written about all fields of Islamic knowledge, including Qur'an exegesis, *hadith*, jurisprudence, doctrine, history, philosophy, ethics, Sufism, politics and economics. As a result, the notion of Shi'ism as a distinct *madhhab* is affirmed by the translated works of these six scholars which are distributed throughout Indonesia, and which are read, cited and discussed by both Sunni and Shi'i scholars. One can conclude therefore, that such works are effective instruments for the dissemination of Shi'i Islam within Indonesian society.

The transmission of Shi'i doctrines and thoughts via publications is much more complex when the translation of books from Arabic, Persian or English originals is taken into account. In order to explain the book as a means of disseminating ideas, and the benefits of this for Shi'is in Indonesia, we can classify existing Shi'i books into three categories: doctrinal, intellectual and spiritual. These categories should be viewed not as distinct from each other but as integrated. The first category, doctrinal books, is the most important. These books are about the Shi'i *madhhab* and meant to provide readers with an understanding of the correct teachings of Shi'ism. Anti-Shi'i groups often consider the books within this category to be tools for converting Indonesian Sunnis to Shi'ism. They recognise a missionary motive in the publication of these works. This category ranges from books giving a general introduction to Shi'i Islam to deep analyses of certain aspects of Shi'i doctrines and teachings. In addition to the aforementioned *Islam Syiah* (Shi'i Islam) and *Inilah Islam* (This is Islam), both written by Tabataba'i, this category includes the work of the late Lebanese scholar 'Abd al-Husayn Sharaf al-Din al-Musawi, *Shi'i-Sunni Dialogue,* that has proved so popular in Indonesia that, by 2001, it had been reprinted nine times.

It is important to restate that this work was the first book published by Mizan and led to the stigmatisation of Mizan as a Shi'i publishing house. However, its translation into Indonesian only took place nearly half a century after the publication of the original *al-Muraja'at*, by al-'Irfan of Beirut, (the oldest Islamic publishing house in Lebanon) in 1936. It should also be kept in mind that the original book had already circulated widely among a number of Indonesian Muslims, particularly the Sayyids, who were sent free copies by Shi'i institutions in the Middle East. Islamic institutions, such as the Islamic Research Institute in Jakarta, also kept the book in their libraries. In fact, it was the Islamic Research Institute's copy which Abubakar Aceh borrowed when he wrote his sympathetic work, *Sjiah, Rasionalisme dalam Islam* (Shi'ism, Rationalism in Islam), first published in 1965, and in which he recognised Shi'ism as a valid *madhhab* in

Islam.[43] Muhammad al-Baqir, the translator of *al-Muraja'at*, received his original copy from the Middle East.[44]

The translation of the al-Musawi's title *al-Muraja'at* (which may roughly be translated into 'consultations'),[45] into Indonesian *Shi'i-Sunni Dialogue* is not entirely correct. The central theme of the book uses a dialogue between two *'ulama'* to instruct on Shi'i Islam. The first, *'ulama'* - the author, al-Muzawi - takes the role of Shi'i teacher, while the second - the then Shaykh al-Azhar Salim al-Bisri - is a Sunni and takes the role of the student. The 'consultations' between the Sunni scholar and the Shi'i *marja' al-taqlid* are about Shi'i Islam (in which al-Bisri tends to accept all al-Musawi's arguments). In other words, the dialogue affirms the validity of Shi'ism by the Sunni religious authority. Thus, the image conveyed and the content of the book were of course viewed as provocative by much of the Sunni world. In the Indonesian translation, Muhammad al-Baqir, (Haidar Bagir's father), provides us with a long and interesting introductory note which has also been the subject of criticism by anti-Shi'i figures in Indonesia[46]. For al-Baqir, the translation is meant to provide Indonesian readers with an 'insider's' perspective on Shi'ism.[47] The publication of the Indonesian edition has attracted great interest from readers and has become a best seller, in turn contributing to the success of Mizan as a newly-established Islamic publishing house. At least, two sympathetic reviews of the book have been written: One by the moderate Muslim intellectual Djohan Effendi, the other by the journalist Syu'bah Asa who 24 years after the book's publication felt the need to demonstrate his strong anti-Shi'i stance[48]. Controversial as this book may be in some quarters, it is clearly one of the most important works on Shi'i Islam available in Indonesian.

Most books in the 'doctrinal' category deal with the Shi'i doctrines and teachings which constitute the core of Shi'i Islam. A distinct characteristic of these books is that many of them include both doctrinal and

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[43] The book was published by Islamic Research Institute of Jakarta and then republished in 1972 and 1980 by Ramadhani of Solo.

[44] Bagir (2003:73)

[45] Brunner (2004:51)

[46] For example, this can be seen in a series of texts by of Haidar Ali (*Al-Muslimun* 225/12/1988, 227/2/1989, 228/3/1989). An Indonesian translation of Mahmud al-Zu'bi's criticism of al-Musawi entitled *Sunni yang Sunni: Tinjauan Dialog Sunnah Syiah-nya al-Musawi* (Sunni Sunnism: A Review of al-Musawi's Sunni Shi'i Dialogue) was also published by Ganesha Publisher in Bandung in 1989.

[47] Al-Baqir (1983:xxiii)

[48] The writings are "*Dialog Sunnah Syi'ah*" (*Panji Masyarakat* 11/7/1983 and "*Syi'ah: Bayangan Sebuah Jembatan*" (Shi'ism: Shadow of a Dialogue) (*Tempo* 11/6/1983). Syu'bah Asa's strong anti-Shi'i attitude can be found in chapter eight and his writing (1998).

philosophical reasoning which has distinguished them from Sunni books on the same topics. This corresponds with the fact that Shi'ism pays much greater attention to the use of *'aql* (reason) than Sunnism. Each of the five principles of Shi'i faith - *tawhid* (belief in Divine Unity), *nubuwwa* (prophecy), *ma'ad* (resurrection), imamate, and *'adl* (Divine Justice) - for instance, have been analysed in this way by prominent Shi'i figures including Murtada Mutahhari, Ja'far Subhani, Nasir Makarim Shirazi and Mujtaba Musawi Lari, translations of which are freely available in Indonesia. Some works by these scholars deal with the fundamentals of Shi'ism and constitute the most important tenets of the *madhhab*. Other aspects of Shi'i teachings and tradition are closely related to religious dogma, namely *tawhid*. In the context of Shi'i tradition, mention should be made of books approving of Islamic beliefs and practices such as *ziyara* (visitation of graves), *tawassul* (uttering names of Sufi saints or Imams in supplications) and celebration of the Prophet's birthday. These practices are also adopted by traditionalist Muslim groups, but are strongly opposed by Wahhabis and reformist groups.[49] Subhani's *Tauhid and Syirik* (Divine Unity and Polytheism) published in 1987 by Mizan affirms that such practices have a sound religious foundation and in fact is highly critical of Wahhabism,.

After the doctrinal books, we turn to the second category - intellectual books. These books are designed to fulfil the intellectual demands of both Sunni and Shi'i Muslims. This category also includes books that are not directly connected to specific Shi'i beliefs and practices. The publications, (in the vernacular), in this category tend to reflect the great interest among Shi'is in Indonesia for Islamic philosophy. While not necessarily containing clear elements of Shi'ism, these books generally deal with aspects of philosophy and Islamic thought that might influence the *weltanschauung* of their readers. At least, we cannot consider the translation and publication of this genre of books as a direct vehicle for the spread of Shi'i Islam. Most of the works by the scholars mentioned earlier in this chapter on philosophy, (some being critical of Western philosophies pertaining to man, society and history in support of Islamic philosophy), can be included in this group. The books within this category tend to promo-

[49] The most significant of these books are Ja'far Subhani's *Studi Kritis Faham Wahabi: Tauhid and Syirik* (Critical Study of Wahhabism: Tawhid and Polytheism, 1987)*, Tawassul, Tabarruk, Ziarah Kubur, Karamah Wali Termasuk Ajaran Islam: Kritik Atas Faham Wahabi* (Tawassul, Tabarruk, Visitation to Tomb, Karama [Miracle] of Walis are Included in Islamic Teachings: Criticism to Wahhabism, 1989) and his *Tentang Dibenarkannya Syafaat dalam Islam Menurut al-Qur'an dan Sunnah* (About the Recommendation of Intercessions in Islam According to the Qur'an and Sunna, 1992), and Ja'far Murtada al-'Amili's *Perayaan Maulid, Khaul dan Hari-Hari Besar Islam Bukan Sesuatu Yang Haram* (The Celebration of Mawlid, Khaul, and Great Islamic Festivals is not Forbidden, 1990).

te Islam as a distinct worldview - the adverse of any other worldviews – and a blueprint for humanity, capable of solving the problems faced by mankind. This is demonstrated in works such as Sadr's *Falsafatuna* (Our Philosophy), published in 1991 by Mizan; Mutahhari's *Masyarakat dan Sejarah* (Society and History) published by Mizan in 1986 and Shari'ati's *Kritik Islam atas Marxisme dan Sesat-Pikir Barat Lainnya* (Islamic Criticism towards Marxism and Other Western Fallacies), also published by Mizan in 1983. In addition, great Shi'i thinkers such as 'Allama Tabataba'i have made a great contribution to the field of traditional Islamic philosophy. An example of note is the book *Ilmu Hudhuri* (Knowledge by Presence), by the contemporary Iranian philosopher Mehdi Hairi Yazdi, (published in 1994 by Mizan). Mehdi Hairi Yazdi, son of the reformer of *hawza 'ilmiyya* of Qum Abd al-Karim Ha'iri, studied Islamic philosophy with Tabataba'i. Such works can be categorised as both intellectual and influential in terms of the religious life of Muslims.

Those books within the spiritual category deal with the spiritual life of the Shi'i community. Most of them contain the sayings and supplications attributed to the Imams, as well as their hagiographies. These sayings and supplications are considered, within the Shi'i tradition, to be part of *hadith*, and, therefore, extremely important to this Islamic group. As a part of *hadith*, these works become the principal source of Shi'i Islam after the Qur'an. They are used as a reference for understanding all fields of Islamic knowledge. The most important book in this category has been *Nahj al-Balagha* (Peak of Eloquence), various versions of which are available in Indonesian. The book contains collections of sermons, sayings and letters attributed to Imam 'Ali bin Abi Talib, the first Imam. It was assembled and systematised by the 10th century Shi'i scholar Sayyid Sharif al-Radi.[50] Among the Indonesian versions available are a 1990 edition by O. Hashem and M. Hashem, translated from the English version entitled *Nahjul Balaghah,* published by YAPI; *Puncak Kepasihan* (Peak of Eloquence) published in 1997 by Lentera; and Muhammad al-Baqir's selective translation from Arabic of Abduh's explanation, *Mutiara Nahjul Balaghah* (Pearls of the *Nahj al-Balagha*), published in 1990 by Mizan. In addition, there are translations of studies of the *Nahj al-Balagha,* including Arif Mulyadi's translation (from English) of Mutahhari's explanation, *Tema-tema Pokok Nahj al-Balaghah* (Major Themes of the *Nahj al-Balagha*), which was published in 2002 by Al-Huda and a translation of Muhammad Muhammadi's work, *Kisah-kisah Bertabur Hikmah Nahjul Balaghah* (Stories Scattered with Wisdom of *Nahj al-Balagha*) published by Cahaya in Bogor. There

[50] Nasr (1989:8)

are also translations of *Sahifa* (Scroll) containing the sayings, supplications, stories and even poems attributed to Fatima and the other Imams. For example, *Sahifa Fatimiyya, Sahifa Husayniyya, Sahifa Sajjadiyya*, and *Sahifa Sadiqiyya*, attributed to Fatima, Husayn (the third Imam), 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin al-Sajjad (the fourth Imam), and Ja'far al-Sadiq (the sixth Imam), respectively.[51] The most famous of these is *al-Sahifa al-Sajjadiyya* which is "the oldest prayer manual in Islamic sources and one of the most seminal works of Islamic spirituality of the early period."[52] Aside from being important reference works, these books are functional instruments for the religious and spiritual life of the Shi'is in Indonesia, particularly in the expression of loving devotion to the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt* and Imams. It should be noted that these works are specifically Shi'i in nature and there is nothing comparable in the Sunni intellectual heritage.

Related to this religious and spiritual life is the publication of large numbers of books on *do'a* (supplications), frequently compiled from Shi'i works. The most famous of these books is *Mafatih al-Jinan* (Keys to the Gardens of Paradise) by Abbas al-Qummi (d. 1941). They are usually selective supplications, followed by their Indonesian translation, and explanations of certain religious rituals and occasions. It should be noted that there is a great demand for this type of book; a demand met by Shi'i publishing houses and Shi'i foundations. Some of these books have become best sellers[53]. One of these books, *Doa Kumail, Doa Thaif, Doa Keselamatan, Doa Tawassul, Doa Ziarah*, published by Fatimah Foundation, was reprinted six times between 1998 and 2002. The growth in demand for these books is directly related to the routine performance of religious rituals and the growing number of *pengajian* and other *da'wa* activities car-

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[51] The first book, *Shahifah Fathimiyyah: Doa-doa Suci Putri Nabi* (Scroll of Fatima: Pure Supplications of Prophet's Daughter) was translated by Jalaluddin Rakhmat and M. Taufik Yahya (2001). The second, *Mukhtasar Shahifah Husainiyyah: Nasihat, Kisah dan Doa Imam Husain as* (Abridgement of Scroll of Husayn: Advice, Story, and Supplication of Imam Husayn [upon whom be peace]) was translated by the translation team at SMU Muthahhari (2003). The third, *Shahifah Sajjadiyyah: Gita Suci Keluarga Nabi* (the Scroll of Imam al-Sajjad: Pure Hymn of the Prophet's Household), was translated by Jalaluddin Rakhmat (1998). All three books contained introductory notes by Jalaluddin Rakhmat and were published by the Muthahhari Press. The fourth book, *Shahifah Shadiqiyyah: Pelita Cinta dan Renungan Doa Imam Ja'far Ash-Shadiq* (Scroll of Imam al-Sadiq: Light of Love and Prayer Contemplation of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiqh), was compiled and translated by a team of Qum alumni and published by Morteza of Bandung (2004).

[52] Jafri (http://al-islam.org/sahifa/intro.html accessed 13/9/2005)

[53] For instance, Mizan has a branch called *Penerbit Misykat* for publishing books on *do'a,* whilst *Pustaka Zahra* has published '*Seri Doa Mustajab*' containing not less than ten books, three of which are best sellers. Some of these supplications are supplemented with cassettes containing recordings of supplications provided by Ahmad Muhajir al-Muhdar.

ried out by Shi'i institutions or groups of the Shi'i community throughout Indonesia. It is common, for example, for leaders of *pengajian* meetings and managers of Shi'i foundations to order large numbers of these books for individual members or for the institutions' collection.

The above descriptions reveal the general characteristics of these translated works, in particular those written by the most prolific authors. It is also evident that the Shi'i works translated into Indonesian generally encompass all fields of Islamic knowledge, as well as all aspects of Shi'ism. Thus, we can deduce that the Indonesian translations of these books have been an effective vehicle for the transmission of Shi'i Islam into Indonesia from Iran, Iraq and other Middle Eastern countries. This migration of Shi'ism and Shi'i thought is in accordance with Coser's statement: "Books are carriers and disseminators of ideas".[54]

C. Works by Indonesian Shi'is

Shi'i figures within Indonesia have also concentrated their attention and energies on the production and dissemination of religious thought through original works. However, thus far I have not found any systematic work by Indonesian Shi'is with regard to Shi'ism as a distinct Islamic *madhhab* or on aspects of principal Shi'i teachings. It is clear that the translated works continue to dominate in terms of the fulfilment of the religious and intellectual demands of the Shi'i individual, group, and community. We can identify several Indonesian Shi'i intellectuals and *ustadh* who have contributed to the field of writing through essays and articles published in periodicals, however I intend to focus on those who have written books dealing with the main body of the Shi'i *madhhab.* To mention but a few, the late Husein Al-Habsyi, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Haidar Bagir, Muhammad Hashem and Omar Hashem have produced and disseminated religious ideas through books. Quantitatively, Rakhmat is the most prolific, with more than 20 books (including textbooks), followed by Husein Al-Habsyi with about ten titles (including his *Al-Kaustar* Arabic-Indonesian dictionary), and then the brothers, Muhammad Hashem and O. Hashem also with around ten. (Other writers have produced less than ten titles). We should bear in mind, however, that while some *ustadh* have begun to produce scholarly works, most Indonesian Shi'i scholarship remains the product of Shi'i intellectuals.

The books written by the Indonesian Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals embrace aspects of doctrine, *fiqh*, *tafsir*, history and Sufism. In relation

[54] Coser (1982:362)

to doctrine, for example, we can mention several books dealing with *ahl al-bayt* (referring to the twelve Imams), an important concept in Shi'i Islam. In Indonesia, it is the neutral term, rather than Shi'ism, to mention Shi'i Islam. There are at least three works which urge Muslim believers to uphold the Qur'an and the *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet Muhammad: Ali Umar Al-Habsyi's *Dua Pusaka Nabi, al-Qur'an dan Ahlulbait* (Two Prophetic Heirlooms: the Qur'an and Ahl al-Bayt. 2002. Pustaka Zahra.); Heru Elryco's *Ahlul Bait dan al-Qur'an, Peninggalan Yang Terlupakan* (Ahl al-Bayt and the Qur'an: the Forgotten Inheritance. 2002. Rosda.); and Alwi Husen's *Keluarga Yang Disucikan Allah* (The Family Purified by God. 1998. Lentera.). Following Shi'i *'ulama'*, the authors affirm that this obligation is based on the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad that are recognised in both Sunni and Shi'i *hadith* collections. At the same time, this can be seen as a Shi'i rejection of a number of Sunni sayings which are considered to be the Prophet Muhammad's *hadith*, (and which command Muslims to follow the Qur'an and the *Sunna* of the Prophet Muhammad) because according to Shi'i beliefs, the transmitter and content of this *hadith* are unreliable.[55]

The most important book on Shi'i doctrine is Hasan Abu Amar's (*Akidah Syi'ah* (Doctrine of Shi'ism). Its full title is *Akidah Syi'ah, Seri Tauhid: Rasionalisme dan Alam Pemikiran Filsafat dalam Islam* (Shi'i Doctrine, Series of *Tawhid*: Rationalism and Nature of Philosophical Thought in Islam) and it was published by *Yayasan Mulla Shadra*, Jakarta, in 1992 and reprinted in 2002. The book consists of three parts - *usul al-din* (fundamentals of religion), doctrine, and unity of God – and its writer, a Qum alumnus, known among Shi'i adherents in Indonesia as a literalist *ustadh*, uses logic, rather than Qur'anic verses, to prove the existence, unity, attributes and actions of God. Abu Amar emphasises the significance of reason in the Shi'i belief system, stating that in Shi'i Islam, the fundamentals of religion must be understood by every Shi'i using logical evidence. Even textual proofs are secondary to logical proofs. In his words, "*al-Qur'an* and *hadith* occupy the position only to support (endorse) the logical proofs."[56] Abu Amar's book contains several references to Qur'anic verses and *hadith*, however, with the exception of the *Bidayat al-Hikma* (Beginnings of Philosophy) and *Nihayat al-Hikma* (Results of Philosophy) - two famous philosophical works by Tabataba'I, not yet translated into Indonesian - he never refers to authoritative Shi'i books on this most essential aspect of religion.

[55] Ali Umar Al-Habsyi (2002:335-349)

[56] Abu Amar (2002:57)

Abu Amar's book on Imam Mahdi, the twelfth Shi'i Imam, (published by the Mulla Shadra Foundation in 2000) should be included in this field of doctrine, because it deals with aspects of imamate, one of the five fundamentals of Shi'ism. However, it should be noted that the belief in the Mahdi is complex matter, worthy of a separate study. Amar admits that this book relies purely on Sunni sources, namely Sunni *hadith* collections and the views of Sunni *'ulama'*. Another book which deals with Imam Mahdi as a justice figure, was written by Jaffar Al-Jufri and published in 2001 by Lentera. Both these books emphasise the importance of belief in the existence of Imam Mahdi and his immunity, yet one author claims the belief has valid religious foundation in Shi'i sources, while the other claims the belief is validated by Sunni.

While every Shi'i is required to understand logical and textual proofs of the fundamentals of religion in which *taqlid* (emulation) is prohibited, in the field of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), lay Shi'is are required to follow the *fatwa* of a *marja' al-taqlid,* who assumes the authority of reinterpreting Islamic jurisprudence. We should bear in mind that Shi'is are classified into *mujtahid* and *muqallid* in terms of Islamic jurisprudence. Therefore, the aforementioned translations of books on *fiqh* are important manuals for performing religious duties. Alongside these translations, Indonesian Shi'i figures have also authored several books on aspects of jurisprudence, in order to meet the demands of the Shi'i community. At the outset, we should mention a booklet entitled *Taqlid dalam Ajaran Syiah Imamiah* (Emulation in the Teaching of Imamiyya Shi'ism) written by Abu Qurba (possibly a pseudonym). In this booklet the author deals with the obligation of laity for *taqlid* and he supports his arguments with logical and textual proofs. Abu Qurba, who lives in Qum, also includes proof of the validity of those who take 'Ali Khamene'i as *marja' al-taqlid*. That evidence is the statements of Iranian 'ulama' as proof of Khamene'i's *a'lamiyyat* (superiority in religious knowledge),[57] one of the requirements for assuming the position of *marja' al-taqlid*.

In terms of ritual observance, most jurisprudence books deal with prayers and the *hajj*. In this regard, there have been two books about prayers: Firstly, Abu Zahra's *Shalat Nabi saw Menurut Ahlul Bait* (Prayer of the Prophet Muhammad According to the Ahl al-Bayt), published in 2001 by Kota Ilmu in Bandung; and secondly, Hidayatullah Husein's *Shalat dalam Madzhab Ahlul Bait* (Prayer in the *Madhhab* of *Ahl al-Bayt*), published by the Abna' Al-Husayn Foundation in Solo. In addition, a manual of ablution and prayer, supplemented by a VCD, has been produced by *Yayasan*

[57] Abu Qurba (2003)

Muhibbin in Probolinggo, East Java. These works illustrate a number of minor differences between Shi'ism and Sunnism with regard to certain movements and incantations in prayers. In respect of the *hajj*, we find several books written by Indonesian Shi'i figures, including O. Hashem's *Berhaji Mengikuti Jalur Para Nabi* (Performing Hajj Following the Line of Prophets, 2001), Muchtar Adam's *Tafsir Ayat-ayat Haji* (Qur'an Commentary of Verses of Hajj, 1993) and *Cara Mudah Naik Haji* (Easy Method to Perform the Hajj, 1993), and Husein Shahab's *Cara Memperoleh Haji Mabrur* ('Methods of Achieving Beneficent Pilgrimage', 1995). With the exception of Husein Shahab's book published by Pustaka Pelita, all three books were published by Mizan. All these works on specific ritual observance illustrate distinctive aspect of Shi'i teachings. Some writers use their work to make statements about Sunni-Shi'i relations. Hidayatullah Husein, for instance, uses his work to appeal for respect and tolerance among Muslims in cases of differences of opinion. The introduction to Al-Habsyi's book, was motivated by the fact that some people regard the Shi'is as infidel. Al-Habsyi wrote this book for the purpose of explaining that Shi'i jurisprudence is based on authoritative religious arguments.[58]

In the context of *mu'amalat* (social transactions), there is a Shi'i book about *mut'a (temporary marriage)*,a controversial issue used by anti-Shi'i groups to attack Shi'ism. It was written by Ibnu Mustafa who used Tabataba'i's *al-Mizan* and Mutahhari's *Hak-hak Wanita Dalam Islam* (Rights of Women in Islam) as sources for his study.[59] There is also an Indonesian version of Ja'far Murtada al-'Amili's *Nikah Mut'ah dalam Islam* (Temporary Marriage in Islam) translated by Hidayatullah Al-Habsyi, son of the late Husein Al-Habsyi. Interestingly, Hidayatullah Al-Habsyi, supplements this work with his own long chapter on '*Sakralisasi Sebuah Perkawinan*' ('The Making of a Marriage Sacred').[60] These books are intended to explain the permissibility of *mut'a* in Shi'i Islam, (which can be practiced as an alternative legal solution to fornication and prostitution which are strongly forbidden in Islam).

Some Shi'i figures have also authored books in the field of *tafsir*, although these are somewhat limited in quantity and quality. In addition to Husein Al-Habsyi's two polemical works on the commentary of *Surah 'Abasa*, Jalaluddin Rakhmat supplies two books in this field, namely *Tafsir Bil Ma'tsur* (Qur'an Commentary by Narrated Sources) and *Tafsir Sufi Al-Fatihah* (Qur'an Commentary of the First Chapter of the Qur'an, 1999),

[58] Hidayatullah Husein (2001:79)

[59] Mustafa (1999)

[60] Hidayatullah Al-Habsyi (2002:169-217)

both published by Rosda in Bandung. Ali Umar Al-Habsyi, (an *ustadh* at YAPI of Bangil, and Husein Al-Habsyi's grandson-in-law), also writes two books: *Tafsir Nuur Tsaqalain* (Qur'an Commentary of The Light of Thaqalayn, 1994. Al-Baqir Foundation, Bangil.) and *Nabi Tersihir?* (The Prophet was Bewitched? 1998. As-Sajjad, Jakarta.). A large number of Shi'i sources, particularly *tafsir* and *hadith* books, are included in these works, which are characteristically Shi'i. Ali Umar Al-Habsyi's *Nabi Tersihir?*, for instance, criticises the Sunni commentary that the Prophet Muhammad was bewitched.[61] For Shi'is like Ali Umar Al-Habsyi, the notion that the Prophet Muhammad was bewitched is inconceivable, because the Prophet is immune and the most perfect human being. This is a widely held view contained in the works of Shi'i scholars. Also related to the issue of sources cited, Rakhmat is correct in his statement that Shi'i authors in this particular field - he includes himself - cannot neglect the influence of Tabataba'i, and his work *al-Mizan* in particular, in the implementation of *tafsir bi al-ma'thur* or the *tafsir al-Qur'an bi al-Qur'an*, which literally means using the Qur'an to interpret the Qur'an. These *tafsir* works by Indonesian authors only deal with certain verses of the Qur'an, and so they are incomparable with Quraish Shihab's masterpiece, *al-Misbah.* Mention should also be made of the collaborative work on the sciences of the Qur'an, *Belajar Mudah 'Ulum al-Qur'an* ('Easy Learning the Sciences of the Qur'an'), edited by Sukardi, a librarian at SMU Muthahhari in Bandung. This book is a collection of articles by Middle Eastern *'ulama'* and Indonesian intellectuals and *ustadh*, including Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Muchtar Adam, Haidar Bagir and Husein Shahab. Its editor says that it should be seen as an introduction for those interested in the meanings and commentaries of verses of the Qur'an.[62] All these works illustrate attempts by Shi'i figures in Indonesia to produce and disseminate literature on Qur'an exegesis and sciences.

The field of Sufism is dominated by the work of Jalaluddin Rakhmat. As described in a previous chapter, Husein Shahab and Haidar Bagir also provide works on Sufism. As a result, there are many works on Sufism available to Indonesian Muslims. This reflects the great interest in Sufism among Muslims in Indonesia, (particularly the urbanites and upper-middle class), and goes hand in hand with the implementation of the Sufi approach to *da'wa* activities undertaken by Shi'is in the country. In a nutshell, Shi'is hope that works on Sufism contribute not only to the enrichment

[61] A widely held view among Sunnis, based on the revelation in two chapters of the Qur'an - namely QS: 113 and 114 - that the Prophet Muhammad was bewitched by a popular witch called Labid bin al-A'sam (Ali Umar al-Habsyi 1998: 21).

[62] Sukardi (2002)

of the Sufi tradition but also to the recognition of Shi'i teachings and tradition among the wider Indonesian Muslim population.

In the field of Islamic history, we have previously described an introduction to the critical study of the history of the Prophet Muhammad by Jalaluddin Rakhmat. Controversial works in the field of Islamic history have included O. Hashem's *Saqifah: Awal Perselisihan Umat* (Saqifa: the Origin of Umma Conflict, 1987) and M. Hashem's *Abdullah bin Saba: Benih fitnah* (Abdullah bin Saba': the Seed of Temptation, 1987), both published by YAPI. Criticising the Sunni interpretation of the election of Abu Bakr as the first caliph to succeed the Prophet Muhammad in the *Saqifa* (hall) of Bani Sa'ida, O. Hashem suggests that the election resulted from a conspiracy among Abu Bakr, 'Umar and Abu Ubayda, and as a result is the original source of division within the Muslim *umma*. (The conspiracy was against the Prophet Muhammad's designation of Ali as his successor.[63]). In *Abdullah bin Saba: Benih fitnah,* M. Hashem bases his analysis mainly on Murtada al-Askari's belief that Abdullah bin Saba' - considered by Sunnis to be the figure responsible for the founding of Shi'ism - was a fictional character.[64] These two books have certainly provoked bitter reactions from anti-Shi'i groups. M. Hashem answers his critics[65] in his book, *Abdullah bin Saba dalam Polemik* (Abdullah bin Saba' in Polemics), by simply reiterating the validity of the Shi'i version of the history of Abdullah bin Saba'.[66] O. Hashem's response[67] can be found in his provocative work, *Syi'ah Ditolak Syi'ah Dicari* (Shi'ism is Rejected, Shi'ism is Sought, 2002). All these historical works provide a common Shi'i interpretation of early Islamic history, and are fundamental to the legitimation of Shi'ism as an Islamic *madhhab*.

Included in the category of historical books are biographies of Imams such as Imam Husayn which recount his martyrdom at Karbala. In this area, O. Hashem writes *Darah dan Air Mata* (Blood and Tears), which re-iterates the historical evidence for this event, namely figures who witnessed the tragedy. Muhsin Labib, Husein Al-Habsyi's stepson and Qum

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[63] O. Hashem (1987)

[64] M. Hashem (1987)

[65] Criticism of M. Hashem's history of Abdullah bin Saba' was included in *Al-Muslimun* (217/4/1988) and republished by *Suara Masjid*. A slightly different version of the same text was republished in the form of leaflet by *Ma'had Ad-Dirasatil Islamiyah* of Jakarta.

[66] M. Hashem (1989)

[67] In addition to Abu Hanifah's article "*Koreksi atas Buku Saqifah*" (Correction to the *Saqifah* Book) serialised in *Al-Muslimun* (monthly from 213/12/1987 to 221/8/1988), Saleh Nahdi wrote a book entitled *Saqifah, Awal Persatuan Ummat* (Saqifa: the Beginning of Unity of Umma) that strongly rejects Hashem's interpretation.

alumnus, has also supplied a series of works on this subject, the latest being *Husain Sang Ksatria Langit* (Husayn, a Knight of Heaven, 2004. Lentera.), which is presented as an historical novel. In view of the fact that the history of the murder of Husayn in Karbala is deliberately downplayed in Sunni literature, Labib maintains that the historical reality should be highlighted even though it might undermine the foundation of a certain *Madhhab.* Labib claims that his book portrays the reality of Husayn's martyrdom. "In this novel, there is dripping of tears, there is also squirting blood. There is a big party, there is also a moan tearing one's inner self. Once more, this is a real history!"[68] The writing of this story can be seen as a vehicle for transmitting what Fischer calls the 'Karbala paradigm', that is, the most emotionally intense episode in Shi'i history.[69] Along with the yearly commemoration of *'ashura*, these texts can be seen as maintaining this deeply embedded emotional paradigm within the heart of Indonesia's Shi'i community.

All the abovementioned works follow the interpretation and arguments of Islamic teachings and history provided in the works of Shi'i '*ulama*'. The writing about aspects of Shi'ism in the vernacular may be considered as an attempt to provide a vehicle for the dissemination and transmission of Shi'ism to an Indonesian audience. Unlike translations, original works clearly represent the most obvious interpretation of Shi'i tenets by Indonesian Shi'i intellectuals and *ustadh*. However, insofar as the content of these works is understood, we do not find significantly different views between the religious elites of the Shi'i community with regard to the principal aspects of Shi'i teachings. Suffice it to say that the attention, energy and creativity of Shi'i figures in the field of religio-intellectual life play an important role in the dissemination of Shi'i teachings and tradition in the country.

D. Shi'i Periodicals

In the framework of the dissemination of the teachings of Shi'ism to the Shi'i community in particular, and Indonesian Muslims in general, several Islamic periodicals have been produced by Shi'i institutions. In these periodicals, translated articles by Shi'i scholars and articles by Indonesian *ustadh* and intellectuals can be found. Cultural production of this kind comprises journals, bulletins, and magazines.[70] With regards

[68] Labib (2004:11)

[69] Fischer (1980:13)

[70] In Indonesia, particularly among Shi'is, the term journal is used to refer to scientific periodicals mainly contain serious articles, while the term bulletin is used for periodicals

to the development of the Shi'i community in Indonesia, two important scientific journals should be mentioned, (the contents of which are mainly serious articles dealing with various aspects of Islamic studies). The first was *Al-Hikmah* (the wisdom), subtitled *Jurnal Studi-Studi Islam* (Journal of Islamic Studies), 17 issues of which were published by the Muthahhari Foundation between 1990 and 1997. In accordance with the foundation's mission, the publication of this Islamic journal was meant to present scholarly works within the fields of traditional Islamic knowledge, including the Qur'an, *hadith*, *fiqh*, philosophy and knowledge. Although the journal's focus was on traditional Islamic knowledge, it also included the translated works by Mutahhari and studies on his works, in order to help readers comprehend his ideas. The content reflected the journal's aim "to combine all meanings of wisdom given by Qur'an commentators and Islamic thinkers: the Qur'an, *hadith*, philosophy, Sufism, science, and other Islamic thought".[71] The mission of *Al-Hikmah* was similar to that of the publisher Mizan, in that it was based on the concept of *hikma* (wisdom). As one reviewer[72] suggests, *Al-Hikmah* clearly contributed to enriching the development of Islamic thought in Indonesia. Its existence seems to have inspired Rakhmat's statement: "...we want it to stir you".[73] The reviewer goes on to emphasise the connection between Jalaluddin Rakhmat and the Muthahhari foundation with Shi'ism and Shi'i thought, suggesting, "AH [Al-Hikmah] is issued to distribute Islamic aspirations from the Shi'i thought background".[74] As a matter of fact, an analysis of all the issues of the journal suggests that it provided readers with the Islamic thoughts of both Shi'i and Sunni scholars.

The second important scientific journal is *Al-Huda* (The Guidance), which began in 2000 and is published by ICC of Al-Huda. As its title suggests, this journal expects to provide "guidance for readers in entering the gate of religious consciousness and religiosity with the *ahl al-bayt* discourse in order to be able to distinguish which is true or false".[75] Unlike *Al-Hikmah*, this journal is open about its Shi'i nature. "The Journal of Islamic Studies in the hand of readers, in accord with its title *Al-Huda*, makes the Prophet Muhammad (may God grant him peace and salvation) and the *ahl al-bayt* (upon whom be peace) reference because they are the key

which are limited in page and rubric. Magazines contain various rubrics.

[71] Rakhmat (1990:4)

[72] The review is published in the daily *Pikiran Rakyat* (27/5/1990) and then included in a brochure of the foundation (Yayasan Muthahhari 1993).

[73] Rakhmat (1990:4)

[74] Yayasan Muthahhari (1993:64)

[75] Hidayat (2000:n.p)

holder of the originality of Guidance".[76] The presentation style and theme of *Al-Huda* very much resembles *Al-Hikmah,* except that *Al-Hikmah* also contained the specific rubric of Muthahhari. The similarity between both publications can be attributed to the fact that Jalaluddin Rakhmat and Haidar Bagir were the co-founders of both institutions producing the journals. In terms of content, both journals contain relatively serious articles, (translations and originals), covering various aspects of Islamic knowledge, including Qur'an exegesis, *hadith*, history, philosophy, Sufism and morality. However, unlike *Al-Hikmah*, *Al-Huda* also provides a number of essays written by Indonesian *ustadh*.

It is generally accepted that Islamic magazines and bulletins are significant means of disseminating the teachings of Shi'ism. Many Shi'i institutions publish some form of periodical. Two publications of note are *Yaumul Quds*, which at the time of my fieldwork in 2004 had ceased to exist, and *Waris* (abbreviation of *Warta Republik Islam,* News of Islamic Republic), published by the Iranian Embassy in Jakarta, and widely read by Shi'is in Indonesia. Notwithstanding the fact that they have a limited circulation, these two publications are instrumental in providing Indonesia's Shi'is with knowledge and information on Shi'ism and the Shi'i world. It is unsurprising then, that in its examination of *Yaumul Quds*, the Body of Research and Development of the Department of Religious Affairs (DEPAG) warns of the potential dangers of these publications to the Indonesian state, citing the possibility of the embassy using the periodicals to spread Shi'i teachings and the Iranian revolutionary ideas in Indonesia.[77]

The most regular Islamic bulletin owned by a Shi'i institution has been *Al-Tanwir* (The Enlightenment), published by the Muthahhari Foundation. This bi-weekly bulletin, which has been issued since January 1991, is seen not only as a way for the foundation to communicate with its members but also as a conduit for *da'wa* between the Muthahhari Foundation and Muslim society at large. The full title of the bulletin is The *Da'wa* Bulletin of Al-Munawwarah Mosque and its offices are located behind Jalaluddin Rakhmat's house. It is issued in cooperation with the Muthahhari Foundation. In fact, most of the articles in the bulletin are derived from transcriptions of Jalaluddin Rakhmat's sermons, delivered at the mosque every Sunday morning. The bulletin also includes articles which are considered important for Muslim society and reports on the activities of the foundation. In step with the philosophical values of the

[76] Hidayat (2000:n.p)

[77] *Pusat Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kehidupan Beragama* (1985/1986:81-82)

Muthahhari Foundation, the bulletin provides a moderate view of various aspects of Islam, and in particular regarding the differences between Shi'ism and Sunnism. *Al-Tanwir* is widely distributed and to date boasts more than 250 editions, consequently it can be seen as instrumental to the spread of the teachings of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

Bahtera (meaning 'ark') is another publication created by Jalaluddin Rakhmat's circle. It is the collaborative product of the Muthahhari Foundation and the Shi'i organisation, IJABI. The magazine, which published its first issue in December 2003, is designed to be a vehicle of communication for the array of leaders and members of IJABI. *Bahtera* provides communicates and explains the ideas of the organisation's intellectuals to its members, although it is also of interest to a wider readership. In general, its contents include topics concerning religious knowledge, as well as social and educational problems. As its subtitle suggests - *Pencerahan dan Pemberdayaan* (Enlightenment and Empowerment) - this periodical represents the ideology of IJABI. It aims to support the ensemble programme of enlightenment and empowerment.

In Bandung, a monthly bulletin, *Al-Jawad,* is produced by Al-Jawad Foundation. *Al-Jawad* is a combination of three bulletins that the institution used to publish: *Al-Jawad* (dealing with spiritual guidance), *Risalatuna* (Our Message, dealing with themes related to unity of God) and *Al-Ghadir* (dealing with information about knowledge within Shi'ism). Historically, *Al-Ghadir* was the first bulletin produced by the institution, published between 1994 and 1997, and it contained the writings of Indonesian students in Qum, Iran. *Risalatuna* was briefly published in 1997.[78] The eight-page *Al-Jawad* attempts to include all three themes. In practice, *like Al-Tanwir*, each edition usually contains an article derived from a sermon recorded at the Nurul Falah Mosque. It also includes information from *wali faqih Rahbar* (the Supreme Leader), 'Ali Khamene'i, or an exhortation from Shi'i Imams, plus certain aspects of jurisprudence or prayers. *Al-Jawad's* content is distinct from that of *Al-Tanwir* in that it has shown its commitment to follow the instructions and advice of Khamene'i, Iran's foremost Shi'i leader. It also pays attention to aspects of jurisprudence, an issue not covered by *Al-Tanwir*. Despite a limited circulation, *Al-Jawad* has clearly participated in the dissemination of the teachings of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

In the same vein as *Al-Jawad*, there is a magazine (generally more than 50 pages) entitled *An-Nashr* (the Victory), published by IPABI of Bogor. This magazine provides several rubrics including doctrine, politics, history, morality, and reports on the work of the foundation. Some articles

[78] Ali (2002:293)

are original, while others are translations. Like *Al-Tanwir* and *Al-Jawad*, *An-Nashr* provides a large number of articles based on sermons, in this case by its leader, Abdullah Assegaff, (an *ustadh* and Qum graduate, who sometimes uses the pseudonym Abu Sukainah). In several aspects, the content of *An-Nashr* resembles that of *Al-Jawad*, reflecting the similar religious orientation, ideology, *da'wa* strategy and close connections between the two institutions, (and on a broader level, among members of the *ustadh* group in Indonesia).

Several periodicals have also emerged from YAPI of Bangil. The first was *Al-Isyraq* (The Sunrise), which issued only nine editions (from 1996 to 1998), and was then succeeded by *Islamuna* (Our Islam) (from 1424/2003 to date). YAPI also produced one edition of *KSAF*, a journal of a study group for religion and philosophy that was meant to include scientific and popular writings on aspects of Islamic knowledge. The goal of *Al-Isyraq* was "to invite all Muslims to enlighten their thought with original and argumentative Islamic views".[79] Compared to the abovementioned bulletins and magazines, these magazines published more varied topics, albeit in less detail, including articles on doctrine, the Qur'an, history, philosophy, morality, education, contemporary development of Islamic world and the obligatory report on the institution's activities. Aside from being a platform for the strategy of the institution and an outlet for articles from the Shi'i perspective (which constituted the largest portion of their content), both *Al-Isyraq* and *Islamuna* also published the Islamic thoughts of a number of Sunni leaders in the country.

The Friday bulletin from *Al-Huda* and the magazine *Syi'ar* (Magnificence) are produced by ICC of Al-Huda. *Al-Huda*'s weekly four-page bulletin presents an article, mainly dealing with aspects of Sufism. Most articles were later republished in two volumes of a book entitled *Renungan Jum'at* (Friday's Reflection) by Suharto in 2002. Published monthly, the luxurious looking *Syi'ar* provides articles on diverse topics of Islamic knowledge, education, and culture. It is by far the most varied among the existing Shi'i periodicals. Although its content mostly deals with Shi'i thought, (both translations and original), each edition also publishes interviews with Sunni scholars or leaders in Indonesia. However, a noticeable absence from *Syi'ar* are articles on political issues, including the political development in Iran. Despite a request by some readers to include politics, the editorial board remains reluctant to do so. This reflects the stated philosophical basis of ICC, (as explained previously), as an apolitical organi-

[79] *Al-Isyraq* (1/1/1417)

sation. Of note is that *Syi'ar* is well-known for providing opportunities for young Shi'i writers to be published.

The latest magazine to emerge is *Suara Ummah* (the Voice of Umma), published by Forum Al-Husainy of Jakarta. The first edition of this monthly magazine was published in February 2004. According to the magazine's editorial board, the publication was the product of a series of meetings and discussion among *ustadh* and intellectuals. Their aim is to demonstrate the great potential of Muslim society and to encourage its resurgence. "Unity is the key word for resurgence because in it God's mercy awaits".[80] With the slogan 'Assemble brotherhood, Side with the Oppressed', the monthly magazine presents events, thoughts and aspects of Islamic teachings within a framework of Islamic brotherhood. Unlike other Shi'i periodicals, *Suara Ummah* hopes to attract a wider readership in the country, and it is sold at a number of street kiosks in Jakarta. To reflect this vision of inclusiveness, the opinions of both Sunni scholars and Shi'i intellectuals and *ustadh* are provided in the magazine, although the Shi'i inclinations of the publication cannot disguised. For example, one reader, named Nurhidayah, wrote to the editorial board asking whether *Suara Ummah* was in fact a Shi'i publication.[81] In response to her letter, the editorial board does not ignore the Shi'i nature of the magazine, but emphasises the importance of contribution to the community instead of questioning one's *madhhab:*

> Miss Nurhidayah, it is history that will prove that, in the future, issues with regard to *khilafiya* [disputed matter] and conflict of *aliran* [stream] in Islam will be considered out-of-date. The Muslims will become more enlightened so that they are more interested in talking about movements beneficial for empowerment, education, and support of the Muslims based on the principle of justice. One day the Muslim society will see the contribution of a movement or the contribution given by a group to the Muslim community and mankind in general, without noticing its *madhhab*. *Madhhab*, let it become our own business before God. A Muslim has to be able to understand and respect each other. Then, he competes to become a supporter of others. Dialogue is still needed and, at the end, freedom to choose a *madhhab* believed to be true is needed, without necessarily regarding others infidel. It is then valid as well if there is a group thinking to have excellence as long as it can be explained with rational arguments or can be proved intellectually.[82]

Thus, from the above description we may glean several points: First, the periodicals produced by Shi'i institutions include scientific journals,

[80] *Suara Ummah* (1/1/2004:4)
[81] *Suara Ummah* (3/1/2004:2)
[82] *Suara Ummah* (3/1/2004: 2).

bulletins, and magazines. Second, these publications are designed to be a means of *da'wa*, communication and education for members of the institutions and organisations and of the Shi'i community. Third, the content, style and presentation of the periodicals reflect the religious comprehension and ideology of the institutions or associations.

E. The Impact of Shi'i Publishing

Without question, Shi'i publishing, (which is a product of complex activity calling on several professions within the community, including writer, translator, editor and even manager), has had a considerable impact on the lives of Shi'is in Indonesia. Atiyeh wrote, "People's lives are definitely influenced by this old and basic vehicle of communication".[83] By exploiting the community's various networks, Shi'i works are readily available to adherents. This corresponds to the fact that the majority of Shi'is in Indonesia are literate. Given what we have learned, we can conclude that there are three functions of publishing in the Shi'i context: Religious change, education, and communication. One of the most remarkable influences of publishing in terms of the development of Shi'is in Indonesia has been in the conversion process. There is no doubt that publishing functions as conduit for religious change. Most Shi'i converts in Indonesia admit the significance of books in their conversion process (although it should be noted that religious conversion is always a complex psychological and sociological process). Frequently certain Shi'i books are a catalyst for readers to carry out intensive studies of Shi'i teachings. A notable example is Jalaluddin Rakhmat's conversion to Shi'ism, which was greatly influenced by the Shi'i works that he read. Rakhmat admitted that his understanding of imamate, for instance, was a direct result of his intensive reading of Shi'i books on the subject.[84] By the same token, an event which occurred during my observations at the Al-Jawad Foundation on 19 May 2004 illustrates the importance of books in the conversion process:

> A man came to the Al-Jawad Foundation in Bandung. In its office he met with Husein Al-Kaff and other foundation staff. In response to a question about his conversion to Shi'ism, the man explained that about four months earlier he read a book about strings of Imam Ali's excellent words entitled *Mereka Bertanya Ali Menjawab,* (They question Ali answers), published by Al-Jawad [1998]. Reading the book reminded him of his father's advice emphasising the excellence of Ali, something he did not find in instructions at school. He told that he continued to read several Shi'i works in order to understand Shi'i teachings. He then converted

[83] Atiyeh (1995:xiii)

[84] Jalaluddin Rakhmat, interview, (2/1/2003)

> to Shi'ism, but only through books, since he has not found teachers and has not joined the Shi'i community.

Most people convert to Shi'ism from Sunnism as a consequence of their independent study of Shi'ism through books, rather than as a result of, for example, sermons delivered by Shi'i preachers. While we cannot deduce which book or books are most influential in this conversion process, we can suggest that it is the category of doctrinal books which is the most influential in attracting readers to Shi'ism, as they can be seen as validating Shi'i teachings with strong sound proofs. It appears that philosophical works by and large have very little impact on the conversion process. Many converts have mentioned the influence of al-Musawi's *Dialog Sunnah Syi'ah,* while others point to Muhammad Tijani al-Samawi's works, one of which describes al-Samawi's own conversion experience. One interesting point is that the writings of al-Samawi have also had a remarkable impact on the conversion of Sunnis to Shi'ism in the United States, and in particular among the Muslim population of US prisons.[85] In Indonesia, al-Samawi's books are read widely and been influential in attracting people to learn Shi'ism. A graduate of the Darussalam Institute for Islamic Studies at Gontor, Ponorogo, East Java for example told that his Shi'i beliefs and practices still follow those taught in the works of Tijani al-Samawi. Al-Samawi's first book, *Akhirnya Kutemukan Kebenaran*[86] (Finally, I Found the Truth) published in Malay in 1991 and in Indonesian in 1993 by Pustaka Pelita, Bandung, has been incredibly influential in the conversion to Shi'ism. In this book, al-Samawi who becomes a prominent Shi'i figure in Tunisia, writes of his journey from Cairo to Alexandria and his subsequent meetings with Ayatollah Khu'i (then prominent *marja' al-taqlid* in Iraq) and Muhammad Baqir Sadr in Najaf. Subsequent to these meetings, al-Samawi begins to question his faith and undertakes an intensive study of the Shi'i doctrines and teachings,(from both Sunni and Shi'i sources), for a period of three years. At the end of this, he converts to Shi'ism. The book deals not merely with al-Samawi's spiritual quest but also his reflections on and interpretations of Shi'i teachings. On his conversion to Shi'ism, Al-Samawi writes:

> Praise be to God, I have found the alternative. After the Messenger of God, I follow the Master of the faithful ... [and other Imams after him].

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[85] Takim (2000:474)

[86] As mentioned in Chapter Two, the Indonesian translation of this work from Arabic (*Thumma Ihtadaytu*) was provided by Husein Shahab, a prominent Shi'i *ustadh* in Indonesia. Its English version is entitled *Then I was Guided*. Both Arabic and English versions are available online (http://www.al-islam.org/guided/21.html).

> I have also exchanged the 'ulama' of my people who discouraged us from thinking and whose majority followed the rulers all the time for the devoted Shi'i 'ulama' who never closed the gate of *ijtihad*, and who neither submitted to nor sought mercy from the oppressive rulers.
>
> Yes, I have changed narrow thoughts and beliefs, full of superstitions and contradictions for new enlightened, open, and liberal ones based on logical deductions and reasoning.[87]

It is important to note that as a direct result of the impact of this book, on 19 November 2002, the mufti of Johor, Malaysia, issued a *fatwa* that declares it to be a forbidden book. Books are generally forbidden because they are contrary to the true teachings of Islam.[88] Despite its status in Malaysia, this book is still read and distributed among Muslims in Indonesia.

The most significant influence of publishing is in the process of education, in the broadest sense. For members of the Shi'i community in Indonesia, publishing, along with preaching, education and training activities, has functioned, and continues to function, as way to deepen and broaden their religious knowledge, which is essential for their religious belief and practice. While books and periodicals will never surpass the importance of religious teachers in the educational and *da'wa* process, they are instrumental in increasing religious comprehension and influencing the religious beliefs and practices of the Shi'i community. Shi'i publications serve not only as sources of knowledge but also as patterns for behaviour for the community. The fact that the majority of Indonesian Shi'is are converts from Sunnism only confirms the influential nature of these publications.

Shi'i publishing also plays an important role in sustaining the Shi'i community, a minority Islamic group in Indonesia. Living as a minority requires ways of maintaining identity and continuity, in particular with regard to encounters with Sunni majority. Shi'i texts are sources of religious knowledge, a crucial weapon in facing challenges from the surrounding majority Sunni. In this regard, Shi'i publications are essential tools in the daily struggle within the dominant religious system and culture. Moreover, they provide the community (including Sunni converts), with the religious knowledge to respond to anti-Shi'i attacks.

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[87] Al-Samawi (1993:183)

[88] (http://islam.gov.my/e-fatwa/mufti/fatwa-warta-view.asp?keyID=327, accessed 18/10/2005). Other forbidden Shi'i works in Indonesian include Tabataba'i's *Tafsir Al-Mizan Mengupas Ayat-ayat Roh dalam Al-Quran* (Tafsir al-Mizan Analysing the Verses of Spirit in the Qur'an) and Shari'ati's *Wanita Dimata dan Hati Rasulullah* (Women in the Eyes and Heart of Muhammad).

As a vehicle of communication, Shi'i publishing has served not only to connect the Shi'i community in Indonesia with other Shi'i communities in other parts of the world but also to integrate it in the Shi'i world. The importance of being part of this Shi'i world is of great concern to Shi'i *ustadh* such as Husein Al-Kaff, who points out that the Shi'is in Indonesia should practice the tradition of Shi'ism in order to avoid isolation from other Shi'i communities in the world.[89] There is a need to find the Shi'i identity and brethren among members of the Shi'i community of the world. Together with the increasing numbers of students learning in Iran, Shi'i publishing, and in particular the translations of works by *mujtahid,* has brought the Indonesian Shi'i community closer to Iran, and increased Indonesia's status as an important centre of Shi'ism. Most of Shi'is in Indonesia see 'Ali Khamene'i, the *wali faqih*, as their *marja' al-taqlid*. This is a result of efforts by teachers, institutions and publications to promote the *a'lamiyyat* (superiority in religious knowledge) and leadership of this figure. (Bestowing the positions of *wilayat al-faqih* and *marja' al-taqlid* on a single person can be seen as an attempt by Iran to attract as many Shi'i adherents in the world under its leadership as possible). Shi'i publishing has been instrumental in forming and sustaining the intense emotional relationship between the Indonesian Shi'i community and other Shi'i communities throughout the world, but in particular Iran.

The impact of Shi'i publishing can be seen beyond the boundaries of Indonesia's Shi'i community. Without doubt, translations and works by Indonesian Shi's have been influential on Sunnis in Indonesia, and works of Shi'i philosophy and thought, in particular, have exerted great influence on Indonesian Muslims. Shari'ati's social philosophical works are widely read, cited, and discussed, as are Nasr's works on Islamic thought and Sufism. These works are considered to offer strong critiques of Western philosophy, worldview and modernity in general. Evidence for the impact of this category is the fact that many famous Muslim intellectuals and students are influenced by certain Shi'i teachings and thoughts. Indonesia's Shi'is see it as a huge step in their struggle for the recognition of their *madhhab* when Muslim intellectuals in Indonesia express positive perceptions of the intellectual and philosophical aspects of Shi'ism.

Doctrinal works have contributed to the maintenance of Islamic traditionalist practices, which come under fire from reformist groups. This is in contrast to the Sunni traditionalist group, which rarely produces scholarly works to counter reformist criticism. As a result there has been an emergence of translations of traditionalist books, and in fact, Shi'i leaders,

[89] *Al-Jawad* (Sha'ban 1421/2000:2)

such as Jalaluddin Rakhmat, suggest that traditionalist Shi'i works serve as an effective tool for defeating reformist arguments on Islamic traditionalist beliefs and practices. In relation to this, Rakhmat also claims that traditionalist Sunni groups in Indonesia, such as NU, also benefit from these Shi'i works.[90]

The impact of books cannot be underestimated. Despite the fact that many anti-Shi'i groups have attempted to fight against Shi'ism, Shi'i works have become an integral part of the intellectual and cultural life of Muslims in Indonesia. Furthermore, books and articles published on the internet have further enhanced the impact of Shi'i publishing. A number of Shi'i foundations in Indonesia now provide websites which publish numerous Shi'i works on various aspects of Shi'ism. In the Indonesian social and religious context, the emergence and development of Shi'i publishing can be seen to have contributed to the fragmentation of religious authority in Indonesia. On the impact of the media on the Muslim world at large, Eickelman and Anderson point out that the transmission and circulation of Islamic texts through a variety of media "... mark a fragmentation of authority. 'Islamic' books set aside the long tradition of authoritative discourse by religious scholars in favour of a direct understanding of texts....".[91] Abdullah also observes that the circulation of religious texts among members of the community has expanded the number and scope of its audience. He goes on to suggest: "The spread of literacy and the translation of formerly esoteric texts have terminated the monopoly of the ulama in any religious discourse. Literacy and the growing importance of the print culture have expanded the number of people who can directly conduct a dialogue with the text."[92]

The fragmentation of religious authority in Indonesia takes different forms: First, in the context of the development of the Shi'is, fragmentation has meant the emergence of a religious group distinctive from the majority Sunni community in terms of interpretation of certain tenets of Islam. Second is the rise of a literate group, products of a secular education within the Sunni community. This group has the same opportunities to engage in religious interpretation as those religious scholars at the traditional centre of Islamic learning. Unsurprisingly, the emergence and development of these groups has prompted attacks from militant groups who claim to represent the legitimate religious authority in Indonesia. We can conclude that the

[90] Rakhmat (1997:488)

[91] Eickelman and Anderson (1997:49)

[92] Abdullah (1996:75)

proliferation of Shi'i publishing, together with other Islamic publications, has undermined the traditional religious authorities in Indonesia.

However, Indonesia is a Muslim country that has no single religious authority and it recognises various forms of Islamic tradition, two factors which encourage religious pluralism.[93] Although there is MUI (*Majlis Ulama Indonesia*, the Indonesian Council of 'Ulama') created by former President Suharto, different Muslim groups tend to follow the religious interpretation and *fatwa* of their own organisation, for example NU, Muhammadiyah or Persis. Such conditions benefit the existence of Shi'is in Indonesia. It is their struggle to promote the validity of Shi'ism as an element of the Islamic tradition, and they use publishing as an instrument to do so. Since the circulation of various forms of Shi'i publications transcends the boundaries of the Shi'i community, Shi'i teachings and thought are read, cited and discussed among the wider Indonesian Muslims population. Publishing has allowed Shi'i teachings and thoughts to penetrate the religious-intellectual life in Indonesia. Shi'ism and Shi'is in Indonesia have even gained recognition in the eyes of moderate Muslim figures. The Indonesian Shi'i organisation, IJABI, has also gained official legal recognition from the government. That said, Shi'is continue to struggle for the recognition of Shi'i teachings and traditions by wider segments of the Muslim community in Indonesia. In this context, the goal of Shi'i publishing remains the recognition of Shi'ism as a valid Islamic *madhhab* by the religious authorities and majority Sunni community. Having demonstrated its extensive influence, we can conclude that publishing is clearly the most effective communicative weapon of struggle for the Shi'is in Indonesia.

[93] Eickelman and Anderson (1997:52)

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE MASS ORGANISATION: IJABI

Over the course of time, the number of adherents of Shi'ism in Indonesia, and the number of Shi'i institutions of *da'wa*, education and publishing, has continued to increase. Up to the end of the New Order, the Shi'is in Indonesia appeared to be a minority religious group, scattered throughout Indonesia but on the whole confined to urban areas. More importantly, they were not unified under a single socio-religious organisation. Then efforts emerged to establish a mass national organisation that would bring together all the geographically diverse Shi'i communities. From an evolutionary perspective, this stage of development can be classified as the organisational phase, following individual and institutional development. This chapter aims to describe this national Shi'i organisation and the reaction to it. It commences with a look at the historical process of the establishment of IJABI (*Ikatan Jama'ah Ahlul Bait Indonesia* (The Indonesian Council of Ahli Bait Associations). This is followed by a section dealing with the ideology of IJABI, (within the framework of understanding the nature of this organisation). In the third section, I shall describe the on-going development of this Shi'i organisation, in particular during the first period of leadership (2000-2004). Finally, I provide a description of the opposition to IJABI and the emergence of a 'non-IJABI group'.

A. The Foundation of IJABI

After the fall of the New Order in 1998, prominent Shi'i leaders in Indonesia, including Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Husein Shahab, Umar Shahab and Ahmad Baragbah, agreed on the importance of establishing a socio-religious organisation that could unite the Shi'i community in Indonesia.[1] Serious attempts to set up such a body began in earnest in the early 1990s, with senior Shi'i leaders holding several meetings, (formal and informal),

[1] Umar Shahab, interview, (9/1/2003)

to discuss the urgent need for, and the possibility of, a Shi'i organisation that would bring together all the adherents of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

The first Shi'i organisation was called MAHDI, an abbreviation of *Majlis Ahlulbait di Indonesia* (The Council of the *Ahl al-Bayt* in Indonesia), and was founded in Jakarta in the early 1990s. It was headed by Ahmad Baragbah, (the head of *Pesantren Al-Hadi* in Pekalongan), with Furqon Bukhari as the secretary. In addition to its executive leadership, the organisation had an advisory board (*pembina*), of 14 members, which included Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Umar Shahab and other prominent Shi'i figures. However, MAHDI did not function well, and almost all of its programmes failed. The fact that MAHDI had no legal status as a socio-religious organisation, and was not recognised by the Department of Home Affairs, clearly contributed to the organisation's problems. It only ever achieved recognition as a foundation (*Yayasan MAHDI*). Key figures were Ahmad Baragbah, Zainal Abidin al-Muhdar (Al-Hakim Foundation in Lampung) and Zulfan Lindan (a political activist of Indonesian Democratic Party for Struggle). Eventually, Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his associates withdrew from MAHDI, leaving Ahmad Baragbah and his supporters to continue until the organisation ceased activities.[2] Another factor in MAHDI's downfall appears to have been that the majority of the Muslim community in Indonesia was simply unaware of its existence. Most significantly however, it failed in its primary aim, to function as a socio-religious organisation that would unite the followers of Shi'ism in the country and co-ordinate all the Shi'i foundations.

The failure of this Shi'i association to operate in Indonesia during the New Order era (1966-1998) can be attributed to two reasons: First, there was no agreement among the various groups or factions within the Shi'i community itself on how the organisation should be run and what its ideology should be. Differences of opinion developed between Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his associates and Ahmad Baragbah and other *ustadh,* particularly regarding the legal status of MAHDI as a Shi'i organisation. Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his supporters believed the procedures for managing and running the organisation should be under the control of the advisory board, whilst Baragbah's group was much more focussed on defining MAHDI's vision and activities, preferring that it become an Islamic foundation rather than an organisation. A second reason for MAHDI's failure can be found in the socio-political situation in Indonesia during the New Order era, which provided very little space for minority religious groups to express their identity and religiosity. In this regard,

[2] Furqon Bukhari, interview, (10/9/2002), Umar Shahab, interview, (9/1/2003)

the Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals in Indonesia saw that the organisation and its members would face difficulties and even threats, not only from members of the majority Sunni Muslim community but also from the New Order regime. For example, any request for MAHDI to be granted legal status as a Shi'i association would almost certainly have been denied by the government, since the state was, (and still is), heavily dominated by the ideology of Sunni Islam. In 1997, when asked whether Shi'is in Indonesia would establish a mass organisation, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, a declared member of Muhammadiyah responded: "Because I do not want to become dependent on anyone, I will not join. But to muffle the atmosphere so as not to lead to continuous misunderstanding I will state my disagreement if the Shi'is in Indonesia establish a social-religious organisation."[3] For most of the prominent Shi'i figures, *taqiyya* is regarded as an essential method for dealing with a socio-political situation which is non-conducive for the position and development of minority religious groups. In sum, a series of complex and interrelated factors - internal and external, religious and socio-political – led to the failure of Indonesia's first Shi'i association. In fact, over the years, the majority of Shi'is in Indonesia seem to have forgotten the existence of MAHDI and its planned role within the Shi'i community.

After the fall of the New Order regime in 1998, there arose fresh encouragement for, and even insistence on, the need to have a national socio-religious organisation to unite the followers of Shi'ism in Indonesia. These calls elicited significant responses from prominent Shi'i leaders, and in turn gained much support from the Islamic Republic of Iran. A series of important meetings took place. Four prominent Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals - Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Ahmad Baragbah, Zahir Yahya, and Umar Shahab - together with a representative from Iran held a meeting to discuss the possibility of founding a Shi'i organisation in Indonesia. This first meeting resulted in an agreement to found a national Shi'i organisation, but initially failed to form a committee to oversee the process. Eventually, Jalaluddin Rakhmat and other intellectuals formed the necessary committee to establish the organisation and define its ideological foundation and principles. The committee also agreed on a name, (proposed by Jalaluddin Rakhmat), for the organisation - IJABI, an abbreviation of *Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia*, or the Indonesian Council of Ahli Bait Associations. Reportedly, Jalaluddin Rakhmat originally planned to officially declare the association open at the *'ashura* commemoration in 1999, without any agreement from renowned Shi'i *ustadh*. However, this would have meant

[3] Jalaluddin Rakhmat, interview, by Irwan Natsir, (*Hikmah* 1/11/1997:15)

that from the outset IJABI could not claim to represent all Shi'i groups in Indonesia. Rakhmat subsequently agreed to postpone its inauguration. He also agreed to hold meetings with other prominent Shi'i *ustadh*, mainly Qum alumni, in order that IJABI be recognised by all Shi'i groups. These meetings were instrumental in establishing the concept of a mass Shi'i organisation to the wider Shi'i community in Indonesia, and were also intended to recruit Shi'i *ustadh* into the process.[4]

One of the most important meetings, conducted in ICC of Al-Huda in Jakarta, brought together Shi'i figures who had previously clashed during their involvement with MAHDI: Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Zainal Abidin al-Muhdar, Husein Shahab, Umar Shahab and Ahmad Baragbah. This meeting produced a general agreement among all the participants to support Jalaluddin Rakhmat's proposal to found a Shi'i organisation in Indonesia named IJABI (*Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia*).[5] However, it was not long before old disputes reared their heads and misunderstandings and disagreements between the Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals impacted the development of IJABI. Some reports suggest that these disagreements were not just characterised by differences of ideological opinion but also by personal matters and stereotyping of and by certain groups. In a nutshell, misperceptions and disputes among the intellectuals and *ustadh* marred both the establishment process and early development of IJABI.

Despite these disagreements, the architect of IJABI – Jalaluddin Rakhmat - decided to go ahead with the organisation's inauguration on 1 July 2000. Rakhmat visited Iran to inform Shi'i leaders there of this important strategic plan for the Shi'i community in Indonesia and, in particular, to gain the support of the *wali faqih*, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i. The inauguration of IJABI was followed, the next day, by its first national congress. This historical two-event was reported by more than ten national newspapers and local papers in Bandung and Jakarta. Figures suggest that approximately 2000 Shi'is, (from 20 provinces in Indonesia, as well as from Singapore and Iran), participated in IJABI's opening ceremony, which took place in Gedung Merdeka, Bandung, where the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference had also been held. The choice of this historic location symbolised, to the public, the significance of this new organisation in the social and religious life of Indonesian society.

Several Muslim scholars - Sunni and Shi'i - from the home country and abroad, were invited to speak at the seminar following the inauguration. Some of the most high profile of these Shi'i teachers and scholars were Sha-

[4] Umar Shahab, interview, (9/1/2003)

[5] Jalaluddin Rakhmat, interview, (2/1/2003)

ykh Ja'far Hadi from Iran, Ayatollah Ibrahim Kazerooni from London and Muhammad Baqir and Rusli, both from Singapore. The presence of such dignitaries demonstrates the (international) support for the establishment of IJABI. Iran's support for the organisation being the most crucial to its success. However, prominent Indonesian Muslim intellectuals, including Nurcholish Madjid and leaders of Muslim organisations such as Ahmad Syafi'i Ma'arif of Muhammadiyyah, and Hasyim Muzadi of NU, originally expected to speak at the meeting, were notably absent from IJABI's inauguration. These absences called into question the support of key elements of the Muslim community in Indonesia, namely the Muslim intellectuals, the modernists and the traditionalists.

It is widely accepted that IJABI"s inauguration was possible due largely to the democratic atmosphere in Indonesia at that time, fostered by the liberal, moderate President Abdurrahman Wahid. Reporting on the inauguration *Gatra*, an Indonesian magazine, wrote the headline: "*Mumpung Gus Dur Jadi Presiden*" ('Taking advantage when Gus Dur is the President').[6] As the title suggests, the socio-political situation in Indonesia after the fall of Suharto's New Order regime gave the opportunity and freedom to minority religious adherents to express their beliefs and religiosity. It is generally acknowledged that Abdurrahman Wahid was a man of openness and pluralism. In addition, the reformation era in Indonesia was marked by the emergence of popular social and religious movements. These movements developed not out of a desire to take part in the development of Indonesian state and society, but rather to establish and demonstrate their own identity and existence, something which had not been possible during the New Order period. These new found freedoms of expression occurred in an environment often described as the euphoria of reformation. Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his associates capitalised on the changed social and political situation in Indonesia during the reformation era, particularly under Abdurrahman Wahid's government. In fact, Jalaluddin Rakhmat admitted that the IJABI inauguration and national congress were carried out in haste, without sufficient preparations, simply because he and his associates wanted to seize the moment, anxious about the possibility of the fall of President Abdurrahman Wahid. There were rumours that the annual meeting of the People's Consultative Assembly (*Majlis Permusyawaratan Rakyat*, MPR) scheduled for August 2000 would start impeachment proceedings against President Abdurrahman Wahid. For this reason, Jalaluddin wanted to get official recognition for IJABI while Abdurrahman Wahid was still in office.[7] This clearly illustrates

[6] *Gatra* (15/7/2000)

[7] *Gatra* (15/7/2000)

Jalaluddin Rakhmat, a prominent Shi'i intellectual, intending to exploit the existing socio-political situation in Indonesia, which he recognised as being conducive to the further development of minority denominations such as Shi'ism.

President Abdurrahman Wahid had been invited to attend IJABI's inauguration and formally open its first national congress, however, he cancelled due to another important State duty in Jakarta. Instead he asked the State Secretary, Djohan Effendy to deputise for him. Effendy did not attend either. In the end, it was the Chief of Directorate of Social and Political Affairs of West Java, Edy Moelyono, acting on behalf of the Governor of West Java who formally opened and delivered a speech at this historical event. The opening ceremony was marked by all participants standing and chanting a *salawat* (invocation) to the Prophet Muhammad and his Household. While the inauguration went well, inevitably, the absence of Abdurrahman Wahid and other representatives of Central Government came as a blow to the architects of IJABI, and Jalaluddin Rakhmat in particular. He expressed his disappointment that President Abdurrahman Wahid and his government had not sent a representative from Jakarta, which would have sent a clear message that the government supported the organisation. Nevertheless he went on to state the full support of the President Abdurrahman Wahid to the organisation several days before its declaration and even long before he became a president. He, stated Jalaluddin Rakhmat, would have mobilised members of NU if the Shi'i community had been attacked or if the Indonesian government had prohibited the Shi'is to live in the country.[8]

As chief of the steering committee for IJABI's inauguration, Jalaluddin Rakhmat gave an important speech at the event entitled '*IJABI: Menyerukan Suara Serak Sejarah*' (IJABI: Calling for Historical Husky Voice).[9] The speech cited important socio-historical reasons for the establishment of IJABI in the reformation era, a time when the country was entering a new millennium with a strong will to establish a new open and democratic Indonesia, free from tyranny and arrogance and allowing its citizens to live according to their beliefs.

> Reformation has given us the opportunity to express ourselves without fear and sense of guilt. We all are important parts of this nation and have to make valuable contributions for its prosperity. We have viewed Abdurrahman Wahid's government as a representation of victory of the Muslim community on the political stage. Long hidden in historical path was a group of Indonesian Muslims

[8] *Pikiran Rakyat* (2/7/2000), *Metro* (2/7/2000)

[9] *Al-Tanwir* (16/7/2000)

> who wanted to erect their religiosity on the basis of loving devotion to God, His Messenger (peace be upon him), and his Household. In the past, their voices once in while were heard from small *surau* (prayer rooms) in villages when they pronounced a supplication: *li khamsatun utfi biha har al-waba' al-hatima, al-mustafa wa al-murtada wa ibnahuma wa Fatima* [I have five (persons) with whom I extinguish the 'heat' of crushing disease: al-Mustafa (the Prophet), al-Murtada ('Ali), the two sons (Hasan and Husayn), and Fatima].[10] In the era of an *'ulama*'s government, at present they jump from the dark path and try to stand up in a light place.[11]

Furthermore, Jalaluddin Rakhmat's speech defines the general characteristics of IJABI, as a new socio-religious organisation. He emphasised that IJABI's intention was not to follow Julius Caesar's statement: *Veni, Vidi, Vici*, (I came, I saw, I conquered), but rather to exist modestly among the existing Muslim organisations and society while at the same time propagating and implementing those Islamic teachings that side with *mustad'afin* (the oppressed). Rakhmat went on to state at a time when many Islamic organisations were joining forces with political parties, his community had established a social organisation without political affiliations. In his view, IJABI was expected to take on the role of assisting people to solve their various difficulties and also to face a variety of challenges in order to gain salvation - like the ship of salvation talked of by the Prophet Muhammad in the famous *hadith* of *safina*: "the *ahl al-bayt* is like Noah's ark; whoever gets on the ark will be safe and whoever leaves it will be swung". He stated that the position of IJABI was becoming more important, particularly when Indonesia faced various economic, social and political crises. He appealed to Muslims in Indonesia to join the ship of IJABI, because IJABI would not get involved in political activities: "This ship is not a political vehicle to achieve important positions in either legislative or executive institutions."[12] Rakhmat's speech then is a clear affirmation of the non-political stance of IJABI.

Jalaluddin Rakhmat's position has been crucial to the development of IJABI. He even describes himself as "a pregnant mother who then gave birth", saying, "So, I must sacrifice to be pregnant and now give birth."[13] This statement contains two important points concerning his position as a Shi'i figure. First, it can be interpreted as meaning that before the ref-

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[10] This supplication is practiced widely among the followers of traditionalist Islam in Java. It is commonly uttered by people in mosques prior to the performing of congregational daily obligatory prayers (Machasin, interview, 22/2/2005). Bases his view on this practise, the foremost NU leader Abdurrahman Wahid suggests that NU is culturally Shi'i.

[11] *Al-Tanwir* (16/7/2000:4)

[12] *Al-Tanwir* (16/7/2000:4)

[13] *Pikiran Rakyat* (2/7/2000)

ormation era Rakhmat concealed the existence of the Shi'i community in Indonesia. During this concealment he experienced various difficulties and threats due to the fact that Shi'is were seen as being synonymous with hardliners, militants or revolutionaries. Secondly, his statement can be understood as a declaration of the existence of Shi'is and their organisation in the Sunni-dominated country, thanks to the reformation[14]. However, Dimitri Mahayana, an engineer and lecturer at ITB, who headed the organising committee of IJABI's inauguration, rejected this interpretation. He stated that the official declaration of IJABI was not a proclamation of the existence of Shi'is in Indonesia, rather it was a proclamation of the spirit of Muslim unity, on the basis of loving devotion to the Qur'an and the *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet who were trustees of the traditions of the Prophet.[15]

During the first national congress, participants discussed and laid down the Statute of IJABI, its rules of organisation, its programmes, as well as electing its chiefs and organisers. The national congress elected Jalaluddin Rakhmat as the chairman of the Advisory Council and Dimitri Mahayana as the Chief of the Executive of IJABI. The Advisory Council consists of 12 members posited by prominent Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals, from various areas of Indonesia. Notably, some of these members are actually recognised Sunni figures in the Muslim community in Indonesia. The number twelve may symbolise the twelve Imams within the Twelver *Imamiyya* Shi'ism. The Advisory Council members were: Sayyid Segaf al-Jufri, Sayyid dr. O. Hashem, K.H. Muchtar Adam, K.H. Djamaluddin Asmawi, Sayyid Muhammad Taufiq Yahya, Sayyid Othman Omar Shihab, Lc., Ust. Hasan Rahmat, Sayyid Ir. Haidar Baqir, MA, Prof. Dr. Ridwan Suhud, Prof. Dr. Sipon Muladi, Sayyid Drs. Ayik Ali Idrus, Sayyid Ja'far Ali Alqadri.

An examination of the position of these Shi'i figures, members of the advisory council of IJABI, in Indonesian society in general helps to understand the influence of IJABI in this Sunni majority country. It is important to note that seven of the twelve members are Sayyids. These seven Sayyids are influential figures not only in the Shi'i community but also in Indonesian society at large. First, Sayyid Segaf al-Jufri is one of the most respected Shi'i *ustadh* in Indonesia. He lives in Solo, Central Java, and a number of Shi'is in the area have studied Shi'ism under him. (Even Jalaluddin Rakhmat regards al-Jufri as his teacher). Second, O. Hashem of the al-Saqqaf clan is a Shi'i intellectual and co-founder of YAPI, known for his polemical and controversial works. Third, Muhammad Taufik Yahya,

[14] *Metro* (2/7/2000)

[15] *Pikiran Rakyat* (10/7/2000)

one of the late Husein Al-Habsyi's sons in-law, lives in Jakarta and is a Shi'i *ustadh* engaged in the field of *da'wa*. Fourth, Othman Omar Shihab is a famous *ustadh* in Jakarta who often appears on Islamic television programmes. It should be noted that the majority of Muslims in Indonesia do not acknowledge his adherence to Shi'ism. Haidar Bagir is a famous intellectual-businessman in the country. He founded and the famous Mizan Publishing Company, well-known for publishing Shi'i books. The two last names are local leaders: Ayik Ali Idrus is a Muslim scholar in Palembang, South Sumatra, who has held several social positions including the chairmanship of MUI of Palembang. Idrus is not known among the local Muslim community as a Shi'i. Ja'far Ali Alqadri is a Shi'i leader in Pontianak, West Kalimantan.

The non-Sayyids are also influential Shi'i leaders in various parts of Indonesia. Some became religious teachers at Islamic foundations or *pesantren*, others university professors. Muchtar Adam is the head of Babussalam, a *pesantren* located in Bandung. He is also a former member of the National People's Representative Council (DPR) of the National Mandate Party (PAN) led by Amien Rais, the former chairman of People's Consultative Assembly (MPR). Adam is engaged in *da'wa* and educational activities in Indonesia. As a Muslim scholar, he wrote several books on Islamic teachings and he is known to have a close relationship with Jalaluddin Rakhmat. Another famous Shi'i teacher in Bandung, (who is also closely related to the chairman of the Advisory Council of IJABI), is Hasan Rahmat, who leads a Shi'i *pesantren* in Bandung named *Al-Mukarramah*. Then, Jamaluddin Asmawi is a famous Shi'i figure who has played an important role in the spread of Shi'ism in East Java. He taught Shi'i teachings at his Islamic foundation in Jember, East Java, and engaged in other *da'wa* activities in Indonesia. He had a close relationship with Jalaluddin Rakhmat and the late Husein Al-Habsyi of Bangil. Ridwan Suhud is a professor at a university in Bandung and Sipon Muladi is a professor in Samarinda, East Kalimantan. It is important to note that Ridwan Suhud, a lecturer at ITB, is known to have converted into Shi'ism long before the victory of the Iranian revolution.[16] In sum, all those who became members of IJABI's Advisory Council are prominent Shi'i *ustadh* and scholars in Indonesia and respected by Shi'i adherents.

Like other socio-religious organisations, the executive board of IJABI comprises a chairman, general secretary, treasury, and several departments. The leading positions were occupied by Shi'i intellectuals; whilst Dimitri Mahayana became the national chairman and Hadi Suwastio became its

[16] Wisananingrum (2001:67-68)

general secretary. It is important to point out that three influential figures who occupied the key positions in the IJABI leadership structure have close relationships with one another. Both Dimitri Mahayana and Hadi Suwastio learned aspects of Islamic teachings from Jalaluddin Rakhmat while students at ITB. Both are known, particularly among Shi'is in Indonesia, as prominent young Muslim intellectuals who have played a great role in the development of Shi'ism in the country.

Soon after its declaration and national congress, as well as the inauguration of its leaders and organisers, IJABI requested legal status from the Department of Home Affairs in Jakarta. On 17 August 2000, the formal letter, supplemented by the organisations statute, rules of association, national guidelines for the programmes and leadership structure, was signed by Dimitri Mahayana, the chairman of executive board, and Hadi Suwastio, the general secretary, and brought to Jakarta. In response, the Department of Home Affairs granted IJABI formal legal status as a societal organisation on 11 August 2000.The quick processing of IJABI's application and the fact that a Shi'i association was legally recognised can be put down to conditions of the reformation. Legal recognition means that IJABI officially becomes a national Shi'i organisation in Indonesia, an important event within the Islamic history of the country. This recognition is very important symbolic capital in the continuous struggle of the Shi'is in Indonesia.

B. The Ideological Foundation of IJABI

The nature of IJABI ideology can be gleaned from its Statute which was formulated and ratified at the first national congress on 2 July 2000. The introduction to the Statute clearly states that the establishment of IJABI is based on the principal doctrine of Shi'i *madhhab,* even though IJABI itself is declared open to followers of any *madhhab* regardless of whether it is Sunni or Shi'i. The Statute goes on to state that the loving devotion to the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt* has become the axis that unites the fellow Muslims, regardless of their *madhhab*. It is agreed that loving devotion to God can only be achieved through loving devotion to his Prophet and, in turn, loving devotion to the Prophet can only be achieved through loving devotion to his *ahl al-bayt*.

By using the name '*ahl al-bayt*' the organisation is giving a clear indication of its Shi'i nature. (Although loving devotion to the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt* is also recognised in Sunnism). Imam Shafi'i, the founder of the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence - a school of thought adhered to by the majority of Muslims in Indonesia - once wrote: "If the Shi'i loves the

Household of the Prophet Muhammad, witness oh Genie (*Jinns*) and Mankind that I am a Shi'i."[17] Given these facts, the Statute states that, for centuries, Indonesian Muslims have attempted to preserve and develop loving devotion to the *ahl al-bayt* and that the establishment of IJABI is an attempt to continue the struggle of previous 'ulama' and Muslim leaders in Indonesia in this respect.

The Statute itself does not provide a definition of *ahl al-bayt*, however, Jalaluddin Rakhmat suggests that the term *ahl al-bayt* has a broad meaning. He interprets the term 'lovers of the *ahl al-bayt*' as not only Shi'is, or those with genealogical lines to the Prophet Muhammad, but all followers of any *madhhab* in Islam who love the Household of the Prophet Muhammad.[18] By adopting this very broad definition of *ahl al-bayt*, IJABI intended to attract a large number of followers regardless of their *madhhab*. However, the reality is that only Shi'is join and participate in the association. The reasons for this our examined below.

Despite its policy of openness and inclusivity, IJABI is clearly Shi'i in nature. This is illustrated in its belief in the five articles of faith (*usul al-din*), as stated in the introduction to its Statute: "the lovers of *ahl al-bayt* in Indonesia are willing to unite and strengthen fronts by establishing a social organisation based on the beliefs in Oneness of God (*tawhid*), Prophecy (*nubuwwa*), imamate (*imama*), justice (*'adala*), and return of servants to Lord, the Most Merciful and the Beneficent". Unlike the six pillars of faith within Sunnism, these five articles of faith are specific to Shi'ism. Moreover, Jalaluddin Rakhmat declared on one occasion, the lovers of *ahl al-bayt* mean adherents of Shi'ism.[19]

As stated previously, the introduction of the Statute cites the famous *hadith* of the Prophet Muhammad regarding *ahl al-bayt*, namely: "the *ahl al-bayt* is like Noah's ship (while typhoon and flood were occurring). Whoever gets on the ship is safe; whoever leaves it is swung and flung." This is used as a textual proof for the establishment of IJABI, which is seen as a ship of salvation which will protect its members, helping them to gain salvation both in this world and in the hereafter. In addition, there is an explicit expression of the belief in the twelfth Imam - Imam Mahdi - and recognition of his leadership within Shi'ism. This is followed by a desire for his blessing in the establishment and running of the organisation. The Statute also states the position of IJABI as a part of a worldwide movement

[17] Rakhmat (1998:244)

[18] *Pikiran Rakhmat* (2/7/2000)

[19] Rakhmat (1998:240-242)

of Shi'i organisations. In the last paragraph of its introduction, the Statute says:

> By saying *bi ism Allah majraha wa mursaha* [in the name of Allah, whether we sail or not] and with the emission of enlightening radiation of the stars of the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt*, we sail the ship of IJABI that will protect all lovers of the *ahl al-bayt* from their enemies, advance thought spiritually, intellectually, and morally, and make all believers prosper physically and spiritually. Finally, we would like to join this ship together with other ships in the whole world under the blessing and leadership of the Lord of the Age, Imam Mahdi, the Awaited, *'ajjala Allah farajah al-sharif* [may God speed up his noble appearance].

IJABI's ideology is also reflected in its logo, an image of Noah's ship. IJABI expects the followers of *ahl al-bayt* in Indonesia to embark on this ship: "Aboard they will be transported to the eternal realm of Divine love and directed by the infallible Imams". The ship is also a well-known symbol of Indonesia, an archipelago stretching along the equator, between Asia and Australia and between the Indian and Pacific oceans. Historically, Indonesians spent most of their lives exploring the oceans in order to sustain life and to learn. The use of the ship logo reflects IJABI's connection to Indonesia, something not necessarily found in other Shi'i organisations.

The IJABI logo depicts spread twin sails, which represent *al-thaqalayn* (the "Two Weighty Matters"), that is, al-Qur'an and the purified *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet (*'itra*) as mentioned in a *hadith* familiar to the followers of Shi'ism. This *hadith* is in clear contrast to the one well-known among Sunnis, that it are the Qur'an and *sunna,* which are the fundamental legal sources.[20] As explained in the previous chapter, in Shi'ism, both the Qur'an and the *ahl al-bayt* guide mankind towards salvation and the return to the all-encompassing Divine Mercy. IJABI believes that all its programmes should be in accordance with *thaqalayn*, (that is, the Qur'an and the *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet) and with the missionary goal to propagate Islamic teachings narrated through the *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet Muhammad.

In the logo, the red blood colour of the sails represents bravery while the white symbolises purity, holiness and cleanliness of the innermost essence of human beings. Furthermore, the red used in the outermost lines and the white space within refer to *jamal* (beauty) and *jalal* (strength) of Divine Attributes.

The ship itself is drawn? in the form of spiral lines indicating the arms of *ahl al-bayt* that are ready to accept the divine blessing. The logo includes five lines that describe *ahl al-Kisa* (the People of Cloak), and below these five lines the ship is sailing on nine waves, each representing one of

[20] The complete version of the *hadith* can be seen p.85 fn.7

the Imams who lead and guide the whole universe. These 14 waves and lines refer to the fourteen Infallibles, which include the twelve Imams, the Prophet Muhammad and his daughter Fatima. The text *Ikatan Jamaah Ahlulbait Indonesia*, the name of the organisation, encircles the ship. The spread twin sails combined with the circle appear as a beacon, symbolising the light of the universe. The ship is moving from the east, that is, the sunrise, the source of illuminations. It is sailing across the ocean bringing with it the light that tears away the veils of darkness in the world of non-existence.[21]

It is important to remember that the term *ahl al-kisa* (the People of Cloak) refers to five people that are addressed in the Qur'anic verse[22] that is known, within Shi'ism, as the *tathir* (purification) verse. This Qur'anic verse, which becomes the principal designation for the immunity of the *ahl al-bayt*, is memorised by every Shi'i. The verse states that God wished to remove all abomination from members of the *ahl al-bayt*. (The members are the Prophet Muhammad, 'Ali bin Abi Talib, Fatima, Hasan, and Husayn). The first meaning of *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet within Shi'ism refers to the five purified people. The second meaning of the term also includes nine Imams (symbolised by nine waves in the logo) who are also considered infallible. The Statute says that the foundation of this socio-religious organisation is Islam and the loving devotion to the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt* (article 3) and its identity is the Qur'an, the Prophetic Traditions, and the loving devotion to the purified Household of the Prophet (article 4). Then, IJABI has five goals:

1. To teach people to live in accordance with the principles of co-existence and the imamate.
2. To introduce and propagate the Islamic teachings narrated through the Prophet's *ahl al-bayt* (peace be upon him).
3. To empower low economic communities and the oppressed (*mustad'afin*).
4. To advance spiritual and intellectual studies.
5. To maintain good relations with all Islamic organisations (article 5).

These goals can be achieved by undertaking several actions as mentioned in article 6 below:

1. To establish and develop educational (*ta'dib*), economic, social and *da'wa* institutions.
2. To establish and develop Islamic libraries.
3. To conduct Islamic studies and research.

[21] http://www.ijabi.or.id/bspweb/maknalogoing.htm

[22] QS (33:33)

4. To publish bulletins, books, magazines, and newspapers.
5. To establish approaches to Islamic organisations and to create Islamic brotherhood among fellow Muslim communities.

The first and second goals clearly indicate the Shi'i characteristic of IJABI. The first goal is about establishing a community of Shi'i adherents in Indonesia. IJABI wants to unite Indonesian Shi'i under the umbrella of its organisation. This corresponds with the function of IJABI as a mass organisation, that is, to assemble the community of *ahl al-bayt* in Indonesia (article 9). Related to this is the necessity of the community not only to believe in *imamate* but also to practice all the teachings of Islam, particularly those of the Imams. This goal can be seen as the internal orientation of IJABI's mission in the sense that it focuses first and foremost on the development and progress of its members and Shi'is in Indonesia in general. The second goal is external. It implies that the true teachings of Shi'ism have not yet spread and been understood among the majority of Muslims in Indonesia. For this reason it is the duty of IJABI to introduce them to these ideas and teach them about Shi'ism. Both these goals can be categorised as the religious characteristic of IJABI.

The third goal reflects the social characteristic of the organisation, which is to support the oppressed. This is one of the most important aspects of Shi'ism, and is frequently emphasised in Shi'i writings. This need to side with those less fortunate perhaps originates from the experiences of the Shi'is themselves as a minority religious group. In the context of Sunni-Shi'i relations, the Shi'is have generally been the oppressed party. For these reasons, IJABI aims to undertake programmes that are designed to transform the poor and the oppressed. The fourth goal of IJABI clearly demonstrates the intellectual and scientific characteristics of the organisation. IJABI states its interest and involvement in studies and research in the scientific field and also suggests that this will advance spiritual research and development. IJABI's belief in a unified system of both spiritual and intellectual research and development can be seen as a reflection of its Shi'i nature.

Whilst the first four goals correspond with the first four actions, the fifth goal correlates to the fifth action. Regarding this last goal, as a new Muslim organisation IJABI attempts to forge good relationships not only with existing Muslim associations in Indonesia, such as NU, Muhammadiyah, and Persis, but also with other international Muslim - both Sunni and Shi'i - organisations, as well as non-Muslim associations. As a recognised socio-religious association in Indonesia, IJABI, together with other associations participates in the development of Indonesian society as a whole.

According to its Statute, IJABI is independent and non-sectarian (article 7). Its independence is reflected in the fact that it is not affiliated to any political party or to the state. Jalaluddin Rakhmat has said that IJABI is not a political means for anyone to gain executive or legislative positions. This is affirmed by the fact that those who are active in a political party cannot join the executive committee of IJABI at the same time. Its non-sectarian characteristic means that followers of any *madhhab* within Islam may join IJABI, provided they are an adult Muslim and willing to obey the Statute of the organisation (article 11). Article 11 is formulated specifically for the purpose of attracting a large number of members to the organisation. Interestingly, recognising the need for a broad membership, Jalaluddin Rakhmat tried to deny the specific Shi'i characteristic of IJABI:

> IJABI is not a social organisation that provides an umbrella for the Shi'i adherents but it is a social organisation open to all *madhhab* and Muslim groups in Indonesia. Within IJABI at this present, there are indeed many people who are originated from a variety of *madhhabs* and groups. They are united in order to love God, His messenger, and his *ahl al-bayt*.[23]

Like other socio-religious organisations in Indonesia, IJABI has formulated its own vision, that is, "to present an intellectual movement which enlightens Islamic thought and to empower the oppressed people (*mustad'afin*)", and mission, that is, "to assemble all lovers of the *ahl al-bayt* from any *madhhab*."[24] Dimitri Mahayana, the then chairman of IJABI's Executive Council, pointed out that IJABI is meant to assemble all Muslims who love the *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet and also to establish the Muslim community through intellectual activities and empowerment of the oppressed, based on the Qur'an and the loving devotion to the *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet. Dimitri Mahayana went on to elaborate on the various kinds of oppression, including socio-economic oppression and oppression of self-expression. It is argued that socio-economic oppression is a result of global capitalism and the subsequent gap between North and South - the developed and the developing countries - which in turn leads to a new form of imperialism. Oppression in the field of religious expression is a consequence of a lack of tolerance and mutual respect.[25] Similarly, Jalaluddin Rakhmat emphasised that IJABI is an umbrella organisation for a community which has been marginalised throughout history, pointing out that IJABI does not represent any political elites, but takes the side of the common man and the oppressed. The statements of Dimitri Mahayana

[23] *Pikiran Rakyat* (2/7/2000)

[24] http://www.ijabi.or.id/deforganisasi.htm

[25] *Pikiran Rakyat* (10/7/2000)

and Jalaluddin Rakhmat are in accordance IJABI's goal to empower the oppressed (*mustad'afin*) who have been neglected by many other social groups and organisations in the country.[26]

IJABI is expected to play a role in realisation of a just and civilised *masyarakat madani* (civil society) (article 10). Article 10 demonstrates IJABI's concern not only for its members but also for establishing a just Muslim community in Indonesia as a whole. Dimitri Mahayana's outlines two aspects of empowerment in relation to IJABI's membership: material and intellectual. Material empowerment means generating a variety of business and economic opportunities in various fields. Thus, IJABI attempts to establish business networks, (which tie in with existing international Muslim business networks), through which the organisation can improve the economic condition of the Muslim community in Indonesia in general and of the members of IJABI in particular. In respect of intellectual empowerment, Dimitri Mahayana suggests that real empowerment comes from the spiritual depth of human beings, both individually and socially. For this reason, IJABI hopes to empower the Muslim community in general and its members in particular by undertaking activities that will set in motion a transformation process that produces dynamic thought and a worldview based on the principles of *tawhid* (Oneness of God) and of Divine love practiced in daily life.[27]

This leads us on to another important aspect of the ideology of IJABI - the paradigm of love. Dimitri Mahayana points to an historical example of the love paradigm, as practiced by Imam 'Ali bin Abi Talib, the first Imam within Shi'ism, who is said to have frequently bathed with the lepers living in suburban areas.[28] Leaders of IJABI regard this love paradigm as a unique characteristic of their new socio-religious organisation. Many works by Jalaluddin Rakhmat, for example, promote the importance of love in social and religious life. He once stated that *Madhhab Alawi* (Shi'ism) is the *madhhab* of love, (as it is represented in the whole life history of 'Ali bin Abi Talib).[29]

We have now established that IJABI was founded on the principal doctrines of Shi'ism. The next step is to scrutinise its organisational principle, and in particular the structure of its leadership. In this respect, IJABI resembles NU, the largest traditionalist Muslim organisation in Indonesia. The national leadership of IJABI consists of an Religious Advisory Coun-

[26] *Pikiran Rakyat* (2/7/2000)
[27] *Pikiran Rakyat* (10/7/2000)
[28] *Pikiran Rakyat* (10/7/2000)
[29] Rakhmat (1999:294-295)

cil (*Dewan Syuro*) and an Executive Council (*Tanfidziyah*). This system is chosen in order to confer status on the position of *'ulama'* , although they do not have the highest authority. IJABI's Religious Advisory Council is a collective consultative leadership and is positioned at the top of the institutional element of the organisation. The Executive Council is responsible for the implementation of all congress decisions. As stated in the Statute (article 14), each part of the leadership is headed by a general chairman (*ra'is 'am*). However, the highest authority in IJABI is not in the hands of the Religious Advisory Council, instead it is held by congress (*muktamar*) - either national or extraordinary - at the national level and by regional or district conference (*musyawarah*) at the regional or district level (article 12). The Rules of Organisation state, "congress holds the highest authority" (article 10.2). From this we can deduce that the authority structure of IJABI is based on the democratic principle that anyone can participate in making organisational decisions through congress or conference.

As the top institutional element of the organisation, the Religious Advisory Council advises and supervises the Executive Council regarding the implementation of all congress decisions. It has no authority to ignore the authority of the Executive Council. The final report of the Executive Council with regard to the implementation of congress decisions is evaluated by the next session of congress, not by the Religious Advisory Council. The relationship between the Religious Advisory Council and the Executive Council is purely consultative. However, it should be noted that the Rules of Organisation (article 20.3) state that the members of the Religious Advisory Council consist of '*ulama*', *ustadh* and intellectuals who "understand Islamic and modern sciences, understand Indonesian social and political context, take care of their self-esteem, do not follow passions, and attempt to take care of Islamic teachings." These qualifications reflect the high status of the Religious Advisory Council within the organisation.

IJABI's decision to make congress, not the Religious Advisory Council, the highest authority is similar to situations in other social and religious organisations in Indonesia. IJABI does not imitate the leadership model of *wilayat al-faqih* which gives the highest authority to '*ulama*'. Consequently, the majority of *ustadh* of Qum alumni view IJABI as an organisation that does not reflect the leadership principle of Shi'ism, and hence, a reason for their rejection of IJABI. For the leaders of IJABI, the rule is simply a manifestation of a democratic.organisation. In short, IJABI's leaders see it as a Shi'i organisation, based on the principal doctrines of Shi'ism, but also based on the principles of democracy, specifically in terms of member participation in the organisation.

C. The Development of IJABI

Although it is too early to evaluate the development of this new socio-religious organisation, let alone predict its future, it is relevant to describe its early growth and the implementation of its programmes. As previously mentioned, the size of attendance at IJABI's inauguration and first national congress, in Bandung in July 2000, illustrates the great enthusiasm among Shi'is in Indonesia for its emergence. The number of participants, (according to media reports), reached more than 2,000, with people coming from 20 provinces throughout Indonesia. At the time of the inauguration, Jalaluddin Rakhmat claimed that IJABI had about three million followers from a variety of backgrounds, including Shi'is from an ex-dissident Muslim group (which he called the 'traditionalist element'), Muslim intellectuals and even poor people, (which he called *mustadh'afin* (the oppressed people)). According to Rakhmat's analysis, the majority of the first group come from Makassar, South Sulawesi, and West Java, and that the social basis of IJABI can be compared with that of the Darul Islam movement. It is certainly true that some members of IJABI are ex-members of Darul Islam (DI/NII). The second group - the intellectuals – comes from the university students and campus groups who have been introduced to the religious and intellectual discourse developed by IJABI leaders. The third element, the poor, generally come from West Java and who, in accordance with Shi'i ideology, have been brought up and educated by figures who founded or joined IJABI.[30] However, as with other socio-religious organisations, such as NU and Muhammadiyah which also claim millions of followers, these figures cannot be proved. In fact, IJABI meetings and gatherings of late seem to have attracted fewer participants than the first national congress.

Following IJABI's inauguration, it seems that its Executive Council has tried to implement both long-term and short-term programmes, as outlined in the National Guidelines for Programmes (2000-2004). Both programmes have both internal and external elements. The IJABI executive structure comprises six departments each with its own programme, namely, organisation, empowerment of Muslim community, intellectual development and *Da`wa*, education, media and information technology, and international relations. As a new organisation, IJABI appears to give priority to raising the profile of the organisation throughout the country by establishing branches, including regional/provincial leadership councils (*Dewan Pimpinan Wilayah*, DPW), district leadership councils (*Dewan Pimpinan Daerah*, DPD) and sub-district leadership councils (*Dewan*

[30] *Tekad* (10-11/7/2000)

Piminan Cabang, DPC). Some months after its foundation, the national Executive Council of IJABI began to implement it various programmes, while the Shi'i leaders in some provinces began organise regional conferences. Often these regional conferences were combined with a seminar which invited the chairman of the Religious Advisory Council, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, along with other Shi'i intellectuals and local Muslim intellectuals and leaders, to discuss a specific topic. The regional branch of South Sumatra, for instance, was officially inaugurated on 17 September 2000. It held a conference on the same day which included guests such as Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Sri Adyanti Rachmadi, and Muslim intellectuals from the capital city of Palembang - including Prof. Jalaluddin, the then rector of IAIN Raden Fatah, and Mal An Abdullah, the general chairman of the provincial branch of NU – who were asked to speak on "Inter-religious Tolerance."[31] Such activities show the early growth of IJABI as a new socio-religious organisation that is gaining recognition in this Sunni-dominated country.

In February 2004, IJABI had 14 provincial, 48 district and 25 sub-district branches. The regional or provincial branches include South Sumatra, West Java, South Sulawesi, JABODEBEK[32] (Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Bekasi), Yogyakarta, Lampung, North Sumatra, Central Java, East Java, West Nusa Tenggara, Bangka Belitung and Central Sulawesi. Additionally, there are so-called regional coordinators for provinces where a regional branch of IJABI has yet to be established, including Aceh, Riau, Bengkulu, Banten, West Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, Bali, and East Nusa Tenggara. IJABI has also established autonomous institutions such as *Ikatan Pelajar Ahlul Bait Indonesia* (the Association of Indonesian *Ahl al-Bayt* Students), *Badan Advokasi dan Pengembangan Hukum dan Hak Azazi Manusia* (Board for Advocacy and Development of Law and Human Rights) and Fatimiyyah (*Ahl al-Bayt* Women). IJABI has also established a branch in Qum, Iran. Some regional or district branches have initiated their programmes, while others - possibly most others - have not yet been active in implementing programmes for the development of Shi'ism in their areas.

The departments of the national Executive Council of IJABI have organised some (long-term) programmes although these have been less successful than the short-term programmes, including the establishment of provincial and district branches, as outlined in the guidelines. It appears that IJABI relies heavily on the Division of *Imdad Mustad'afin* at the Mu-

[31] *Al-Tanwir* (17/9/2000)

[32] This is different from the popular acronym JABOTABEK (Jakarta, Bogor, Tangerang, Bekasi).

thahhari Foundation, to execute it programme in the field of empowerment of the Muslim community. This division has considerable experience in the empowerment of poor children and orphans, for example, on 2 July 2000, it carried out a mass circumcision programme in the framework of the celebration of the Prophet's birthday and the inauguration of IJABI.[33] (Several other regular programmes of this division involve the participation of students from Muthahhari's Senior High School). This close cooperation between the two institutions is explained by the fact that the head of this division of *Imdad Mustad'afin*, Sayyid Abu Ali Al-Aydrus, is also the head of the division of the oppressed within IJABI's department of empowerment of Muslim community. In this regard, this programme of IJABI has been relatively successful in terms of its aims to empower the oppressed.

IJABI's development is also indicated by the fact that the department of empowerment of Muslim community organised a 'business training' programme, aimed at providing participants with 'financial intelligence', so that may go on to create business opportunities for their own personal and organisational benefit. This programme was carried out in cooperation with the McDonald's Company in Indonesia, owned by Bambang Rachmadi. This programme attracted many participants from a number of regional and district branches of IJABI. The idea behind this activity is for members of IJABI to be able to improve their economic condition.

Another relatively active department seems to be that of intellectual development and *da'wa*. This department is responsible for celebrating holy days within the Shi'i tradition, including the Prophet's birthday, the Imams' and Sayyida Fatima's birthday, *'ashura*, and *arba'in*. Additionally, this department has organised several training activities in fields such as philosophy, Islamic law, *akhlaq*, and Sufism. Discussions and seminars - national and local - on various topics have been held. Like the empowerment of Muslim community programme, these activities are usually carried out in cooperation with the Muthahhari Foundation and sometimes with the Sehati or Tazkiya Sejati Foundations, (headed by Sri Adyanti Rachmadi, wife of the aforementioned Bambang Rachmadi). Furthermore, IJABI has already sent several students to pursue their learning in Iran and this annual programme is expected to run well. IJABI is also looking into the possibility of sending students to other countries such as England, America, Australia, and Syria.

One of the most important *da'wa* activities conducted by IJABI was a *muballigh* training known as *Pengkaderan Muballigh* (the Forming of Prea-

[33] *Al-Tanwir* (2/7/2000)

cher Cadre). This training is important not only for Shi'i *da'wa* (as described in Chapter Four) but also for the consolidation of IJABI members and leaders throughout the country. The training was aimed at providing the cadre of IJABI with the capability to defend the *madhhab* of *ahl al-bayt,* to enlighten the Muslim *umma* and also to defend Islam in the context of global political developments. The training dealt not only with topics of Shi'ism and *da'wa* techniques but also discussed a number of problems its members were confronted with. The participants are asked to fight against ideas that are contrary to the Statute and principles of IJABI.

In general, the early development of IJABI has, without question, depended on its central figures, (Jalaluddin Rakhmat, Dimitri Mahayana, and Hadi Suwastio in particular), and other related foundations, especially the Muthahhari Foundation and Tazkiya Sejati. The support of rich patrons such as Sri Adyanti Sudharmono has also contributed significantly to the early growth of this Shi'i organisation. However, in April 2003, a breakdown in the relations between Jalaluddin Rakhmat and Sri Adyanti Sudharmono and her brother Tantyo Sudharmono resulted in internal dissension within IJABI. Following this upset, Jalaluddin Rakhmat resigned from his position as the director of the Tazkiya Sejati Foundation, which he had occupied since 1997. Tantyo Sudharmono was removed from his position as the chairman of the JABODEBEK branch of IJABI, to be replaced by Budiono.[34] This recent and dramatic episode has clearly affected the later development of IJABI.

The exact reasons behind the discord remain unclear. Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his IJABI associates hint at slanderous remarks towards Jalaluddin Rakhmat during his time at Tazkya Sejati. This resulted in him issuing a circular which contained statements cursing his opponents. The circular was sent to all the provincial and district branches of IJABI, and received both positive and negative reactions from IJABI members and members of the Shi'i community at large. Later, Rakhmat justified his cursing through his publications, *Al-Tanwir*[35] and *Bahtera*.[36] In an article entitled, 'The Command of Cursing in the Qur'an and *Sunna*', Rakhmat states: "There are several ignorant people among the followers of *ahl al-bayt* who do not bother to curse those who should be cursed." He goes on to cite several verses of the Qur'an and sayings of the Prophet and the Imams that permit

[34] Budiono is a Shi'i figure in Jakarta. Besides leading Shi'i foundations, in 1998 he founded a *nasyid* group called K'PAS (*Kelompok Pencinta Aktif Shalawat*, the Active Lover Group of Invocation) that has been invited to perform at religious events in Jakarta and West Java.

[35] *Al-Tanwir* (3/5/2003:1-5)

[36] *Bahtera* (October 2003:66-71)

the cursing of certain sinful people - including slanderers. In short, Rakhmat was trying to make the point that no textual and rational proofs reject the permissibility of cursing.

Dissention also occurred in local branches of IJABI, including South Sumatra, Central Java and Yogyakarta. Internal conflicts in Palembang, South Sumatra, for instance, contributed to the withdrawal from IJABI of renowned Shi'i figures such as Jailani and his wife Mariatul Fadilah. As a result, IJABI programmes in the area have not run smoothly. The former chairman of the Central Java branch of IJABI was dismissed from his position because of his involvement in the *Yaum al-Quds* demonstration in 2003. This is an annual demonstration, held on a Friday, in the first week of Ramadan, as prescribed by Ayatollah Khomeini. In Indonesia, Shi'i *ustadh* organised this demonstration to demonstrate their adherence and loyalty to the leader of the Iranian revolution. Given that IJABI promotes itself as a non-political organisation, it forbids its members to get involved in any political activities - including demonstrations - which may threaten the legal status of IJABI. Consequently, a number of IJABI's executive members, active in political parties, resigned. This has further reduced the social basis of this organisation.

In response to the internal discord, IJABI tried to strengthen its position. In so doing, it formulated ten attributes of non-IJABI behaviour, namely racism, intolerance, *tarekatism* (following certain Sufi orders and confessing the high spiritual achievement through the Sufi orders), *mahdism* (confessing a capability to communicate with the Imam Mahdi), to promote a state based on Islamic *shari'a* (like DI/NII), *salafism* (Wahhabism), *fiqh*-orientation, politics, utilising IJABI for personal gain and disloyalty. Each of these ten attributes was believed to have been present among members of IJABI, threatening the existence and unity of IJABI and decreasing the efficiency of its programmes. By formulating this list, IJABI hoped its members would disaccustom themselves from these ten attributes rendering IJABI the ideal social-religious organisation.

The problems outlined above resulted in a decrease in membership and leadership of IJABI. Its second national congress, in Jakarta on 27-29 February 2004, was marked by a lack of support from prominent Shi'i figures and Iranian representatives in Indonesia. Those prominent figures who had attended its inauguration and first national congress were mainly absent. There was no representative from Iran or ICC of Al-Huda, for example. Nonetheless, hundreds of participants did attend the seminar, which followed the congress, on the topic "Building Ethics Paradigm in the Life of Society and Nation" in which Nurcholish Madjid, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, and Juanda from the Indonesian Navy were speakers. Repre-

sentatives of provincial and district branches of IJABI from throughout the country attended. Although they acknowledged the problems and weaknesses of IJABI's leaders, the participants of the congress unanimously accepted the reports presented by Jalaluddin Rakhmat as the chairman of its Religious Advisory Council and Dimitri Mahayana as the chairman of its Executive Council. They also agreed to re-appoint Jalaluddin Rakhmat to his top position in the Religious Council and elect Furqon Bukhari as the new chairman and Khalid al-Walid as the new secretary general of the Executive council.

D. The Response to IJABI

During the process of establishing IJABI, there appeared to be consensus among followers of Shi'ism in Indonesia, and particularly intellectuals, scholars and *ustadh*, about the importance of a national organisation, (and also that this organisation should be called IJABI). This consensus was demonstrated at meetings held in the Al-Huda Islamic Centre in Jakarta, attended by many renowned Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals. Clearly at this point in time, Indonesia's Shi'is were united by a common purpose. However, as previously mentioned, this unity was short-lived and tainted by disputes and misunderstandings between the proponents of IJABI - Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his associates - and Shi'i *ustadh*, mainly Qum alumni. Consequently, the majority of Shi'i *ustadh* and scholars were absent from IJABI's inauguration and first national congress in Bandung.

These disputes and misunderstandings between the two groups continue to this day. Discord at the elite level has become widespread among members of the Shi'i community. Public criticism of opponents and use of certain *da'wa* activities to defend points of view has become commonplace. It is not unusual, for example, for a leaders to criticise opponents during *pengajians* (religious discussion groups), in the hope of gaining support. In short, there is a schism in the Shi'i community in Indonesia between those members affiliated to IJABI, who are now split into two opposing groups: supporters of IJABI and their opponents; IJABI and non-IJABI.

However, it would be an oversight to neglect the third category – those Shi'is who refuse to join either of these camps. Members of this 'neutral' group are clearly troubled by the fact that the establishment of IJABI, instead of promoting unity within the Shi'i community in Indonesia, has rather exaggerated existing fractures. This group includes a number of well-known Shi'i figures who have made attempts to bridge the divide. For example, Sayyid Seggaf al-Jufri's has made efforts to organise Islamic rituals and commemorations that bring together the IJABI and non-IJABI

groups in Solo, Central Java. Another prominent Shi'i intellectual, known for his harmonious relationship with all Shi'i groups is Haidar Bagir, the head of Mizan Publishing Company. Despite the fact that he was listed as being a member of IJABI's Religious Advisory Council, Bagir has never participated in any IJABI activities. He refuses to take sides with either of the opposing groups, preferring to offer general moral and material support to Shi'i activities.

Haidar Bagir is not alone. In fact, the majority of Shi'i scholars who are officially listed as members of IJABI's Religious Advisory Council do not publicly show support for IJABI or its programmes. Some even go so far as to reject the organisation outright. This extraordinary situation is exacerbated by the fact that a number of people listed as being members of IJABI's central board or members of its regional or district branches rarely participate in IJABI programmes, let alone lead or organise an activity. Furthermore, a number have even been proactive in destabilising the organisation and its influence. Inevitably this serious lack of support has led to IJABI programmes being severely compromised and more often than not unable to achieve results.

As previously explained, those proponents of IJABI include elements of the intellectual, ex-dissident Muslim group, along with those grassroots members who had relations with IJABI's leaders long before the organisation was established. These elements are brought together through *da'wa* and educational activities held at Shi'i foundations located in various regions. Such activities usually involve eminent Shi'i intellectuals being invited to deliver a religious lecture. In addition, IJABI supporters maintain their ties through the publication of books and periodicals, in which prominent intellectuals write about Shi'i teachings and ideology. On the whole, the leading figures among IJABI supporters are intellectuals who have considerable influence over the other elements of this group. The majority of them graduated from secular universities but learned and committed to practice Islamic teachings according to the Shi'i *madhhab*. A small number graduated from the *hawza 'ilmiyya* in Qum.

In terms of religious thought, it is widely known that IJABI places more emphasis on the importance of *akhlaq* or Sufism than jurisprudence. Moreover, IJABI leaders are openly critical of those who uphold what they call the *fiqh* paradigm - a controversial term coined by Jalaluddin Rakhmat - in their religious life and *da'wa* activities. In his Sunday religious gatherings, Jalaluddin Rakhmat continues to present Islamic teachings derived from the Sufi tradition in its widest meaning, including the traditions of the Imams. These beliefs are also reflected in his numerous religious works. For Rakhmat and his associates, Sufism and Shi'ism are not only insepa-

rable but also united as an integrated teaching of Islam. As explained in a previous chapter, Jalaluddin Rakhmat even recommends ignoring the observance of aspects of jurisprudence for the sake of Islamic fraternity in accordance with the teaching of *taqiyya*.

In contrast, opponents of IJABI are mainly Shi'i *ustadh*. Most graduated from the *hawza 'ilmiyya* of Qum, a few from other Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia or abroad. The majority are Sayyids. They have a significant number of followers and activists who support their institutions and activities. Before the establishment of IJABI, a number of leading figures in this group had headed the organisation of (the aforementioned) *Yayasan Mahdi*, which had been set up as a mass Shi'i organisation. Like the IJABI group, this group has also established Shi'i foundations and *pesantren*, which claim to follow the *hawza 'ilmiyya* system of Islamic education in Qum. As mentioned in a previous chapter, a few of the Shi'i *ustadh* have written Islamic books published by Shi'i publishers. Some of their foundations also produce Islamic periodicals. Like the IJABI group, IJABI opponents use these activities to sustain their contacts and their relationship.

Unlike the proponents of IJABI, however, the *ustadh* pay great attention to the entire teachings of Shi'ism, including Ja'fari jurisprudence. For this reason, IJABI supporters view them as a *fiqh*-oriented group. In their foundations and *pesantren* they continue to promote all aspects of Shi'i teachings. For this group, being a Shi'i means leaving behind all the non-Shi'i elements of Islam and, instead, upholding all the teachings and traditions of Shi'ism, commonly called *tashayyu'* (which literally means 'Shi'ism'). This is necessary, they believe, in order for Shi'is become true believers and so that the Shi'i community in Indonesia does not become isolated from other Shi'i communities in the world.[37]

The divide between the two groups in terms of social and educational background and religious orientation intricately leads to conflict and competition with regard to the accumulation of social, cultural and economic capital. The explanation below illustrates that complex factors contribute to creating competition and conflict between IJABI and non-IJABI within the Shi'i community in Indonesia. The competition and conflict originates in the differences in social background among the Shi'i community in Indonesia: Arab descendant group versus campus group, as well as *ustadh* versus intellectuals. The divide is sustained by a number of interrelated personal, religious, political, and economic factors. Each group has its own identity which they tend to preserve and strengthen. This

[37] Al-Kaff (2001:2)

identity becomes even stronger when faced with the other group. Each group propagates their own religious ideology, trying to attract as many followers as possible, as well as trying to exert influence among the wider Indonesian Shi'i population. Whenever possible these groups attempt to set up a Shi'i organisation, providing a place for Shi'i adherents to gather, with a view to becoming the dominant force within the community. This act of establishing a socio-religious organisation can be seen as a political one, even though the organisation itself is non-political. Political interests are also evident in the strategies used by members of these groups to gain influential positions within the new organisation and even influence the formulation of its statute and rules. This valuable social capital can be in turn converted into economic capital, as a statement made by Bahruddin Fanani, (speaking for all those Shi'is who choose not to join either of the competing groups), affirms. He points out that the main source of conflict between IJABI and non-IJABI are social position and economic resources.[38] In the context of accumulating capital the different groups compete, rather than cooperate, which each other.

There are further issues - some major, some minor matters, some related to the above-mentioned differences - giving the *ustadh* cause to reject IJABI. Ahmad Baragbah suggests, three reasons for their rejection of IJABI. The first concerns the name of the organisation. The name of an organisation reflects its identity. The *ustadh* had originally proposed that the appropriate name for a Shi'i organisation was *Ahlulbait* (*ahl al-bayt*). Not only is it succinct and easy to remember, but the term is very important to and frequently used by the Shi'i community. Some may view this as a minor problem. The second, perhaps more important, matter, concerns the position of *wilayat al-faqih* in relation to the organisation. This political concept, which is implemented in the Islamic Republic of Iran, gives the *faqih* (learned man of religion) the highest authority over other segments of society. The *faqih* is designated as leader of the Shi'i community, not just in Iran but worldwide, and the Shi'is in Indonesia are expected to recognise this political-religious leadership. Indonesia's Shi'i *ustadh* believe that the concept *wilayat al-faqih* should be mentioned explicitly in IJABI's Statute, demonstrating the Shi'i nature of the organisation and its deference to the leadership of *wali faqih* in the Shi'i world. In fact, the term is absent in the Statute. This, then, is one of the main rationale for the *ustadh* to reject, and even oppose, IJABI's existence. Quite simply, the *ustadh* group regards IJABI as an opponent of *wilayat al-faqih*. A third factor, also related to the Statute and Rules of organisation, concerns au-

[38] Bahruddin Fanani, interview, (16/10/2002)

thority. The IJABI Statute and Rules of organisation state that the highest authority is the national congress. The *ustadh* argue that this power, like the appointment of the chairman of the Executive Council, should be in the hands of the Religious Advisory Council (*Dewan Syuro*), and not based on a ballot of the national congress. They believe that an election will not be able to produce the best results. In support of this argument, they point to experiences at the first national congress, which they believe was not well-prepared, something the organiser, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, also admits to.[39]

The *ustadh* group considers IJABI, which does not support *wilayat al-faqih*, to be *raushan fikr* (reformed intellectuals). In Iran these *raushan fikr* have different political orientation to the *'ulama'* who have led the country since the Islamic revolution of 1979. Indonesia's *ustadh*, believe IJABI supporters resemble the *raushan fikr* in Iran in that they emphasise the importance of intellectuals, (rather than *'ulama'* or the position of jurist in social and political fields), in various aspects of Muslim life. The Shi'i *ustadh* cautious attitude to the position of intellectuals is supported by a statement written by Khomeini. "Islam will not be protected by *raushanfikr* (intellectual). It is *raushanfikr* that fools the clear verses of the Qur'an."[40]

There is a further issue which is the source of conflict between the IJABI and non-IJABI groups, and that is Jalaluddin Rakhmat's attitude towards Sayyids. Some Sayyids know Rakhmat as anti-Sayyid, (though Rakhmat himself rejects this accusation). They point to several statements made by Rakhmat in an interview on national television, which, they say, indicate his negative attitude toward Sayyids. (Some respondents offer a recording of the programme and cite witnesses to support their position). Consequently, many Sayyids are terribly annoyed with Jalaluddin Rakhmat. This is evident in a discussion of M. Hasyim Assegaf's (M. Hashem's) book, *Derita Putri-Putri Nabi: Studi Historis Kafa'ah Syarifah* (Anguishes of Daughters of the Prophet: A Historical Study of Kafa'a Sharifa). The book was published by Rosda in Bandung in the framework of celebrations of Fatima's birthday held by IJABI, (in cooperation with Rosda and the Sehati Foundation), in Jakarta in September 2000. One of the main themes of the book is that *kafa'a* (equality of rank) in marriage is the product of Arab culture, and is legitimised by the Sunni schools of jurisprudence, and *Shafi'i* in particular. *Kafa'a* in marriage is not recognised in Ja'fari jurisprudence. This was perceived to be a criticism of the widely held view among the Arab community in Indonesia that a Sharifa (*Syari-*

[39] Ahmad Baragbah, interview, (21/10/2002)

[40] Alison (2000:28)

fah) - a title given to female descendants of the Prophet - may only marry a Sayyid.[41] (This is known as *kafa'a sharifa*). Assagaf makes the point that the Imams strongly reject this racial discrimination. In Shi'ism, ancestry is not permitted to be the basis for the legality of marriage. Even Khomeini's daughter married a non-Sayyid man.[42] Assagaf goes on to state that the obligation of Sharifas to marry only Sayyids is also contrary to the principle of human rights.[43] Assagaf - himself a Sayyid -, Jalaluddin Rakhmat and Maria Ulfa Anshar were all speakers at the event in Jakarta. Among the participants in the discussion were many Sayyids and Sharifas. During the discussions, a number of criticisms, as well as rude statements, were addressed solely to Jalaluddin Rakhmat, rather than to Assegaf or Anshar. For example, demonstrating her bitter criticism of Rakhmat, one Sharifa even shouted: "even dogs look for good partner."[44]

It is important to remember that the Sayyid issue is a classical and sensitive matter that, in the early 20th century, divided the Arab community in the Dutch East Indies into pro- and anti-Sayyids.[45] The conflicts between these groups even attracted attention of the colonial government, who tried to solve the problem. The fact that IJABI would organise a discussion on this topic can be seen as provocative. In this regard, Zein Al-Hadi, a Shi'i teacher in Jakarta, sent Jalaluddin Rakhmat a letter, warning him that organising such an activity would be very unpopular.[46] Jalaluddin Rakhmat ignored this advice, considering it to be an important intellectual activity, and an opportunity to implement one of IJABI's programmes. Clearly, the central problem is not the content of the book *per se*, but rather the deliberate raising of the sensitive issue of Sayyid versus non-Sayyid.

The Sayyid-non-Sayyid divide is generally acknowledged within the Shi'i community in Indonesia. Some Shi'i leaders suggest that this divide corresponds to the divide between IJABI and non-IJABI, others disagree. However, it is a fact that both Sayyids and non-Sayyids have used their organisations and religious gatherings as vehicles to both defend and

[41] Sayyid Usman, for instance, strongly rejected marriages between a Sharifa and a non-Sayyid man - either Arab or non-Arab – even if her *wali* (guardian) agreed to it. Sayyid Usman maintained that if a marriage of this kind occurs, it should be nullified, if necessary by force (Azra 1995:12).

[42] Assagaf (2000:272)

[43] Assagaf (2000:301-302)

[44] Ahmad Muhajir al-Muhdar, interview, (29/8/2002)

[45] Mobini Kesheh (1999:92-107)

[46] Ahmad Muhajir al-Muhdar, interview, (29/8/2002)

strengthen their own position, while at the same time highlighting the weaknesses of their opponents.[47]

Some Sayyids have tried to understand Jalaluddin Rakhmat's negative attitude toward Sayyids. Some suggest that it is a result of bad experiences in personal relationships with Sayyids. For example, one Sayyid informant suggested that Jalaluddin Rakhmat had failed to marry his son to a Sharifa in Lampung because the Sharifa's father had opposed the union.[48]

Whether this anecdote is true or not, there is no question that a number of Sayyids have a disharmonious relationship with Jalaluddin Rakhmat and consequently reject the existence of IJABI as a national Shi'i organisation in Indonesia and also refuse to participate in its activities. One well-known famous Sayyid leader, Zainal Abidin al-Muhdar, actually became embroiled in a public spat with Jalaluddin Rakhmat. The two openly squabbled about the Sayyid issue at the Iranian embassy in Jakarta and again at the ICC of Al-Huda in Jakarta. Even though they were seen to apologise to each other at ICC of Al-Huda, their disharmonious relationship continues to this day.[49]

Jalaluddin Rakhmat and other IJABI leaders strenuously deny that they have a negative attitude toward Sayyids. They may well have a point - seven out of twelve members of the IJABI Religious Advisory Council are Sayyids, and other Sayyids occupy positions on its Executive Board, including Jalaluddin Rakhmat's confidant, Sayyid Abu Ali Al-Idrus. (Abu Ali has headed the division of *Imdad Mustad'afin* at the Muthahhari Foundation and the division of *Mustad'afin* at IJABI). Jalaluddin Rakhmat himself insists that he is not at all anti-Sayyid, even though he is reported as having used some ethnic stereotypes[50] when referring to Arabs in Indonesia. For example, he quoted the professor of anthropology, Michael Gilsenan, who in a meeting with Rakhmat referred to the uniqueness of the Arabs in Indonesia, saying that they have a racist attitude towards the native population, despite being a minority group in the country.[51]

Jalaluddin Rakhmat and his supporters group insist that the *ustadh* had actually agreed on the establishment of IJABI, but that during the process - before the inauguration and congress - the *ustadh*, and the Arab descendants of Qum alumni in particular, decided that they should be-

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[47] Bahruddin, interview, (4/9/2002)

[48] Ahmad Muhajir al-Muhdar, interview, (29/8/2002)

[49] Ahmad Muhajir al-Muhdar, interview, (29/8/2002)

[50] Stereotype means "a set of ideas based on distortion, exaggeration, and oversimplification that is applied to all members of a group" (Shepard 1981:216)

[51] Jalaluddin Rakhmat, interview, (2/1/2003)

come the dominant leaders of the organisation. In other words, the Arab descendants agreed to the establishment of IJABI as long as they could become part of the leadership.[52] Jalaluddin Rakhmat stuck to his belief that every decision has to be decided through congress.[53] He once stated that he was forced to fight against the Arab descendants for the sake of democracy.[54] As explained above, the *ustadh* disagreed with the position of congress as the highest authority.

In addition to the issues mentioned above, the rejection of IJABI can also be attributed to misunderstandings which occurred during a series of meetings during the process to establish IJABI. Disharmony reached its peak following a statement by Jalaluddin Rakhmat and Dimitri Mahayana which suggested that a number of the Shi'i *ustadh* who were striving to become leaders of the Shi'i community in Indonesia, including IJABI, were incapable of such a role. In response, the Shi'i *ustadh* demanded a written apology from Jalaluddin Rakhmat. Rakhmat did write an apology letter, but his opponents saw its content as cynical. Consequently, he was asked to come to the last meeting, three days before the IJABI inauguration, to explain his letter, Rakhmat did not attend the meeting. As a result most of them took the decision to not only boycott IJABI's inauguration and national congress but also to reject IJABI as an organisation.[55]

For the non-IJABI group, Jalaluddin Rakhmat's personality is frequently cited as a source of tension. For example, after the spat and subsequent apologies between Rakhmat and Zainal Abidin al-Muhdar at the ICC of Al-Huda, Rakhmat is reported to have told the evening religious gathering at Tazkiya Sejati that he had been attacked by overwhelming numbers of Sayyids. Furthermore, he is said to have frequently humiliated a number of Shi'i *ustadh*, and in particular those without a university education. He never invites them to deliver religious lectures at the Tazkiya Sejati Foundation or to attend the religious gatherings held by Sri Adyanti Sudharmono.[56] It is widely acknowledged that teaching religious gatherings such as those at Paramadina and Tazkiya Sejati, (which have a mainly middle class audience), receives significant remuneration. In addition, Jalaluddin Rakhmat's statements in religious gatherings and to the national media, discrediting the *ustadh,* are significant sources of disharmony between IJABI and non-IJABI.[57]

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[52] *Gatra* (6/12/2003:62)

[53] Jalaluddin Rakhmat, interview, (2/1/2003)

[54] *Gatra* (6/12/2003:62)

[55] Umar Shahab, interview, (9/1/2003)

[56] Ahmad Muhajir al-Muhdar, interview, (29/8/2002)

[57] Haidar Bagir, interview (5/4/2004)

Among the initial reactions to the establishment of IJABI, one came from a meeting of a number of *ustadh* of Qum alumni at the Al-Jawad Foundation on 18 June 2000, (before IJABI's inauguration). *Ustadh* at the meeting included, Ahmad Baragbah, Zahir Yahya, Muhsin Labib, Husein Al-Kaff, Abdullah Husein al-Aydrus and Muhammad Sueb. The meeting produced two conclusions, which were signed and sent to Jalaluddin Rakhmat: first, a recommendation to cancel the inauguration ceremony and put the establishment of IJABI on hold because it was ill-prepared. Second, a rejection of the ideological foundations of IJABI, including its refusal to accept the principle of *wilayat al-faqih* in the structure of the organisation.[58]

Other subsequent attempts have been made to reject the existence and development of IJABI. One of them included a letter stating their rejection of the organisation, signed by 36 prominent Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals, and sent to the international Shi'i leader, *wali faqih* in Iran, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i. This was one of the most important anti-IJABI strategies employed, because from a religious perspective, the Shi'i community in Indonesia is an integral part of the Shi'i world, under the headship of the *wali faqih*. There have, however, been a number of proponents of IJABI who studied in Iran who came out in defence of their organisation. Khalid Al-Walid, the then chairman of the Iranian branch of IJABI and current secretary general of IJABI, visited the Rahbar's office to make a number of clarifications regarding the disputes between the proponents and the opponents of IJABI.[59] Despite recurring efforts by IJABI's enemies to convince the centre of Shi'i leadership that the organisation should be rejected, it is clear that IJABI - as a national Shi'i organisation in Sunni-dominated Indonesia and as a part of the worldwide group of Shi'i organisations – still has the formal recognition by the office of the international Shi'i leader in Iran.

A group of Indonesian students in Qum, affiliated to the Association of Indonesian Students of Qum (*Himpunan Pelajar Indonesia*, HPI) also publicly rejected the existence of IJABI, in a letter, dated on 22 March 2001, signed by its presidium. Ibrahim Al-Habsyi (Husein Al-Habsyi's son), Abdullah Beik and Muchtar Luthfi, (all of whom have close connections to prominent *ustadh* of Qum alumni in Indonesia). Their rejection was based on the ideological foundations of IJABI and its refusal to accept the principle of *wilayat al-faqih*. The letter emphasised that an organisation designed to bring together all Shi'is in Indonesia must absolutely

[58] Ali (2002:413-414)

[59] Khalid Al-Walid, interview, (3/7/2002)

obey the leadership of *wali faqih* during the occultation of Imam Mahdi because he is the representative of the Imam.[60] The letter states:

> In the view of HPI, 'to hold *wilaya*' [spiritual investiture] cannot be just jargon. There are several derivations from the principles that are required by the organisation. Therefore, the principles must be implemented in a systematic, not technical, matter.
>
> Systematically, the establishment of organisation may not use the principle of 'absolute democracy' (the highest authority is determined totally on the basis of the quantity of votes) because the Western version of absolute democracy in the view of the *wilayat al-faqih* system is 'rubbish' and has already a long time ago been thrown out by this pure system. From this perspective, HPI cannot accept a Shi'i organisation that claims 'to hold *wilaya*' in the system of establishing leadership, using ways contrary to the principles of *wilaya*.
>
> Technically, the procedure of the organisation may not be contrary to the clear and agreed *shari'a* laws and there is no contextual reason to renounce them (with a reason of *taqiyya*, for instance), HPI cannot accept an organisation acting on behalf of Shi'i community but, in fact, neglects matters that precisely become a symbol and identity of Shi'i *madhhab*.[61]

Another important strategic attempt to repudiate IJABI, came from a consolidation of the leaders of the Shi'i foundations. Following a series of meetings, they agreed to reject IJABI and all its programmes. One of these meetings was called 'workshop of the *Ahl al-Bayt* Foundations all over Indonesia' and was held in Jakarta, 7-8 June 2001. The workshop was organised by ICC of Al-Huda to mark the celebration of *mawlid* of the Prophet. It was attended by a number of guests from Iran, including Ayatollah Shaykh Akhtari. This is a clear indication of the lack of support for IJABU from ICC of Al-Huda. Just before the workshop was to take place, IJABI issued a circular, (signed by Dimitri Mahayana, the chairman of Executive Board, and Hadi Suwastio, the general secretary), on 31 May 2001. The circular lists a number of reasons for declaring the workshop invalid: First, IJABI remains the umbrella organisation for all Shi'i foundations and congregations in Indonesia and so no other organisation is required. Second, the establishment of another organisation, if this was the aim of the workshop, would threaten the success of any programmes run by IJABI and the new organisation. Third, the workshop was designed to create disunity within the Islamic community and lead to confusion among the adherents of Shi'ism. The, the opponents of IJABI refuted the IJABI circular by issuing a 'Declaration of Attitude of Indonesian Ahl al-Bayt

[60] Ali (2002:417-418)

[61] Ali (2002:418)

Foundations to IJABI' on 8 June 2001, in Jakarta. This declaration clearly rejects the position of IJABI as the umbrella organisation for existing Shi'i foundations in Indonesia. The main part of the declaration says:

> Considering and seeing several points below:
>
> - The claim that IJABI is an umbrella organisation for Indonesian all *ahl al-bayt* foundations and congregations is not true;
> - As a *fait accompli* among the Indonesian *ahl al-bayt* community, the existence of IJABI has precisely resulted in various continuing disputes, dissensions, and controversies;
> - Demeanour of some IJABI personnel both in the centre and in the branches that has become slanderers that endanger the existence of a number of foundations as well as individuals related to them;
> - The unclear IJABI vision and mission has resulted in the separation of IJABI from other Indonesian *ahl al-bayt* foundations.
>
> Herewith, we on behalf of foundations that are undersigned state several following attitudes:
>
> 1. Take no responsibility for any IJABI activities and any related foundations and individuals;
> 2. Reject to be under the organisational umbrella of IJABI;
> 3. Appeal for unity of all foundations and communities of the lovers of the *ahl al-bayt* in Indonesia under the shade of the Master of Affair of Muslims, the Grand Ayatollah Sayyid 'Ali Khamene'i.

27 Shi'i foundations and one local association from all over Indonesia signed the declaration, including such major institutions as Fatimah and Madinatul Ilmi of Jakarta, IPABI of Bogor, Al-Jawad of Bandung, and Al-Hadi of Pekalongan.[62] The majority of the signatories were the chiefs of the foundations, while others were staff members, including staff of ICC of Al-Huda of Jakarta, an Iran-sponsored Shi'i foundation in Indonesia. This represents a significant rejection of IJABI by the country's Shi'i foundations.

Another significant development by opponents of IJABI is the establishing of three local Shi'i associations in Java: KIBLAT (*Komunitas Ahlul Bait Jawa Barat*, West Java *Ahl al-Bayt* Community) in West Java, WASIAT in Central Java, and FAJAR (*Forum Jamaah Ahlul Bait Jawa Timur*,

[62] Other foundations include AMALI (Medan), Al-Baqir (Bangil), Al-Hujjah (Jember), Al-Kazim (Cirebon), Al-Mujtaba (Purwakarta), CIS (Jakarta), Darul Taqrib (Jepara), Al-Batul (Jakarta), FAHMI (Depok), ICC of Al-Huda (Jakarta), Pelita Hidayah (Malang), Al-Kautsar (Malang), Al-Hakim (Lampung), Safinatun Najah (Wonosobo), Al-Muhibbin (Probolinggo), Al-Aqilah (Tangerang), Al-Wahdah (Solo), Al-Mawaddah (Kendal), Al-Muntazar (Samarinda), Al-Huda (Sumenep), Miftahul Huda (Tangerang), and As-Sajjad (Jakarta). **The local organisation is FAJAR (Forum Jamaah Ahlul Bait Jawa Timur).**

Forum of East Java *Ahl al-Bayt* Congregation) in East Java. In contrast to IJABI, these three Shi'i organisations only function to coordinate the existing Shi'i foundations within their areas. Proponents of these organisations accuse IJABI's provincial and district branches of usurping the position and function of Shi'i foundations in the regions. They say this has led not only to opposition from the leaders of the Shi'i foundations but also to inactivity at the branches of IJABI, who are failing to implement their programmes. They believe that both the existing Shi'i foundations and the regional and district branches of IJABI are likely to have the similar programmes, leading to a duplication of efforts.

The leaders of these coordinating organisations are prominent Shi'i teachers who are Qum alumni. Husein Al-Kaff and Abdullah Assegaf became the founders and leaders of KIBLAT, while Ahmad Baragbah and Miqdad are the founders and leaders of WASIAT. The influential leaders of FAJAR are Zahir Yahya and Muhsin Labib. All of these men graduated from Qum and have become prominent Shi'i teachers and leaders in Indonesia. They have close connections with one another based on their shared ideology and aim to propagate Shi'ism in Indonesia.

KIBLAT is an assembly of six Shi'i foundations located in several cities and towns in West Java, including Al-Jawad of Bandung, As-Syifa of Garut, Al-Kazhim of Cirebon, Al-Kautsar of Bandung, Al-Mujtaba of Purwakarta and IPABI of Bogor. KIBLAT's first congress was held in August 2001. WASIAT in Central Java was officially declared at the end of 2002 and has yet to make significant progress. FAJAR, which is centred in Malang in East Java, (home to a large Shi'i community), was officially inaugurated on 21 April 2000, although it had been initiated in 1998. FAJAR used to have significant influence on the Shi'i community in East Java, however, this has since decreased, partly due to its leaders - Zahir Yahya and Muhsin Labib - moving to Australia and Jakarta, respectively, for study. Of the three associations, KIBLAT has been, and continues to be, active in its role as coordinator of the six Shi'i foundations, as well as organising their training and education programmes and the celebration of Shi'i holy days. Its activity may be seen as an attempt to compete with IJABI, partly because of its geographically location, close to the national centre of IJABI in Bandung. As for the development of the local associations, WASIAT does not run particularly well. Moreover, these three local coordinating associations are not recognised nationally or legally by the Indonesian government.

A marked difference between these local associations and IJABI can be seen in their incorporation of the concept *wilayat al-faqih* in their statutes and organisations. The goal of these associations is to establish a

community based on the principle of *wilaya,* so that the Shi'i community in Indonesia completely accepts and lives under the umbrella of *wilayat al-faqih*. As an imitation of *wilayat al-faqih*, the structure of these local associations places the so-called *mustashar* (adviser) - a position occupied by prominent local *ustadh* and Qum alumni – as the highest authority in such crucial matters as formulating ideological, conceptual, and strategic policies of the association, and even giving it the power to dissolve the association. As this position is connected to the *wali faqih*, it is considered to have legitimacy in *shari'a*..[63] Thus, unlike IJABI, these local associations implement a top-down leadership, giving authority to local *ustadh*, rather than making decisions through congress.

There is a desire among proponents of these local Shi'i organisations to found another national Shi'i organisation, different from IJABI in terms of religious and organisational principles, and using their local Shi'i associations as its model. This was seen in 2003 when the *ustadh* group in Jakarta established Forum Al-Husainy, which aims to assemble and unite nearly all renowned *ustadh* and activists in the capital city of Indonesia. With the involvement of key figures such as Husein Shahab and Hasan Daliel Al-Aydrus, this forum succeeded in bringing together the majority of *ustadh* and activists in the area. They attempted to organise various *da'wa* activities using, what they call, a spiritual, intellectual and social approach. The spiritual approach, for example, includes organising a monthly *dhikr* congregation in the Al-Bina Mosque in Jakarta. In terms of the intellectual approach, several series of *da'wa* training have been organised. In addition, *da'wa* activities have been undertaken using a social approach.[64] This forum, however, differs from the three local institutions, not least because of its emphasis on *da'wa* programmes rather than on the formulation of Statutes or other organisational apparatus. While IJABI is only supported by a small number of Shi'is in Indonesia, the majority of the country's *ustadh* and activists agree on the necessity to have a single national organisation that is recognised by all groups within the Shi'i community. Husein Shahab makes the point that that there is always an aspiration among Shi'i leaders to have a single umbrella organisation to ensure programmes of *da'wa*, education and culture achieve maximum results.[65]

To sum up, IJABI has achieved legal recognition from the government, resulting in the accumulation of symbolic capital and it exercises power in terms of its existence and activities. IJABI is based on the principal doc-

[63] Ali (2002:431-432)

[64] *Suara Umma* (1/1/2004:55-57)

[65] Husein Shahab, interview, (2/4/2004)

trines of Shi'ism, however, its operated in accordance with the principles of democracy, placing the highest authority in the hands of national congress. Despite its legal status, IJABI lacks support from the internal Shi'i community, and the *ustadh* in particular, who actively reject its nationally recognised position by employing a variety of strategies. The main reason for this rejection is IJABI's refusal to accept the concept *wilayat al-faqih* in its ideology. Consequently opponents have established local associations that may ultimately manifest as another national Shi'i organisation. This schism has its origins in the historical formation and structure of the Shi'i community in Indonesia.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUNNI RESPONSES

As shown, there are influential individuals and institutions within the Shi'i community in Indonesia that have, despite their small number, created opportunities to propagate the teachings of Shi'ism. However, there remain a number of obstacles to the growth and development of the Shi'is in Indonesia, the most significant being the responses to this growth by the majority Sunni Muslim community. These responses are complex and range from the extremely negative to the moderate. This chapter deals with the complex responses to Shi'ism and its development in Indonesia in the period of post-Iranian revolution. For details of the response by Sunni Arab descendants in the early 20th century, I have noted two books by Sayyid Uthman bin Yahya and Sayyid Hasan bin Shahab. These responses to Shi'ism are a direct result of the nature of Islam in the Indonesian society and state. The majority Muslim population is Sunni, but within this group there are reformist and traditionalist factions, with several related organisations. The chapter commences with an examination of the attitude of existing Islamic organisations in the country towards Shi'ism. Secondly, it will deal with the *fatwa* of the Indonesian '*ulama*', a religious authority in Indonesia. Thirdly, the chapter will consider the response of the Department of Religious Affairs (DEPAG) as a representative of the Indonesian government. Fourthly, it deals with the ways in which anti-Shi'i propagation is executed and also examines the tensions between Shi'i and Sunni groups in Indonesia. Finally, it will examine the moderate attitude of Muslim intellectuals that has provided a space for the spread of Shi'ism.

A. The General Attitude of Islamic Organisations

By and large, Indonesian Islam is characterised by the strong resistance of Muslim individuals, organisations, and institutions to Shi'ism and the Shi'is in Indonesia. The most active and negative response to the develop-

ment of Shi'ism comes from the reformist Muslim groups, such as Persis and Al-Irsyad, and those individuals and institutions linked to them.

Persis was established in 1923 and claims to follow the *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a* even though the intellectual works of its leading figures, including Ahmad Hassan (1887-1958), make little mention of this. The main purpose of Persis is to implement - through propagation and instruction - the pure teachings of Islam, based on the Qur'an and *Sunna* of the Prophet, in all aspects of Muslim life.[1] Persis emphasises the need to abolish all beliefs and practices which are considered contrary to these two principal sources of Islam. The history of this reformist Islamic organisation is littered with fierce attacks on the religious beliefs and rituals understood and practiced by traditionalists, who constitute the majority of the Indonesian Muslim population. Since its establishment, Persis has been "straightforward in its expression, and unrelenting, and [has] denounced or condemned others quite readily."[2]

There is no mention of Shi'ism to be found in any Persis publications in the pre-Iranian revolution era. This can be attributed firstly to a widespread ignorance about the existence of Shi'is in Indonesia at this time; and secondly, to Persis being focused on its concerns with traditionalist beliefs and practices, the developing ideologies of the state and with Christianity. However, within a matter of months after the victory of the Iranian revolution, we see Persis publications carrying articles related to Shi'ism. One of the initial responses to events was the inclusion of an article on *mut'a*[3] (literally, 'enjoyment', temporary marriage) in *Al-Muslimun*, the Persis magazine in Bangil. The article describes the classical arguments between the Sunni and Shi'i views on this topic and reiterates the validity of the Sunni perspective, which rejects the practice of *mut'a*. More importantly, however, this article indicates the emerging awareness among Persis members of the spread of Shi'ism in the country. Over the years, Persis has induced intense resistance to Shi'ism and Shi'is in Indonesia, using a variety of methods. Quite simply, Persis believes that Shi'ism is a heretical sect and it sees itself as the frontline in the fight to protect Sunni Muslims in Indonesia.[4] This resistance is most evident when analysing Persis's close

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[1] Federspiel (2001:87)

[2] Noer (1973:95)

[3] The title is "*Kawin Mut'ah di Negeri Iran*" (Mut'a in Iran) written by Sulhawi Rubba (July 1979).

[4] Abduh and Abu Huzaifah (1998:xiv-xviii). A. Ghozy, the head of *Pesantren* Persis in Bangil, affirmed that o[nly] Persis has declared Shi'is to be unbelievers (A. Ghozy, interview, 4/10/2002). Shi'ism has become a sensitive issue for Persis members. This is illustrated by my experiences during [an] interview with A. Ghozy. Eight other members of Persis attended,

links to *Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia* (Indonesian Islamic Missionary Council), known as DDII.

DDII is closely associated with the reformist Muslim group Indonesia, and is well-known for its very negative response to the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. The organisation's co-founder and first leader was Mohammad Natsir (1908-1993), who was a student of Ahmad Hassan, the leader of Persis, and a former leader of the Masyumi party. Since its establishment on 26 February 1967 DDII has been one of the most, (if not the most), active and progressive institutions in the field of *da'wa* in Indonesia. Its claims to be a unifying symbol of the *umma* and calls for cooperation between existing missionary institutions. DDII urges its missionaries to avoid *khilafiya* (disputed) matters, and instead expects them to promote those basic principles of Islam which are common to all Muslim factions, reformist and traditionalist. It believes this will prevent confusion among the laity and reduce the burden among the missionaries themselves.[5] DDII's anti-Shi'i propagation is a manifestation of the concept of *difa'* (self-defence) which is directed towards Christianisation (seen as an external threat) and '*paham-paham dan aliran-aliran sesat*' (the threat of heterodox ideological currents and religious views) such as secularism, *Islam Jamaah* (LDII), *Ahmadiya*, and also towards Shi'ism (seen as an internal threat).[6] DDII views Shi'ism as a heterodox sect even though the term *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a* is absent in its statute. DDII, and its related individuals and institutions, have organised a number of missionary activities for the purpose of protecting Indonesian Muslims from being influenced by Shi'ism or particular teachings of Shi'ism. It is widely accepted that DDII, along with its leaders and institutions, is one of the great opponents to the propagation of Shi'i teachings in Indonesia.

DDII established connections with Saudi Arabia, and specifically the Muslim World League (*Rabitat al-'alam al-islami*)[7], one of the vice-leaders of which was Natsir. From an international perspective, it is clear that the anti-Shi'i movement in Indonesia receives strong support from Middle Eastern countries, and Saudi Arabia in particular, whilst the Shi'i movement is supported by Iran. In this context, competition and conflict between Sunnis and Shi'is in Indonesia is fuelled by competition and tension over Muslim primacy, between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The relationship

misunderstanding the purpose of the interview. They had expected a debate on Shi'ism and seemed disappointed when I explained I was only gathering data on Persis' official opinion of Shi'ism.

[5] Husin (1998:142)

[6] Husin (1998:139-140)

[7] This organisation was founded in Mecca in 1962.

between these two countries was at its lowest ebb during the period of Khomeini's leadership, in the first decade following the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Iran's successfully established an Islamic state and claims to be the sole authority and representative of 'genuine' Islam. This, along with its attempts to propagate these beliefs to the whole Muslim world, was a direct challenge to the Saudi kingdom and its hold on the Muslim primacy. Iran's revolutionary message, opposes the Saudi regime - which Khomeini depicts "as oppressive and as the ally of other oppressive Muslim governments"[8] - and its brand of Islam, namely Wahhabism, seen by many as a false sect which aims "to create factionalism and division between the world's Muslim" and "to eliminate the history of Islam".[9] Aware of the growing influence of the Iranian revolutionary spirit, the Saudi's responded by promoting the message that Iran is an exporter of terrorism and imperialism, determined to destabilise the Gulf States.[10]

The dissemination of the Saudi brand of Islam, Wahhabism, by the Muslim World League is a particular source of tension. The promotion of Wahhabism has direct connections to a worldwide anti-Shi'i movement, also active in Indonesia. The Muslim World League owns periodicals, publishing houses, agencies and has missionaries scattered all over the world. It has organised meetings and financed Islamic centres, Islamic education, publication, and missionary activities in Indonesia.[11]

The second Muslim reformist organisation, known for its anti-Shi'i stance, is Al-Irsyad, a non-Sayyid Arab organisation, which was founded in 1914. Its anti-Shi'i attitude appears to run parallel to its anti-Sayyid activities, carried out through *Jami'at Khair,* to which Ahmad Surkati was affiliated. A simple explanation is that Al-Irsyad's anti-Shi'i sentiments are unsurprising given that a large number of Sayyids, (the organisation's long-standing enemy), adhere to Shi'i Islam. However, this explanation calls for refinement. Clearly theological reasons dominate the anti-Shi'i attitude of Al-Irsyad, coupled with its strong ties to anti-Shi'i groups in the Middle East. The reformist character of its religious doctrines are strongly influenced by Wahhabism, and there are strong historical and psychological factors which contribute to its prominent role in Indonesia's anti-Shi'i movement. It came as no surprise, then, that during Al-Irsyad's 36th National Conference, held in Pekalongan, Central Java, on 23-26 October 1996, the organisation appealed to the government to prohibit the spread

[8] Goldberg (1990:156)
[9] Goldberg (1990:156)
[10] Goldberg (1990:163)
[11] Goldberg (1990:164)

of Shi'ism in Indonesia.[12] The motion urges DEPAG and other government institutions to adopt a firm attitude:

> To prohibit Shi'ism and other streams contrary to the teachings of the Qur'an and *hadith* of the Prophet (may God grant him peace and salvation) in the whole *de jure* region of Indonesia and also all their activities in any forms, either ritual, printing, and publication etc. because in the long period it is worried that these will result in conflicts among the Muslims in Indonesia as adherents of the teachings of *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a*.[13]

In contrast, the largest reformist Muslim organisation in Indonesia - Muhammadiyah - appears to take a neutral stance to Shi'ism, in the sense that it does not get involved in promoting anti-Shi'i views to its members and Muslims at large. This is particularly true of the central board of Muhammadiyah, (although there is some evidence that local branches and members do conduct anti-Shi'i activities). Like the above-mentioned reformist associations, Muhammadiyah claims to follow the *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a,* however, its main concern, (since its establishment in 1912), appears to have been with promoting the necessity of Islamic renewal in Indonesia.[14] As Noer has pointed out, although the ideology of Muhammadiyah is similar to that of Persis, Muhammadiyah demonstrates a more patient attitude and shows more understanding towards others.[15] Since Muhammadiyah holds an influential position within Indonesian society, the fact that it refrains from participation in anti-Shi'i propagation is an interesting phenomenon. Even during the most well-attended anti-Shi'i seminar of 1997 the Muhammadiyah representative was notably absent among the speakers. However, this should not be taken as meaning that there are no Muhammadiyah scholars willing to enter into discussions about Shi'ism. A possible explanation is that the main priorities of Muhammadiyah are social, educational and *da'wa* activities rather than theological debates about Shi'ism. The divide between Sunnism and Shi'ism is a classical matter that has coloured the history of Islam. In a foreword to a book containing a collection of papers from this 1997 seminar,[16] the Muhammadiyah leader, Amien Rais, avoids mentioning the conclusions and recommendations of the seminar. Rather, the foreword emphasises that differences are unavoidable within the dynamics of Muslim society and that the Shi'is constitute a valid section of the Muslim *umma*. Instead

[12] Abduh and Abu Huzaifah (1998:xxi)

[13] Pimpinan Pusat Al-Irsyad Al-Islamiyyah (1996:32)

[14] Saleh (2001:75)

[15] Noer (1973:94-95)

[16] Abduh and Abu Huzaifah (1998:xii)

of judging Shi'ism as a false sect, as other reformist organisations might do, this important modernist Islamic organisation sympathetically calls on all Muslims to study Shi'ism critically, using the Qur'an and *hadith* as standards. Muhammadiyah is likely to maintain its moderate attitude towards Shi'ism given that its current chairman, Muhammad Din Syamsuddin, has close relations with Shi'i figures in Indonesia.

The largest traditionalist Islamic organisation in Indonesia, NU, demonstrates conflicting attitudes towards Shi'ism. Unlike the majority of the country's reformist organisations, NU does not tend to get involved in anti-Shi'i activities, despite claiming to be an ardent follower of the *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a* and probably the strictest Islamic organisation in Indonesia. NU holds the principle that while Shi'ism differs from Sunnism, it is still a part of the realm of Islam. Its priority is strengthening the teachings of Sunnism among its members and the Indonesian Muslim population at large. However, there has been a noticeable split in the attitudes of NU leaders towards Shi'ism among the NU leaders. On the one side there is an extremely negative attitude, upheld by several '*ulama*' of NU, who take part in anti-Shi'i activity. On the other side, there is the moderate attitude of those such as Abdurrahman Wahid and Said Agiel Siradj. A number of anti-Shi'i leaders and scholars point to the views, attitude and action of a number of NU leaders, (and in particular of Abdurrahman Wahid and Said Agiel Siradj), which they consider to promote Shi'i teachings to members of NU.[17] This contrast between those holding very negative views of Shi'ism and those with a more moderate opinion has led NU to institutionally abstain from opposing Shi'i propagation in Indonesia. Thus far, this position has characterised the dynamic development of the largest Islamic traditionalist organisation. However, the complexities of this issue deepen further given that some anti-Shi'i '*ulama*' belonging to NU are opponents of Abdurrahman Wahid's group within the organisation. This group of '*ulama*' have made Shi'ism 'a weapon' in their opposition to Abdurrahman Wahid's leadership. Also relevant is NU's view of religious tradition. NU, like adherents of Shi'ism, opposes Saudi Arabia's Wahhabist stance, which wants to abolish all traditionalist Islamic practices.

[17] For Abdurrahman Wahid's response to Shi'ism, see the last section of this chapter. Regarding Said Agiel Siradj, polemics concerning his alleged adherence to Shi'ism have appeared in a number of Indonesian national media. These polemics started when Said Agiel Siradj criticized the concept of Aswaja (*ahl al-sunna wa al-jamaá)* as formulated by the founder of the NU Hasyim Asyari. Several local NU '*ulama*' considered him a heretic and as a result he was dismissed from his position as vice-secretary of the Religious Advisory Council on the national board of NU.

Since its establishment in 1926, NU has come to see the Wahhabism promoted by Saudi Arabia, along with reformist organisations such as Persis and Al-Irsyad, as the 'great enemies' of traditionalist Muslims.

The above description only takes into account the general attitude of the central boards of these Muslim organisations. It appears that at the local level, branches of both NU and Muhammadiyah, (and actually nearly all local offices of Muslim organisations), tend to demonstrate a negative attitude towards Shi'ism. This can usually be explained by external factors such as local anti-Shi'i groups joining forces in their efforts to fight the spread of Shi'ism in their area. In East Java, for instance, '*ulama*' of NU, Muhammadiyah, Persis, in collaboration with the provincial branch of MUI, met in 1992 in the framework of preventing the dissemination of Shi'ism in the region.

To recap, it is clear that the response of Islamic organisations to Shi'ism is affected by a series of interconnected internal and external factors. Of the four organisations examined, the reformist Persis and Al-Irsyad demonstrate a very strong resistance to Shi'ism while NU and Muhammadiyah tend to have a more moderate response. The puritan character of Islamic organisations and the support of certain Middle East countries - in particular Saudi Arabia and its Wahhabism, which has similar puritan tendencies - all contribute to forming a strong negative response to Shi'ism. However, the strength of the response is clearly determined by the priorities and the focus of individual Islamic organisations. Muhammadiyah, for instance, differs from Persis and Al-Irsyad because of it tends to focus on social, educational and missionary programmes rather than theological discussions. The response of NU is also more accommodative and moderate. Theologically and institutionally, NU is unlikely to become a friend of the reformist groups, let alone Wahhabism, and therefore also unlikely to actively oppose the spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia. NU's main concerns have been with the strengthening of its membership and the Muslims community at large. However, the negative perception of Shi'ism upheld by some NU and Muhammadiyah figures, particularly at a local level, may become a potential source of negative responses to Shi'ism. Finally, we note that external factors also influence reactions to Shi'ism.

B. The Response of MUI

Majlis Ulama Indonesia (the Indonesian Council of 'Ulama'), known as MUI, was established in 1975 on the initiative of then President Suharto. The government regards it as an authoritative religious institution, particularly in respect of religious sects and denominations other than the

ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a (Sunnism) that is adhered to by the majority of Indonesian Muslims and the state. As implied, the government depends heavily on the *fatwa* (legal opinion) issued by the MUI. Any analysis of the response of the Indonesian '*ulama*' to Shi'ism, should also consider the *fatwa* of MUI related to this matter, "because the *fatwa* is an important instrument through which the 'ulama' express their authority".[18]

The position of Shi'ism in Indonesia is complicated by a number of intertwined political and religious aspects. On 8 March 1984, MUI held an annual national meeting in which, among other things, the position of Shi'ism was discussed. The result of the meeting was a recommendation (*tawsiya*), which reads as follows:

> Shi'ism as a stream existing in the Islamic world has principal differences from the Sunni *madhhab* (*ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a*) that is adhered to by the Indonesian Muslims. The differences, among others, are:
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> 1. Shi'ism rejects the *hadith* that is not narrated by the *ahl al-bayt* whereas *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a* does not differentiate them provided they fulfil the requirements [recommended by] the sciences of *hadith*.
> 2. Shi'ism views that the Imams are infallible, whilst *ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama'a* views them ordinary men who cannot escape from mistakes.
> 3. Shi'ism does not recognise *ijma'* without the existence of the Imams whereas *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a* recognises it without requiring the participation of 'imams'.
> 4. Shi'ism views that the establishment of leadership/government (imamate) as a pillar of the religion whereas the Sunnis (*ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a*) view it as public welfare with the goal of imamate being to guarantee and protect *da'wa* and the interest of *umma*.
> 5. Shi'ism in general does not recognise the caliphate of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, 'Umar bin Khattab, and 'Uthman bin 'Affan while *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a* recognises the four Rightly Guided Caliphs (Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman, and 'Ali bin Abi Talib).
>
> Considering the principal differences between Shi'ism and *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a* as mentioned above, especially regarding the difference on imamate (government), MUI appeals to the Indonesian Muslims who uphold *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a* to increase awareness of the possibility of the coming of streams that are based on the teachings of Shi'ism.[19]

Even though its general content resembles that of the circular previously issued by DEPAG, a major point of interest in this recommendation is that it neither deals with the legal opinion of Shi'ism in Islam nor defines the legal consequences for those who adhere to it and practise its teachings.

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[18] Kaptein (2004:116)

[19] Adlani *et al.* (1997:90)

Besides reiterating the usual arguments which illustrate the contrasts between the Sunni and Shi'i doctrines, the text only goes as far as to recommend that Sunni Muslims in Indonesia should not follow the teachings of Shi'i Islam. This issuance of a recommendation, not a *fatwa,* is unique and interesting. It is also of significance for Indonesia's Shi'is, because it does not judge Shi'ism to be a false brand of Islam whose teachings deviate from orthodox Islam. By implication then, existing Shi'is can, *de jure,* practice their beliefs and carry out their activities. Further, the recommendation means that no individual, group or institution can forbid the missionary efforts of Shi'ism in the country.

Scrutinising the various recommendations issued by MUI from 1975 to 1988, Mudzhar suggests that the recommendation on the Shi'i movement was issued in support of government policies.[20] One may question why it was necessary for MUI to give the recommendation on Shi'ism at the time. Mudzhar tried to explain the rationale behind the issuance by examining the socio-political development during early 1980s:

> We know that 1979 was the year of the Iranian revolution, which toppled the secular government of the Shah and replaced it with an Islamic one. Apparently the echo of that resounded beyond Iranian territories and reached Indonesia. It was rumoured that some Muslims youths were to be target of for the exportation of the ideas of the Iranian Islamic revolution. It was in this context that the government saw it necessary to take precautionary steps to prevent such Islamic revolutionary ideas from developing in the country, and it was also in this context that the MUI made it contribution to the efforts to preserve the establishment by issuing the *fatwa*. Thus, while the arguments of the *fatwas* were classical and theological in nature, the goals were contemporary and political. It is too obvious to ignore the fact that the actual concern of the *fatwa* was with the doctrine of the *imama* and nothing else.[21]

The recommendation was delivered to support government policy regarding its response to the export of revolutionary ideas. This is affirmed in a speech in 1984 given by the Minister of Religious Affairs, which reminded the '*ulama*' of the growing interest in Shi'ism and of Iran's efforts to spread its revolutionary ideas. At the same meeting, the Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security Affairs also emphasised these tendencies.[22] However, to deny the religious goal of the recommendation completely is misleading. At that time, '*ulama*' in Indonesia were aware of, or at least had heard of, the growing number of converts to Shi'i Islam among Muslim youths, the growing distribution and publication of Shi'i works,

[20] Mudzhar (1993:114)

[21] Mudzhar (1993:115)

[22] *Tempo* (17/3/1984:66)

and the increasing number of students studying in Iran.[23] Concerned with this situation, the '*ulama*' were motivated to formulate the *fatwa*. In other words, the issuing of the recommendation by MUI was aimed not only at supporting the government policy with respect to Iranian revolutionary ideas but also at preventing Indonesian Muslims from being influenced by teachings of Shi'ism and from conversion to Shi'i Islam.

This significant recommendation was a catalyst for controversy regarding Shi'ism in Indonesia. Both positive and negative reactions were forthcoming. The positive response was also the pragmatic response, that the recommendation reflected the reality occurring in the country following the success of the Iranian revolution. The step taken by the MUI was considered appropriate and important to defend the Sunni community from the influence of Shi'ism. The more radical and indeed negative elements believed MUI's recommendation to be ineffective since it had no legal effect. The struggle for the prohibition of Shi'ism in Indonesia continues to characterize this group today. The negative responses include regret that the recommendation was ever issued. The argument being that in fact it has achieved the opposite of what was intended, actually making Shi'ism more popular, because a growing number of people are now eager to learn about it.[24]

Reformist groups within Indonesia continue to urge MUI to issue a *fatwa* on the falsity of Shi'ism, even though its council has so far resisted these calls. In fact, at the national meeting of 1996, for instance, there were fresh appeals to reaffirm the 1984 recommendation.[25] For MUI, however, the 1984 recommendation remains its final and only statement on this matter. The position maintained by MUI's council, as K.H. Ali Yafie affirms, is simply to stress the principal differences between Sunnism and Shi'ism, as outlined in the 1984 recommendation.[26]

A second religious judgement made by MUI concerns the practice of *mut'a*, or temporary marriage, which is permitted in Shi'ism. In its attempt to solve the religious case in the Muslim community, the department on 11 October 1996 sent a letter to MUI with regard to the importance of issuing a *fatwa* on *mut'a*. The request is connected to the issue of *mut'a* spreading among the Muslims, particularly the above-mentioned case of Ali Hasan reported in the national mass media. But MUI has not delivered the requested *fatwa* until the following year. On 25 October 1997, the

[23] Natsir (1984:9-10)

[24] Natsir (1984:9-10)

[25] *Media Dakwah* (November 1997:41)

[26] *Media Indonesia* (5/10/1997)

fatwa commission of MUI held a meeting regarding the issue of a *fatwa* on the prohibition of *mut'a.* This followed a letter from the Secretary General of DEPAG (11 October 1996) requesting the *fatwa* and a letter and decision from the chairman of the Muslim association Ittihadul Muballighin (*Ittihad al-muballighin*, the Unity of Missionaries) on the prohibition of this marriage type. The subsequent *fatwa* issued by MUI includes the classical arguments against *mut'a* and also re-affirms the marriage law in Indonesia. The *fatwa* goes on to state that, first, *mut'a* is proscribed and, second, any person engaged in *mut'a* must be brought before a court, in accordance with the prevailing rules of law.[27]

MUI's issuance of the *fatwa* cannot be dissociated with the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. First, MUI states that the *fatwa* is a response to what it considers a growth in the practice of *mut'a* among Muslims in Indonesia, and in particular youths and students. Second, according to MUI, there has been anxiety and unrest among parents, '*ulama*', leaders, educators, and the wider Muslim community, that the practice of *mut'a* is being used as a means of Shi'i propagation in Indonesia. Third, MUI affirms that the majority of Muslims in Indonesia are Sunnis who reject Shi'ism in general and its teaching of *mut'a* in particular.[28] This clearly shows a link between the *fatwa* and a controversial seminar on the falsity of Shi'ism that was organised in 1997, and which is described above.

Unlike the seminar, MUI's *fatwa* did not attract a significant response from the Muslim community. This can be explained by a number of reasons: First, MUI's judgement of the widespread practice of *mut'a* is questionable because some '*ulama*', including K.H. Ali Yafie, doubt the relevance of issuing the *fatwa*, given that the matter is already dealt with clearly in the Islamic law understood by the majority of Muslims in the country. In fact, moderate Muslim intellectuals, such as Abdurrahman Wahid and Nurcholish Madjid, seem to ignore both the practice of *mut'a* and the issuance of the *fatwa*. The issue of *mut'a* also emerged at the National conference of NU in November 1997, about one month after the issuance of MUI's *fatwa*. Although the conference concluded that *mut'a* is forbidden, unauthentic and to be rejected, interestingly, as Barton and Feilard have shown, the Shi'i permissibility of *mut'a* "did not in itself provoke a major outcry at this national gathering ... [and] did not seem to represent automatic grounds for its rejection."[29] Second, this focus on and rejection of *mut'a* may be regarded as a part of the anti-Shi'i movement promoted

[27] Adlani *et al.* (1997:125)

[28] Adlani *et al.* (1997:123)

[29] Barton and Feilard (1999:26)

mainly by certain circles of the reformist Islamic group. In fact, some of those active during the meeting of Ittihadul Muballighin suggested that MUI members are speakers for and proponents of the anti-Shi'i movement in general. Thus, we see the issue of *mut'a* being used as a weapon to oppose the spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

The local branches of MUI also provided responses to Shi'ism, however, essentially they were in line with the views of the central institution. On 2 August 1993, for instance, MUI in East Java held a meeting in Surabaya, which invited the '*ulama*' from various Muslim organisations, including NU, Muhammadiyah and Persis, as well as the Al-Bayyinat Foundation, (an anti-Shi'i organisation). The meeting was led by a well-known anti-Shi'i figure, K.H. Misbach, chairman of the provincial board of MUI and head of the DDII branch of East Java.[30] Originally, the purpose of the meeting was to discuss a question relating to the Court of East Java and Husein Al-Habsyi's Quran commentary book, in English, *Did the Prophet Frown?* However, the meeting developed into a forum for the discussion and judgement of Shi'ism.

At the meeting, some participants presented their views on Shi'ism from theological perspectives while others described the development of the Shi'is in East Java, and in particular in Bangil, where Husein Al-Habsyi lived and headed his famous *pesantren*. It is evident from the dialogue at the meeting that the most negative views were expressed figures from Al-Bayyinat and Muhammadiyah. Muhammad Baabdullah of Al-Bayyinat of Bangil, for instance, stated that Shi'i doctrines are more dangerous than Zionism and that Shi'is do not have the right to live in Indonesia, a country where the state ideology is based on *Pancasila* (the Five Principles). Similarly, Muammal Hamidy of Muhammadiyah was of the opinion that all Shi'i activities should be outlawed as they were clearly causing an uneasiness within the community. Hamidy also proposed that the provincial branch of MUI should establish a team to scrutinise the characteristics of this false religion. K.H. Rochim Noer, the head of Muhammadiyah in East Java, shared Baabdullah's opinion that the Shi'is are disbelievers, at the same time backing Hamidy's proposal to form a team to scrutinise Shi'ism and the Shi'is, as well as the reasons for their going astray. The meeting of MUI in East Java approved this motion.[31]

Various responses to the MUI meeting followed. The editor of *Aula*, a magazine of NU in East Java, criticised the product of the meeting as a non-progressive achievement given that on 9 January 1992 MUI in

[30] Amsyari (1994:155)

[31] *Aula* (September 1993:24-28)

East Java had already cited and distributed the 1984 recommendation on Shi'ism. The *Aula* editor argued that rather than establish a team to scrutinise the perceived threat of Shi'ism in the region, the provincial MUI should produce a plan of action because the national MUI had already formulated a clear recommendation on Shi'ism.[32]

The issuance of the interrelated recommendation and *fatwa* clearly shows a tolerance by the central board of MUI for the expression of religious authority in Indonesia. This accommodation reflects not only the different elements - reformist (modernist) and traditionalist '*ulama*' - within the council but also the different and contradictory responses of Islamic organisations and individuals to Shi'ism. Generally speaking, the 1984 recommendation is a much clearer expression of MUI's moderate attitude than the *fatwa* on the prohibition of *mut'a*, which can be seen as accommodating the reformist elements of the organisation. It is pertinent to note that another controversial *fatwa* was issued by MUI in 2005, also dealing with *mut'a.* However, this *fatwa* explicitly avoids any reference to Shi'ism, most likely because of the influence of moderates within MUI.

C. The Response of DEPAG

The position of DEPAG, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, as the representative of the Indonesian government, is an important one in our analysis. In general, DEPAG carries out research and investigations into controversial religious groups and subsequently produces a formal report and opinion. DEPAG is also responsible for maintaining harmony in Indonesian society and it does so by implementing the concept of the 'trilogy of religious harmony', which was pioneered by the former Minister Alamsjah Ratu Perwiranegara (in the period of 1978-1983). This concept promotes harmony between different religious adherents, harmony between adherents of the same religion, and harmony between religious adherents and the government.[33] It should follow then, that DEPAG also views Shi'ism from the perspective of the trilogy of religious harmony. However, since the majority of Indonesian Muslims are Sunni, DEPAG is predominantly Sunni, with almost all ministers, officials and staff adhering to Sunnism. Consequently, DEPAG actually categorises the presence of Shi'ism in Indonesia as a threat to religious harmony in the country and a religious problem that needs to be solved. The matter is further complicated by the fact that Shi'ism is frequently associated with Iranian revolutionary ideology. Like many Muslim countries in the world, the attitude of the

[32] *Aula* (October 1993:55)

[33] Ratu Prawiranegara (1982:27)

Indonesian government towards the Shi'is, particularly in 1980s, was interspersed with a fear of the export of revolutionary ideas.

There are a number of cases regarding Shi'ism which have attracted the attention and energies of DEPAG. However, two of them in particular warrant further examination. The first case from 1982, is in respect of Abdul Qadir Bafaqih, a Shi'i teacher in Bangsri, Central Java. Following reports that Bafaqih was a Shi'i *ustadh,* teaching Shi'ism in the area, DEPAG's Body of Research and Development investigated and presented its findings to the Minister, on 10 November 1982. The report details research findings about the *ustadh*, his Shi'i teachings and missionary activities, as well as the reactions of local Islamic leaders. In addition, it provides the Minister advice regarding the action to be taken with regard to this religious case. This report makes three important recommendations, which are also crucial to our understanding of the attitude of the Indonesian government towards Shi'ism. First, from a religious point of view, Shi'ism cannot be forbidden because it is widely recognised in the Islamic world. Second, action should be taken to withdraw and forbid further distribution of recordings of Bafaqih's religious preaching among adherents of Sunnism. Third, the Provincial Office of Religious Affairs was advised to approach and guide members of this new Islamic group in order that they adapt to the religious life of the majority Sunni community.

Further, the Inspectorate General of the same ministry was entrusted with the task of investigating the case further. In the Inspectorate General's report to the Minister, on 27 December 1982, a similar description of Abdul Qadir Bafaqih's religious teachings and activities was provided, however in this case there was more emphasis on the social and political aspects of the case. First, there was no evidence of political inclination in the activities of the *ustadh* or the possibility for 'the third party'(Iran) to use them for its political interest. Second, the report describes how the activities of the *ustadh* created tension between the *ustadh* and local '*ulama*', even though there was no evidence of this provoking public reactions. However, the Inspectorate concluded that the situation had potential to get worse, and so it urged that special guidance, provided by the apparatus of the DEPAG, be carried out for the students of the *ustadh*, with a view to them living in harmony with other members of the Muslim community.

These two formal reports provide us with important observations. First, religious opinion is avoided in the reports. In other words, they demonstrate a neutral attitude towards the newly emerged Islamic group. No judgement is made about whether Shi'ism is a true Islamic school. Second, it illustrates the primary concern of the authority - religious harmony among different Islamic groups in the country. The third point is

its emphasis on the possible political implications of this religious case, namely that somehow there is a connection with the export of Islamic revolutionary ideas from Iran.

The second case is the textual study on *Yaumul Quds*, the magazine published by the Iranian Embassy. At the request of the Attorney General, in the mid 1980's DEPAG's Body of Research and Development conducted research and provided a recommendation on the content of the magazine. In its scrutiny, after providing a long summary of the magazine, the Body points out that only one article, on *walayat* (sovereignty), had the potential to create problems in the religious life of society and the state, and it recommended that the article in question should be censored. In a formal letter to the Attorney General, on 15 January 1986, the Body provides the Attorney General with more detailed reasons for its recommendation: First, the article contains inappropriate terms. Second, it interprets Qur'anic verses out of context and without connecting them with the *asbab al-nuzul* (occasions of revelation). Third, its interpretation of the Qur'anic verses is at odds with the religious comprehension of majority of Indonesian Muslims. Fourth, it suggests that the article is meant to spread the teachings of Shi'ism in Indonesia, and therefore is at risk creating disorder in religious life, not least because the article has the potential to become the religious basis for political activity. Fifth, its publication in the Indonesian language can be seen as an attempt to distribute Iranian revolutionary ideas in the country.[34]

These two cases demonstrate a clear concern by DEPAG for the social order within Indonesian society and with the political implications of the spread of Shi'ism in the country. The department recommends censoring the abovementioned article because of what it believes to be both the social and political implications of its distribution. For DEPAG, the fact that the magazine was published by the Iranian Embassy, well-known for its desire to propagate revolutionary ideas to other countries, serves as confirmation that their judgement is correct.

Providing solutions to religious problems is not the only duty of the DEPAG. As we will see below, the department also takes on a preventative role with regard to the spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia. This is demonstrated by the issuance of a specific *Surat Edaran* (circular), which can be considered as a reflection of the official view of DEPAG on Shi'ism. The circular, entitled *Hal Ihwal Mengenai Golongan Syi'ah* (Particulars on the Shi'i Groups), was issued on 5 December 1983 by the Director General

[34] *Pusat Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kehidupan Beragama* (1985/1986:81-82, 1986/1987:65-66)

of Community Guidance and Hajj Affairs, with approval of the Minister, Munawir Sjadzali (1925-2004). The circular was intended for internal departmental distribution only. It states that the department needs to provide its civil servants with information about Shi'ism and its differences with Sunnism. The subtext is that the department wants to protect all its civil servants from the influence of Shi'ism. The circular, which was sent to all sections within the department, is meant to be a manual for civil servants in carrying out their duties. Moreover, there is a political rationale for issuing the circular, namely "in the framework of warding off every irresponsible negative effort through the strife of religion that may be able to rock the national stability and tenacity...."[35]

In order to fully understand the official view of DEPAG, it is necessary to further examine the contents of this circular. Its introduction provides an historical description of the emergence of three groups within the Muslim *umma* following the death of Prophet Muhammad, namely the majority Sunnis, the Shi'is, and the *khawarij* (seceders from the ranks of the partisans of Ali). It then provides an explanation of the four main divisions within Shi'ism, namely the *Zaydiyya* - said to be the most moderate of the Shi'i sects and the closest to Sunnism - , the *Isma'iliyya* (*Sab'iyya* or 'Sevener'), the *Imamiyya* and the *Ghulat* - the 'extremists' that deviate from the true teachings of Islam.

We need to pay particular attention to the DEPAG description of *Imamiyya* Shi'ism, which is followed in Indonesia, Iran and by the majority of Shi'is in the world. DEPAG suggest that this Shi'i sect has several characteristics: First, its followers believe that Abu Bakr and 'Umar usurped Ali's right to the caliphate, so consequently *Imamiyya* Shi'is frequently denounce the two caliphs in their religious teachings. Second, they place Ali in a higher position than human beings in general, namely as a mediator between man and God. Third, some followers of this sect even believe that Ali and other Imams have divine attributes. Fourth, they believe that the Imams are infallible of both major and minor sins. Fifth, they do not recognise the consensus of opinion among the '*ulama*' as a principle of Islamic law unless it is approved by the Imams. As a result, neither *ijtihad* nor the use of rational opinion is applied in their interpretation of Islamic law. Sixth, they permit the practice of *mut'a*. Seventh, they believe that the dead Imams will return to this world before Judgement Day to wipe out all evils and punish all of their opponents.

This explanation clearly indicates a poor understanding of the principal doctrines of *Imamiyya* Shi'ism. These misleading views may contribute

[35] Surat Edaran (5/12/1983)

to a negative attitude among the civil servants of the department towards Shi'ism and the Shi'is. The circular goes on to state:

> All those [mentioned above] are not in accord with and even contrary to the true teachings of Islam. In the teachings of Imamiyya Shi'ism thought cannot develop, *ijtihad* is not permitted. All has to wait for and depends upon the Imam. Between the common people and the Imam there is a wide, gaping gap or distance, which is a fertile place for all kinds of *khurafat* [superstition] and *takhayul* [heresy] deviating from the teachings of Islam.

Two serious mistakes are contained in the above explanation, in the sense that it contradicts the historical reality of the Shi'is. First, it is generally accepted that Islamic thought in the Shi'i world, particularly its philosophical aspects, continues to develop, and in fact can be said to be more developed than Islamic thought in the Sunni world. Second, *ijtihad* is always open in Shi'i Islam and there is a need for the continued existence of a *mujtahid,* (a religious scholar who has achieved the level of competence necessary to practise *ijtihad*), given that the laity must follow a living *marja' al-taqlid* - a *mujtahid* - recognised as a source of emulation in matters of religious law. This has resulted in close ties between '*ulama*' and lay people in the Shi'i world. All the misperceptions found in the circular clearly originate from a failure to understand the key concept of imamate in Shi'ism and from an ignorance of the historical reality of the Shi'is.

However, the most significant part of DEPAG's circular is its statement that Muslims in Indonesia are the followers of *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a*, whose views differ from those of the Shi`is. In the context of the response to the Shi'is in Indonesia, the link between DEPAG's circular and the previously described recommendation of MUI, (which was issued some months after the issuance of the circular), cannot be ignored.[36]

[36] Despite the official anti-Shi'i view of the department, the Ministers of Religious Affairs have been accused by anti-Shi'i groups of having paved the way for the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. The late Munawir Sjadzali who occupied the position of minister for two periods (1983-1993) is said to have shocked the religious authority through his 're-actualisation' of Islamic law project. Anti-Shi'i groups saw the spread of Shi'ism as a side effect of Munawir Sjadzali's 're-actualisation' of Islam, as the following quote shows: "In the mean time the 'needle' of Shi'ism slowly but surely is stabbed into the youth bodies with the enticement of *mut'a* that is permitted, whereas all this time this type of fornication with the label of religion was not known" (*Media Dakwah* November 1997:41). For the re-actualisation of Islam in Indonesia, see Van Dijk (1991). A different accusation was directed to Quraish Shihab. When he became the Minister of Religious Affairs for some months at the end of Suharto's presidency in early 1998, M. Quraish Shihab was accused of being a Shi'i. He was considered to have played an important role in influencing the MUI's attitude to Shi'ism (Jaiz 2002:114). LPPI distributes a brochure entitled *Syiah dan Quraish Shihab* (Shi'ism and Quraish Shihab), which

We should bear in mind that DEPAG is not an institution of '*ulama*', and so it cannot produce *fatwa* or religious judgements that bind the community. The department carries out its duty in providing solutions to existing religious problems and in its prevention of the possible emergence of new religious problems in the Indonesian society and nation. Thus, DEPAG can only request that MUI make recommendations on Shi'ism and issue *fatwa* on *mut'a,* for example. These requests must be based on considerations of the religious life of Muslim society, and in particular with a view to resolving problems between Sunnis and Shi'is in order to promote religious harmony in the country.

D. Anti-Shi'i Propagations

With regard to the Sunni-Shi'i relations in Indonesia, a large number of activities have been undertaken by anti-Shi'i groups for the purpose of preventing or reducing the spread of the teachings of Shi'ism in Indonesia. These missionary activities include publishing, seminars or discussions, appealing to government authorities, and preaching carried out by the reformist group, in particular DDII and its missionaries and related institutions. Among other attempts to reduce or to compete with the growth of Shi'ism in Indonesia, the publication of anti-Shi'i works has been of major importance. Coser affirms that, like its opponent, the anti Shi'i group realises the great importance of books as "carriers and disseminators of ideas."[37] The publication of books in the vernacular is meant to provide Indonesian Muslims with Sunni views on Shi'ism, in the hope that they will be less susceptible to the teachings of Shi'ism and thus less likely to convert. These publications are also intended to compete with

includes a statement by a friend of Shihab's in Cairo that Shihab often defends Shi'ism. This has become a controversial issue in the Indonesian media, requiring the chairman of MUI, Hasan Basri, to clarify that Quraish Shihab is not a Shi'i but he refuses to regard the Shi'is as infidels (*Jawa Pos*; *Republika; Media Indonesia; Terbit* 27/3/1998). The head of LPPI, M. Amin Djamaluddin showed me another manuscript which was to be published in the event that Quraish Shihab would have been reappointed in President Habibie's cabinet (1998-1999). Shihab's denials that he is a Shi'i can be found, for instance, in *Terbit* (17/3/1998). A large number of opinions are published in the media (for instance, *Terbit* 20/3/1998, 26/3/1998, 31/3/1998, *Media Indonesia* 12/4/1998) including a long article entitled "*MUI, Quraish Shihab, dan Seputar Isu Syi'ah*" (MUI, Quraish Shihab, and On the Subject of Shi'i Issue) by Tontowy Djauhari Hamzah (*Terbit* 18/4/1998). All the writers ask him to prove his opposition to Shi'ism. NU however supports Shihab. It is stated in *Aula* that the issue is raised due to the political interests of certain individuals or group (*Aula* April 1998:66).

[37] Coser (1982:362)

the growing number of Shi'i works, particularly those translated from the Arabic, English and Persian originals. In other words, publishing has been used as a means of anti-Shi'i propagation for the purpose of protecting Sunni Muslims in the country from being influenced by the growing Shi'i missionary activities. In this regard, Mohammad Natsir and other Muslim leaders in the country were truly aware of the growing phenomenon. Natsir once wrote: "In the meantime begins the publication of books and brochures on Shi'ism in Indonesian. Some are original works, others are translations from Arabic and English books. They are published in West Java, Central Java, and East Java etc. and get a wide market of readers particularly among our youths."[38]

The anti Shi'ism literature were certainly works strongly rejecting the existence of Shi'ism and its teachings, (supported by both textual and rational proofs). However, it leans heavily on translations, of Arabic originals, of the most famous anti-Shi'i works, because no Indonesian '*ulama*' and leaders were able to produce such works themselves. Through the international network established by the reformist leaders, a choice was made for the popular anti-Shi'i works in the Middle East written by Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib (1886-1969) and Ihsan Ilahi Zahir (d. 1987). Al-Khatib was born in Damascus and, from 1920, took up permanent residence in Cairo, where he became one of the most resolute advocates of Wahhabism. This was a direct result of the great influence of the writings of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1323) on his educational background. Al-Khatib was a journalist, commentator, editor and publisher of his own periodicals, *al-Zahra* (1924-1929) and *al-Fath* (1926-1948), and he also produced editions of classical Arabic books and Wahhabi writings. He had a fiercely negative stance towards Shi'ism and strongly opposed any attempts to reach rapprochement and conciliation between Sunnism and Shi'ism.[39] Zahir was described as "the most prolific Sunni polemicist in recent years."[40] He was the editor of the Islamic journal, *Tarjuman al-Hadith* (the Hadith Interpretations) published in Lahore and the secretary-general of *Jam'iyyat ahl al-hadith* (Society of People of Hadith), a Wahhabi movement. When a bomb exploded during a rally by the movement in Lahore on March 1987 he was fatally wounded and died a few days later in Riyadh. He was buried in Medina.[41] Regarding the translation and publication of his books, on March 1986, Zahir visited Indonesia, including Surabaya, where he became acquainted with a translator of his books, Bey Arifin, and

[38] Natsir (1984:9)

[39] Brunner (2004:255-256)

[40] Ende (1990:226)

[41] Ende (1990:226)

the director of Bina Ilmu Publisher, who published Zahir's works in Indonesian. Like his predecessor, Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib, Zahir was strongly anti-Shi'i and an opponent of all Sunni sympathisers who promoted ideas of rapprochement, in particular the *Jam'iyyat al-taqrib bayn al-madhahib al-islamiyya* (the Society of Rapprochement between the Islamic Denominationalism), established in Cairo in 1947.[42]

The most influential of these translated anti-Shi'i works, were those by Zahir. The most important of his books translated into Indonesian include *Salah Faham Sunnah Syi'ah* ('Sunni Shi'i Misunderstanding', 1983), *Syiah dan Sunnah*[43] (Shi'ism and Sunnism, 1984), and *Syi'ah Berbohong atas nama Ahlul Bait* (The Shi'is Lie in the Name of Ahl al-Bayt, 1987). These are followed by al-Khatib's *al-Khutut al-Arida,*(The Broad Outlines) which was translated into Indonesian under the title *Mengenal Pokok-pokok Ajaran Syiah Al-Imamiyah dan Perbedaannya dengan Ahlussunnah*[44] ('Introducing Principal Teachings of Imamiyya Shi'ism and their Difference from Those of Sunnism', 1985). The foreword of this book was written by Muhammad Nasif, the then secretary general of the Muslim World League. It is important to note that al-Khatib regards Shi'ism as a religion outside Islam rather than a *madhhab* within Islam. It is true that these books are distributed widely in Islamic institutions, organisations and libraries throughout Indonesia and this has made them very popular among large segments of Indonesian Muslim society, including Sunni and Shi'i scholars. Their popularity is indicated by the fact that they are frequently, if not always, referred to when Sunni Muslims in the country discuss Shi'ism. The front cover of Zahir's *Syiah dan Sunnah* states: "*Buku ini Dibagikan dengan Cuma-Cuma Tidak Untuk Diperjualbelikan"* (This book is distributed for free, Not for sale). This indicates an absence of commercial interest in the publication of these books. In fact, an introductory note by the translator Bey Arifin to his book *Shi'ism and Sunnism*, (1984), suggests that the Muslim World League, a Saudi-based organisation, promoted and financed the translation and publication of the books: "The Muslim World League Centre in Mecca al-Mukarrama with its letter no.1/6/16 on 23 Safar 1404H through the Muslim World League Office

[42] Ende (1990:226)

[43] The English version, *The Shi'ites and the Sunna*, was printed at Lahore in 1984.

[44] Its English translation is entitled *Al-Khutoot Al-'Areedah: Exposition and Refutation of the Sources upon which the Shiite Religion is Based*, printed by the Islam Information Centre, South Netherlands, in 1983. This indicates the spread of anti-Shi'i propagation in Europe. Takim also notes the intense anti-Shi'i propagation via publications in America (Takim 2000:470).

in Jakarta with its letter no.133/VII/1404 on 8 December 1983 requested me to translate the book *al-Shi'a wa al-Sunna* into Indonesian."[45]

Even though there is as yet no quantitative data on the Indonesian versions of Arabic anti-Shi'i works, we can assume that the number has increased since the 1980s. However, they are still no match for the plethora of Shi'i works. To mention but a few of the most popular in Indonesia: Muhammad Malullah's *Syiah dan Pemalsuan Al-Qur'an* ('Shi'ism and Falsification of the Qur'an') published in 1982 by Pustaka Mantik in Jakarta, Muhammad al-Tunsawi's *Beberapa Kekeliruan Akidah Syi'ah* ('Several Mistakes of Shi'i Doctrine') and Abu al-Hasan al-Nadwi's *Dua Wajah Saling Menentang antara Ahlu Sunnah dan Syi'ah* ('Two Opposing Faces between Sunnism and Shi'ism'), both published by Bina Ilmu, Surabaya in 1984 and 1987 respectively. The tendency continues today with different types of publications, from brochures to voluminous works, and with different tones, from provocative to more moderate. The most important of which might be As-Salus's *Ensiklopedi Sunnah-Syiah* ('Sunni-Shi'i Encyclopaedia'), originally consisting of four volumes of Arabic work. The encyclopaedia was praised by Muhammad Hidayat Nurwahid, the current spokesman of the Indonesian People's Consultative Assembly and prominent leader of PKS, in his introductory notes to the publication. Hidayat Nurwahid, who is known to have a negative attitude towards Shi'ism, claims that this book is a "serious and scientific work, which can fulfil the scarcity of authoritative literature on Shi'ism."[46]

A recently translated work, Al-Buhairi's *Gen Syi'ah* ('Gene of Shi'ism', 2001), is probably the most provocative of the anti-Shi'i works published in Indonesia.[47] The author, who is motivated by his strong anti-Shi'i attitude, came from Mecca to Indonesia looking for a translator for his work.[48] Al-Buhairi has good connections with the reformist organisation Al-Irsyad.[49] Furthermore, as he admits, his motivation for writing the book was his personal experiences of the existence of Shi'is in India and Indonesia.[50] Al-Buhairi invites, or even challenges, Sunni scholars to hold a dialogue or debate with their Shi'i counterparts and he has even offered to cover

[45] Arifin (1984:11)

[46] Nurwahid (2001:xii)

[47] Its full title is *Gen Syi'ah: Sebuah Tinjauan Sejarah, Penyimpangan Aqidah dan Konspirasi Yahudi* published by Darul Falah Publisher in Jakarta. Its original is Arabic *al-Shi'a, minhum 'alayhim* (The Shi'is: from them on them).

[48] Bashari (2001:vii)

[49] Al-Buhairi (2001:300)

[50] Al-Buhairi (2001:xi-xii)

any expenses that such an event incurred.[51] Significantly, the translation of Al-Buhairi's book is the only publication to have been criticised by Indonesian Shi'is. For example, the book is heavily criticised on the website of the Fatimah Foundation.[52] Thus its contents warrant further review. The content of the book is summarised by the translator in his introductory notes as follows:

> Shi'ism was bred by Jews, raised by Zoroastrians, supported by Christians and Hindus, contributed by Romans and Greeks, and financed by colonisers. Led by the liars or ignoramuses. Metaphorically, Shi'ism is a name of cake of which the ingredients consist of Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Rome and Greek religion.
>
> Another finding is that Shi'ism and lie are inseparable like twin. Lying is compulsory for Shi'is, paradise can only be gained by lies whilst hell is gained by a frank, just, and honest attitude.
>
> The Shi'i is a collection of stupid people, seen from the spectacles of the Qur'an and Tradition of the Messenger of God (may God grant him peace and salvation). They, says Ustadh Mamduh, are *Baqarun bila Qurun* (cows without horns), meaning man's head but cow's brain.[53]

None of such works contain positive or even moderate views on Shi'ism. Two general, but related, points can be drawn from their content. Firstly, emphasis is placed on controversies between the two *madhhab*, but with no intention of providing rapprochement. Secondly, the main issues of these controversies remain the same as those of past disputes. Ende correctly subsumes the interrelated topics on which the Sunni interpretation disagrees with Shi'ism including: 1) the Qur'an, Shi'i interpretation, and alleged distortion (*tahrif*) of its text, 2) the authenticity and Shi'i view of *hadith*, 3) the Shi'i view of the Prophet's companions, 4) the history and Shi'i concept of imamate, 5) certain legal norms, in particular *mut'a* (temporary marriage), 6) the Shi'i teaching of *taqiyya*, and 7) certain Shi'i religious rituals.[54] The same topics of controversy have also coloured the books written by Indonesian anti-Shi'i authors whose interpretations rely heavily on the mentioned Sunni polemical works.

The reformist groups not only publish translated works but also produce their own anti-Shi'i writings. Apart from being greatly influenced by the above-mentioned works, these writings can be considered superficial. By and large, the anti-Shi'i works written by Indonesian Islamic scholars are articles published in reformist periodicals and booklets. A large number

[51] Al-Buhairi (2001:299-300)

[52] See www.fatimah.org

[53] Bashari (2001:ix)

[54] Ende (1990:221-222)

of articles are to be found in *Al-Muslimun* of Bangil; from September 1979 to January 1998 there are 32 titles of anti-Shi'i articles published in this reformist magazine. This is the largest number among the existing Islamic periodicals. In addition, polemical works in the national media indicate the dynamic opposition to the Shi'is in the country.

The works can be classified into two categories: a general category covering the rejection of Shi'ism as a valid *madhhab* in the context of Islamic orthodoxy; and a specific category dealing with particular aspects of Sunni-Shi'i controversies. Indonesian anti-Shi'ism publications began to appear in 1984, the year that DDII published two booklets, the institution's *Soal Syi'ah* (On Shi'ism) and Rasjidi's *Apa Itu Syi'ah* (What is Shi'ism), which point out false teachings of Shi'ism. It should be noted that Rasjidi, a former Minister of Religious Affairs (12 March 1946 - 2 October 1946), professor of Islamic law at the University of Indonesia, Muhammadiyah activist, Masyumi figure, and a vice chairman of DDII is one of Indonesia's Muslim leaders who is greatly concerned about the anti-Shi'i propagation. To borrow Azra's term, Rasjidi was a guardian of the faith of the *umma* against Christianity and heterodox currents.[55] In the years following the Iranian revolution, Rasjidi became an active speaker at Sunni-Shi'i discussions held around the country and produced several polemical works on the subject. Rasjidi's booklet, which includes the circular by DEPAG as its appendix, generally deals with those topics which are sources of past Sunni-Shi'i controversy, so it is not necessary to describe its content here. However, his conclusion is of importance as it directly relates to Islam in the Indonesian social context. Rasjidi writes:

> We the Indonesian are given great blessing and true guidance with Islam by God, the Creator of the sky. We thank God that the Islam we adhere to is Sunni Islam, which is based on the existing, and the only one, Qur'an and the *hadith* that has been scrutinised, selected, and specified in detail by *hadith* scholars from Bukhari [d.870], Muslim [d.815], Abu Daud [d.889], Nasa'i [d.915], Turmudhi [d.892], until Ibn Majah [d.886].[56]

The late Rasjidi, was a polemicist, educated in Cairo, at the Sorbonne and in Canada. In the 1970s he became involved in a polemic with Nurcholish Madjid on the idea of secularisation. Following MUI's 1984 recommendation on Shi'ism, Rasjidi wrote a short article entitled "a mere

[55] Azra (1994)

[56] Rasjidi (1984:45). These scholars produced *hadith* collections namely *al-Sahih, al-Sahih, al-Sunan, al-Sunan, al-Jami' al-Sahih,* and *al-Sunan* respectively which are commonly called *al-kutub al-sitta* (the six books).

contribution on Shi'ism", which was published in *Tempo*[57] and in a slightly different version in *Al-Muslimun.*[58] The article was intended to expand on Ahmad Ghazali's criticism of the MUI recommendation.[59] In it Rasjidi restated the classical Sunni description of Shi'ism, mainly based on Zahir's polemical works, and stressed the essential influence of Persian political culture on religious doctrines of Shi'ism. Rasjidi - reflecting the attitude of Sunni Muslims in general and of DDII - mixed up the topics of Shi'ism and war in the article, blaming Iran for the Iran-Iraq conflict. He concluded: "This is what I want to contribute to Indonesian Muslims. We do not hate the Shi'is but we do not accept their doctrine that is contrary to the pure Islamic doctrine, the Sunni doctrine."[60]

Criticisms from Shi'i adherents, albeit many anonymously, followed. One of the fiercest critics of Rasjidi was Agus Abubakar Arsal Al-Habsyi, who provides us with strong arguments to suggest that Rasjidi makes a number of fatal mistakes in his analysis of Shi'i doctrines, teachings and history. Let me take one example:

> In the paragraph seven it is written: "Imam in Shi'ism means political leader ..." and so on. From all Shi'i literature that I have once read, never did I find such a definition. Or maybe Mr. Rasjidi has other references. In the Imamiyya Shi'i understanding, an Imam has the task of carrying out the same duty as a prophet does. Like prophets, Imams are the people chosen by God through His prophet's appointment. The only difference is that prophets receive revelation and Imams, through a special gift, receive the prophet's commands. Thus, a prophet is God's messenger, an Imam is prophet's messenger.[61]

Other critics include Ali Muchsin and Ibrahim Abdullah Assegaf who use their writings to demonstrate a number of errors and misperceptions by Rasjidi.[62], (although their arguments are perhaps not as compelling as Al-Habsyi's). Interestingly, Rasjidi only refuted the writings of Ali Muchsin and Ibrahim Assegaf, ignoring Al-Habsyi's arguments. In his refutation, published in *Al-Muslimun*, Rasjidi suggests that Ali Muchsin has in fact made mistakes in his writing. Reiterating a common understanding on certain teachings of Shi'ism, Rasjidi claims that both Assegaf and Muchsin appear not to comprehend the principal difference between Shi'ism and

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[57] *Tempo* (12/5/1984)

[58] *Al-Muslimun* (July 1984)

[59] *Tempo* (14/4/1984:7)

[60] Rasjidi (1984a:50)

[61] *Tempo* (26/5/1984:7)

[62] The titles are "*Syi'ah: Aliran yang Mana*" (Shi'ism: Which Stream) and "*Syi'ah: Kekeliruan Prof. Rasyidi*" (Shi'ism: the Mistakes of Prof. Rasyidi) respectively (*Tempo* 9/6/1984). Al-Habsyi's criticism is entitled "*Syi'ah: Koreksi terhadap Rasjidi*" (*Tempo* 26/5/1984).

Sunnism. However, Rasjidi agrees with his critics on the importance of Islamic brotherhood. Rasjidi concludes by accusing the Iranian Embassy of propagating teachings of Shi'ism to Muslim youth in Indonesia in an unacceptable way.[63]

The second polemical writer of anti-Shi'i work is A. Latief Muchtar (1931-1997), the general chairman of Persis for 14 years (1983-1997), who, like other reformist Muslim leaders, had a very negative stance on Shi'ism. His primary and secondary education was undertaken in the Persis schools. He completed his undergraduate degree in Islamic studies in Cairo and gained both a masters degree and a doctorate in the same field from the IAIN of Jakarta. Muchtar had a reputation as a well-qualified reformist scholar in the field of religious studies. His anti-Shi'i stance is indicated by his membership of DDII and the Muslim World League. In 1986, responding to the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia, Muchtar - under the penname Abu Irfan (his first son being Irfan Setiawan) - wrote a controversial article, provocatively titled "*Awas Akidah Syiah*" (Beware of Shi'i Doctrine), which was published in *Risalah*, the magazine of Persis in Bandung[64]. (Between 1986-1987 *Risalah* published a discourse on Shi'ism between its opponents and proponents). Muchtar admitted that his writing was intentionally provocative, as he wanted Indonesian Muslims to be aware of the spread of Shi'ism in their country. He emphasised that his writing should be understood in the framework of Islamic *da'wa* - that is to enjoin to do good and to desist from evil (*amr ma'ruf, nahy munkar*). Muchtar began his polemic by mentioning the triumph of Iranian revolution and its impact on the Shi'is in other places, such as Lebanon, as well as on Indonesia's Sunnis. He writes: "the extreme and radical Shi'i movement has attracted some of the Muslim youth in Indonesia with its concept of imamate...."[65] He explains the origin of Shi'ism as a consequence of political matters following the death of the Prophet Muhammad and also demonstrates the divisions within Shi'ism. His sources were the (aforementioned) Indonesian versions of books by al-Khatib (published in 1985), Zahir (published in 1984) and al-Tunsawi's (published in 1984), as well as Rasjidi's booklet (published in 1984). Muchtar reiterates the common issues and arguments which strongly reject, what he considers to

[63] Rasjidi (1984b:9-10).

[64] The article and its response are then provided as an appendix to the collection of Muchtar's writings, *Gerakan Kembali ke Islam: Warisan Terakhir A. Latief Muchtar, Ketua Umum Persis 1983-1997* (The Movement to Return to Islam: the Last Legacy of A. Latief Muchtar, the General Chairman of Persis 1983-1997) published in 1998 by Rosda in Bandung. It is interesting to note that Jalaluddin Rakhmat writes an introductory note to the book even though he is one of the polemicists writing in *Risalah*.

[65] Muchtar (1998:324)

be, Shi'i doctrines, including imamate, infallibility, *mahdism*, *raj'a* (return) and *taqiyya*. However, I believe his uncritical method of reading the sources meant that the mistakes and misunderstandings about Shi'ism which litter were inevitable. One of his critics, Abdi Mahaestyo Soeherman, in a no less provocatively titled article, "*Syiah bukan Sampar*" (Shi'ism is not a Contagious Disease), published in the same magazine, identifies the weaknesses and misperceptions contained in Muchtar's article and his sources, Soeherman then goes on to provide a Shi'i version of Shi'i teachings and history that are mainly based on contemporary Shi'i sources. We do not have information on this person, but his writing and sources suggest that he is Shi'i. To refute this criticism, Muchtar produce yet another long article, praising al-Khatib and Zahir and their works and re-iterating the need to fight against the Shi'i doctrine[66].

The polemics continued. Saeful Abdullah, M. Syaifullah and Muhammad Khalid were among those who lined up to advise Muchtar to check his sources, discuss his thoughts with Shi'i '*ulama*' or to read Shi'i sources. Ikhwatu Iman and Ika Tanumaja, criticising the critics, offered support to Muchtar. Jalaluddin Rakhmat also became embroiled in the controversy by delivering an Indonesian translation of Mahmud Shaltut's famous *fatwa* and also of Muhammad al-Ghazali's, (the leader of Ikhwan al-Muslimun), view on the validity of observing Islamic worship according to the Twelver Shi'ism.[67] Rakhmat was clearly seeking authoritative legal religious recognition from international Sunni scholars, including Shaltut who was the first to recognise Shi'ism as a completely equal denomination. Rakhmat responds to Muchtar's opinions on Shi'ism in his introductory note to the publication of the collected works of Muchtar (1998). One of the most important elements in the controversy is the involvement of the Iranian Embassy in Jakarta, which issued an official statement, signed by Alireza Motevali Alamoti, the Embassy's Second Secretary. The essential part of the text reads:

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[66] The title is "*Sekali Lagi, Awas Akidah Syiah*" (Once More, Beware of Shi'i Doctrine) (Muchtar 1998:359-399).

[67] Rakhmat (1998:400:413). Mahmud Shaltut's *fatwa* is frequently used by Shi'is to support their opinions with regard to Sunni-Shi'i dialogues. The main part of the *fatwa* (I follow Brunner's translation [2004:289-290]) reads: "1. Islam does not oblige any of its adherents to be affiliated with a specific *madhhab*. Rather, we say: Every Muslim has the right to follow any of the legal schools that have been properly handed down and whose rules in their specific (legal) effects are laid down in writing. A person who follows one of these schools is entitled to turn to any other without being subjected to reproach. 2. In the sense of the religious law of Islam (*shar'an*), it is allowed to perform the divine service (*ta'abbud*) in accordance with the rite of the Ja'fariyya, which is known as *Shi'a imamiyya*, in the same way as in accordance with all schools of the Sunnis."

> Abu Irfan's description of Shi'ism is his own personal beliefs and ideas which have completely no relevance to the reality of Shi'ism.
>
> We believe that his description of Shi'ism mentioned above is based only on his imagination; it even appears that he does not have information as well as basic knowledge about the broad and deep Shi'i ideology.[68]

Included in the general category of anti- Shi'ism works rejecting the validity of Shi'ism, is a compilation of papers originating from an LPPI seminar in 1997. The book, *Mengapa Kita Menolak Syi'ah* (Why we reject Shi'ism), contains a collection of the seminar papers, a conclusion and recommendation, clippings from the media and several forewords from existing Islamic organisations and institutions.[69] The fact that MUI, Muhammadiyah, NU, Persis, Al-Irsyad, Al-Khairat of Palu, DDII, Ikatan Masjid Indonesia (the Association of Indonesian Mosque), and Al-Bayyinat of Surabaya endorse the book, illustrates the widespread support by Islamic organisations, (with certain exceptions), for the prevention of the spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia.

In addition, there are two booklets written by M.O. Baabdullah[70] and Fuad M. Fakhruddin worthy of mention.[71] Baabdullah's bi-lingual booklet (Indonesian and Arabic) regarding the *fatwa* and the stance of Sunni '*ulama*' on Shi'i doctrine is probably the more important of the two; not least because of its harsh content regarding the Shi'i as infidel. The late Baabdullah was a famous anti-Shi'i figure in East Java. He lived in Bangil and was affiliated to the Manarul Islam Mosque of Bangil, Al-Irsyad and also had strong ties with Saudi Arabia. Baabdullah was known to be a harsh opponent of the late Husein Al-Habsyi. Both he and Husein Al-Habsyi were Arab descendants, but Husein Al-Habsyi was a Sayyid and M.O. Baabdullah non-Sayyid. Baabdullah believed that Shi'is are *kafir* (infidel), even though they pronounce the confession of faith that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His messenger. He based his views on the *fatwa* and opinions of great Sunni '*ulama*' such as Imam Malik (d. 795), Ahmad bin Hanbal (d. 855), Bukhari (d. 870), Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111), Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) and Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1787). Baabdullah emphasised that the infidelity of the Shi'is is clearly demonstrated in their thoughts, which are contrary to the true teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. His booklet examines the recent development of the Shi'is, and in this regard makes two important points

[68] Muchtar (1998:403)

[69] Abduh and Abu Huzaifah (1998)

[70] Baabdullah (1990)

[71] Fakhruddin (1990)

to support his view that Shi'ism is a religious sect outside Islam: First, Baabdullah writes that the Shi'i theological doctrine on the distortion of the Qur'an and a number of other false principal doctrines clearly show that the Shi'i group of today is more evil than its predecessor. Second, he writes that the contemporary Shi'i group has mixed up various evil and dangerous currents and follows polytheistic ways of life.[72]

In the category of books dealing with specific issues relating to aspects of Sunni-Shi'i controversies, there are a number of booklets which should be mentioned: There are at least two booklets dealing with the prohibition of *mut'a*, one by the previously mentioned Fakhruddin[73], the other written by Muhammad Sufyan Raji Abdullah.[74] *Mut'a* appears to be the most popular topic for discussion, with at least five articles on the subject in Persis' *Al-Muslimun*. Aside from the texts quoted and used to reject the Shi'i permissibility of *mut'a*, the writings frequently allege dangerous consequences of the practice, including the high rate of babies born without being acknowledged by their father and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV-Aids. In addition, there are other booklets concerning imamate, history of the Prophet's companions, *tafsir* and *hadith*. Most of these anti-Shi'i works criticise the growing number of works by Indonesian Shi'i intellectuals. In the field of Islamic history, Saleh Nahdi criticises Hashem's *Saqifah*, re-iterating the idea that the event of *saqifa* - the designation of Abu Bakr as the first caliph succeeding the Prophet Muhammad - was the origin of unity in the *umma.* In the field of *tafsir*, Ja'far Umar Thalib[75] criticises Husein Al-Habsyi[76] re-asserting that the Prophet did frown; and in the field of *hadith,* Husnan responds to a chapter of Jalaluddin Rakhmat's *Islam Aktual*. There are also a number of articles published in *Al-Muslimun* reacting to the works of these Shi'i writers: Abu Hanifah's critique of Hashem's *Saqifah*,[77] Ibnu Mursyid's critique of Husein Al-Habsyi's *tafsir*,[78] and Hasyim Manan's criticique of Rakhmat's *Islam Aktual*.[79] In general, these polemical writings use the same arguments on the falsity of the teachings of Shi'ism, and they all cite

[72] Baabdullah (1990:83-84)

[73] Fakhruddin (1992)

[74] The titles include *Kawin Mut'ah dalam Pandangan Islam* (Mut'a in the View of Islam) published in 1992 by Pedoman Ilmu Jaya, Jakarta and *Mengapa Aku Menolak Dikawin Kontrak* (Why I Reject being Married 'in Contract') published in 2000 by Pustaka AlRiyadl, Jakarta.

[75] Thalib (1993)

[76] Al-Habsyi (1991a)

[77] *Al-Muslimun* (December 1987, January-December 1988)

[78] *Al-Muslimun* (1992:67-74)

[79] *Al-Muslimun* (1992:47-57)

textual and rational proofs from Middle Eastern anti-Shi'i works. Once more we should reiterate that publishing is a popular missionary way for anti-Shi'i groups to defend their religious ideology and demonstrate what they believe to be the falsity of Shi'ism.

The second means of anti-Shi'i propagation is the organising of seminars, discussions, and debates concerning Shi'ism and Sunni-Shi'i relations. A large number of these activities have been organised with the purpose of opposing the spread of Shi'i teachings. In other words, these activities are carried out in the framework of Islamic *da'wa* rather than intellectual achievement. It is no exaggeration to say that Sunni-Shi'i seminars, and other similar activities, on Islamic doctrine, history and development have become the hottest and most controversial in Indonesia. It is perhaps unsurprising then that some of these seminars - such as the one organised in 1994 in the *Pesantren* Darunnajah, Jakarta, in which Rasjidi and Jalaluddin Rakhmat were speakers - descended into chaos because of the high tension between the two opposing groups of participants.

Two of the most popular seminars should be examined in detail: One of the first seminars of this kind in Indonesia, (and which attracted media interest), was the "the Seminar on Islamic Doctrine" organised in Jakarta's Hotel Indonesia on 14 January 1988, by the Middle East Alumni of Jakarta. This seminar can be seen as a counteraction to a similar activity held in Jakarta about a month earlier (8 December 1987), at which all the speakers were famous liberal thinkers and 'enemies' of the reformist groups, and DDII people in particular. (Speakers at this event included Harun Nasution, Nurcholish Madjid, and Abdurrahman Wahid[80]). In the eyes of the anti-Shi'i group this seminar was clearly meant to contribute to the spread of Shi'ism in the country[81]. The controversial anti-Shi'i seminar in question involved three main speakers - M. Rasjidi, Ibrahim Hosen and Fuad M. Fakhruddin[82] - who all agreed that Shi'ism was the main causal factor of the Iran-Iraq war. They also concurred on the danger of Shi'ism for the Indonesian nation. In accordance with the general goal of the seminar, namely to confirm Shi'ism as a heterodox sect in the framework of

[80] The seminar was organised in Jakarta by the West Java branch of KOMPPAQ (*Korps Mahasiswa Penghafal dan Pengkaji Al-Qur'an*).

[81] One of the critics is Muhammad Hidayat Nur Wahid who was at the time a student in Saudi Arabia. In *Tempo* (23/1/1988:14-15), he fiercely criticises Madjid's opinion on the fictive figure of Abdullah bin Saba'.

[82] Rasjidi's paper is without title, whilst the papers of Fakhruddin and Hosen are "*Hakikat Syiah dalam Segala Pandangan Hidupnya*" (The Nature of Shi'ism and its all Worldviews) and "*Syi'ah Sebagai Gerakan Yang Membahayakan Eksistensi Islam*" (Shi'ism as a Movement Dangerous to the Existence of Islam) respectively. Hosen's was published in *Mimbar Ulama* (126/XII/1988).

Islamic *da'wa*, the participants were given four anti-Shi'i books consisting of Indonesian translations of Middle Eastern works by Said Hawa, al-Tunsawi, al-Khatib, and Zahir.[83] Abdul Malik M. Aliun, chairman of the seminar's organising committee said, "that the Middle East alumni think it necessary to correct Islamic doctrine from false streams, one of which is Shi'ism, and we the Muslim *umma* need to know Shi'ism in order not to be plunged into sin."[84]

The above opinion inevitably provoked angry reactions from the more moderate participants at the seminar, including Muslim intellectuals such as Nurcholish Madjid and Alwi Shihab. In addition, no less than six critics wrote articles that were published in the national magazine, *Tempo*, responding in particular to Fakhruddin's statement that "'Ali bin Abi Talib tried to fulfil his personal ambition for the caliphship and therefore he is not Islamic". These critics, including Alwi Shihab, see that this view would be provocative to both Sunnis and Shi'is, because of the undoubted personal quality of 'Ali and the prohibition of discrediting one of the four rightly guided caliphs.[85] In his response to Alwi Shihab, Fakhruddin, who has strong anti-Shi'i views, maintained his stand.

The most impressive anti-Shi'i seminar took place in the hall of the Istiqlal mosque in Jakarta on 21 September 1997. It was organised by LPPI (*Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengkajian Islam*, Institute of Islamic Studies and Research), in collaboration with *Gema*, a bulletin of Al-Irsyad. LPPI is directed by Amin Djamaluddin who claims to be a student of Natsir. As a DDII activist receiving a monthly allowance from the organisation, Djamaluddin has a vested interest in blocking the development of religious currents considered false. This also demonstrates the link between LPPI and DDII and their organisation of *da'wa* activities.[86] The importance of this anti-Shi'i seminar lies in its success, not only in getting several Muslim leaders, representing great Islamic organisations and institutions in the country, as speakers. (Among them was K.H. Hasan Basri (1920-1998), the then general chairman of MUI, who delivered an opening speech to

[83] They include, respectively, *Khomenisme* (Khomenism) *Beberapa Kekeliruan Akidah Syiah* (Several Mistakes of Shi'i Doctrine), *Mengenal Pokok-pokok Ajaran Syiah al-Imamiyah dan Perbedaannya dengan Ahlussunnah* (Introducing Principal teachings of Imamiyya Shi'ism and their Differences from those of Sunnism) and *Syiah dan Sunnah* (Shi'ism and Sunnism) (*Tempo* 23/1/1988).

[84] *Tempo* (6/2/1988)

[85] They are Chehab Rukni Hilmy, Zulkifli (*Tempo* 6/2/1988), Doni Darmawan (13/2/1988), Alwi Shihab (20/2/1988), Abdul Kadir and Bismar Siregar (27/2/1988). The organiser of the seminar has clarified the missionary goal of the seminar (*Tempo* 6/2/1988). Fakhruddin's response is published in the same magazine (20/2/1988).

[86] Husin (1998:285)

the seminar) but also in attracting a large number of participants comprising state officials, military personnel, '*ulama*', Muslim leaders, leaders of Islamic organisation and 'ordinary' people. This seminar was widely reported and became the source of a long-running controversy in the Indonesian media.

Amin Djamaluddin, chief of the seminar's organising committee, stated that the seminar was conducted so that authoritative Islamic scholars could provide an explanation of the nature of Shi'ism to the government, security authorities and other related groups, in order that they may "formulate steps to stop the action of the Shi'i people working the land of the Sunni in Indonesia."[87] To achieve this goal, the speakers invited were known anti-Shi'i figures, including Moh. Dawam Anwar (a secretary of the Religious Advisory Council of NU), Irfan Zidny (head of the astronomy board of NU), Thohir Al-Kaff (Al-Bayyinat Foundation of Surabaya), A. Latief Muchtar (the then general chairman of Persis), Nabhan Husein (the chairman of Jakarta DDII), Muhammad Hidayat Nurwahid (the head of Al-Haramain Foundation of Jakarta and later *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*), and Syu'bah Asa (Vice-editor of *Panji Masyarakat*). What is very evident is that none of the speakers hold positive views on Shi'ism. Insofar as we can understand the content of the papers presented in the seminar, no new interpretations and arguments, regarding the sources of Sunni-Shi'i controversies, were presented. It is evident however that all the speakers have great interest in efforts to prohibit the growing spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia. For example, K.H. Irfan Zidny, expresses his regret for the number of Indonesian Muslim students and intellectuals supporting or even adhering to the teachings of Shi'ism, in spite of the fact that they only learn these teachings in a short period of time and from Indonesian Shi'i figures who do not have a thorough knowledge of Islam. Zidny suggests that it is the duty of '*ulama*', and leaders of Islamic organisations and institutions, to cooperate with state authorities and address the phenomenon of Shi'ism which he believes to be dangerous to the unity of *umma*.[88]

Ten of the twelve points in the seminar conclusion, formulated by the committee, reiterate those well-worn arguments contained in Sunni polemical works, including the Shi'i view of the Qur'an that has been corrupted by the companions of the Prophet, the acceptance of *hadith* only through the *ahl al-bayt* of the Prophet, the rejection of the caliphate of Abu Bakr, 'Umar, and 'Uthman, the practice of *taqiya* and *mut'a*, and the

[87] Abduh and Abu Huzaifah (1998:xxv-xxvi)

[88] Abduh and Abu Huzaifah (1998:24-25)

belief in Imams and their infallibility.[89] Two particularly significant points made in the conclusion need to be noted: The first is a statement that reads "Indonesian Muslims have the responsibility and obligation to prevent various efforts of falsification and destruction of Sunni doctrines adhered to by Muslims in Indonesia."[90] This claim and invitation is formulated to fulfil the goal of the seminar, namely to defend the Sunni land from the presence and spread of Shi'ism. The second and highly provocative point made is that throughout history Shi'is have proved to be criminals, traitors, and terrorists.[91] This can be considered as a libellous accusation, unless of course the committee can prove it.

Regardless of the teachings of Shi'ism and the reality of the Shi'is in Indonesia, the conclusion supports the ten points of recommendation formulated by the seminar committee. The recommendation formulated below is clearly intended to prohibit the existence and activities of Shi'is in all forms:

> Based on the conclusions and to protect the stability, the safety and unity of society, the Indonesian nation and state, this seminar recommends:
>
> 1. To urge the Indonesian government, in this case the Indonesian Attorney General to immediately prohibit Shi'ism in the whole of Indonesia because, besides having caused society uneasiness, [it] is a source of destabilisation of the life of the Indonesian nation and state because it is impossible that the Shi'i have a loyal attitude to the Indonesian government since in their teachings of Islam there is no concept of consensus but only the absolute decision from the Imam.
> 2. To request the Indonesian Attorney General and all related government institutions to cooperate with the MUI and the Board of Research and Development of the Department of Religious Affairs to scrutinise books containing Shi'i views and to prohibit their distribution throughout Indonesia.
> 3. To urge the government cq the Minister of Justice to withdraw the license of all Shi'i foundations or those spreading the teachings of Shi'ism in Indonesia such as Muthahhari in Bandung, Al-Muntazar in Jakarta, Al-Jawad in Bandung, Mulla Sadra in Bogor, YAPI in Bangil, Al-Muhibbin in Probolinggo, and Al-Hadi in Pekalongan.
> 4. To request the government, in this case the Minister of Information to require all publishers to report and deposit examples of all their published books to the MUI to get scrutinised.
> 5. To remind all Islamic organisations, educational institutions (school, *pesantren* and university) throughout Indonesia of keeping on guard against Shi'ism that can influence their members and students.

[89] Abduh and Abu Huzaifah (1998:158-160)

[90] Abduh and Abu Huzaifah (1998:158)

[91] Abduh and Abu Huzaifah (1998:160)

6. To invite the whole Indonesian Muslim society to be alert of Shi'ism because Shi'ism is an infidel, false, and falsifying sect.
7. To appeal to all women to avoid practising *mut'a* ('contract marriage') that is practised and propagated by followers of Shi'ism.
8. To appeal to all mass media (print, electronic, audio-visual) and book publishers not to spread Shi'ism in Indonesia.
9. To appeal to the Indonesian government to prohibit activities of spreading Shi'ism by the Iranian Embassy.
10. Specifically, to expect that LPPI immediately cooperates with MUI and Department of Religious Affairs to publish a short manual on the falsity of Shi'ism and its principal differences from Sunnism."[92]

There were huge responses - both positive and negative - to this anti-Shi'i seminar and its conclusion and recommendations. Many can be found in the letters to the editor of national newspapers and magazines. Those reacting positively to the seminar - thus negatively to Shi'ism - expressed their appreciation of the seminar, with its emphasis on the impossibility of unity between Sunnis and Shi'is, and doubts about the capability of Shi'is to prove the truth of Shi'ism.[93] It is clear that the authors agree with the seminar and with its content and recommendations. In contrast, those reacting negatively to the seminar offer various opinions, including that the seminar discussed questions of Shi'ism while ignoring the contribution made by the Shi'is to Islam. They also point to the inaccuracy of seminar's decision, its non-proportionality and even its non-scientific character.[94] A Shi'i *ustadh* Alwi Husein al-Muhdar, an alumnus of Al-Azhar University, provides the readers with views of contemporary Middle Eastern '*ulama*', including Sayyid Tantawy and Yusuf Qardawi, who suggest that there are only minor differences between Sunnism and Shi'ism.[95] Several more serious articles have been published in the Indonesian media in response to

[92] Abduh and Abu Huzaifah (1998:160-162)

[93] Among others, the writings include "*Terimakasih Adanya Berita Seminar Syi'ah*" (Thanks for the News on Shi'i Seminar) by Abdullah Ali (*Pelita* 7/10/1997), "*Syi'ah dan Suni Tidak Mungkin Bisa Bersatu*" (Shi'ism and Sunnism cannot be united) by Unang D. Mintareja (*Pelita* 31/10/1997), and "*Buktikan Bahwa Syiah Tidak Sesat*" (Prove that Shi'ism is not False) by Tontowy Djauhari Hamzah (*Panji Masyarakat* 17/11/1997).

[94] Among others, the views are included in such writings as Saefudin's "*Mengapa Syi'ah Dipersoalkan?*" (Why is Shi'ism Questioned?) (*Pelita* 3/10/1997), Sobar Awanto Habsyi's "*Seminar Syiah: Sebuah Keputusan Yang Menyesatkan*" (Seminar on Shi'ism: A Misleading Decision) (*Republika* 28/9/1997), Achmad Al-Attas's "*Seminar Soal Syiah Yang Tidak Proporsional*" (A Non-Proportional Seminar concerning Shi'ism) (*Panji Masyarakat* 20/10/1997), Abdullah Husin's "*Seminar Tentang Syiah Tidak Ilmiah*" (Seminar on Shi'ism is unscientific) (*Panji Masyarakat* 20/10/1997), and B.I. Yakup's "*Mengapa Syiah Ditolak?*" (Why is Shi'ism Rejected?) (*Tiras* 20/10/1997).

[95] *Tiras* (24/11/1997)

the seminar. The writers, generally proponents of Islamic brotherhood, include Muhammad Amin Sadik, Islah Gusmian, Masyhuri and Sihbudi who write articles questioning the relevance of seminar, suggesting it made a subjective judgement on Shi'ism, regarded as an in absentia judgement.[96] It should not automatically be assumed that all the proponents of this view are Shi'is, although clearly some of them are, including Alwi Husein. These negative responses to the seminar can be subsumed into two categories: First, those stating the irrelevance of the Seminar's decision because it did not involve prominent Muslim intellectuals in the country, such as Nurcholish Madjid, Abdurrahman Wahid, and Amien Rais. Second, those propagating the idea of unity or rapprochement between Sunnis and Shi'is, believing that there are only minor, surmountable differences between the two *madhhabs*.

Among the adherents of Shi'ism, O. Hashem has provided the most comprehensive emotional response to the seminar through his article "*Jawaban Lengkap...*" which was then extended to become a book entitled *Syi'ah Ditolak Syi'ah Dicari* (Shi'ism is Rejected, Shi'ism is Sought)[97]. In his response, Hashem declares strong opposition to the seminar, its conclusion and recommendations and restates Shi'i views on classical topics that are the sources of Sunni-Shi'i controversy. One of O. Hashem's statements is particularly interesting: "Do not think that the Minister of Religious Affairs will join the crazy [action] to prohibit Shi'ism. Our Minister of Religious Affairs is not a stupid person..."[98] In response to Hashem, Djamaluddin and Hidayat Nurwahid wrote an article demonstrating what they saw as the weakness of Hashem's arguments from a Sunni perspective. On the above statement, Djamaluddin writes: "... according to us, it is not that the person who prohibits Shi'ism who is crazy but it is exactly the

[96] The articles are entitled "*Seminar atau Pengadilan In Absentia*" (Seminar or Sentencing In Absentia) (*Pelita* 10/10/1997), "*Mengadili Syi'ah, Tak Relevan*" (Judging Shi'ism, Irrelevant) (*Media Indonesia* 14/11/1997), "*Titik Temu Sunni-Syiah dan Kerukunan Umat Beragama*" (the Sunni-Shi'i Meeting Point and Religious Harmony) (*Pelita* 17/10/1997), and "*Polemik Suni-Syiah*" (Sunni-Shi'i Polemics) (*Tiras* 17/11/1997), respectively.

[97] The full title is "*Jawaban Lengkap terhadap Seminar Nasional Sehari tentang Syi'ah 21 September 1997 di Masjid Istiqlal Jakarta*" (A Complete Answer to One day National Seminar on Shi'ism 21 September 1997 in Istiqlal Mosque, Jakarta), which was republished under another title "*Mengapa Kami Bela Syi'ah*" (Why we Defend Shi'ism). The book *Syi'ah Ditolak Syi'ah Dicari* (Shi'ism is Rejected, Shi'ism is Sought) is published by ICC of Al-Huda, Jakarta, firstly in 2000 and reprinted in 2002.

[98] Cited in Djamaluddin (n.d:40). These sentences are omitted in Hashem (2002).

person who defend Shi'ism who is crazy."[99] Djamaluddin ends his writing by emphasising that "Shi'ism is false, falsifying, and a sect of infidels."[100]

Again it is significant to note the involvement of the Iranian Embassy in Jakarta in these discussions of the anti-Shi'i seminar. Via its Social Relations Division, the Embassy issued a statement making the point that these accusations regarding Shi'ism are not based on the reality of Shi'ism[101]. Of the nine points presented by the Embassy, three need mentioning: First, it states that the intent of the committee and speakers at the seminar was to destroy national stability and unity, as well as the international image of Indonesia as a pluralistic and tolerant society. The second item is directed to a point in the seminar's conclusion stating: "the Constitution of Iran decides that the official religion of Iran is Islam which is the *Ja'fari Ithna 'ashariyya* school of Islam....". In response, the Embassy points out: "the choice of ideology is a legal right of each nation. For us, such a statement has the same meaning as interference in internal affairs of other nations". Thirdly, the Embassy statement deals with the accusation that Shi'is are terrorists and criminals, (as mentioned in point 12 of the seminar conclusion). The Embassy suggests that this is simply repeating the propaganda of Zionist and certain arrogant countries.[102]

Amin Djamaluddin not afraid to speak out. As the chief organiser of the seminar and head of LPPI, he provided both emphasis and explanation in his refutation to the Iranian Embassy.[103] Djamaluddin affirms that the seminar was conducted as an Islamic *da'wa* provided for Indonesian Muslims, pointing out that involving Iran in any discussions and/or move to prohibit the presence of Shi'is in Indonesia is unavoidable simply because the majority of Iranians are Shi'is. However he denies that this amounts to interference in Iran's internal affairs. What's more, he even accuses Iran, through its Embassy, of interfering in the pluralistic religious life of the Indonesian nation which is "to be destroyed through the Shi'i religion, strategically and systematically"..Some of Djamaluddin's explanations simply restate the controversial topics and should not be described here. The controversy was never solved, but did eventually die down over time. Suffice it to say that seminar has been used as a vehicle of anti-Shi'i propagation in Indonesia.

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[99] Djamaluddin (1998:40)

[100] Djamaluddin (1998:41)

[101] The title is "*Tudingan Soal Syiah Tidak Berdasar*" (Accusations concerning Shi'ism have no base) published in *Panji Masyarakat* (3/11/1997).

[102] *Panji Masyarakat* (3/11/1997:8)

[103] The title is "*Manuver Politik Kedubes Iran*" (the Political Manoeuvre of Iranian Embassy) published in *Panji Masyarakat* (8/12/1997)

The third method of anti-Shi'i propagation is to make an appeal to the Indonesian government. A clear-cut example is the anti-Shi'i group's approach to the government asking for the realisation of the LPPI seminar recommendations. About a month after the seminar had taken place, LPPI wrote a letter,(signed on 17 October 1997), requesting that the government - in this case the Attorney General, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Education and Culture, and the Minister of Religious Affairs - forbid the existence of Shi'ism in Indonesia. The group also called a press conference, after which 15 Islamic leaders - including the LPPI director, Amin Djamaluddin and speakers from the seminar - went to the office of the Attorney General and the Department of Religious Affairs to present the same request.[104] In the previous year, LPPI had also sent the Minister of Religious Affairs, the Attorney General, and the chairman of MUI a similar appeal for the prohibition of Shi'i Islam in the country. The Indonesian government failed to respond to either request.[105] As previously mentioned, Al-Irsyad also made a similar approach to government in 1996.

The struggle for the prohibition of Shi'ism in Indonesia continued. It became particularly strong following MUI's issuance of the *fatwa* prohibiting the practice of *mut'a*. Working towards its goal of ridding Indonesia of Shi'ism, LPPI distributed a leaflet[106] and urged MUI to issue a *fatwa* on the falsity of Shi'ism and the prohibition of its spread in Indonesia.[107] Despite the request, MUI did not issue the *fatwa*, stating that its 1984 recommendation was sufficient.

Similar actions took place in other parts of the country, particularly in those places where major Shi'i institutions are located. The Association of Middle East Alumni of Madura copied the steps of LPPI in its attempts to prohibit Shi'ism. In 1992, in Pekalongan, Central Java, where the *Pesantren* Al-Hadi is situated, Sunni groups made a resolution on Shi'ism containing four demands: First, for the *Pesantren* Al-Hadi to cease all activities; second, to bring Ahmad Baragbah, the leader of Al-Hadi, before the court as he has organised unlawful marriages; third, to watch and prohibit all Shi'i activities in Pekalongan; and fourth, to call on the central government to declare, via its GBHN (*Garis-garis Besar Haluan Negara*, Broad Outlines of the Nation's Direction), that the only form of Islam recognised by the state

[104] *Pelita* (28/10/1997)

[105] *Panji Masyarakat* (3/1/1997:74-75)

[106] "The Principles of Falsity of Shi'ism" is published by LPPI in accordance with the recommendations of the mentioned seminar.

[107] *Pelita* (1/4/1998)

is *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a.* The resolution was delivered to the mayor of Pekalongan and the district People's Representative Council.[108]

The fourth method used by anti-Shi'i supporters to protect Muslims from the influence of Shi'ism is conventional preaching (*tabligh*) in religious gatherings (*pengajian*). In this regard, we find, or are told, that anti-Shi'i figures throughout the country include the falsity of Shi'ism as a topic in their sermons at mosques or other places. Wisananingrum reported her experiences in 1991 when she witnessed a leader of MUI delivering a religious sermon about the falsity of Shi'ism at the Al-Muslimun Mosque in Bandung. She believes such actions to be a part of the anti-Shi'i propagation aimed at getting the Muslim community to reject the teachings of Shi'ism.[109] A number of anti-Shi'i sermons were also carried out at the DDII mosque in Jakarta. Further, similar sermons are widely disseminated though radio stations such as At-Thohiriyah FM in Jakarta, who produced a programme about 'false currents', presented by a journalist, Hartono Ahmad Jaiz, who is also an activist for DDII and LPPI.[110] There are many other examples, too numerous to be mentioned, however a Sunni religious gathering in Bangil in 1993 is worthy of note. It is also an important case in that it reveals the religious tensions between Sunni and Shi'i groups in Indonesia. It was called the religious gathering of *ahl al-Sunna*, and consisted of elements of NU, Persis, Muhammadiyah and the Al-Bayyinat Foundation, and was attended by hundreds of participants. In this forum, the group not only learned the teachings of Sunnism but also criticised the teachings of Shi'ism. This gathering was undertaken as a response to the religious gathering of *ahl al-Bayt*, which was headed by Zahir Yahya (Husein Al-Habsyi's son-in-law) and Ali Al-Habsyi (his son).[111] It is important to bear in mind that religious preaching is the most common and widespread means of anti-Shi'i propagation in the country.

The four ways of anti-Shi'i propagation are directed at all segments of the community and state, the laity and elite. They include both cultural and structural approaches. In the eyes of the anti-Shi'i group, not only are the community members to be protected from the influence of Shi'i teachings but the Indonesian government is expected to take a decision on

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[108] Zainuddin *et al.* (2000:113-114)

[109] Wisananingrum (2001:92-93)

[110] A compilation of his journalistic reports is published as a book entitled *Aliran dan Paham Sesat di Indonesia* (False Streams and Teachings in Indonesia) in which he includes "*Gerakan Syiah di Indonesia*" (the Shi'i Movement in Indonesia) (Jaiz 2002:114-144), which is mainly derived from his report to *Media Dakwah* (October and November 1997).

[111] *Aula* (September 1993:12-13)

the prohibition of Shi'ism in Indonesia. So far it has not possible to examine the effectiveness of anti-Shi'i propagation by means of publication, seminar, and religious preaching, but clearly the structural approach to the government has failed, with the notable exception of the city of Mataram in West Nusa Tenggara. In June 2003, the mayor of Mataram issued an instruction for the prohibition of Shi'ism in the city. The instruction stated that Shi'ism may not be distributed to the Sunni groups.[112] The prohibition led not only to disappointment from the Shi'i followers in Mataram but also negative reactions from members of Mataram's society.[113]

The attempts by the Sunni reformist group to protect the Sunni community from the influence of Shi'ism and to prohibit the existence of Shi'ism in the country inevitably leads to high tensions between the two groups. Shi'i figures in Indonesia recount many bitter experiences in the face of negative reactions from the anti-Shi'i group. The reactions are directed not only to individuals but also to institutions, and they vary in their severity. One example of an individual experience occurred in 1996. Ali Hasan, a teacher at a junior high school and a religious teacher at his house in Sragen, Central Java, was imprisoned for three and a half years after being accused of having illegal sexual relations with three girls. These sexual relations were said to be based on *mut'a*.[114] Ali, supported by a number of his students, denied the accusations and stated that his trial had been a joke (*dagelan*). He believed that his arrest had been a way to stop the religious gatherings at his house which had become increasingly popular.[115]

There are also examples of destructive anti-Shi'i actions which have coloured Sunni-Shi'i relations. The burning down of the branch of *Pesantren* Al-Hadi in Batang, Central Java, in April 2000, is an extreme case in point. It is said that the building and facilities of the *pesantren* were burnt down and destroyed by a large number of people, intent on putting a stop to its activities. In fact, before the tragedy occurred the regent of Batang and the district attorney apparatus had issued instructions to stop teaching activities at the *pesantren*. In the eyes of the *pesantren*, this was a result of efforts by the anti-Shi'i group to influence the authority. The *pesantren* had plans to bring the case to the court, but during this judicial process the

[112] *Koran Tempo* (4/6/2003)

[113] *Koran Tempo* (5/6/2003). The report on the prohibition of Shi'ism issued by the Mayor of Mataram, Moh. Ruslan, and its controversies is also covered by *Lombok Post* (3-9/6/2003)

[114] *Gatra* (25/5/1996)

[115] Ali Hasan, interview, (11/9/2002)

tragedy took place.[116] This case is evidence that, anti-Shi'i propagation in response to the spread of Shi'ism has also involved the destruction of Shi'i institutions, in the name of religious belief and Islamic *da'wa*.

E. The Moderate Response of Muslim Intellectuals

Amidst the growing efforts of the anti-Shi'i movement in Indonesia, which is supported by many Islamic leaders, the Shi'is in the country can count a number of leading Muslim intellectuals who tend to protect the existence of the Shi'is as a minority religious group. They include Nurcholish Madjid, Abdurrahman Wahid and Amien Rais, all of whom are known to have moderate or sympathetic views towards Shi'ism and its adherents. Consequently, they have been criticised by anti-Shi'i supporters, who accuse them of providing a space for Shi'is to propagate the teachings of Shi'ism in Indonesia. In the eyes of their critics, these intellectuals, at least indirectly, contribute to the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. This idea that they have made an indirect contribution is perhaps correct. In addition, these intellectuals are accused of creating the many barriers that are faced by the anti-Shi'i group in their struggle to prohibit the existence of Shi'ism in the country. Given these suggestions, it is important to try to pinpoint these alleged attempts by prominent Muslim intellectuals to provide a space for the Shi'is and Shi'ism in Indonesia.

It is not without reason that a number of Muslim intellectuals were invited to become discussants at a seminar on the religious and political thought of Jalaluddin Rakhmat, on 30 October 1997, (held in the framework of the distribution of Jalaluddin Rakhmat's compilation book, *Catatan Kang Jalal: Visi Media, Politik, dan Pendidikan.* This seminar is interesting in the context of Sunni-Shi'i relations in Indonesia because many people saw it as the counter-seminar, based purely on the fact that Jalaluddin Rakhmat is a prominent Shi'i leader in Indonesia. The speakers were the above-mentioned prominent intellectuals, Nurcholish Madjid, Amien Rais and Said Agiel Siradj (who substituted Abdurrahman Wahid), known for their moderate view of Shi'ism. Discussions on Sunni-Shi'i relations did arise during the seminar, and Rais, for instance, suggested that followers of both Sunnism and Shi'ism should respect and cooperate with each other.[117]

Amien Rais, the former chairman of Muhammadiyah, does not provide us with extensive views on Shi'ism in his writings or comments, but

[116] *An-Nashr* (18/2000:57-59), *Tempo* (http://www.tempointeraktif.com/majalah/arsip/thn03/edisi07/per-1.htm accessed 17/4/2002)

[117] *Ummat* (10/11/1997:21)

rather his general attitude is likely to correspond with his positive attitude towards the Iranian revolution. When questioned about his opinion on the LPPI's seminar, he was apprehensive. He suggested that the Sunnis should avoid cynicism when discussing Shi'ism, and vice versa, and that both Sunnis and Shi'is should have a mutual respect.[118] He appears to avoid giving his opinion about Shi'ism, as result neither the Shi'i nor anti-Shi'i groups can claim that Amien Rais is among their supporters or, indeed, a supporter of the other. That said, Rais strongly rejects Shi'ism on the field of doctrine, in particular the immunity of Imam and Mahdism. It appears to be the political aspects of Shi'ism, particularly the Iranian revolution, that have attracted Rais's sympathy. Moreover, Iran's strong opposition to the West meets with his approval. Therefore, Rais's moderate stance to Shi'ism has, in a way, to be understood in the framework of his political attitude towards the West. This attitude is also indicated by his links to Muhammadiyah, an organisation more concerned with educational, social and missionary activities than theological debates.

Amien Rais's contribution to the development of Shi'ism in the country can be seen from his translation of Ali Shari'ati's book into Indonesian, although it should be noted that he denies any intention to promote Shi'i thought in Indonesia, and to expose the classical political conflict between the Sunnis and Shi'is. In his introduction to Shari'ati's work, Rais writes:

> Dr. Ali Shari'ati is a Shi'i whereas the translator is a Sunni Muslim. The motif to translate this book is not to offer fragments of Shi'i thought in Indonesia. For the translator, the Sunni-Shi'i difference is an old-fashioned historical legacy that has resulted in the weakness of Islamic *umma* as a whole. What we need to do is not to expose the past political conflict that will clearly be of no use.[119]

Amien Rais's sympathetic and moderate attitude to Shi'ism has provoked challenges, particularly from the reformist Muslim group. When Rais proposed the levying of the fifth portion of income for the religious alms of professionals (*zakat profesi*),[120] he was seen to have been influenced by the Shi'i teaching of *khums* (a fifth). Consequently, he was judged by many to be a disbeliever. In response, Jalaluddin Rakhmat, with whom Rais shares a very close relationship, defended Amien Rais's view from the Shi'i perspective.[121] Another criticism of Rais, this time by Mudzakkir

[118] *Kompas* (31/10/1997:15)

[119] Rais (1984:ix)

[120] Rais (1988)

[121] Rakhmat (1991:145-153, 1998:81-85)

Husein, is directed at his frequent praise of Iran while disparaging other Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia.[122]

Rais's attitude can also be seen in the context of his close relations with Muslim intellectuals and students, some whom happen to be adherents of Shi'ism. Many Shi'i figures in Indonesia have close relations with Amien Rais and when he established his political party, the National Mandate Party, he instantly gained support from this segment of Muslim society. A number of his party members successfully fought for membership of the national or regional People's Representative Council. From this perspective, Rais's attitude to Shi'ism can be seen as a socially and politically motivated.

One of the most persistent defenders of Shi'ism is the intellectual Nurcholish Madjid[123], who once advised youth at the Al-Azhar mosque of Jakarta to learn about Shi'ism - a statement that is said to have created unease with the mosque's organisers.[124] In the above-mentioned seminar of 1988, when Ibrahim Hosen said that the Shi'is have their own Qur'an, Nurcholish Madjid produced a Qur'an printed in Iran, containing Khomeini's introductory note, showing it to the audience and stating that it was no different from the Sunni one. He emphasised that an objective and scientific attitude is required when looking at Shi'ism.[125] In one of his articles, Madjid affirms that by reading the Qur'ans published by the Shi'is, the opinion, or even accusation, that the Shi'is have a different Qur'an to the Sunni's is invalidated.[126] Commenting on the seminar, he said he was upset because the three main speakers denounced the Shi'is, creating dissension rather than peace within Muslim society. Madjid also strongly rejected the view of speakers at the event that Shi'ism was the main factor in the Iran-Iraq war, stating that the Sunni-Shi'i divide has existed since the early history of Islam.[127]

Furthermore, Madjid's moderate view of Shi'ism can be identified in his paper presented.[128] In Madjid's view, the existence of Shi'ism should not be considered as a religious or political problem but instead as a reality

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[122] *Al-Muslimun* (266/1992:6-7)

[123] He died in August 2005

[124] *Media Dakwah* (November 1997:47)

[125] *Tempo* (23/1/1988)

[126] Madjid (1989:15)

[127] *Tempo* (23/1/1988:85-86)

[128] Madjid's paper entitled "*Sekilas Tinjauan Historis tentang Paham-paham Sunnah-Syi'ah*" (A Glance of Historical Review on Sunnism-Shi'ism) was then published as an introduction to the Indonesian translation of Jafri's book (1989).

which colours Islamic history and society.[129] According to Madjid, the Sunnis will gain greater benefits if their intellectual interaction with Shi'ism is open and receptive. For example, one benefit is to be found in the field of philosophy, because the philosophical tradition Shi'ism continues to develop, while in Sunnism it tends to stagnate. Madjid emphasises that Shi'ism appears to be better than Sunnism in inheriting and advancing the philosophical intellectual tradition.[130]

On Sunni-Shi'i relations, Madjid points out that each should have a mutual understanding and respect. Each should learn to recognise the other's existence in the framework of equality and fraternity. Madjid writes:

> So once again, the division of human being into groups, like Sunni and Shi'i, is genuine, natural and unavoidable because [it] is a product of historical process that may not be erased. What is not natural, not genuine, and not accord with basic human character (*fitra*) is when someone or a group claims their own absolute truth, then immediately forces his or her will and view on others. This is *shirk*, polytheism, which is unforgivable by God.[131]

Madjid also reiterates his view on the need to develop a non-sectarian attitude - one of the basic Islamic teachings propagated by the Prophet Muhammad. The non-sectarian spirit is in accordance with the Qur'anic concept of *hanif*, (which refers to Abraham's monotheistic religion[132] as the *hanif* religion).[133] Thus, Madjid's moderate attitude towards Shi'ism has a strong theological basis in Islamic tradition. The fact that he provides theological legitimacy for the need for a pluralistic attitude is an important religio-intellectual achievement, and has contributed to the religious life and development of Indonesia, (a contribution that cannot be equalled by Rais or Wahid).

Unsurprisingly, Madjid's moderate stance is criticised by anti-Shi'i people, such as Syu'bah Asa, who accuse him of contributing to the spread of Shi'ism in Indonesia. Madjid shares close relations with a number of Shi'i figures, including Jalaluddin Rakhmat. This is evidenced by the fact that Jalaluddin Rakhmat was given an opportunity to present some Shi'i teachings during a religious course organised by Madjid's foundation, Paramadina. Asa cynically describes how Rakhmat's religious lecture was well

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[129] Madjid (1989:6)

[130] Madjid (1989:15-16)

[131] Madjid (1989:19)

[132] QS (6:161)

[133] Madjid (1995:687-688)

prepared in terms of fulfilling Madjid's ideals of providing his audience with views different from those upheld by the majority in the country. "With all pleasure he spreads doubt about all established Islamic teachings and historical interpretation, grows *su' al-zan* (specific character of the Shi'is) in order to divide the *umma* image of the Prophet's companions that is perceived by the Muslims (Sunni) as integrated totality...."[134] The presence of Jalaluddin Rakhmat was said to have resulted in an anti-Shi'i element of the foundation withdrawing its support. In addition, ICAS (Islamic College for Advanced Studies), the Jakarta branch of the London-based Shi'i institution of higher learning, has organised a Masters programme in the field of Islamic philosophy and Sufism, in cooperation with the Paramadina University.

Former Indonesian President, Abdurrahman Wahid's moderate attitude towards Shi'ism is integral to his tolerance of all minority groups in the country. He uses many ways to protect the position of the Shi'is, who are strongly opposed by the majority of Muslim leaders including those of his own organisation, NU. He focuses more on the sustainability of the Sunni community itself than on the accusations and attacks on the Shi'i group. In July 1993, for instance, Wahid gave a speech at a thanksgiving of the Tijaniyya Order, mentioning and praising the last two Sufi saints of the 20th century, namely Muhammad Alawi al-Jaza'iri and Ayatollah Ruhullah Khomeini. This provoked harsh reactions from certain members of the participants who opposed Wahid's views. This was followed by a dialogue between two representatives of the Al-Bayyinat Foundation, a famous anti-Shi'i foundation, and Abdurrahman Wahid. In the dialogue Wahid answered questions related to Sunni-Shi'i controversies and responded to rumours that he is Shi'i and propagates Shi'ism in Indonesia. In addition, he advised the Al-Bayyinat representative to adopt an objective attitude and engage in a dialogue with Shi'i leaders such as Jalaluddin Rakhmat. In turn, Al-Bayyinat told him of their concerns about the spread of Shi'ism in particular areas of East Java and about the tensions between Sunni and Shi'i groups. The Al-Bayyinat representative said, "there is going to be a war between the Shi'i and Sunni."[135] Al-Bayyinat also requested Wahid's support for its action against the propagation of Shi'ism being organised by Husein Al-Habsyi in Bangil, East Java. The transcript below shows how Wahid coped with the not insignificant pressure, (threats even) to support their cause:

[134] Asa (1998:147)

[135] *Aula* (September 1993:18)

AB[136]: Indeed, we already have reacted in a positive manner. But they (Ustadz Husein and his son-in law) do not care for our call [not to spread Shi'ism]. Therefore, there still are religious gatherings of *ahl al-bayt* and *ahl al-sunna wa al-jama'a.* Even, we have cooperated with the military authorities. We have given them the data on them. We got the data because we smuggled our people to their place. They pretended to study there. We cooperate with the military in order that they fear.

GD: (Listening to the explanation Gus Dur looked sad and shed tears), *abki akhi, abki akhi, abki akhi* (I am crying, my brother; I am crying, my brother; I am crying, my brother). To solve religious problems, why did you cooperate with the military authorities? You have even given the data to the authorities. This is the same as that you want to kill our own brothers. It is like in the Dutch colonial era when many 'ulama' died because of action of their own brothers.

AB: Well, what else can we do? If [faced] with the military authorities they will fear.

GD: Do you think that using the military authorities will solve the problem. Solve it well, internally. I think it can [be solved]. As well, we can, for example, publish books. We list the teachings of Shi'ism that we consider deviating. Then, below it we write the true teachings. And in writing this down a scientific and simple language should be used.

AB: If just through writings it cannot [work] Abuna [our father]...

GD: Who say so? In the era of Imam al-Ghazali the development of Shi'ism was even greater but with only one book the Shi'is were already confused. Coping with Shi'ism in your way is like killing cockroaches with a bombardment. It does not reach the target. Therefore, it needs good strategy.[137]

Abdurrahman Wahid, in his attempt to protect the Shi'is, believes that some cultural aspects of Shi'ism are actually already practiced by NU. For example, according to Wahid, referring to a prayer of adoration widely practiced among NU members, NU shows loving devotion to the *ahl al-bayt* comprising five people: the Prophet Muhammad, 'Ali, Fatima, Hassan and Husayn. This is similar to the concept adopted by Shi'is. The supplication reads: *li khamsatun utfi biha har al-waba' al-hatima, al-Mustafa wa al-Murtada wa ibnahuma wa Fatima* (I have five persons with whom I extinguish the 'heat' of crushing disease, the Prophet, 'Ali, Hasan, Husayn, and Fatima). For Wahid, it is not unnatural to take on this Shi'i view, as the Shi'is also adopted many aspects of the Sunni tradition.[138] However, it is important to make it clear that NU does not take on Shi'i doctrine.[139]

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[136] AB is an abbreviation of Al-Bayyinat and GD is Gus Dur, a popular nickname of Abdurrahman Wahid.

[137] *Aula* (September 1993:18-19)

[138] An example is the adoption of the consensus (*ijma'*) of Muslim jurist as an authoritative argument in the Shi'i legal theory (Stewart 1998:57).

[139] Wahid (1999:185-186)

Another indication of Abdurrahman Wahid's sympathetic attitude towards Shi'ism is his providing an opportunity for Shi'i figures to present their views before NU figures. Jalaluddin Rakhmat, for instance, became one of the speakers in a training programme for young '*ulama*' called the Programme for the Developing of 'Ulama' Vision (*Program Pengembangan Wawasan Keulamaan*, abbreviated PPWK),which lasted one year (1995-1996). Moreover, in 1993 he not only allowed the Shi'i group, *Forum Silaturrahmi Ahlul Bait*, to commemorate the ritual of *'ashura* in the Al-Munawwarah Mosque in Ciganjur next to his house but also delivered the opening speech at the commemoration[140]. In this speech, Wahid states: "Frankly, the Sunni has even to learn much from brothers from the Shi'i *madhhab*. Why? Because the Shi'i *madhhab* is never interrupted in the philosophical tradition."[141] Consequently, Wahid has been accused of promoting Shi'ism. In response to his critics, Wahid reiterates that the Shi'is should not be regarded as an enemy.[142] Greg Barton gives four reasons for Abdurrahman Wahid's support of the Shi'is: First, by nature Wahid tends to help wronged and oppressed minorities. Second, he opposes anything that impinges the freedom of faith and principle. Third, for Wahid, all Muslim intellectuals can profit from delving into Shi'i scholarship and its on-going tradition of *ijtihad* and metaphysical philosophy. Fourth, he argues that many NU rituals and approaches to Sufism are actually rooted in Persian Shi'ism, and therefore NU scholars are advised to understand Shi'i Islam in order that they can understand the nature of Sunni Indonesian Islamic traditionalism.[143]

The moderate attitude of the Muslim intellectuals can also be seen in their criticism of the anti-Shi'i seminar of 1997. Abdurrahman Wahid, for instance, regards the seminar as '*kurang kerjaan*' ('not enough work'). He says that it produced subjective judgements without intellectual honesty, judging Shi'ism in absentia. He states that Muslims should unite in order to solve crucial problems. He goes on: "The Shi'is are Muslim as well. They have the right to live. If the government prohibits [Shi'ism] I will demonstrate."[144] This is a powerful statement in support of the existence of the Shi'is, and through which the Shi'is become more aware of Abdurrahman Wahid's protection. In this regard, even though Wahid does not have the same close relations with Shi'i figures as Rais and Madjid do, his position as a charismatic leader of the largest Islamic organisation is

[140] The full transcription of the speech is published in *Aula* (October 1993:40-49).
[141] *Aula* (October 1993:47)
[142] Mastuki (1999:63-64)
[143] Barton (2002:174)
[144] *Media Indonesia* (5/10/1997)

considered strategically important for the existence and development of the Shi'is in Indonesia.

The most significant impact of Abdurrahman Wahid's moderate attitude with respect to the struggle of the Shi'is in Indonesia, came in 2000, (when Wahid was President of Indonesia) in the form of the government's recognition of the national Shi'i organisation, IJABI. The Shi'i leaders recognise, (and exploited) this period as the best opportunity for them to strive for the national recognition. The legal recognition is extremely important for the existence of the Shi'is, allowing this Islamic group to carry out social, educational, and missionary activities, under the auspices of IJABI. Not only Wahid but also Rais and Madjid supported the establishment of the national Shi'i organisation, and Madjid was a speaker at the second national conference of IJABI on 27-29 February 2004, before an audience of hundreds of Shi'is from all over Indonesia.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

This study has shown the multi-faceted realities of the Shi'is in Indonesia amidst the overwhelming Sunni majority. Systematically, it has revealed the different groups within the Shi'i community, its leaders and *madhhab*, and the methods they employ - including applying strategies appropriate to the existing social, religious, and political context - in order to gain recognition in the Sunni-dominated country.

There are three main groups which have formed the Shi'i community in Indonesia, each with its own historical and social context. The first, oldest, and most eminent is the Arab descendant group - mainly Sayyids - who became the origins of the Shi'i community. In the latter part of the 19th century, Shi'ism attracted some followers among the Arabs in the Indonesian archipelago, due to increasingly extensive contacts between the Arabs of the Hadramaut and the Malay-Indonesian world. This group maintained their adherence to Shi'ism during several decades until the victory of the Iranian revolution in 1978-1979. The second group consists of graduates from *hawza 'ilmiyya* (the Shi'i institutions of learning) in Qum, Iran. Although a number of Indonesians had studied in Qum prior to the outbreak of the Iranian revolution, this number significantly increased following the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and with the intensification of interaction between the Iranian government and Indonesian Shi'i *ulama*. The third is the campus group, graduates from secular universities who also engaged in Islamic gatherings at campus mosques and other places. This group emerged in response to the victory of the Iranian revolution and can be seen as part of the 'Islamic revival' which occurred at secular campuses during the New Order's de-politicisation of Muslim society. The three main groups are interconnected and use various methods to spread Shi'i teachings and attract followers. The 'internal conversion' from Sunnism to Shi'ism has occurred slowly through a variety of ways, namely education, kinship and friendship, and publications.

The division in the formation of the Shi'i community contributes to a lack of a single leader recognised by all groups. Sociologically, the Indonesian Shi'i leaders may be classified into *ustadh* and intellectuals. The *ustadh* are educated mainly in the field of religious knowledge in Islamic educational institutions, while the intellectuals are formally trained in the field of secular sciences and possess non-formal religious training. Until 1994 the most influential Shi'i *ustadh* was Husein Al-Habsyi, a member of the traditional Shi'i group. Al-Habsyi played an important role in the spread of Shi'i teachings in Indonesia through *da'wa*, education, and publications. Today, the position of *ustadh* has been occupied by the Qum alumni. One of the prominent *ustadh* is Husein Shahab who devotes himself to the field of *da'wa*, takes part in the establishment of Shi'i foundations and produces scholarly works. The most prominent intellectual is Jalaluddin Rakhmat who, besides being a lecturer at universities, established and heads an Islamic foundation, engages in *da'wa* activities, and writes books. Important determinants of leadership in the Shi'i community in Indonesia are educational background and religious accomplishment; engagement in the field of *da'wa*, education, and publication; and connections with Shi'i 'ulama' in Iran.

Turning to the religious aspects of the Shi'i community, among the fundamental beliefs and practices that set *ithna 'ashari* Shi'ism apart from Sunnism is imamate, a belief which colours all Shi'i teachings. It is the belief in the twelve Imams succeeding the Prophet Muhammad, from 'Ali (the first Imam) to the Mahdi (the twelfth and present Imam) who went into occultation and whose return is awaited. The belief is put into practice according to Ja'fari jurisprudence, which includes codes of conduct concerning '*ibadat* and *mu'amalat* (social relations). Additionally, there are some rituals and ceremonies that are recommended as important aspects of Shi'i piety. For Shi'is living in a hostile Sunni environment, another unique aspect of their teachings is *taqiyya,* which can be seen as a doctrinal basis for stigmatised Shi'is to implement strategies of dissimulating personal and social identity in their interaction with the Sunni majority. While their belief system cannot be negotiated upon, its expression in terms of practice, particularly *fiqh*, may be performed according to the school upheld by the Sunni majority. *Taqiyya* is instrumental in exercising *da'wa*, education, publication, organisation, and even in the practising of their religion.

In order to gain recognition, the Shi'is in Indonesia have utilised varied strategies - individually, institutionally, and organisationally. This study has revealed the ways they hope to achieve the ultimate target - recognition - through *da'wa*, education, publication, and mass organisation, all of

which are interrelated. Shi'ism has to be spread by means of *da'wa* in the broadest sense of the term. The missionary character of Shi'ism is as inherent in itself as in Islam in general. The implementation of *da'wa* can be both individual and institutional. Both individual and institutional *da'wa* are closely interrelated. Every Shi'i has an obligation to exercise *da'wa* activities and the mentioned prominent Shi'i figures have played an important role as a *da'i* (practitioners of *da'wa*). *Da'wa* becomes more intensive and programmed through institutions that are scattered throughout the country. The institutions, (a few are big, but most are small), are mainly centred in towns where large Shi'is communities reside. The word Shi'ism is never mentioned in their stated ideals, owing to its negative connotation among the Sunni majority, but some use the neutral and generally recognised term of *ahl al-bayt*. As far as their stated ideals are concerned, the Shi'i institutions share a common missionary objective, namely to realise an Islamic society. The established institutions generally possess elements of *ustadh*, *jama'a*, activity, and centre of activity. The *da'wa* includes *tabligh* (preaching), *ta'lim* (teaching, course), and social *da'wa*. *Da'wa* training is also carried out for the purpose of enhancing the knowledge and skills of *da'i,* as well as motivating and affirming their missionary zeal.

In addition to *da'wa*, education is an important means of struggle for the recognition of Shi'ism in Indonesia. Different from *da'wa*, education is directed towards training children of school age that are expected to become the next qualified generation. In this regard, the Shi'is have run a number of educational institutions. These institutions can be divided into the traditional *pesantren* system and the modern school system. Famous *pesantren* include YAPI in Bangil (East Java) and Al-Hadi in Pekalongan (Central Java), while the most famous school is SMU Muthahhari in Bandung (West Java). Each has its own system of education. With regard to religious orientation, each educational establishment may implement either direct or indirect strategies. Al-Hadi is known to utilise a direct strategy, affirming its Shi'i character in the curriculum, books, and the daily life of teachers and students. With this strategy, Al-Hadi expects to inculcate all its Shi'i students in aspects of Shi'i teachings, knowledge, and traditions. Students are expected to have a comprehensive understanding of Shi'i teachings and practice them in daily life. The other two educational institutions, however, apply an indirect strategy, in the sense that they follow the national curriculum supplemented with basic branches of Islamic knowledge. The students come from either Sunni or Shi'i families. It is through these Islamic subjects that aspects of Shi'i teachings in comparison with Sunni teachings are introduced.

The dissemination of Shi'i teachings and traditions is also carried out through publishing, which has been instrumental in the growth and development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. Besides some Shi'i-owned publishing houses participating in the production of Shi'i books, many Shi'i institutions operate in the field of cultural production in addition to their activities in the field of *da'wa* and education. Regardless of differences in their institutional character, they mainly publish Indonesian translations of foreign Shi'i works, written by prominent Shi'i '*ulama*' and intellectuals, mainly from Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon. These translated works encompass all fields of Islamic knowledge and all aspects of Shi'i Islam and they continue to enjoy a significant position in the fulfilment of the demand for the religious and intellectual dimension of the Shi'i individual, group and community. Nonetheless, the works of Indonesian Shi'i *ustadh* and intellectuals in various branches of Islamic knowledge have also been published. Periodicals, including scientific journals, magazines, and bulletins, have been produced by the Shi'i institutions. Unlike *da'wa* and education, publication may have an extensive impact since its has the potential to reach an unlimited audience, Shi'i or Sunni. This impact may also be greater due to a lack of a single religious authority in Indonesia, a country which encourages religious pluralism, something Shi'ism benefits from. Shi'ism and its adherents have gained recognition in the eyes of moderate Muslims and the Shi'is continue to struggle for recognition from wider segments of Muslim society in Indonesia.

An attempt to gain recognition was also undertaken through the establishment of a mass organisation, called IJABI, or the Indonesian Council of Ahli Bait Associations. IJABI is the national organisation of Shi'is in Indonesia and has achieved legal recognition from the state. This achievement results from strategic factors: the utilisation of the term '*ahl al-bayt*' to hide its Shi'i identity, exploiting an opportunity to establish a national organisation in the *reformasi* era, a time marked by the emergence of popular movements - social, religious, or ethnic - and a political regime under the moderate President Abdurrahman Wahid, a man known for his belief in openness and pluralism. The achievement means that IJABI accumulated symbolic capital and could exercise power in terms of its existence and activities. With this capital, IJABI - as the recognised national Shi'i organisation - can carry out its programmes and activities in order to achieve its vision and missions. However, despite achieving legal recognition, IJABI has lacked support from the internal Shi'i community, mainly the *ustadh*, for a variety of reasons: ideological, political and even personal. Several efforts have also been made to reject the position of IJABI as the

national Shi'i organisation. As a result, IJABI has not exerted extensive influence on the life of the Shi'i community.

With regard to Sunni responses to Shi'ism, complex responses, ranging from the extreme negative to the moderate, are revealed. The negative response comes from the reformist groups, in particular from Persis, Al-Irsyad and those individuals and institutions linked to them. This is due to the nature of the reformist movement, which strives to abolish all beliefs and practices considered contrary to the two principal sources of Islam, the Qur'an and Sunnah. However, we can surmise that this is not the case if leaders or influential figures within the reformist movement, such as those of Muhammadiyah, have good relations with Shi'is figures. Traditionalist groups, such as NU, tend to be accommodative and moderate, and involved more in efforts to strengthen the teachings of Sunnism to its members rather than participating in anti-Shi'i activity. MUI, the Indonesian Council of 'Ulama', is regarded as an authoritative institution by the government. It generally never issued fatwas on Shi'ism, however, in 1984 it issued a recommendation to protect Sunni Muslims from the influence of Shi'i teachings. In terms of the negative response to Shi'ism, a large number of activities have been carried out to prevent or reduce the spread of Shi'ism. These include the publication of anti-Shi'i works, holding of seminars and discussions, appeals to the government and preaching. This has led to high tensions between the Shi'is and anti-Shi'i individuals, tensions which spilled over in April 2000, with the burning down of the Batang branch of *Pesantren* Al-Hadi in Central Java. In spite of these anti-Shi'i activities, a number of leading Muslim intellectuals have adopted a moderate stance to Shi'ism. Among them are Nurcholish Madjid, Abdurrahman Wahid, and M. Amien Rais, all of whom are considered to have provided a space for the development of Shi'ism in Indonesia. As explained above, the government's official and legal recognition of the national Shi'i organisation, IJABI, in 2000 can be seen as a direct result of Abdurrahman Wahid's moderate attitude, seized on by the Shi'i leaders who took advantage of the opportunity to strive for national recognition.

In relation to the Sunni majority, the stigmatised Shi'is generally apply certain strategies considered appropriate to the social, religious, and political context. In applying these strategies, they uphold the teaching of *taqiyya* which has sound textual and rational bases. Based on Goffman's sociological view,[1] common strategies include information management and adaptation that are implemented through *da'wa*, education, publication, organisation and even in the religious life of the community. Informa-

[1] Goffman (1986)

tion management deals with the concealment of both personal and social identity, institutions, and Shi'i terms, signs or symbols from the Sunnis. The concealment of real goals and interests are inherent elements of these strategies. Information management is also implemented in their interaction with Sunnis: in formal contacts such as seminars, discussions and interviews; and in informal daily encounters. Ambiguous answers to questions regarding Shi'i identity, using religious terms generally recognised by the Sunni majority and prioritising textual reasons from Sunni sources are common techniques implemented by the Shi'is in most activities of *da'wa*, education, publication, and organisation, particularly those activities in which members of the Sunni majority participate.

Adaptation is the way in which the Shi'is adjust to the norms and rules of the Sunni majority. It is implemented in terms of religious rituals and practices, in so far as they perform religious rituals according to the Shafi'i *fiqh* which is upheld and practiced by the majority in Indonesia, particularly when they are performed in congregation and public. This practice is even seen as significant in the maintenance of Islamic fraternity - an Islamic value that is promoted at all times and places. In this way, Shi'i existence and identity remains hidden to the majority, which is very important for the preservation and consolidation of their position in the Sunni-dominated country.

The strategies implemented can be seen within a framework of reconversion and reproduction strategies. Reconversion strategies are the transferring of accumulated capital into another type of capital, the most sought after being symbolic capital. By implementing information management and adaptation, the Shi'i *ustadh*, intellectuals and lay adherents may accumulate a particular type of capital and transform it into another type. For example, the cultural and social capital gained by the *ustadh* and intellectuals may be transformed into economic capital, enabling them to gain prestigious social and economic positions in society. Reproduction strategies are "sets of practices designed (and mediated) to maintain and improve position."[2] The ultimate aim of the Shi'i struggle in Indonesia is to obtain recognition of Shi'ism and its adherents in Indonesia by the Sunni majority, both the laity and religious cadre. The legal recognition of IJABI by the government means an increase in the position of Shi'ism and its adherents. This is only one aspect of recognition and the struggle for the social and religious recognition of Shi'ism and its adherents is a continuing process.

[2] Mahar (1990: 18)

In short, the Shi'is in Indonesia, as a stigmatised group, have implemented various strategies - using *da'wa*, education, publication, organisation, and even aspects of religious life - depending on the existing political, social, and religious situations, in order to gain recognition and occupy a legitimate position and exercise legitimate power in society. Throughout their entire history they have struggled for recognition - a fundamental dimension of social life - the achievement of which is an unending duty.

SAMENVATTING

Onderwerp van deze studie zijn de sjiieten in Indonesië, de positie die ze innemen als een islamitische minderheid te midden van een soennitische meerderheid en de wijze waarop zij erkenning in hun land proberen te krijgen. De studie is beperkt tot de *Ithna 'ashariyya* (ook bekend als Twaalvers of het *Ja'fari* sjiisme). Dit is een richting binnen de islam waarvan de aanhangers geloven dat twaalf imams Muhamad zijn opgevolgd en als gevolg van hun opvattingen een aantal specifieke gebruiken kennen.

In de analyse van de sjiieten in Indonesië als godsdienstige minderheidsgroep wordt gebruik gemaakt van de stigma theorie zoals die door Goffman is ontwikkeld. Volgens deze Goffman theorie zijn gestigmatiseerde groepen geneigd strategieën te gebruiken die passen binnen het sociale systeem dat wordt gedomineerd door de meerderheid. Daar waar het soennisme de norm is geworden in de islamitische wereld wordt het sjiisme als 'abnormaal' beschouwd en moeten sjiieten van bepaalde strategieën gebruik maken om erkenning door de soennitische meerderheid te verwerven.

Kwantitatieve gegevens zijn er niet, maar het is wel zeker dat binnen de grote groep van Indonesische moslims de sjiieten een zeer kleine minderheid vormen. Hoewel het sjiisme ook in het verleden in Indonesië beleden werd, zijn de meeste sjiieten in Indonesië soennieten die na de Iraanse revolutie van 1979 werden bekeerd.

In Indonesië kunnen verschillende groepen sjiieten worden onderscheiden. De eerste groep bestaat uit sjiieten van Arabische afkomst. Zowel kwantitatief als kwalitatief vormen zij een belangrijk element in de sjiietische gemeenschap in Indonesië. Naar aantal gezien vormt deze groep een groot deel van de Indonesische sjiietische gemeenschap. Kwalitatief gezien zijn de meest prominente sjiietische *ustadh* van Arabische afkomst, vaak zijn ze Sayyid. Bovendien worden de Arabieren geacht de oorspronkelijke leden van de sjiietische gemeenschap in Indonesië te zijn; dit onverlet het feit dat het onduidelijk blijft wanneer het sjiisme in Indonesië werd geïntroduceerd. Dat een aantal Sayyid families het sjiisme beleed was niet algemeen bekend bij de soennietische meerderheid. De opkomst van mensen

die in Qum hadden gestudeerd, die islamitisch onderwijs hadden genoten aan de *hawza 'ilmiyya* (academies) in Qum, het belangrijkste centrum van sjiietisch islamitisch onderwijs in de wereld, vormde een uiterst belangrijke bijdrage tot het tot stand komen van een sjiietische gemeenschap in Indonesië. De meeste vermaarde sjiietische *ustadh* zijn afgestudeerden van de *hawza 'ilmiyya* in Qum. Het is niet duidelijk wanneer precies Indonesiërs voor het eerst naar Qum gingen om daar islamitisch onderwijs te volgen. Een aantal deed dat al enige jaren voor de Iraanse revolutie. Zij waren allemaal Indonesiërs van Arabische afkomst en kwamen uit verschillende delen van de het land. Een feit is dat na de vestiging van de Islamitische Republiek van Iran de contacten tussen haar regering en de Indonesische sjiitische 'ulama' intensiever werd.

De overwinning van de ayatollahs inspireerde de Indonesische intellectuelen en 'ulama' ook om de ideologische achtergrond van de Iraanse revolutie, het sjiisme te bestuderen. Dit droeg bij tot de opkomst van een tweede belangrijke groep binnen de sjiitische gemeenschap in Indonesië. Vanaf de jaren tachtig is het sjiisme een nieuwe vorm van islam geworden die aantrekkingskracht uitoefent op studenten van vermaarde Indonesische universiteiten. Campussen in Bandung, Jakarta en Makassar in Zuid Celebes zijn tot centra van het sjiisme geworden.

Hoewel over het algemeen het ontstaan van deze groep een reactie geacht wordt te zijn op de Iraanse revolutie in 1979 zijn er toch een aantal mensen die zich al veel eerder tot het sjiisme bekeerden. De bekeerlingen aan een aantal universiteiten in de jaren tachtig is deels een gevolg van de Iraanse revolutie, maar de fascinatie met de overwinning van Ayatollah Khomeini leidde niet automatisch tot bekeringen tot het sjiisme. Veel Indonesische islamitische intellectuelen die de gebeurtenissen in Iran in 1978 en 1979 nauwgezet in de media volgden bleven soenniet.

De relatie tussen de sjiitische intellectuelen, the campus groep, en de *ustadh* is gecompliceerd. Alle drie de groepen delen een gemeenschappelijk doel – het bevorderen van het sjiisme – en op dit punt zijn ze geneigd om met elkaar samen te werken, maar hun relatie is tevens gekleurd door meningsverschillen en conflicten.

Een ander punt dat vermeld dient te worden is dat tot de sjiitische gemeenschap ook bekeerden behoren met een dissidente achtergrond. Ze zijn afkomstig uit islamitische minderheden die in de ogen van de soenitische meerderheid er heterodoxe praktijken op na houden.

Bekeringen vonden en vinden plaats op drie met elkaar gerelateerde wijzen. De eerste is door middel van onderwijs in de brede betekenis van het woord, de overdracht van kennis en waarden. Daarnaast kunnen

vrienden of familieleden een rol bij de bekering spelen. De derde manier waardoor mensen zich tot het sjiisme bekeren is het lezen van literatuur. De eerste twee manieren speelden de hoofdrol bij de bekering van Indonesische Arabieren voor de Iraanse revolutie, maar is ook van belang bij het bekeringsproces in de andere groepen. Onderwijs is een zeer belangrijk instrument bij de bekering tot het sjiisme geworden.

Bekeerden beschouwen het sjiisme als juister en meer door de rede beïnvloed dan de soennitische islam die zij eerst aanhingen. Ze zijn geneigd het sjiisme positief te waarderen zowel als een set religieuze doctrines als een historische realiteit. Opgemerkt kan worden dat de sjiitische doctrine van rechtvaardigheid nauw verbonden is met die van het *imamaat*. Sjiieten beschouwden dit als een geëigend concept in hun strijd tegen het autoritaire Suharto regiem en in hun streven om een rechtvaardig bestuur te bewerkstelligen. Ze geloven ook dat in het sjiisme de rol van *'aql* (rede) veel groter is dan dit in het soennisme het geval is. Het sjiisme wordt geacht meer ruimte te geven aan *'aql* op verscheidene terreinen van kennis. In dit verband wijzen ze op de voortgaande ontwikkeling van kennis, de ideeënwereld en filosofie sinds de vroegste geschiedenis van het sjiisme, zoals dit naar voren komt in het optreden van Imams en 'ulama' die zich verzetten tegen onderdrukkende regiems, de opvattingen over de noodzaak van *ijtihad* en de dominante plaats die de filosofische traditie inneemt.

Op dit moment is er gezien de verschillen in achtergrond onder de sjiieten geen persoon die door alle sjiitische groeperingen in Indonesië als leider wordt erkend. De sjiitische leiders in Indonesië kunnen in twee categorieën worden ingedeeld: *ustadh* en intellectuelen. Deze classificatie komt overeen met het onderscheid in de islamitische wereld in het algemeen en in de geschiedenis van de islam in Indonesië in het bijzonder tussen 'ulama' en intellectuelen. De eerste groep, de *ustadh*, zijn over het algemeen een product van traditionele islamitische onderwijsinstellingen. De 'intellectuele' groep is daarentegen afgestudeerd aan seculiere universiteiten.

Sjiitische *ustadh* hebben twee belangrijke kenmerken. Ten eerste vindt hun onderwijs gewoonlijk plaats aan instellingen van islamitisch onderwijs waar verschillende takken van islamitische kennis wordt onderwezen. Ten tweede wijden de *ustadh* zich aan religieuze propaganda en onderwijs aan islamitische onderwijsinstellingen. Velen hebben een of meerdere instituten opgericht en geven daar leiding aan. Hun hoofdberoep is dat van godsdienstig onderwijzer of geestelijke leidsman van de *jama'a*, de achterban van zulke islamitische instellingen.

Sjiitische intellectuelen zijn afgestudeerd aan seculiere universiteiten en hebben seculiere vakken gestudeerd. Ze hebben nooit godsdienstig

onderwijs gevolgd of informatie over het sjiisme opgedaan op een Indonesische of buitenlandse officiële islamitische instelling. Ze bestudeerden het sjiisme toen ze student aan een universiteit waren of na hun afstuderen. Ze waren actief in godsdienstige kringen en woonden lezingen bij in de campus moskeeën of andere islamitische instellingen. Als zodanig worden ze als minder gekwalificeerd beschouwd op het gebied van traditioneel islamitische kennis dan de *ustadh*. Sjiitische intellectuelen zijn over het algemeen universitaire docenten, leraren aan andere onderwijsinstellingen en/of werken bij sociale en culturele instellingen en in de zakenwereld.

Als een aparte denominatie binnen de islam heeft het sjiisme een reeks religieuze opvattingen en gebruiken die het van het soennisme onderscheidt. Genoemd dienen te worden fundamentele begrippen als *ahl al-bayt*, het imamaat, het geloof in de Imam Mahdi, en *taqiyya*. Sjiieten zeggen dat ze volgelingen zijn van de *ahl al-bayt*. Het begrip *ahl al-bayt* wordt vaak gebruikt om de sjiieten en het sjiisme van de soennitische gemeenschap te onderscheiden. Letterlijk betekent het 'de mensen van het Huis, dat wil zeggen het Huishouden van de Profeet Mohammed. Voor sjiieten omvat de *ahl al-bayt* de Profeet Mohammed, zijn dochter Fatima, zijn neef en schoonzoon 'Ali en zijn twee kleinzonen Hasan en Husayn. Een tweede betekenis van *ahl al-bayt* komt overeen met die van *'itra*, een begrip dat alle twaalf Imams omvat; van Imam 'Ali tot de Imam Mahdi.

Imamaat is het fundamentele geloofspunt dat de sjiieten van de soennieten onderscheidt. Moslims zijn verplicht om het te vestigen. In tegenstelling tot soennieten beschouwen sjiieten het als een religieus concept. In het sjiisme is de Imam een godsdienstige, geestelijke en politieke leideer die dezelfde functies heeft als de Profeet. In tegenstelling to de Profeet echter heeft de Imam echter geen goddelijke geboden ontvangen. Evenals het profeetschap is het imamaat gebaseerd op goddelijke aanstelling. Sjiieten beschouwen het als onvoorstelbaar dat men een Imam zouden kunnen kiezen, dit alleen al niet omdat de mens daar eenvoudigweg de bevoegdheid niet toe heeft. Alleen God heeft de autoriteit om via de Profeet een Imam te benoemen. Alleen Hij weet wie de meest godvruchtige onder de mensen is en over de meeste kennis beschikt.

Het soennisme en sjiisme hebben verschillende opvattingen over het geloof in de Imam Mahdi. Een essentieel verschil betreft de geboorte van de Imam Mahdi. Waar soennieten van mening zijn dat de Imam Mahdi nog niet geboren is, geloven sjiieten dat hij al geboren is en nog leeft maar zich verborgen houdt. Omdat dit onderdeel is van hun opvattingen over het imamaat besteden sjiieten bovendien meer aandacht aan het geloof in de Imam Mahdi dan soennieten doen. De belangrijkste geloofsopvattingen over de Imam Mahdi zijn dat hij de zoon is van de elfde Imam, Hasan

al-'Askari, dat hij die laatste Imam is die door God is verkozen, dat hij onfeilbaar is en dat hij volkomen kennis van de Qur'an en *hadith* bezit.

Van tijd tot tijd geeft de occultatie van de Imam Mahdi aanleiding tot problemen. Een daarvan is het optreden van mensen die beweren dat zij de Imam Mahdi zijn. Sjiitische leiders in Indonesië waarschuwen hun achterban tegen zulke valse Mahdis. Een ander probleem is dat Indonesische sjiieten soms claimen dat ze de Mahdi hebben ontmoet of met hem hebben gecommuniceerd.

Taqiyya (of *reservatio mentalis*, in Latijn) betekent letterlijk afschermen. De meeste sjiieten in Indonesië volgen dit principe. Ze proberen informatie te verbergen of aan te passen niet alleen over hun eigen identiteit en geloof maar ook over die van hun geloofsgenoten, sjiitische instellingen en de wijdere sjiitische gemeenschap. Sommigen echter en in dit betreft in het bijzonder *ustadh* die in Qum hebben gestudeerd, zijn wel bereid om in het openbaar van hun sjiitisch geloof te getuigen.

Naast deze grondslagen van de godsdienst (*usul al-din*) zijn er de 'vertakkingen' van de godsdienst (*furu' al-din*) die een gedragscode voor alle sjiieten vormen. Dit is vergelijkbaar met de *rukun Islam* (de zuilen van de islam) in het soennisme. De sjiieten in Indonesië volgen de *Ja'fari* school van jurisprudentie. Dit onderscheidt hen van de meeste moslims in Indonesië die de *Shafi'i* school aanhangen. Regelmatig beamen Sjiitische leiders dat de *Ja'fari* school erg dicht bij die van *Shafi'i* staat en dat de verschillen tussen de *Ja'fari* jurisprudentie en die van de *Shafi'i* en de drie andere soennitische scholen van jurisprudentie kleiner zijn dan die tussen de vier soennitische scholen van jurisprudentie zelf.

Algemeen gezien als een hoofdpunt van verschil tussen de *Ja'fari* jurisprudentie en die van de soennitische scholen is het feit dat in het sjiisme de poort van *ijtihad* niet gesloten is. In het soennisme is deze dat sinds de negende eeuw. Hoewel de poort der *ijtihad* voor iedereen geopend is verplichten sjiitische 'ulama' de leek om de opvattingen van een hoogste *mujtahid* te volgen. Deze figuur staat bekend als de *marja'* of de *marja' al-taqlid* (de bron van navolging). Gewoonlijk publiceert de *marja' al-taqlid* zijn door *ijtihad* verkregen opvattingen. Deze betreffen een grote variëteit van onderwerpen, van godsdienstige tot politieke zaken. Zo'n publicatie wordt meestal *risala 'amaliyya* (traktaat over de praktijk) genoemd en wordt de religieuze richtlijn voor zijn *muqallids*, zij die zijn opvattingen volgen. Alle Indonesische sjiieten zijn *muqallids muqallids.* De meeste van hen beschouwen Groot Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, de huidige *wali faqih* in Iran, als hun *marja'*. Een aantal volgt Groot Ayatollah 'Ali Sistani uit Irak, weer Groot Ayatollah Bahjat Fumani uit Iran.

Wat betreft *'ibadat* (de gebeden, het vasten, de *zakat* en de hajj) zijn er op de hoofdpunten geen grote verschillen tussen de rituele gebruiken en opvattingen van de sjiieten en de soennitische meerderheid in Indonesië.

Een bijzondere sjiietische instelling is de *khums*, de een vijfde belasting. Een andere specifiek sjiietisch gebruik is de *mut'a*, het tijdelijke huwelijk. Sjiieten in Indonesië beschouwen dit laatste als toegestaan, omdat het ook gedurende het leven van de Profeet Mohammed werd toegepast. Soennieten verbieden *mut'a*. Voedsel vormt een ander punt van onderscheid. De *Ja'fari* school zoals die door sjiieten in Indonesië wordt aangehangen verbiedt het eten van vis met schubben. Ook eten dat door ongelovigen is aangeraakt is *haram*.

In de eerste tien jaar die volgden op de Iraanse revolutie van 1978-1979 vonden islamitische missionaire activiteiten (*da'wa*) van sjiieten meestal op een individuele basis plaats. Er was één uitzondering: de rol die werd gespeeld door de vermaarde onderwijsinstelling YAPI die in 1976 in Bangil werd opgericht. Vanaf het eind van de jaren tachtig zijn leidende sjiieten in Indonesië stichtingen, *yayasans*, gaan oprichten. Recente schattingen geven aan dat er meer dan tachtig van zulke stichtingen zijn, verspreid over het hele land en geconcentreerd in de steden. Gegeven het relatief geringe aantal sjiieten in Indonesië is dit een betrekkelijk groot aantal. De aanwezigheid van dergelijke *yayasans* en hun geografische spreiding zijn een indicatie voor de geografische spreiding van sjiieten over het land. Het laat ook zien hoe actief men is op sociaal, cultureel, educatief en godsdienstig gebied.

De snelle toename van het aantal sjiietische instellingen in Indonesië is het gevolg van twee met elkaar samenhangende factoren. In de eerste plaats zijn de meeste sjiietische religieuze onderwijzers and intellectuelen in de private sector werkzaam. Ze hadden behoefte aan een institutioneel platform voor hun religieuze aspiraties. Op een paar uitzonderingen na zijn in het hele land van Sumatra tot West Irian de sjiietische stichtingen in stedelijke gebieden gezeteld. Dit weerspiegelt de groei van het sjiisme in Indonesië als een stedelijk verschijnsel. Een ander belangrijk punt met betrekking tot de oprichting van sjiietische *da' wa* instellingen is dat het groeiend aantal sjiietische stichtingen correspondeert met het toenemende aantal Qum alumni die naar hun vaderland terugkeerden.

De groei van het sjiisme in Indonesië kan op het conto worden geschreven aan de sleutelrol van Jiddische religieuze geleerden, onderwijzers en intellectuelen die stichtingen, *bezanden* en andere scholen, en andere socio-culturele instellingen hebben opgericht. Er zijn op zijn op zijn minst vijf *pesantren* die het sjiisme onder Indonesische moslims hebben geprop-

ageerd: YAPI in Bangil, *Al-Hadi* in Pekalongan, *Dar al-Taqrib* in Bangsri Jepara, *Al-Mukarramah* in Bandung, and *Nurul Tsaqalain* in Leihitu, Midden-Molukken.

Het uitgeven van publicaties heeft ook in belangrijke mate bijgedragen tot de verbreiding van het sjiisme. De ontwikkeling van het sjiisme en van uitgeverijen zijn hand in hand gegaan in Indonesië. Het uitgeven van sjiitische boeken en tijdschriften kan tot op zekere hoogte als onderdeel van de *da'wa* activiteiten worden gezien. Het is echter ook een indicatie van de bijdrage die het sjiisme aan het intellectuele en culturele leven in Indonesië heeft geleverd. De overgrote meerderheid van de sjiitische uitgeverijen zijn nauwelijks of in het geheel niet bekend bij de officiële uitgeverswereld in Indonesië. Er zijn echter een aantal uitzonderingen. Mizan, Pustaka Hidayah, en Lentera zijn drie bekende sjiitische uitgeverijen die zowel sjiitische als niet sjiitische literatuur uitgeven. Alle drie hebben zich tot gevestigde uitgeverijen ontwikkeld. Bij andere sjiitische instellingen is het uitgeven van literatuur onderdeel van een breder scala aan activiteiten waaronder ook *da'wa* en onderwijs vallen. Grote instellingen zoals de ICC van Al-Huda, Muthahhari, Al-Jawad, YAPI (*Yayasan Penyiaran Islam*), YAPI (*Yayasan Pesantren Islam*) van Bangil and Al-Baqir van Bangil vallen in deze categorie.

Door gebruik te maken van de verschillende netwerken van de sjiitische gemeenschap kunnen sjiieten sjiitische publicaties gemakkelijk raadplagen of aanschaffen. Hierbij komt nog dat de meerderheid van de Indonesische sjiieten kunnen lezen en schrijven. In de sjiitische context heeft het uitgeven van literatuur drie functies: bijdragen tot verandering van godsdienstige opvattingen, onderwijs en communicatie. Het stimuleren van bekeringen is een van de meeste opmerkelijke bijdragen van het uitgeven van literatuur aan de ontwikkeling van het sjiisme in Indonesië. Dit kan niet ontkend worden. De meeste sjiitische bekeerlingen erkennen het belang van boeken in hun bekeringsproces. Vaak worden bepaalde boeken genoemd die als een katalysator hebben gewerkt bij de lezers ervan om zich intensief in het sjiisme te verdiepen. De meeste bekeerlingen tot het sjiisme kwamen tot hun daad als gevolg van hun eigen studie van sjiitische literatuur, en niet, bijvoorbeeld, door het bijwonen van sjiitische preken. De invloed van sjiitische literatuur beperkt zich niet tot de sjiitische gemeenschap in Indonesië. Vertalingen en werken van Indonesische sjiitische auteurs hebben niet nagelaten indruk te maken op Indonesische soennieten en met name sjiitische filosofische werken hebben een grote invloed in de wijdere Indonesische islamitische gemeenschap gehad.

Tot het einde van de Nieuwe Orde was er geen overkoepelende organisatie voor de Indonesische sjiieten. Daarna werden er een aantal pogingen

ondernomen om te komen tot een nationale organisatie die de geografisch zo verspreide sjiitische gemeenschappen moest verenigen. De eerste als overkoepelend bedoelde organisatie was de MAHDI, een afkorting van *Majlis Ahlulbait di Indonesia* (Raad van de *Ahl al-Bayt* in Indonesië). De MAHDI werd in het begin van de jaren negentig in Jakarta opgericht. Het initiatief was tot mislukken gedoemd. Dit had twee redenen. Ten eerste bestond er geen overeenstemming onder de verschillende facties binnen de sjiitische gemeenschap zelf over hoe de organisatie geleid moest worden en wat haar ideologie moest zijn. De tweede reden was het gevolg van de sociaal-politieke omstandigheden in Indonesië ten tijde van Nieuwe Orde, die weinig speelruimte bood aan religieuze minderheden om uiting te geven aan hun identiteit en godsdienstigheid.

Het einde van de Nieuwe Orde gaf een nieuwe impuls aan het streven om tot nationale sociaal-religieuze organisatie te komen die alle aanhangers van het sjiisme in Indonesië verenigde. Prominente sjiitsche leiders reageerden positief en verkregen de steun van de Islamitische Republiek van Iran. Stappen werden ondernomen om een sjiitische organisatie genaamd IJABI (*Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia*) op te richten. Het duurde echter niet lang tot oude vetes weer van zich deden spreken en misverstanden en meningsverschillen tussen de sjiitische *ustadh* en intellectuelen weer op de voorgrond traden. Desalniettemin besloot de architect van de IJABI - Jalaluddin Rakhmat – zijn plannen voort te zetten. Rakhmat bezocht Iran om sjiitische leiders daar van zijn plannen op de hoogte te stellen en de steun van de *wali faqih*, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i te verwerven. De inauguratie van de nieuwe organisatie vond plaats op 1 juli 2000. Zeven van de twaalf leden van de adviesraad van de IJABI waren Sayyids. De niet-Sayyids waren sjiitische leiders met grote invloed in verschillende delen van Indonesië. Sommigen zouden religieuze onderwijzers aan Islamitische stichtingen of *pesantren* worden, anderen werden hoogleraar aan een universiteit. Er heerste brede overeenstemming over het feit dat de inauguratie van IJABI had kunnen plaatsvinden dankzij het democratische politieke klimaat van dat moment in Indonesië, dat werd gestimuleerd door de vrijzinnige, gematigde president Abdurrahman Wahid.

De eenheid was van korte duur. In reactie op de interne onenigheid probeerde het IJABI bestuur zijn positie te versterken. Het formuleerde tien kenmerken van niet-IJABI gedrag. Genoemd werden het zich schuldig maken aan racisme, intolerantie, tarekatisme (het volgen van bepaalde Sufi ordes), mahdiisme (de claim dat men met de Imam Mahdi kon communiceren), het propageren van een staat gebaseerd op het islamitische recht, salafisme (Wahhabisme), fiqh georiënteerd zijn, het spelen van politieke spelletjes, het gebruiken van de IJABI voor persoonlijk gewin en disloyali-

teit. IJABI leden die een dergelijk gedrag tentoon spreidden werden ervan beschuldigd een bedreiging voor het voortbestaan en de eenheid van de IJABI te vormen en de efficiëntie van haar programma's te ondermijnen. Met het opstellen van de lijst hoopte de IJABI dat haar leden zich zouden distantiëren van ongewenst gedrag waardoor de IJABI de ideale sociaal-religieuze organisatie zou kunnen worden. Het conflict kostte de IJABI leden en leiders.

De conflicten en misverstanden tussen de twee groepen bestaan nog steeds. Er is een schisma binnen de Indonesische sjiitische gemeenschap met aan de ene kant zij die tot de IJABI zijn toegetreden en aan de andere kant zij die het bestaan van deze organisatie afwijzen. Tot de voorstanders van de IJABI behoren een deel der intellectuelen, leden van voormalige dissidente islamitische groeperingen en gewone sjiieten die al een band hadden met de IJABI leiders lang voordat deze organisatie werd opgericht. Vertaald naar religieuze opvattingen betekent dit dat de leiders van de IJABI meer de nadruk leggen op het belang van de ethiek of the Sufisme dan op dat van de jurisprudentie. De anti-IJABI groep bestaat voornamelijk uit *ustadh* en hun achterban. De meeste van deze *ustadh* zijn afgestudeerden van de *hawza 'ilmiyya* in Qum. Een aantal van hen studeerden aan andere islamitische onderwijsinstellingen in Indonesië of het buitenland. De meerderheid bestaat uit Sayyids. In tegenstelling tot de IJABI leiders besteden deze *ustadh* meer aandacht aan alle bestanddelen van het sjiisme, met inbegrip van de Ja'fari jurisprudentie. IJABI leden beschouwen hen dan ook als *fiqh* georiënteerd.

Het verschil in sociale en onderwijs achtergrond en in religieuze oriëntatie tussen beide groepen heeft geleid tot conflicten en wedijver bij het verwerven van sociaal, cultureel en economisch kapitaal. De wedijver vindt zijn oorsprong in het verschil in sociale achtergrond in de sjiitische gemeenschap in Indonesië: de groep van Arabieren versus de campusgroep, en *ustadh* versus intellectuelen. De tegenstellingen worden nog versterkt door aan elkaar gerelateerde persoonlijke, godsdienstige, politieke en economische factoren. Er is nog een andere kwestie die een bron van conflicten is tussen de IJABI en non-IJABI groep. Dat is de houding van Jalaludin Rakhmat ten opzichte van de Sayyids. Hoewel Rakhmat deze beschuldiging ontkent zijn een aantal Sayyids van mening dat hij anti-Sayyid is.

Een belangrijke stap die de tegenstanders van de IJABI hebben ondernomen is de oprichting van drie lokale sjiitische organisaties in Java: KIBLAT (*Komunitas Ahlul Bait Jawa Barat*, West-Javaanse *Ahl al-Bayt* Gemeenschap) in West-Java, WASIAT in Midden-Java, en FAJAR (*Forum*

Jamaah Ahlul Bait Jawa Timur, Forum van de Oost-Javaanse *Ahl al-Bayt* Congregatie) in Oost-Java.

Vanuit internationaal perspectief is het duidelijke dat landen in het Midden-Oosten en met name Saudi-Arabië de anti-sjiisme beweging in Indonesië met kracht ondersteunen, terwijl de sjiieten in Indonesië kunnen rekenen op de steun van Iran.

In Indonesië zelf zijn de reacties van de soennitische gemeenschap op de groei van het sjiisme in Indonesië complex. Ze variëren van extreem negatief tot gematigd. De meest negatieve en ook meest frequente reacties komen van een aantal reformistische islamitische groepen zoals de Persis en Al-Irsyad en de mensen en instellingen die hier mee verbonden zijn. De felle houding van Persis wordt nog duidelijke als men haar relatie met de *Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia* (DDII, Indonesische Islamitische Missionaire Raad) in de analyse betrekt. In tegenstelling tot de Persis en Al-Irsyad neemt de grootste reformistische organisatie in Indonesië, de Muhammadiyah, zo te zien een neutral standpunt ten aanzien van het sjiisme in, in de zin dat zij zich niet inlaat met het propageren van anti-sjiitische opvattingen onder haar leden of in de islamitische gemeenschap in het algemeen.

De grootste traditionalistische islamitische organisatie in Indonesië, de Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), huldigt het principe dat het sjiisme weliswaar verschilt van het soennisme maar dat de sjiieten desalnietemin onderdeel uitmaken van de islamitische wereld. Er valt echter een duidelijk verschil te constateren in de houding van individuele leiders van de NU ten opzichte van het sjiisme. Aan de ene kant zijn er de extreem negatieve reacties van NU 'ulama' die actief deelnemen aan anti-sjiisme activiteiten. Daar tegenover staan de gematigde opvattingen van leiders zoals Abdurrahman Wahid en Said Agiel Siradj.

Deze verschillende reacties in Indonesië worden weerspiegeld in de houding van de *Majlis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI, Indonesische Raad van 'Ulama'), een raad die door de Indonesische regering wordt beschouwd de met gezag bekleedde instantie op religieus gebied met name daar waar het niet-soennietische godsdienstige sekten en genootschappen betreft. Een aanbeveling uit 1984 en een *fatwa* uit 1997 waarin het tijdelijke huwelijk (*mut'a*) wordt verboden zijn een indicatie van de tolerante houding van het centraal bestuur van de raad. Wat de regering zelf betreft is er het Ministerie van Godsdienst. Dit stelt onderzoeken in naar controversiële religieuze groeperingen. Op basis daarvan brengt het formele rapporten uit en formuleert het officiële standpunten. Het ministerie is overwegend soennitisch. Bijna alle opeenvolgende ministers, hoge ambtenaren en le-

den van de staf zijn soennieten. Het gevolg hiervan is dat het ministerie in het sjiisme een bedreiging van de religieuze harmonie in het land ziet en de aanwezigheid van sjiieten beschouwt als een probleem dat moet worden opgelost. De kwestie wordt nog verder gecompliceerd door het feit dat het sjiisme dikwijls met de Iraanse revolutionaire ideologie wordt geassocieerd. Zoals dat in veel landen in de wereld het geval was werd de houding van de Indonesische regering ten opzichte van het sjiisme in het bijzonder in de jaren tachtig mede bepaald door de vrees voor het verbreiden van revolutionaire ideeën vanuit Iran.

Anti-sjiitische groeperingen hebben een groot aantal activiteiten ondernomen om de verbreiding van het sjiisme in Indonesië te voorkomen of te verminderen. Hiertoe behoorden het uitgeven van publicaties, het organiseren van seminars en discussiebijeenkomsten, oproepen tot de regering en het houden van preken door reformistische groeperingen, met name de DDII en aanverwante instellingen. Desalniettemin kan de sjiitische gemeenschap in Indonesië te midden van toenemende activiteiten van de anti-sjiistische beweging rekenen op een aantal leidende islamitische intellectuelen die er toe neigen het bestaan de de sjiieten als minderheid te beschermen. Voorbeelden zijn Nurcholish Majid, Abdurrahman Wahid en Amien Rais, die allen bekend staan om hun gematigde of welwillende houding ten opzichte van het sjiisme en zijn aanhangers.

GLOSSARY

Abangan
: Nominal Javanese Muslims

Adat
: Indigenous tradition; customary law.

Adhan
: The call to Prayer.

'adl
: Tustice.

Ahl al-sunnah wa al-jama'ah (*ahlussunnah waljamaah*)
: Sunni distinguished from the Shi'i; it refers to traditional Islam which basically follows Ash'ari theology, Shafi'i jurisprudence, and al-Ghazali's Sufism.

Ahl al-bayt
: Literally the people of the house; the Prophet Muhammad's household.

Ajengan
: The title of 'ulama' used in West Java, equivalent with the term kyai in Central and East Java .

Akhlaq
: Morality, ethics

'*alim* pl '*ulama*'
: Muslim scholar.

'aql
: Reasoning.

Arba'in
: Literally meaning forty; the commemoration of the fortieth day of Imam Husayn's martyrdom.

'*ashura*
: The anniversary of the martyrdom of the third Imam Husayn commemorate on the tenth of the first month in the Muslim calendar.

Ayatollah
: Ayat Allah literally sign of God; the honorific title bestowed to a *mujtahid*.

Ayatollah uzma

The grand ayatollah; the honorific title bestowed to *marja' al-taqlid*.

Da'wa

[dakwah] Islamic missionary activity.

Da'i

Propagandist; evangelist; one who carries out Islamic propagation.

DDII

Dewan Dakwah Islam Indonesia [Indonesian Islamic Missionary Council].

DEPAG

Departemen Agama [the Ministry of Religious Affairs].

Dhikr

Remembrance of God.

DI/NII

Darul Islam/Negara Islam Indonesia [House of Islam/Islamic State of Indonesia]; an Indonesian political movement which in 1948 declared the Islamic state of Indonesia.

Do'a

Supplication, prayer.

DPC

Dewan Pimpinan Cabang, sub-district leadership council.

DPD

Dewan Pimpinan Daerah, district leadership council.

DPW

Dewan Pimpinan Wilayah, provincial leadership council.

FAJAR

Forum Jamaah Ahlul Bait Jawa Timur [Forum of East Java Ahl al-Bayt Congregation].

Faqih

Jurist; expert in Islamic jurisprudence.

Fiqh

Islamic jurisprudence.

Golkar

Golongan Karya, Functional Group; party of the New Order government.

Hawl

The annual death commemoration.

Hawzah 'ilmiyya

College of learning in the Shi'i world.

Hikayat

A historical tale or account.

HMI

Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam [Association of Muslim University Students].

HMI MPO

Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam Majelis Penyelamat Organisasi [Council of Organisation Saviours of the Association of Islamic University Students].

HPI

Himpunan Pelajar Indonesia [Association of Indonesian Students].

Hujjat al-Islam

Literally means proof of Islam; the common title of an aspiring mujtahid.

IAIN

Institut Agama Islam Negeri [State Institute for Islamic Studies].

Ibadat

Worships; ritual observances.

ICC

Islamic Cultural Center.

ICIS

International Center for Islamic Studies.

ICMI

Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia [Association of Indonesian Muslim Intelligensia].

IJABI

Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia [Indonesian Council of Ahl al-Bayt Associations].

Ijaza

License, the authority granted by a *mujtahid* to a student to exercise *ijtihad*.

Ijtihad

Independent interpretation of Islamic doctrine based on the sufficient knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunna.

IKIP

Institut Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan [Institute of Teacher's Training and Educational Sciences].

Iqro'

Literally reading; referring to 'modern' method of learning Qur'an recitation.

IPABI

Ikatan Pemuda Ahlul Bait Indonesia [Indonesian Association of Ahl al-Bayt Youth].

ITB

Institut Teknologi Bandung [Bandung Institute of Technology].

'itra

Progeny.

JABODEBEK

Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Bekasi.

Jahiliyya

Ignorance; pre-Islamic Arabian Society.

Jama'a

Congregation.

Kafa'a

Compatibility or equality between partners in marriage.

Khum

Literally one-fifth; religious tax of one-fifth from certain categories of goods and income paid by Shi'is, originally paid to the Prophet Muhammad and the Imam. Now paid to the believer's *marja' al-taqlid* in his capacity as a representative of the Imam.

KIBLAT

Komunitas Ahlul Bait Jawa Barat [West Java Ahl al-Bayt Community].

KKM

Kuliah Kader Muballigh [Course for Preacher Cadre].

LDII

Lembaga Dakwah Islam Indonesia [Institute of Indonesian Islamic Propagation].

LDK

Lembaga Dakwah Kampus [Campus Mosque Da'wa Body].

LPII

Lembaga Pembinaan Ilmu-ilmu Islam [Institute for Establishment of Islamic Knowledge].

LPPI

Lembaga Penelitian dan Pengkajian Islam [Institute of Islamic Studies and Research].

Madhhab

School of Islamic jurisprudence

Madrasah

Literally meaning school; modernized Islamic school offering both religious and general subjects.

MAHDI

Majlis Ahlulbait di Indonesia [Council of Ahl al-Bayt in Indonesia].

Majlis ta'lim

Council for learning.

Maqtal

Story of the massacre of Husayn and his at Karbala

Marja' al-taqlid pl. *maraji' al-taqlid*

Literally reference point for emulation; the authoritative source in matters of Islamic law, namely one who through his learning and probity is qualified to be followed in all points of religious practice and law by the laymen.

Marja'iya

The position of the source of imitation; the relationship between *marja'al-taqlid* and *muqallid*.

Masjumi

Madjelis Sjuro Muslimin Indonesia [Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims].

Ma'tam

Chest-beating in 'ashura ritual.

Mawlid

The ceremony of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday.

MPR

Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat [People's Consultative Assembly].

Mu'amalat

Social transactions.

Muballigh

Preacher.

Muhammadiyah

The largest reformist Muslim organization founded in 1912.

MUI

Majelis Ulama Indonesia [Council of Indonesian Muslim Scholars].

Muqallid

Imitator; an ordinary believer who follows a *mujtahid*.

Mut'a

Temporary marriage.

NKK

Normalisasi Kehidupan Kampus [Normalization of Campus Life].

NU

Nahdlatul Ulama, the Awakening of Muslim scholars; the largest traditionalist Islamic organization established in 1926.

PAN

Partai Amanat Nasional [National Mandate Party].

Pancasila

Five Pillars; the ideological and political foundation of the Republic of Indonesia consisting of five principles: belief in One God; a just and civilized humanity; the unity of Indonesia; popular rule through policies formed after representative consensus and social justice for the whole Indonesian people.

PDIP

Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle.

Pengajian

Religious gathering.

Persis

Persatuan Islam [Islamic Unity]; reformist Muslim organization established in 1923.

Pesantren

Traditional Islamic educational institution.

PHBI

Perayaan Hari-hari Besar Islam [Commemoration of Islamic Holy Days].

PKB

Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa [National Awakening Party].

PKI

Partai Komunis Indonesia [Indonesian Communist Party].

Pondok

Hostel, dormitory residence where students live in the pesantren complex.

Priyayi

Javanese nobility, member of the Javanese official administrative class.

Ratib

Certain formula of *dhikr* and prayers formulated by a Sufi teacher.

Ratu Adil

Just King.

Reformasi

Reform, generally meaning political liberation and economic transparency; also used to refer to the period following Suharto's resignation.

Salawat

Invocation of the Prophet Muhammad and his family.

Santri

Students of pesantren.

Sayyid

Descendant of the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter Fatima.

Sekolah

School; the modern school following the Western educational system.

SMU Plus

Sekolah Menengah Umum Plus, Senior High School with attribute Plus.

SLTP

Sekolah Lanjutan Tingkat Pertama, Junior High School.

STAIN

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri [State University of Islamic Studies].

Tabaruk

The taking of blessing from the Prophet Muhammad and other pious persons through anything related to them.

Tabligh

Religious preaching.

Ta'lim

Religious teaching.

Tabut

The annual observance in Bengkulu and Pariaman, West Sumatera, to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Husayn

Tawassul

The prayer supplicated to God by uttering names of persons having high position at the side of Him.

TBC

Tahayul, Bid'ah, Churafat [Superstition, Innovation, Myth].

Taqiyya

Dissimulation of religious faith in order to protect one's self, family or property from harm or for the sake of Islamic fraternity.

Taqlid

Emulation, following or imitation; refers to the following of the dictates of a *mujtahid*.

Thaqalayn

Literally 'two weighty matters'; two safeguards (the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad's household.

TK/TPA

Taman Kanak-kanak/Taman Pendidikan Al-Qur'an [Kindergarten/Qur'anic Kindergarten].

UI
: Universitas Indonesia [the University of Indonesia].

UII
: Universitas Islam Indonesia [the University of Indonesian Islam].

UNPAD
: Universitas Padjadjaran [Pajajaran University].

UIN
: Universitas Islam Negeri [State Islamic University].

Ulu al-amri
: Those in authority.

Umma
: The community of believers.

Ustadh
: Religious teacher.

Wali
: Guardian; helper or defender, saint.

Wali Sanga
: Nine Saints known to have introduced Islam in Java.

Wilayat al-Faqih
: Literally guardian of the jurist; the concept that government belong by right to those who are learned in Islamic jurisprudence; the persons called *wali faqih*.

Wujudiyya
: Sufi teaching of the unity of being (God and human being).

YAPI
: Yayasan Pesantren Islam [the foundation of Islamic Pesantren], a pesantren established in 1976 and located in Bangil, East Java; also Yayasan Penyiaran Islam [the Foundation of Islamic Propagation] centred in Jakarta.

Ziyara
: The visitation of grave.

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Suara Ummah
Syi'ar
Tekad
Tempo
Tempo Interaktif
Terbit

Tiras
Ummat
http://www.fatimah.or.id
http://www.icc-jakarta.com
http://www.ijabi.or.id
http://www.majelisulama.com

Zulkifli was born on 13th of August 1966 in Bangka, Indonesia. He completed a *doctorandus* degree in 1990 at the Faculty of Tarbiyah (Education), the State Institute for Islamic Studies (IAIN, Institut Agama Islam Negeri) Raden Fatah in Palembang. In 1991 he was appointed as a lecturer at the same faculty and in 1998 he was transferred to the Faculty of Adab (Arts) of the same institute. From 1992 to 1994 he pursued his MA program in the field of anthropology at the Australian National University, Canberra. From 2001 to 2005 he conducted his PhD program at Leiden University under the Indonesian Netherlands Cooperation in Islamic Studies (INIS). Since the end of July 2007 he has been promoted as the Provisional Chairman of State College for Islamic Studies (STAIN, Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Negeri) Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung, Indonesia.