

The Structure and Context of Justice in Indonesian Shi'i Discourses

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Abstract: Justice, a universal problem of human being, becomes important to the Shi'is in Indonesia not only because of its fundamental doctrine in Shi'i theology but also due to the minority status of the Shi'i group amidst the overwhelming Sunni majority. This paper is aimed to uncover the structure and context of justice within the Indonesian Shi'i discourses by using structural analysis and connecting its universal character to the political, social, and religious contexts. The study is based on the content analysis of available sources on the two Shi'i organizations: IJABI (the Indonesian Council of Ahli Bayt Associations) and ABI (Ahl al-Bayt of Indonesia). The paper uncovers that the structure of binary oppositions of justice-injustice, justice-oppression or justice-tyranny and binary pairs of imamate-justice, Shi'is-the oppressed or Shi'ism-pure Islam has been dominant in the Indonesian Shi'i discourses of justice. The application of the structural model is relevant to political, social, and religious contexts. While adaptation strategies are used with regard to the political context, rapprochement is applied to contribute to harmonious social relations. However, the politics of authenticity emphasizing the authenticity of Shi'ism over Sunnism is remarkable regarding the religious context. Thus, the universal structure of justice is applied in particular contexts.

1 INTRODUCTION

The Shi'i minority has placed the teaching of justice in a very high position not only because justice is a fundamental doctrine in the Shi'i theology but also it is related to its minority status among the Sunni majority in Indonesia. The concept of justice is frequently emphasized in religious sermons and Shi'i writings. To side with or to empower the oppressed has been a very famous slogan or vision in Shi'i institutes and organizations. The need to side with the oppressed originates from the experiences of the Shi'is themselves as a minority religious group. The goal of this paper is to uncover the structure and context of justice within the Indonesian Shi'i discourses. The structural anthropology is the approach to uncover, in a systematic way, deep and fundamental structures underlying various social, cultural, and religious phenomena. The structure in this approach is the model that is used to comprehend social, cultural, and religious phenomena. "In structuralist theory, the whole is seen as greater than the sum of the parts, and most whole can be broken down by appeal to the idea of distinctive features or binary oppositions" (Barnard, 2004). In Levi-Struss' structural anthropology which attempted to search for the structure of all possible structures representing the

culmination of the principle of psychic unity or 'collective unconscious', structure is actually the structure of ideas which is built on a rational foundation (rather than empirical reality) which is universal in nature. Unlike the general trend of structural analysis, in this paper the universal character of structure is combined with political, social, and religious contexts in order to obtain the historical and contextual analysis of the discourse. The paper is based on a library study on the two mass Shi'i organizations: IJABI (Ikatan Jamaah Ahlul Bait Indonesia, the Indonesian Council of Ahli Bayt Associations) established on 1 July 2000 and ABI (Ahlulbait Indonesia, Ahl al-Bayt of Indonesia) established on 27 July 2010 through the content analysis of their websites and written products, particularly with regard to the Ashura commemoration.

2 JUSTICE IN SHI'ISM

At the outset it should be emphasized that the concept of justice in Shi'ism can only be fully comprehended from the Shi'i worldview or perspective of Islam. The concept of resistance and opposition to tyranny and fighting for a just cause is deeply entrenched in

Shi'ism. Even the spirit of resistance and opposition can be perpetuated in the fullest degree in Shi'ism.

Although justice is considered very important in Sunnism, justice, or exactly divine justice, is a fundamental of Shi'i denomination in addition to other four: the Oneness of God, prophethood, imamate, and resurrection. The Shi'is place great emphasis on divine justice as one of God's attributes, arguing that God cannot act in an unjust manner because of his just nature. This is also in accord with the Shi'i emphasis on the role of rationality (*'aql*) because rationality can distinguish justice from injustice in every aspect of human being. In *Buku Putih Mazhab Syiah (White Book of Shi'i Denomination)* published by the Ahl al-Bayt of Indonesia (ABI), a national Shi'i mass organization, it is written that with regard to the principle of Divine Justice, the Shi'is believe that God is just. He never and will never commits injustice or does anything that is deemed badly by common sense to all His creatures. Therefore, they believe that man has free will in his action and receives the consequence of all of his actions because God has given him freedom. Without exceptions, good deed will receive reward while bad deed will receive punishment. God's judgement of man's actions is in accord with His Justice (Tim ABI, 2012).

In addition, the teaching of justice is closely connected to the doctrine of imamate which sets Shi'ism apart from Sunnism. Imamate-justice is a very relevant binary pair in Shi'ism. As Shariati, an ideologue of the Iranian revolution, has said: "Islam without justice and Imamate is the same as the religion of Islam minus Islam" (Shariati, 1971). The position of the twelve imams in Shi'ism, particularly Imam Ali and Imam Husayn, is seen as a representation of the teaching of justice. The Shi'is see the figure of Ali, the first Imam in Shi'ism and the fourth caliph in Sunnism, as the manifestation of a justice which accommodates the oppressed. "Imam Husayn is recognized as a prominent figure of justice, steadfast in his beliefs, upholding dignity, freedom fighter who led one of the most significant revolutions in human history. He sacrificed his life, the life of his family members and friends to fight against injustice and oppression" (Majulah Ijabi, 2014). In general, the Shi'i Imams have become role models for the quest for justice because of their opposition to injustice and tyranny. The Ahl al-Bayt which is another inclusive term for Shi'ism is considered a symbol of justice against any tyrannical and oppressive actions although its leaders and followers have experienced such actions. Therefore, justice is usually understood as a dividing issue between Sunnism and Shi'ism and this sectarian framework has been the most common framework in the struggle for power in the Middle East until now.

The teaching of justice is even more closely related to the belief in Imam Mahdi which is shared by both Sunnis and Shi'is and this is similar to the popular messianic concept of Ratu Adil (Just King) promoting the idea of the coming of a figure who will bring justice and prosperity in Java. For Shi'is, the recognition of the existence of Imam Mahdi and awaiting for his return are very important aspect of religious piety. Imam Mahdi is believed to come to restore the absolute justice throughout the world and gain the religious and political authority and leadership in the world in which the oppressed is liberated. His return is awaited by both Sunni and Shi'is and understood as a realization of God's promise and His gift to the oppressed. This belief, therefore, becomes the philosophical basis for the establishment of Muslim *umma*.

The Shi'i model of golden figure under the Mahdi is associated with the binary opposition of oppressed. In Shi'ism, the concept of justice is usually discussed from its oppositional reality which has become important concepts, namely injustice or oppression. The structure of binary opposition or binary system which is a pair of related concepts that are opposite in meaning has sharply colored the discourse of justice in Shi'i writings. In fact, injustice or oppression has been experienced by the Prophet Muhammad, his family and descendants, and followers of Shi'ism throughout Muslim history. Even Shi'ism itself has even been associated to the faith of the oppressed or justice-seeking class, as Dicky Sofjan puts it: "Shi'ism in nature is the ideology of the oppressed who are constantly struggling for freedom and justice, as echoed by the Shi'i clergy and intellectuals. According to Islamic historiography, the Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Shi'i followers have suffered from injustice early on as well as received the tyrannical treatment" (Sofjan, 2013). Furthermore, Shi'ism has been known to have the culture of opposition and resistance to a hostile majority. The Shi'i mode of resistance is magnified by the Shi'i personification of the Imams as the victims of Sunni injustice. This has made the Shi'i tradition the hallmark of the oppressed to overthrow an oppressive and corrupt regime and Shi'ism with its strong revolutionary disposition has become, as Dabashi calls, a religion of protest (Dabashi, 2011).

3 THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

The interest to the concept and teaching of justice increased during the New Order (1966-1998) under the oppressive regime. This is in line with the interest to critical or neo-Marxian theory of society and culture such the plight of the oppressed and the

pedagogy of the oppressed. This meets with critical concepts in Islam with the terms like the oppressed clearly presented by Shi'i thinkers such as Ali Shariati and Murtada Mutahhari. The popularity of the critical thinking was due to the a historic moment of the victory of Iranian revolution in 1979. In the revolution, Ayatollah Khomeini, its leader, succeeded in overthrowing the oppressive regime of Reza Pahlevi. The historical event has attracted great attention from modernist Muslim intellectuals and leaders in Indonesia such as the late Hamka, Dawam Rahardjo, and Amien Rais who related it with the phenomenon of Islamic revival of the fifteenth century of the Muslim calendar. The victory was seen as the result of the power of Islamic faith against tyranny and corruption associated with the powerful Shah of Iran.

It is the Shi'i doctrine of justice that to a certain extent become important attractive element for Indonesian youth to convert to Shi'ism as they saw it instrumental in the struggle to establish a just government and to replace an authoritarian regime like the New Order government and the Iranian revolution led by Khomeini who succeeded to overthrow an oppressive regime is a justice implementation. The Shi'i model of resistance to tyranny and injustice is seen as more appealing than Sunni political thought that is likely to accommodate to tyrannical rulers. Embracing Shi'ism is thus an expression of protest against the political regime and the religious establishment (Zulkifli, 2016).

The structure of binary opposition (which is the backbone of any language, culture, and philosophy) and binary pairs is a fundamental structure in Indonesian Shi'i discourses. Included in the structure is justice-injustice, justice-oppression, justice-tyranny, or justice-corruption. The structure of binary pairs include imamate-justice and Shi'is-the oppressed or the Ahl al-Bayt-the Oppressed. These structures have colored the Indonesian Shi'i discourse of justice and related concepts but the structures more often than not are related to the political context.

The binary opposition of justice-oppression is always expressed in the annual commemoration of Ashura, the commemoration of the martyrdom of Imam Husayn, the third Imam, who was murdered in battle at Karbala, on 10 Muharram 61 (10 October 680). It is held on every tenth day of Muharram, the first month of the Muslim year. Usually Ashura takes place in cities and towns in Indonesia with a large population of Shi'is. Since reformation, the commemoration has taken place publicly and has attracted the interest of national mass media, including anti-Shi'i groups. The important position of the commemoration has contributed to constituting the Karbala Paradigm, the most emotionally intense episode in Shi'i history, which is instrumental in

maintaining this deeply embedded emotion within the heart of Indonesia's Shi'i community. For Shi'is, the Karbala paradigm has not only provided an opportunity for spiritual redemption but also become "a vehicle for expressing and strengthening a variety of political and social relationships, associations and identities" (Aghaie, 2014).

The Battle of Karbala has been used by Shi'is as symbols to articulate a range of political, cultural, dan religious values. Whiles Husayn symbolizes goodness, truth, justice, piety, courage, self-sacrifice, honor, and devotion to God, Yazid symbolizes evil, moral corruption, injustice, cruelty, pride, and obsession with the material world. The opposition discourse of justice versus oppression, honor versus shame, good versus evil and others becomes a central theme in Shi'ism (Aghaie, 2014).

The Ashura commemoration in which the struggle for justice is deeply ingrained is frequently contextualized with the political situation. Ashura has been celebrated for years in Indonesia although Sunnis and Shi'is celebrate it differently. Among Sunnis, fasting is recommended and the cooking of Suro porridge which has red and white colors has been widespread. The appeal for sacrifice is usually emphasized and is illustrated by the famous Shi'i slogan: "Every day is Ashura and every place is Karbala". It is used to encourage the followers of Shi'ism to contextualise the struggle of Husayn in Indonesia. Therefore, Indonesian Shi'is see that the Ashura commemoration in which Husayn's struggle for justice is emphasized has relevance to the national flag: red and white. "And the red and white flag that is the flag of our country, the flag of our pride, which we uphold is also inspired by Imam Husayn's struggle. Conscious or unconscious. Red symbolizes blood that is shed to defend the truth. White symbolizes the sanctity of the struggle." (Ahlulbait Indonesia, 2017).

The Ashura commemoration is seen to have high relevance to the state ideology of Pancasila. Umar Shahab, the chairman of ABI advisory council, stated:

"We are proud as Indonesian Muslims, especially as lovers of the Ahl al-Bayt, we are proud that the foundation of our country is five principles, five great precepts, which we call Pancasila. Because the principles are in accordance with the main principles of our religion. We are followers of devine unity "there is no god but Allah" symbolized by the first principle or precept (the Only One God). Imam Husayn is also a humanitarian fighter as symbolized by the second principle. That is what Imam Husayn fought for (Just and civilized Humanity). We also adhere to the third principle which states about unity. We also defend, fight for the interest of the people. The Quran teaches to defend the common people. That we are also very proud, the principle of

democracy is the basis of our country as the fourth principle. And the fifth principle is justice which is also the goal of the struggle of Imam Husayn.” (Ahlulbait Indonesia, 2017).

The widespread discourse of justice in the Shi'i narratives is closely related to the political context of the position of the Shi'is as integral part of the Indonesian state and nation. Being part of this big nation, they are not only proud of being citizens of Indonesian state and members of the Indonesian society with equal rights and obligations but also loyal to the state ideology of Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, and the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). In IJABI's Pancasila Declaration on 1 June 2017 it stated that IJABI always attempts to play an active role in their endeavour to keep upright the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. “With Pancasila, we invite all elements of the nation to jointly maintain and care for the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI), and fight against any attempt to replace the foundation and pillar of our nation and state. Let every flower sprouts in the homeland called Indonesia. Indeed, among great gifts from this country is the introduction to us plurality, diversity, and ideology to maintain the diversity within unity: *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*” (Ijabi, 2017).

Husayn's struggle for justice is considered to have significance to President Joko Widodo's project of mental revolution. IJABI has issued a press release in 2014 which states: “IJABI is trying to maintain the values of our lord Husayn's struggle. IJABI believes that the example of our lord Husayn and his family and companions is the deriving force of a genuine mental revolution. Every fragment of the Ashura story presents a true lesson of upholding justice. Through the example of Ashura, people want to learn to fight for human justice.” (Majulah Ijabi, 2014)

Husayn's struggle for justice is even seen to have universal significance. It is not only a value for Muslim but for all human being. The event of Karbala is seen to contain a noble dimension, namely the struggle to gain a true humanity. Struggle for liberating mankind from oppression and tyranny is truly a universal value regardless any religions, traditions, and political affiliations. “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 beloved sons in those days, who strongly opposed a tyrannical regime” (Zulkifli, 2013). It is also emphasized: “Imam Husayn sacrificed for humanity. There are human values

tramped by the Umayyad regime: they ignored justice; they ignored honesty; they ignored the truth; they ignored human rights. For this reason Imam Husayn rose to sacrifice himself and his family in order that all human being is aware and continues to fight for the truth, for holiness and justice” (Ahlulbait Indonesia, 2017). To follow Husayn's example of sacrifice for truth and justice is one of the lessons acquired from the commemoration of his martyrdom.

Thus, although the Battle of Karbala is a local case in a specific historical event, the Shi'is see it to contain a universal dimension. “Since there is always tyranny, then there must always be revolt” (Dabashi, 2011). The role of Ashura was to stimulate people that there are always injustice and tyranny in every time, place, government, and nation, and people should always have the humanitarian principle, namely the spirit of revolution to fight against oppression and tyranny (Aghaie, 2014).

4 THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

The binary pair structure of Shi'is-the oppressed has dominated the social context of Shi'i growth and development in Indonesia. The concept has been utilized by many Shi'i foundations especially in the formulation of its vision and mission. In the Muthahhari Foundation, for instance, there is a section called *Imdad Mustadh'afin* which means “to give assistance and pay attention to the dispossessed and oppressed.” It is meant to improve the self-respect of the poor and provide education to the children of the lower class in society in order to have better future life (Zulkifli, 2013). The terminology is then used in the vision of IJABI is formulated: “to present an intellectual movement which enlightens Islamic thought and to empower the oppressed.” The empowerment of the oppressed becomes one of its five pillars, in addition to rational and spiritual Islam, non-sectarianism and prioritizing morality over jurisprudence, pluralistic Islam, and civil Islam. (Mappadeceng, 2014). Claiming IJABI as an umbrella organization for a marginalized community throughout history, Jalaluddin Rakhmat maintained that the goal IJABI is to side with and empower the poor and the oppressed in society.

Similarly, the binary pair structure of Shi'is-the Oppressed is clearly expressed in the inaugural speech of the chairman of advisory council of ABI, the *Ahl al-Bayt* of Indonesia, on 15 June 2011, Dr. Umar Shahab as follows: “As a role model, the *Ahl al-Bayt* really reflects the noble values of Islam. They are at the forefront of defending the poor and the oppressed (*mustad'afin*). Their home is a *malja'* (a sanctuary) for the poor people and the commoners.

Even unbelievers feel the security and tranquility in their homes. The teachings they convey are full of compassion and greatness.” (Ahlulbait Indonesia, 2017).

To side with the oppressed is an important element of *da'wa*. The concept of *da'wa* should include three elements, namely the injunction of enjoining good and prohibiting evil, the implementation of Islamic *shari'a*, and the empowerment of humankind against tyranny and injustice. Then, an important type of *da'wa* is social work activities or social *da'wa* which is an implementation of the Shi'i teaching promoting the necessity to side with the oppressed. The practical aspect of social *da'wa* is to give material and financial assistance to members and groups of the poor, both in urban and rural areas, regardless their religious affiliations. The effect of social *da'wa* activities can make the Shi'i members, teachers, and activists closer to members of other communities.

The structure of justice-injustice is elaborated to the structure of good-evil or civilized-backward and in the context of anti-Shi'i activism. In recent years varied types of anti-Shi'i activism tend to increase. The various types of anti-Shi'i activism have created destructive sectarian violence. The unwanted case was the brutal sectarian attack against the Shi'i community in Sampang, Madura, East Java, on 29 December 2011. The mosque, learning facilities, and houses were burnt down by hundreds of villagers from the surrounding of learning institution because the institution is spreading the deviationist teaching of Islam. Ironically, while the attackers were freed, Tajul Muluk, the leader of the institution and of the community is on trial for blasphemy. On 12 July 2012, Tajul Muluk was sentenced to two years in jail. Many elements of Indonesian society see it as unjust decision and an effort to criminalize Tajul Muluk who represents a minority group. Another terrible attack against the Shi'is in Sampang, Madura, took place on 26 August 2012 in that one was killed, at least seven were injured, and 47 houses were burnt down. Almost 300 people were then had to leave their village and now take shelter in the tennis court in the town. Hundreds of others were not found, probably hiding in forest or in other villages and towns. Finally, on July 2013, 354 Shi'i followers were relocated to the Puspa Argo blocks in Sidoarjo, East Java, until today. The criminalization of this minority group due to blasphemy is an example of the opposition structure of justice-injustice.

In the Shi'i discourse “the cultural backwardness” of the anti-Shi'i group is characterized. In its 2013's certificate, ABI has advised its members to expose the suffering and oppression of the followers of the Ahl

al-Bayt school continuously to the government and the wider community in order to introduce their moral excellence in contrast to the cultural backwardness of the hostile groups. “Ashura is also an attempt to welcome to maintain the motherland from the robed extremist spreading seeds of hatred and hostility among the national citizens. Ashura is also an attempt to welcome the call to guarantee that the national leadership in the hand of trusted leaders, guarantee all of its national citizens in freedom to practice their faith, free from intimidations and fear, and guarantee the rights of its people to live in prosperity physically and mentally.” (Majulah Ijabi, 2014)

5 THE RELIGIOUS CONTEXT

The structure of binary pairs of Shi'ism-pure Islam is closely connected to the religious context. This is basically the fundamental divide between Shi'ism and Sunnism or, in Jalaluddin Rakhmat's term, between Alawi School (Islamic tradition associated with Ali, the first Imam in Shi'ism and the fourth caliph in Sunnism) and Umari School (Islamic tradition associated with Umar (the second caliph). “Followers of the *madhhab alawi* believe that all traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, with regard to doctrine, worship and social interaction must be followed without exception. According to this *madhhab*, all of the Prophet's traditions are textual proofs, since the Prophet was totally immune from major and minor sins and mistakes. His life was led wholly in accordance with the will of God. Any stories and interpretations contrary to this principle are rejected in Shi'i Islam...the *madhhab umari*, by contrast, follows the traditions of the Prophet only in relation to doctrine and worship and not in contingent worldly aspects. The *madhhab umari* argues that on several occasions the Prophet made mistakes, was corrected by his companions, upon which God sent His injunctions to affirm the opinions of his companions” (Zulkifli, 2013).

In addition, Shi'is generally see themselves as ‘the chosen’, in contrast to the Sunni majority. This is in accordance with ethos of refusing to recognise that the majority opinion is necessarily true and has become one of the most important distinguishing aspects of Shi'ism. There is an Indonesian statement, ‘*Alhamdulillah kita sudah Syi'ah*’ meaning ‘Praise be to God, we are already Shi'i’ which is an affirmation of their high religious status. Although they acknowledge that Sunnis are Muslims, the Shi'is affirm that they themselves are the true believers. This view is partly derived from the frequently-cited statement by the Prophet Muhammad commanding

the faithful to follow his household and also the statement that 'Ali and his followers will gain victory on the day of judgement and will enter paradise. Another argument frequently used by members of the Shi'i community in Indonesia is that the number of people who uphold the truth is usually small, while the majority of people only follow popular teachings propagated by means of political force. This is also an argument which explains the minority position of the Shi'is in Indonesia as well as in the wider world (Zulkifli, 2013).

In addition, for Shi'is, Shi'ism is believed as the school of Islam that attempts to maintain pure Islam, sometimes called *Islam Muhammadiyah* (Muhammadist Islam) in contrast to "corrupted Islam" by the oppressive regimes. "*Islam Muhammadiyah* is the Islamic teachings in accord with the message brought by the Prophet Muhammad and continued by his purified household and loyal companions." The Ashura commemoration is a way to maintain the continuity of Muhammadist Islam which the Prophet Muhammad and his household uphold. Husayn sacrificed his life in order to establish truth and justice that have been destroyed by the oppressive regimes. "In the Indonesian context, Ashura is to welcome the call to *Islam Muhammadiyah*, Islam that has the noble character as taught by the purified model." (Majulah Ijabi, 2014). The prophet's household and the Imams are believed to have ascribed their lives to establish *Islam Muhammadiyah*. On another occasion, Jalaluddin Rakhmat said: "Let us resolve to continue their struggle to establish truth and justice. Let us resolve to vow an oath of allegiance to the Messenger of God (Upon Whom be Peace) and his pure House, to establish Islamic teachings based upon the Book of God and the Sunna of His Messenger and transmitted by his infallible House. Let us summon pure tenacity to continue this pure struggle until the last day" (Zulkifli 2013).

In the above quotations, it is indicated that the structure of binary pair of Shi'ism-pure Islam is against the other binary pair of Sunnism-corrupted Islam that was promoted by the tyrannical regimes, particularly Yazid and other ummayyad leaders. It is the ideal concept of *Islam Muhammadiyah* that is promoted through various means of propagation by Shii figures and organizations.

But there is a contradiction in the religious context of Sunni-Shi'i relations. Shi'ism-Sunnism is not seen as structural opposition, but as binary pair, particularly in the context of rapprochement and integration. As the Shi'is see themselves as a part of the Muslim world, they consider Sunnism as a legitimate denomination in Islam. "According to Shii sources, the Islamic status of Sunnis is legitimate and their position is the same as the Shi'is in all of the consequences of their Islamic status" (Tim ABI,

2012). The Shi'is in Indonesia intensively promote the Islamic unity between different denominations. They frequently refer to the Amman Message which was signed by all prominent Muslim figures of the entire world. One of its points reads as follows: "Whosoever is an adherent to one of the four *Sunni* schools (*Mathahib*) of Islamic jurisprudence (*Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i* and *Hanbali*), the two *Shi'i* schools of Islamic jurisprudence (*Ja'fari* and *Zaydi*), the *Ibadi* school of Islamic jurisprudence and the *Thahiri* school of Islamic jurisprudence, is a Muslim. Declaring that person an apostate is impossible and impermissible. Verily his (or her) blood, honour, and property are inviolable. Moreover, in accordance with the Shaykh Al-Azhar's *fatwa*, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to the *Ash'ari* creed or whoever practices real *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) an apostate. Likewise, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to true *Salafi* thought an apostate. Equally, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare as apostates any group of Muslims who believes in God, Glorified and Exalted be He, and His Messenger (may peace and blessings be upon him) and the pillars of faith, and acknowledges the five pillars of Islam, and does not deny any necessarily self-evident tenet of religion" (Hardy, Mughal, and Markiewics, 2017).

Similarly, in the context of Sunni-Shi'i rapprochement, both denominations agree to have mutual respect in many aspects of their teachings. For instance, the late Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah (1935-2010), a prominent figure among Shi'i ulama who strived for the unity between Sunnis and Shi'is forbade the cursing and slandering of the Prophet's companions known in Sunnism as the rightly Guided Caliphs (Abubakar, Umar, Uthman) and his wives. This is a very radical view since this act has been very common among Shi'is and is legitimized by Shi'i scholars. Excerpt from an interview on 8 March 2008 is read:

"Q: What is your stand regarding the issue of cursing and slandering the companions, including Abubakr, Umar and Aisha?

A: Personally, I forbid the act of slandering and cursing any companion whom Allah had mentioned in the following Ayah: "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those with him are firm of heart against the unbelievers, compassionate among themselves; you will see them bowing down, prostrating themselves, seeking grace from Allah and pleasure," (48:29), at a time we set aside the issue of the Imamate and Caliphate, for which we have other considerations. As for the issue of cursing, I have always deemed it forbidden for any Muslim, and I state in all the relevant religious inquiries I receive

that it is forbidden to curse and slander any companion including the Caliphs. I reiterate the words of Imam Ali (a) which he said while he was on his way to Siffin and heard some of the People of Iraq cursing and slandering the People of Sham, so he told them: "I dislike you starting to abuse them, but if you describe their deeds and recount their situations that would be a better mode of speaking and a more convincing way of arguing. Instead of abusing them you should say: 'O Allah! Save our blood and their blood, produce reconciliation between us and them, and lead them out of their misguidance so that he who is ignorant of the truth may know it, and he who inclines towards rebellion and revolt may turn away from it.'" Actually, this text is found in the book *Nahj al-Balaghah* (*At-Taqrīb*, 2010).

The Iranian spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, also issued a fatwa with regard to Sunnism. He has issued a fatwa in which he prohibited insulting Aisha, one of the Prophet Muhammad's wives and any Sunni Islamic icons: "Insulting the symbols of Sunni brothers, including the Prophet's wife, Aisha, is forbidden. This includes the women of all prophets and especially the holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the leader of all prophets" (Tim ABI, 2012). Therefore, ABI and its leaders condemned all actions contrary to this fatwa. Included in the sacred Sunni symbols is the respect for the Prophet Muhammad's companions, particularly the four rightly guided caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali. The Shi'is recognize that the truth of this historical fact cannot be denied. They were also his respectful companions who struggled their lives and had high achievements in the spread and establishment of Muslim community during and after the prophet's life. In fact, Ali himself was involved in the struggle with them and sent his children in assisting them in many affairs. Thus, although the Shi'is believe that Ali has the right and authority to succeed the Prophet Muhammad after his death, they should respect them and appreciate their achievements as the Sunnis do to them.

6 CONCLUSION

In the Indonesian Shi'i discourses of justice, there are the structure of binary oppositions of justice-injustice, justice-oppression or justice-tyranny and binary pairs of imamate-justice, Shi'is-the oppressed or Shi'ism-pure Islam. The use of the fundamental structural model has been related to the relevant political, social, and religious contexts. There is a tendency to apply adaptation strategies with regard to the social and political context emphasizing the commitment to achieve national integration. Rapprochement is

applied in the social context emphasizing harmonious social relations except regarding the anti-Shi'i activism which is strongly condemned. Regarding the religious context the structural model is used as an attempt to present the authenticity of Shi'ism over Sunnism or it may be considered the politics of authenticity even though Sunnism is considered as a legitimate denomination within Islam.

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