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# DECONSTRUCTING THE HISTORICAL NARRATIVE: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE ABSENCE OF A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE OF THE SHIA FACTION IN THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

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**Abstract** The discourse on the history of Islamic civilization is often dominated by narratives that romanticize inter-group harmony without giving adequate attention to a critical analysis of the disintegrative factions within it. This scientific article aims to examine, dissect, and deconstruct the claims regarding the Shia faction's contributions to achieving the glory of Islam. This study investigates the historical role, contemporary sociopolitical reality, and future projections of the Shia faction using a comparative-analytical (*muqāran*) historical approach based on orthodox classical literature and modern political studies. The results conclusively show that the absence of a positive Shia role is not an a priori assumption, but a well-documented historical fact. In the past, the existence of Shia political entities such as the Fatimid (Ubaydid) Dynasty in Egypt and the Safavid Dynasty in Persia consistently acted as subversive forces that destroyed the cohesion of the Ummah, hindered the expansion of Islam into Europe by allying with Christian empires, and facilitated the collapse of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad in 1258 AD. At present, the theological anomalies inherent in Shia dogma—such as the exclusive Imamate cult, the doctrine of infallibility, and the rejection of the legitimacy of the early generations of the Prophet's Companions—have triggered severe creedal clashes. The transformation of this ideology into a political movement post-1979 Iranian Revolution has proven to spawn sectarian proxy wars that destroy the infrastructure of civilization in the Middle East and threaten social harmony in regions like Indonesia. Projecting into the future, this research concludes that the historical shackles and sectarian sentiments institutionalized in Shia theology will always be a stumbling block to the reconciliation of the Ummah. As long as the epistemology of hatred towards mainstream history is maintained, the Shia faction will remain an inhibiting variable that distances the Ummah from the ideals of unity and the revival of global Islamic civilization.

**Keyword** : Constructive Role, Critical Review, Historical Deconstruction, Islamic Civilization, Shia Faction

***Abstrak*** *Wacana sejarah peradaban Islam sering kali didominasi oleh narasi yang meromantisasi harmoni antar kelompok tanpa memberikan perhatian yang memadai pada analisis kritis terhadap faksi-faksi disintegratif di dalamnya. Artikel ilmiah ini bertujuan untuk memeriksa, membedah, dan mendekonstruksi klaim-klaim mengenai kontribusi faksi Syiah dalam pencapaian kejayaan Islam. Studi ini menyelidiki peran historis, realitas sosiopolitik kontemporer, dan proyeksi masa depan faksi Syiah*



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*menggunakan pendekatan sejarah* ***analitis-komparatif (muqāran)*** *berdasarkan literatur klasik ortodoks dan studi politik modern.Hasil penelitian menunjukkan secara meyakinkan bahwa absennya peran positif Syiah bukanlah sebuah asumsi a priori, melainkan fakta sejarah yang terdokumentasi dengan baik. Di masa lalu, keberadaan entitas politik Syiah seperti* ***Dinasti Fatimiyah (Ubaidiyah)*** *di Mesir dan* ***Dinasti Safawi*** *di Persia secara konsisten bertindak sebagai kekuatan subversif yang menghancurkan kohesi umat, menghambat ekspansi Islam ke Eropa dengan beraliansi bersama imperium Kristen, dan memfasilitasi runtuhnya Kekhalifahan Abbasiyah di Bagdad pada tahun 1258 M.Pada masa kini, anomali teologis yang melekat dalam dogma Syiah—seperti kultus Imamah yang eksklusif, doktrin maksum (infallibility), dan penolakan terhadap legitimasi generasi awal Sahabat Nabi—telah memicu benturan akidah yang parah. Transformasi ideologi ini menjadi gerakan politik pasca-Revolusi Iran 1979 terbukti melahirkan perang proksi sektarian yang menghancurkan infrastruktur peradaban di Timur Tengah dan mengancam harmoni sosial di wilayah seperti Indonesia.Memproyeksikan masa depan, penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa belenggu sejarah dan sentimen sektarian yang terinstitusi dalam teologi Syiah akan selalu menjadi batu sandungan bagi rekonsiliasi umat. Selama epistemologi kebencian terhadap arus utama sejarah tetap dipertahankan, faksi Syiah akan tetap menjadi variabel penghambat yang menjauhkan umat dari cita-cita persatuan dan kebangkitan peradaban Islam global.*

***Kata Kunci :*** *Peran Konstruktif, Tinjauan Kritis, Dekonstruksi Sejarah, Peradaban Islam, Faksi Syiah.*

## A. INTRODUCTION

The golden age of Islamic civilization (Islamic Golden Age) spanning from the 8th to the 13th century AD is often portrayed as the peak manifestation of intellectual achievement, political stability, and economic prosperity ever achieved by mankind.[1] Under the auspices of a centralized and broad-minded government, educational and research institutions like the *Baitul Hikmah* (House of Wisdom) in Baghdad successfully accumulated, synthesized, and developed global knowledge, ranging from Greece and Persia to India.[1] Remarkable innovations in the disciplines of medicine, mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy not only brought prosperity to Muslim societies of their time but also laid the foundation of enlightenment for European civilization centuries later.[1] However, behind the grandeur of this historiographical narrative, Islamic history also harbors dark tales of internal divisions that continuously undermined the stability of the civilization from within. One of the most destructive historical and theological fault lines, the impact of which continues to overshadow the Muslim Ummah to this day, is the emergence and development of the Shia sect, which has always positioned itself as the antithesis to the mainstream Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah (Sunni).

The roots of this deep division can be traced back to the political disputes that occurred immediately after the death of Prophet Muhammad SAW.[2] The event of Saqifah Bani Sa'idah, which culminated in the election of Abu Bakr As-Siddiq as the first caliph through a mechanism of consensus and consultation among the companions, was

fundamentally rejected by a small group of Ali bin Abi Talib's sympathizers.[2] This group built a political belief that the authority to lead the Ummah could not be left to human choice, but was an exclusive divine prerogative falling to Ali and his descendants (Ahl al-Bayt).[2] What initially was merely a political tendency or preference of a minority group—especially after the open conflict in the Battle of Siffin and the arbitration (Tahkim)—gradually underwent a radical epistemological mutation, transforming into a rigid and standardized theological doctrine.[3]

In its historical evolution, the Shia faction developed beyond a mere school of thought into an organized political and military movement. The ambition to seize and maintain power was often realized through maneuvers that directly clashed with the collective interests of the Muslim Ummah. History records the emergence of various dynasties affiliated with Shia teachings—such as the Idrisid Dynasty in Morocco, the Fatimid Dynasty in Egypt (North Africa), the Buyid Dynasty in Iraq, and later the Safavid Dynasty in Persia—each leaving behind a highly controversial legacy of governance.[3] Modern narratives often attempt to rehabilitate the image of these dynasties by highlighting their architectural heritage or artistic patronage, as if these cultural aspects could erase the facts of social repression and geopolitical betrayal that occurred.[4]

However, from the perspective of Sunni puritanism, orthodox historical scholarship, and objective civilizational political analysis, this legacy cannot be judged as a positive contribution to Islamic civilization as a whole.[5] On the contrary, Shia factions are consistently seen as acting as agents of disintegration. Their existence has frequently drained the internal energy of Muslims through armed conflicts, the weakening of legitimate caliphate institutions, persecution of the Sunni majority, and strategic military alliances with the enemies of Islam, including the Mongols in the East and European Christian empires in the West.[5] This phenomenon reflects a pattern of historical betrayal that continues to be replicated in every era.

In the modern era, this problem has not subsided but rather amplified. Contemporary Shia transformation is heavily influenced by the success of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.[8] This revolution aggressively exported the sectarian ideology of *Wilayat al-Faqih* to various parts of the world, triggering regional instability, societal polarization, and prolonged proxy wars in the Middle East.[8] The destructive impact of this ideological expansion did not stop in the Arab region; its waves

even reached Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, which historically possesses a harmonious socio-religious order based on the teachings of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah.[8] The emergence of exclusive Shia educational institutions and propagation agencies in Indonesia immediately sparked strong resistance from the grassroots, often culminating in social exclusion and physical conflict.[9] This situation confirms the hypothesis that Shia theological doctrines essentially lack the capacity to assimilate or contribute peacefully within majority societies.

Responding to the complexity of these problems, this scientific article is specifically articulated to fill the space of Islamic discourse in online academic journals (such as SINTA-indexed journals in Indonesia) with a firm, holistic, and critical review.[10] The main objective of this research is to systematically prove the arguments regarding the absence of a constructive role of the Shia faction in achieving the glory of Islam, by stretching the analysis across three interconnected temporal axes: the past, the present, and the future. By dismantling historiographical myths and excavating doctrinal realities, this research is expected to enlighten academics, policymakers, and scholars in mapping the structural challenges that hinder the ideals of Muslim unity and the revival of Islamic glory.

## B. METHOD

This research is designed as a comparative-analytical qualitative study (*muqāran*) based on library research and historical criticism.[11] Considering that this article is intended for national-standard online Islamic academic journals, the methodology applied must meet the standards of analytical rigor, argumentative rationality, and the ability to triangulate authoritative epistemological sources.[10] Therefore, the historical approach advocated is not merely descriptive-narrative retelling past events, but a critical historiographical approach that dissects motives, power relations, and the socio-theological consequences of an event on the structure of civilization.

The primary data in this study were extracted through the documentation method from various reliable literature sources. Primary sources include a review of classical historiographical works and orthodox commentaries from early Islamic scholars and thinkers, such as the critical analysis by Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah detailing the roles of Shia figures in the context of the Mongol invasion.[6] Additionally, historical data regarding the political dynamics of the Fatimid (Ubaydid) and

Safavid Dynasties are drawn from historical studies compiled by classical and modern scholars like Philip K. Hitti and W. Montgomery Watt.[5]

To contextualize the contemporary Shia problem, this research relies on secondary sources consisting of contemporary religious research reports, official institutional fatwas, and recent journal articles. These sources include official documents from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) regarding recommendations on Shia in 1984 [8], fatwas and theological views from the Dewan Hisbah of Persatuan Islam (Persis) [12], and in-depth research publications from the Agency for Religious Research and Development (Litbang Agama) and the Institute for Islamic Research and Assessment (LPPI).[8] Data regarding the latest sociological dynamics in Indonesia is confirmed through national-scale survey findings conducted by independent institutions, such as the Wahid Foundation in 2017.[9]

The qualitative data analysis procedure in this study is carried out through four systematic methodological stages:

1. **Heuristics (Gathering Traces):** Collecting all literary artifacts and historical data containing intersections between Shia political/theological activities and their impact on the Sunni majority entity.
2. **Source Criticism (Verification):** Validating the originality and credibility of the sources used. In this stage, pro-Shia views that tend to be historically manipulative (such as the glorification of the burning of intellectual traditions by the Mongols) are filtered and deconstructed using comparative analysis from Sunni historians who hold historical validation authority (such as the analysis of the roles of Nasir al-Din al-Tusi and Ibn al-Alqami).[6]
3. **Theological and Sociopolitical Interpretation:** Verified facts are not left as dead entities but are interpreted to find causal mechanisms. Creedal differences (such as the concept of infallibility and hatred towards the companions) are directly linked to the reality of social intolerance at the grassroots level.[9] Intra-group and inter-group conflict resolution theories are applied to understand Sunni-Shia polarization.[4]
4. **Historiography and Strategic Projection:** Synthesizing findings from the past and present into a coherent narrative structure to produce arguments that address the research problem. This stage explores the philosophical thoughts of national figures,

such as the "shackles of history" view by Prof. Dr. Ahmad Syafii Maarif, to draw conclusions regarding the prospects (or lack thereof) for future unity.[9]

This methodological design—integrating past historical criticism, analysis of contemporary fatwas and social resolutions, and projection studies—is believed to be capable of presenting a comprehensive, dense, and anti-reductionist argument that negates the existence of a positive role of Shia doctrine in the ecosystem of Islamic civilization.

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The Past: A Track Record of Disintegration, Subversion, and Civilizational Betrayal

Historically, the rise of the Shia movement from a local political entity into a dynastic power was never accompanied by substantive contributions in strengthening the foundation of Islamic civilization against external threats. Instead, puritanical historical records demonstrate that the existence of Shia governance was always accompanied by agendas of creedal coercion, internal military fragmentation, and geopolitical collaborations that paralyzed Islamic defenses. An analysis of three main historical loci—Fatimid rule, Safavid maneuvers, and the fall of Baghdad—provides undeniable evidence of the zero positive contribution of this faction in the past.

#### a. The Myth of the Fatimid (Ubaydid) Dynasty and the Collapse of Western Defenses

The Fatimid Dynasty, which declared itself in North Africa before moving its center of power to Egypt, is often hailed in biased literature as a great empire that advanced science and architecture, such as the establishment of the Al-Azhar Mosque.[15] However, critical Sunni historians firmly reject the name "Fatimid" because their claim of lineage from Fatimah bint Rasulullah is considered a mere genealogical fabrication. Orthodox scholars are more inclined to use the nomenclature "Ubaydid Dynasty" referring to Ubayd Allah al-Mahdi, where prominent figures like Philip K. Hitti assert that the founders of this dynasty most likely originated from the lineage of a Persian named 'Abdullah bin Maymun, a propaganda leader of the Ismaili esoteric movement.[5]

The absence of a positive Ubaydid role is reflected very clearly in its domestic political pattern, which was filled with religious tyranny against the majority. As a sectarian minority

in power in a Sunni land, the Ubaydids utilized military strength and structured state administration to conduct forced assimilation.[5] According to records by W. Montgomery Watt and other Islamic historians, this repression took place systematically. During the reign of Caliph Al-Aziz in 372 AH, the government issued an official ban on the congregational Tarawih prayers in all mosques across Egypt, an act that tore at the heart of the Muslims' worship traditions.[5]

Theocratic ruthlessness reached its peak under the rule of Caliph Al-Hakim, a ruler appointed at the age of 11 who exhibited signs of authoritarian madness.[5] Historian Ibn Khallikan documented that Al-Hakim ordered massacres against citizens who refused to cultify and exalt the privileges of Ali bin Abi Talib above the previous caliphs.[5] He even crossed the line by ordering the destruction of several church facilities and holy graves belonging to Christians.[5] This deviant puritanical policy not only injured domestic stability but also provided moral precedent and political justification for European knights to initiate the bloody wave of invasions known as the Crusades.

In terms of imperial administrative governance, the Ubaydid Dynasty bequeathed a highly corrupt and fragile system of government due to the practice of appointing child caliphs (such as Al-Mustansir, who was appointed at the age of 7).[5] The absence of mature leadership triggered prolonged civil wars among military groups recruited from different ethnicities—Berbers, Turks, and Sudanese.[5] Internal conflicts that erupted violently in 1068 AD sparked fatal chaos, plagues, extreme famine, and economic collapse.[5] This domestic devastation resulted in the loss of control over strategic Islamic territories like Syria and Palestine to rebel groups and the Crusaders.[5] This fact obliterates all claims of glory; the Ubaydid Dynasty was not a guardian of civilization, but an administrative parasite that sucked the vitality of Egypt until it became weak and easily destroyed by external enemies.

Similarly, the existence of the **Buyid Dynasty**, a Shia-affiliated dynasty that successfully dominated the capital Baghdad and turned the Abbasid Caliph into a political puppet in the 10th century, left a divisive legacy.[3] It was during their rule that antagonistic sectarian practices—such as demonstrative commemorations of Ashura mourning and the celebration of Ghadir Khumm—were forcibly institutionalized amidst the Sunni public in Baghdad.[3] The empirical legitimacy of Sunni state institutions was destroyed to nourish Shia dogmatic sentiments, which in turn further sharpened societal polarization and weakened national morale in facing continent-scale crises.

**b. Mongol Invasion and Internal Subversion: A Critical Analysis of the Roles of Al-Alqami and Al-Tusi**

The climax of the absolute destruction of the classical era of Islamic civilization occurred in 1258 AD when the barbarian Mongol forces led by Hulagu Khan leveled Baghdad, burned down the world's largest libraries, and massacred millions of Muslims along with Caliph Al-Mu'tasim Billah.[1] If traced from the lens of deep historical epistemology, this military collapse did not stand alone but was catalyzed by the systematic collusion and betrayal of top Shia adherents at the heart of Abbasid defenses.[3]

The first destructive role was played by **Mu'ayyad al-Din ibn al-Alqami**, the wazir (prime minister) of the caliphate who held Shia beliefs. Prominent Sunni historians like al-Ghassani detailed the intrigues of Ibn al-Alqami's betrayal.[6] Mastered by sectarian sentiment and revenge over conflicts that occurred against the Shia community in the Karkh area, the wazir deliberately engineered demilitarization policies; cutting the armed forces' budget, disbanding the city's defense troops, and drastically restricting warfare logistics just when the Mongol threat was visible on the eastern horizon.[6] Furthermore, Ibn al-Alqami was proven to have conducted clandestine communications with the invading forces and corresponded with Shia figure al-Sayyid Taj al-Din Muhammad ibn Nasr al-Husayni to ensure that when the Mongols destroyed Baghdad, the interests of the Shia faction remained protected over the ruins of the Sunni order.[6]

Besides from within the palace, the intellectual legitimacy for the massacre was supported by another central Shia figure, the scholar and astronomer **Khwajah Nasir al-Din al-Tusi**. Although hailed by modern Shia historiography as a savior of science who established the Maragheh observatory, al-Tusi's role from the lens of Islamic civilization is highly problematic. He stood as a spiritual and military advisor beside Hulagu Khan during the conquest.[3] Great Ahlus Sunnah scholars delivered extremely harsh criticisms against al-Tusi.[6] Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Taymiyyah straightforwardly indicted him as the main instigator who convinced Hulagu Khan that executing the Abbasid Caliph—an act feared by the Mongols due to myths of a spiritual curse—would not bring cosmic disaster, but was a political necessity.[6]

Ibn Taymiyyah's student, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, stripped away al-Tusi's moral and theological decadence by highlighting that al-Tusi disregarded Sharia, ignored the obligation

of prayer, legalized forbidden practices, and used occultism/magic to gain prestige in the eyes of the pagan Mongol leaders.[6] The moniker *Nasir al-shirk wa al-kufr wa al-ilhad* (defender of polytheism, disbelief, and atheism) bestowed upon him is a theological representation of the fact that for the sake of sectarian hatred ambition to destroy Sunni dominance, the Shia elite were willing to collaborate with the existential enemies of the Islamic religion. The argument that Shia contributed to the civilization crumbles into pieces in the face of the empirical fact that they became the main facilitators of the collapse of the House of Wisdom and the thousands of scholars who were the pillars of that civilization itself.

**c. The Safavid Dynasty: A Thorn in the Flesh and the Savior of Europe from Ottoman Conquest**

Heading towards the era of Islamic resurgence (Gunpowder Empires), the Safavid Dynasty founded by Shah Ismail I in Persia in the early 16th century AD occupies a special position as a catalyst for global division.[4] Before Ismail I's bloody invasion, Persia was a highly tolerant region with a predominantly Sunni population.[4] Ismail I brutally altered this demographic configuration by proclaiming Twelver Shia (Ithna Ashari) as the official state religion in Tabriz.[7] This declaration was not done persuasively, but through forced conversion, brutal persecution of Sunni scholars, and the imposition of a cultural identity that obligated the public to curse the first three Rightly Guided Caliphs (Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman) as state policy.[4] This coercion severed Persia's cosmopolitan intellectual tradition and turned it into an island of radical isolation amidst the constellation of the Islamic world.

However, the highest level of damage from the emergence of the Safavids did not occur solely in domestic theological aspects, but in its destructive geopolitical impact on the Ottoman Empire.[4] In the 16th century, the Ottoman Caliphate represented the pinnacle of Muslim military power and was mobilizing full force in its military campaigns to expand into the heart of the European continent.[7] However, this holy ambition for the spread of Islam was consistently sabotaged by provocative offensive movements from the Safavid Dynasty on the Eastern border (Anatolia).[7]

The sharp ideological rivalry and the hatred of the Safavid faction towards the "Sunni Ottoman Turks" forced the Ottomans to divide their army's concentration.[7] Instead of advancing into Central Europe, the elite Ottoman troops (Janissaries) had to be pulled back

thousands of kilometers to the East to quell rebellions and face the Safavid Qizilbash forces in epic bloody battles such as the Battle of Chaldiran in 1514 AD.[7] This border war was not a temporal event, but a war of attrition that drained the energies of both sides and never ceased during the leadership of successors like Tahmasp I, Ismail II, and Muhammad Khuda Banda.[7]

The most unforgivable form of civilizational betrayal in this discourse is the foreign diplomacy maneuvers of the Safavid Dynasty. Aware of its military inability to single-handedly face the Ottoman Turks, the Safavid Shia government initiated correspondence and strategic military alliances with European Catholic Christian kingdoms such as Spain, Portugal, and Great Britain.[7] The goal of this interfaith geopolitical alliance was crystal clear: creating a two-front war that would squeeze the Ottoman forces.[7] This backstabbing strategy successfully saved Western European civilization from total collapse to Islam.[4] The role of the Shia through the Safavid Dynasty, in conclusion, acted as an anchor that stopped the great ship of Islamic expansion; defending an ego-sectarian supremacy at the expense of universal glory that was already at the doorstep.

## 2. The Present: Theological Division, Proxy Geopolitics, and Infiltration in Indonesia

If the narrative of the past is colored by empire-level military intrigues, contemporary reality shows how Shia theological doctrine produces alienation, disharmony, and horizontal conflict in the era of the nation-state. The Sunni paradigm towards Shia is not merely based on historical prejudice, but on fundamental incompatibilities regarding the structure of *Aqidah* (Creed) and *Sharia* developed by Shia religious institutions.[8] The absence of a positive Shia role today stems directly from doctrinal rigidity that is inherently anti-Sunni.

### a. Theological Anatomy as a Trigger for Fundamental Exclusivity

To understand the impossibility of assimilation, it is necessary to dissect the pillars of Shia theology that are officially identified as deviant by mainstream orthodox bodies, including the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), the Institute for Islamic Research and Assessment (LPPI), and the Dewan Hisbah of Persatuan Islam (Persis).[8] The following is a theological comparison tabulation that acts as the root of current segregation:

| THEOLOGICAL / SHARIA DIMENSION | MAJORITY UNDERSTANDING (AHLUS SUNNAH WAL JAMAAH) | SHIA DOCTRINE CONSTRUCTION (IMAMIYYAH) | CONTEMPORARY SOCIOPOLITICAL IMPLICATIONS AND IMPACTS |
|---|---|---|---|
| **SOURCE OF EPISTEMOLOGICAL AUTHORITY** | Scientific validation through hadiths narrated by the Prophet's companions universally. | Mass rejection of hadiths; only acknowledging narrations specifically from the *Ahl al-Bayt* (the Prophet's family) line.[8] | Delegitimizes the epistemological structure of the Quran and Sunnah understood by Muslims generally; severs integration of thought. |
| **CONCEPT OF POLITICAL & SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP** | Leadership (Khilafah) is conditional, historical, based on community consultation (*Shura*), and human.[2] | Makes *Imamate* (leadership of Ali's descendants) a part of the pillars of religion (Pillars of Faith) and holds the status of *Ma'sum* (holy/flawless).[2] | Infidelizes or misguides past state entities and Sunni authorities believed to have "usurped" the right of the Imamate.[2] |
| **ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PROPHET'S COMPANIONS** | *Taradhi* (praying for Allah's pleasure) and honoring the best generation, especially Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman.[9] | Delegitimizes the validity of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, even turning it into a tradition of *La'nat* (cursing).[8] | Causes creedal pollution and wounds the psychological bonds of Sunni Muslims, creating an impossible point for grassroots tolerance.[12] |
| **SOCIAL JURISPRUDENCE PRINCIPLES (MARRIAGE)** | The practice of contract marriage (Nikah Mut'ah) is absolutely forbidden until the Day of Judgment based on authentic evidence.[12] | Nikah Mut'ah is legalized, even given immense spiritual reward priority.[12] | Destroys the moral fabric of society and triggers sentiments of social resistance from local Sunni communities.[12] |
| **PRACTICAL WORSHIP EXCLUSIVITY** | Congregational prayers remain valid even if performed with an imam possessing different furu'iyyah (branch) views. | Radical belief that prayers are theologically invalid if performed following a non-Shia (Sunni) imam.[12] | The practice of repeating prayers (secretly) behind a Sunni community, reflecting an attitude of isolation and a mentality of supremacist sentiment.[12] |

The theological data above illustrates that the Shia group designed its religion not as a subsystem within the large umbrella of Islam, but as an alternative paradigm built on the

foundation of rejecting what is believed by nearly 90% of Muslims worldwide.[2] M. Natsir and orthodox scholars like K.H. Latif Mukhtar explicitly classify the entry of such doctrines as "creedal pollution" that contaminates the foundation of the Ummah's faith.[12] No real contribution can be expected from a community whose pillars of faith necessitate hatred for the main symbols of its partner's civilization.

**b. The 1979 Iranian Revolution and the Geopolitics of Middle East Destruction**

The theological impact of Shia doctrine found its explosive momentum into the realm of international geopolitics following the victory of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979.[4] In a superficial narrative, this revolution that overthrew the dictatorial monarchy of Shah Reza Pahlavi was considered a phenomenon of the Ummah's awakening against the hegemony of capitalism and US-Western imperialism.[4] However, when evaluated from the perspective of the Islamic world's integration, this revolution transformed into an experiment of radical ideology export. Revolutionary figures like Ayatollah Khomeini systematically transformed the state into a breeding ground for the ideology of *Wilayat al-Faqih*, a concept of absolute theocracy where the Shia spiritual faction holds limitless control.[2]

Immediately after consolidating power, the Tehran government used its oil wealth not to build cross-sectarian poverty alleviation programs, but to fund the formation of paramilitary proxy militias across Arab countries with pluralistic populations.[2] The birth of extreme armed Shia groups loyal to Iranian ideology in Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq became the main catalyst for the collapse of stability in those countries.[2] Political hegemonic rivalries, often packaged as sectarian battles against Saudi Arabian influence, have dragged the Middle East into the largest humanitarian crisis of the 21st century.[9] The Ummah's energy has been depleted, trillions of dollars burned in wars between Muslims, and the strategic struggle for the Palestinian nation marginalized by this religious sentiment-sponsored division agenda.[2]

**c. Infiltration, Horizontal Conflict, and Sociological Resistance in Indonesia**

The global penetration of Shia dogma has also struck the Nusantara archipelago. The presence of Shia in Indonesia did not occur suddenly but metamorphosed through four escalating waves well-documented by the Religious Research and Development Agency.[8] Starting from an early stage limited to intellectual curiosity post-1979 Revolution towards the philosophical thoughts of figures like Ali Shariati and Mutahhari [8], it developed into an era

of sending student cadres to religious education centers (hawzas) in the holy city of Qom, Iran.[8] These intellectual diasporas returned to Indonesia no longer as pure researchers, but as radical preachers importing worship rituals (fiqh) and the exclusivity of Imamiyyah Shia creed to be planted in Ahlus Sunnah boarding school bases.[8] This incubation process reached its peak in the openness phase characterized by the overt establishment of Shia-oriented civil society organizations, such as the *Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia* (IJABI) in the early millennium (July 2000).[8]

This massive and provocative invasion of Shia ideology rapidly disrupted the harmony of social cohesion carefully maintained by traditional and modern Islamic organizations in Indonesia (such as Nahdlatul Ulama, Muhammadiyah, and Persis).[9] Social friction that escalated from pulpit debates turned into strings of mass persecution and communal violence. A series of tragedies—ranging from arson incidents on religious facilities like the Al-Hadi Islamic Boarding School in Batang Regency in 2000, open conflicts between citizens and exclusive groups in Bondowoso in 2006, to the eruption of the bloody tragedy of the systematic expulsion of the minority Shia community in Sampang Regency, Madura Island in 2012—serve as empirical markers.[2]

Sociologically, the alienated status of the Shia faction in the eyes of the Indonesian public can be precisely measured. A comprehensive national-scale study conducted by the prestigious *Wahid Foundation* in October 2017 involving around 1,500 respondents reflected their position at the very bottom of the social tolerance trough.[9] In the matrix of social groups "most disliked" by the public, Shia adherents occupy a very concerning rank.[9]

Table: Ranking of Most Disliked Social Group Identities in Indonesia (Wahid Foundation Survey, Oct. 2017) [9]

| Rank | Social Group Identity | Respondent Percentage (%) | Analysis Indicator |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Communism Ideology (PKI) | 21.9 % | Absolute rejection based on ideological trauma and historical violence of the Old Order era.[9] |
| **2** | LGBT Groups | 17.8 % | Massive rejection over the deviation of human sexual nature against religious and social norms.[9] |
| **3** | Jews | 7.1 % | Geopolitical sentiments rooted in existential hatred resulting from the Zionist aggression conflict crisis.[9] |
| **4** | Christians | 3.0 % | Minor local-scale social friction regarding the establishment of worship facilities in majority pockets.[9] |
| **5** | Atheists (Non-Religious) | 2.5 % | Rejection based on philosophical violations of the First Principle of Pancasila consensus.[9] |
| **6** | **Shia Adherents** | **1.2 %** | The worst position within the spectrum of Islamic streams; reflecting organic public resistance to dogmas that destroy brotherhood (ukhuwah).[9] |

The quantitative data above is not merely random statistics but a very sharp portrait of sociological reality (social mapping). Being a group whose rejection rate is higher than cultural minorities like Wahabis, ethnic Chinese (0.7%), or official minority religions like Catholics and Buddhists (0.5%), shows that the mainstream Indonesian Muslim public views Shia doctrine as a pathological entity (disease) that tears the fabric of nationality and Islam.[9] This evidence conclusively establishes the flawless argument that today, the role of the Shia faction, especially in strategic regions with the potential to become the anchor of future civilization like Indonesia, provides no positive added value. Conversely, their presence precisely acts as a catalyst for polarization, counter-radicalism in thought, and a drain on the nation's intellectual energy in mitigating horizontal conflicts.

## 3. Future Projections: The Illusion of Consolidation and Structural Shackles of History

Formulating the architecture for the resurgence of Islamic civilization in the 21st century will never escape the debates surrounding the position of the Shia minority in the grand scheme of the Ummah. In a romantic and apologetic approach, there are narratives calling for cross-sectarian dialogue, inter-sectarian approach forums (*taqrib bainal madzahib*), and peaceful resolutions to face the threats of the secular world order and Islamophobia.[2] However, analyzed through a realistic political frame and objective psycho-theological observations, this assimilation initiation is merely a highly fragile pragmatic illusion. This is because the doctrines that legitimize hatred toward history have materialized so deeply in the subconscious of Shia followers.[2]

### a. The Shackles of History and the Lust for Power of the Arab Elite

Prolific scholar, historian, and central Indonesian Muslim figure, Prof. Dr. Ahmad Syafii Maarif, provides a highly competent diagnostic dissection regarding this sectarian disease phenomenon. In his writings and thoughts analyzed posthumously, the Sunni-Shia conflict is defined not as a common variation of fiqhiyyah understanding, but as the embodiment of **"The Shackles of History"** that kills civilizational progress.[9] The causal root of this modern-century catastrophe, according to him, is actually a constantly reproduced manifestation of pragmatic disputes among the communal elites of Arab tribes that occurred more than 14 centuries ago.[9] The core of that primitive dispute wrapped in religious garb was the lust to seize political dominance following the Prophet's death.[9]

Syafii Maarif's radical critique dismantles modern political hypocrisy in the Middle East, particularly highlighting the egocentrism of the Saudi Arabian regime representing the Sunni power axis and the Iranian theocratic regime leading the Shia camp.[9] The foreign policy executed by both sides proves that sectarian egoism is prioritized by degrading the ethical call of the Quran regarding the importance of *Ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood).[9] Energy, research funds, logistical potential, and geopolitical instruments of the Muslim Ummah are utterly consumed; burned in polemical debates over the historical status of past figures and proxy territorial wars, leaving behind chronic Ummah problems such as structural mass ignorance, extreme poverty, inequality in mastery of cutting-edge science technology, and ideological stagnation.[9] Ahmad Syafii Maarif clearly concludes that as long as regimes

boasting sectarian exclusivity continue to maintain sectarian hegemony, it seems impossible they can be mandated or trusted to emerge as the captains bringing the dawn of revival for the Islamic world's civilization.[9]

**b. Failure to Understand Substance: The Philosophy of Salt vs. The Philosophy of Lipstick**

For the Shia, embracing religious dogma necessitates the formation of formal structural power.[2] This is reflected in their state conception projection demanding the presence of an Infallible Imam or a hierarchical representation on earth (*Wilayat al-Faqih*).[2] Philosophically, this ambition-driven approach for power and the establishment of a formal state is critiqued by borrowing a theory from the founding father of Indonesia, Mohammad Hatta, regarding the *Philosophy of Salt* opposed to the *Philosophy of Lipstick*.[9]

In building a true social civilization (*tamadun*), what a community needs is the application of teachings through the philosophy of salt. Salt animates the civilizational building process by dissolving itself into the dish, transmitting its essence and providing a savory taste evenly, without demanding that the physical form of its salt particles be visibly dominant or acknowledged for its greatness by those enjoying the taste.[9] This means Islamic morality should color social behavior, government administration, anti-corruption law enforcement, and protection for vulnerable groups without needing the endorsement of a label or rigid formalization of state sharia.[9]

Conversely, the Shia group has fundamentally long trapped its thoughts within the spectrum of the lipstick philosophy.[9] They demand visual and formal symbolic exclusivity prominently on the surface (such as the ritual of self-flagellation in public streets during the Ashura mourning festival or establishing the supremacy of a leadership figure titled Ayatollah), yet neglect the formation of a conflict-free inner structure of shared prosperity.[2] This lipstick-based political paradigm conditions the Shia population in various Muslim-majority countries—even into the infinite future—to continue positioning themselves as a complaining faction, a marginalized group with a revolutionary inclination ready at any time to explode and overthrow regimes whenever there is an opportunity for destabilization, rather than embodying productive citizens creating social welfare and assimilative science innovators.[9]

Ultimately, seeing no signs of doctrinal reform within the internal realm of Shia spiritual theology regarding efforts to deconstruct teachings that denounce the instruments of the companions' consensus, the discourse on the strategic role of Shia in reviving civilization is nothing more than a utopian fantasy. All projections towards a glorious future necessitate the prerequisite that the mainstream Ahlus Sunnah entity across the globe begins taking theological and administrative mitigation stances. The most logical consolidation effort is to build civilizational infrastructure independence unilaterally by separating and limiting the doctrinal penetration of groups that make the subversion of civilization and hatred towards historical inheritors the heart of their religion.

## D. CONCLUSION

Studying history and civilization is not enough merely by highlighting partial material achievements, but absolutely requires measuring the extent to which a movement contributes values of unity, stability, and defense of the existence of Islam. A comprehensive, multi-dimensional, and critical evaluation of the sociopolitical anatomy and theological traces of the Shia faction affirms an indisputable reality: the absence of their positive contribution and constructive input in weaving the glory of Islam throughout the epochs of time.

The past phase recorded black stains of collaboration and destruction from within. Power maneuvers practiced by the Ubaydid (Fatimid) Dynasty were colored by extreme repression of mainstream Sunni understanding, the annihilation of tolerance symbols, and the decadence of government institutions that widened the path of invasion for European armies in the Crusades.[5] The centuries-old grandeur and glory of civilization in Baghdad were systematically torn down from the center of its bureaucracy by the betrayal of a Shia wazir, Ibn al-Alqami, and the spiritual massacre justification from the philosopher Nasir al-Din al-Tusi who served as an advisor to the polytheistic Mongol rulers.[3] The most structural defection role was etched by the Safavid Shia regime, which transformed the Sunni territory of Persia into a sea of blood to instill hatred, and then actively forged military coalition alliances with European Catholic empires (Portugal and Spain). These cross-religious alliance maneuvers of the Safavids functioned effectively to stab and attack the Ottoman Turkish Caliphate from behind, which ultimately shattered the dream of a grand conquest expansion of the Islamic message into the heart of the European continent.[4]

In the present day, the absolutism of Shia theological deviation becomes a high wall blocking assimilation. Their official theological stance—as confirmed by authoritative Sunni bodies like LPPI fatwas, MUI, and the views of Persatuan Islam (Persis) experts—structurally believing in the doctrine of infallible imams outside prophetic revelation authority, the legalization of the amoral practice of contract marriage manipulation (Mut'ah), and the institutionalization of a culture degrading the authority and cursing the inherited honor of the Prophet's closest companions, automatically nullifies their eligibility as legitimate heirs to the scientific tradition of past civilizations.[2] The politicization of identity birthed by the momentum of the 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution turned this creedal explosion into a regional proxy war machine.[4] The implications of this infiltration also ignited the embers of disharmony in harmonious countries like Indonesia—reflected in the series of conflicts in Batang, Bondowoso, and the humanitarian tragedy in Sampang—making the adherents of this ideology occupy the spectrum of sociological association with the most extreme level of social rejection in mainstream society.[9]

Projecting the geopolitical landscape of civilization and the direction of the Ummah's unification in the future, there appears to be no realistic path of moderation. The dark historical shackles inherited from the selfishness of Arab elites in the classical era have petrified into pillars of faith in the hearts of the Shia community.[9] The construction of their struggle trapped in the lipstick philosophy—pursuing artificial structural power revolutionarily (*Wilayat al-Faqih*) rather than spreading substantive goodness like the salt of civilization—demonstrates structural flaws in the orientation toward building an advanced participatory culture.[9] Therefore, the rationality of the conclusions of this historical and theological study recommends an ultimate conclusion: the agenda of reconciliation for Islamic revival relying on assimilation with the Shia entity is a utopian mirage. As long as the doctrinal foundation of the faction adopts the delegitimization of the history of the majority Muslim community and prioritizes its sectarian identity absolutely, the presence of the Shia faction on the geopolitical theater stage is always guaranteed to function as a weakening anchor, a trigger for internal fractures (subversive), and an existential threat to the long process toward the revival of the era of true Islamic civilizational glory.

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