

## Mapping the National Insight of the Salafi Group in Indonesia Based on their Fatwa on Social Media

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**Abstract:** This article provides an overview of the national insight of the Salafi group as reflected in the lectures of their figures on the YouTube platform about saluting the flag. The aim is to enrich insight into the Salafi group in Indonesia, which is often seen from only one perspective. This study uses qualitative data with a discourse analysis approach within the framework of the study of *ushûl fiqh*. Discourse analysis is used to examine the statements of the preachers semantically, social cognition, and social context, while *ushûl fiqh* analysis is used to see their legal reasoning. Data were collected using documentation techniques from videos of lectures by Salafi preachers on digital platforms that can be used as an important space to understand their national insight. This study reveals that all Salafi preachers in Indonesia are allowed to salute the flag because this theme does not fall within the realm of faith. However, they do not recommend it to be done. This attitude is different from non-Salafi preachers who advocate it because the red and white flag is part of the struggle of Islamic scholars and Muslims. Regarding legal reasoning in fiqh, these preachers try to enter the *khilâfiyah* fiqh (a matter of differing opinions) space and choose an opinion that allows saluting the flag. This tendency then received a positive response from the majority of netizens. This study concludes that the Salafi group in Indonesia has used an adaptation strategy approach by utilizing rhetorical skills to avoid anti-nationalism stigma.

**Keywords:** Islamic insight, *khilâfiyah*, national insight, Salafi group, saluting flag

**Abstrak:** Artikel ini memberikan gambaran tentang wawasan kebangsaan kelompok Salafi yang terefleksikan dari ceramah-ceramah para tokoh mereka di platform Youtube tentang hormat bendera. Tujuannya adalah untuk memperkaya wawasan terhadap kelompok Salafi di Indonesia yang seringkali dilihat hanya dari satu sudut pandang. Penelitian ini menggunakan data kualitatif dengan pendekatan analisis wacana dalam kerangka kajian *ushûl fiqh*. Analisis wacana digunakan untuk menelaah pernyataan-pernyataan penceramah secara semantik, kognisi sosial, dan konteks sosial, sedangkan analisis *ushûl fiqh* untuk melihat penalaran hukumnya. Data dikumpulkan dengan teknik dokumentasi dari video ceramah para penceramah Salafi di platform digital yang dapat dimanfaatkan sebagai ruang penting untuk memahami wawasan kebangsaan mereka. Studi ini mengungkap bahwa semua penceramah Salafi di Indonesia membolehkan hormat bendera dengan pertimbangan bahwa tema ini tidak masuk ke dalam ranah akidah. Namun, mereka tidak menganjurkan hal itu untuk dilakukan. Sikap ini berbeda dengan penceramah non-Salafi

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yang mengajarkannya karena bendera merah putih adalah bagian dari perjuangan ulama dan umat Islam. Secara *legal reasoning* fikih, para penceramah tersebut berusaha masuk ke ruang *khilāfīyah* fikih dan memilih pendapat yang membolehkan hormat bendera. Kecenderungan ini kemudian mendapatkan respon positif dari mayoritas warganet. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa kelompok Salafi di Indonesia telah menggunakan pendekatan strategi adaptasi yakni dengan memanfaatkan kemampuan beretorika untuk menghindari stigma anti-nasionalisme.

**Kata kunci:** wawasan keIslaman, *khilāfīyah*, wawasan kebangsaan, kelompok Salafi, hormat bendera

## Introduction

Digital media has become an important space for transforming discourse and religious movements,<sup>1</sup> one of which is through Islamic clicktivism.<sup>2</sup> Salafi groups, which were apolitical<sup>3</sup> when they first entered Indonesia, they have, over time, begun to infiltrate political space through lectures on social media platforms, one of which is YouTube. These lectures indirectly reflect the national insight of the Salafi group, which can be used as an entry point to understand the relationship between their ideology and the values of nationalism and Islam in Indonesia.

Since its inception in the 1980s, Salafis in Indonesia have indeed continued to proliferate and are divided into three variants, namely: Salafi puris, harass, and jihadis.<sup>4</sup> Most Salafis in Indonesia are purist groups who tend to accept Pancasila and the constitution. However, the anti-Pancasila image remains attached due to the activities of a handful of groups such as Laskar Jihad.<sup>5</sup> This tendency is indicated by the emergence

<sup>1</sup> Rasiyam Rasiyam and others, 'Integration of New Media and Prophetic Communication Enhanced for Zakah, Infâq, Shadaqah, and Waqf Fundraising: A Case Study of Baitulmaal Munzalan Indonesia,' *Journal of Islamic Law*, 4.1 (2023): 28–46 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v4i1.1167>>.

<sup>2</sup> Muzayyin Ahyar and Alfitri, 'Aksi Bela Islam: Islamic Clicktivism and The New Authority of Religious Propaganda in The Millennial Age Indonesia,' *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies*, 9.1 (2019): 1–29 <<https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v9i1>>.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob Olidort, *The Politics of 'Quietist' Salafism* (Washington, D.C., 2015) <[https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Brookings-Analysis-Paper\\_Jacob-Olidort-Inside\\_Final\\_Web.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Brookings-Analysis-Paper_Jacob-Olidort-Inside_Final_Web.pdf)>.

<sup>4</sup> Din Wahid, 'Nurturing the Salafy Manhaj: A study of Salafi Pesantren in Contemporary Indonesia', *Wacana*, 15.2 (2014): 367-376 <<https://doi.org/10.17510/wacana.v15i2.413>>.

<sup>5</sup> Noorhaidi Hasan, *Laskar Jihad: Islam, Militansi, dan Pencarian Identitas di Indonesia Pasca Orde-Baru* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2008), pp, 67-96.

of literature written by Nafik Muthohirin (2017) and Bashori A. Hakim (2014), which illustrates that some Salafi groups support nationalism but with interpretations that still emphasize Islamic law as the main element, such as their proposal to return to using the Pancasila text as contained in the Jakarta Charter.<sup>6</sup>

This article attempts to highlight the national insight of the Salafi group through an analysis of their lecture material on social media, especially those concerning sensitive issues such as the law on the National flag salutation. Discussions about the law on the National flag Salutation in Indonesia are familiar, considering that since 1983, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, an Indonesian Salafi figure, has prohibited his students from saluting the National flag.<sup>7</sup> However, discussions about this increased on social media in the early 2000s.

Suppose one examines recordings from fifteen years ago on digital media. In that case, it turns out that in 2005, only one article, entitled "What's Wrong with Respecting the Flag?" discussed the law on flag salutation.<sup>8</sup> Several years later, there were no articles with the same theme again, except after 2010, and even then, only one article. Only after 2015 did discourse on the law of saluting the flag begin to appear in cyberspace, as indicated by the emergence of dozens of articles on the law of saluting the flag over the years. Most of these articles contained normative reviews that generally supported the permissibility of saluting the flag. One article contained a rebuttal to a figure from Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) who stated that saluting the flag was *harâm* (forbidden).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Nafik Muthohirin, 'Reproduksi Salafisme: dari Kesunyian Apolitis Menjadi Jihadis', *Sosial Budaya*, 14.1 (2017): 55–62 <<http://ejournal.uin-suska.ac.id/index.php/SosialBudaya/article/view/4162>>; Bashori A. Hakim, 'Wawasan Kebangsaan Kelompok Salafi di Nusa Tenggara Barat: Studi Kelompok Salafi di Ponpes Dârush-Shifâ', *Harmoni: Jurnal Multikultural & Multireligius*, 13.2 (2014): 70–86; Anthin Lathifah, "From *Qitâl* to *Difâ'*: The Meaning and Behavior of Jihad according to Jihadists in Semarang City." *Al-Abkam*, 28.1 (2018): 1-26.

<sup>7</sup> Imam Hamdi, 'Kasus Hukum Abu Bakar Baasyir: Menolak Pancasila Sampai Terorisme', *Tempo.Co* (Jakarta, 2019) <<https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1166777/kasus-hukum-abu-bakar-baasyir-menolak-pancasila-sampai-terorisme>>.

<sup>8</sup> Burhanuddin, 'Hormat Bendera, Apa Salahnya?', *Ahmad.Web.Id* (Jakarta, January 2005) <<https://ahmad.web.id/sites/islamlib/hormat-bendera-apa-salahnya.htm>>.

<sup>9</sup> Fakfak, 'Ustadz HTI: Haramnya Hormat Bendera dan Nasionalisme Sama dengan Haramnya Zina dan Khamr', *Fak-Fak.Com* (Jakarta, August 2015) <<https://www.fak-fak.com/2015/08/ustadz-hti-haramnya-hormat-bendera-dan.html>>.

There was another article containing a rebuttal to two Middle Eastern clerics who forbade saluting the flag, including the statement by the Chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) for Arts and Culture, M. Cholil Ridwan, in 2011 stating that Saluting the National Flag is *harâm*.

In 2019, the discussion on this topic was more dynamic. An article citing a fatwa from the Saudi Arabian Lajnah Daimah stated that saluting the flag was *harâm*, and the author leaned toward the fatwa.<sup>10</sup> In addition, social media was also shocked by the emergence of an incident where parents of junior high school students in Batam prohibited saluting the flag.<sup>11</sup> From this incident, responses and comments increasingly filled cyberspace, both in articles on various internet sites and social media. This trend is positively correlated with the increase in the number of social media users in Indonesia, which in 2015 was 79 million, then increased to 160 million in 2019, and increased again to 170 million in 2020.<sup>12</sup> Regarding the use of the internet as a medium for preaching, A.M. Iqbal has raised the issue through his writings on the Salafi group movement, but only limited to the issue of their conflict with the Liberal Islam Network (JIL), Shia, and other traditional groups that they consider to be heretical and superstitious without mentioning their insight into state symbols.<sup>13</sup>

This study is unique because it links the theme of National Flag Salutation as a representation of the national and Islamic insight of the Indonesian Salafi group. By utilizing social media as an arena for Islamic clicktivism, this study attempts to map the views of Salafi preachers and netizens' responses to the lectures. This topic is relevant because

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<sup>10</sup> Abu Abdurrahman, 'Tujuh Belasan', *Dakwahmanhajsalaf.Com* (Jakarta, 2019) <<https://www.dakwahmanhajsalaf.com/2019/08/tujuh-belasan.html>>.

<sup>11</sup> Juli Hantoro, 'Kisah 2 Siswa SMP di Batam Tak Mau Hormat Bendera', *Tempo.Co* (Jakarta, November 2019) <<https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1278327/kisah-2-siswa-smp-di-batam-tak-mau-hormat-bendera>>.

<sup>12</sup> Conney Stephanie, 'Berapa Lama Orang Indonesia Akses Internet dan Medsos Setiap Hari?', *Kompas.Com* (Jakarta, February 2021) <<https://tekno.kompas.com/read/2021/02/23/11320087/berapa-lama-orang-indonesia-akses-internet-dan-medsos-setiap-hari-?page=all>>.

<sup>13</sup> A. M. Iqbal, 'Internet, Identity and Islamic Movements: The Case of Salafisme in Indonesia', *Islamika Indonesiana*, 1.1 (2014): 81–105.

it reflects the dilemma between commitment to strict Islamic values and acceptance of state symbols. In addition, this article also analyzes the public response, especially netizens who are actively involved in discussions in the comments column, so that it can be considered to represent the public's national insight in general. The results of this study are expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the correlation between the theme of the lecture, the Preacher's national insight, and the public's interpretation more broadly.

## Research Methods

This qualitative study uses a documentation method to analyze video recordings of lectures by Salafi preachers in Indonesia regarding the law of National Flag Salutation. It also uses a combined approach of discourse analysis and *ushûl fiqh*. Discourse analysis uses the Van Dijk model, which emphasizes three dimensions: text, social cognition, and social context.<sup>14</sup> Text analysis uses a semantic approach to capture the meaning of phrases, clauses, sentences, or the entire contents of the lecture delivered. In contrast, cognitive analysis and social context help capture the social background of the lecture's emergence. In another position, the *ushul fiqh* approach is used to identify the model of Islamic legal reasoning, especially fatwas, delivered by the lecturers, considering that the lectures are themed on Islamic law and the *ushul fiqh* is the methodology of Islamic legal reasoning.

The research data was obtained from video recordings from the YouTube application with the keywords "saluting flag according to Islam" and "Islamic law on flag salutation." Of the hundreds of videos uploaded from 2016 to 2021, only 20 were valid, while the rest were only repetitions or modifications by content creators. Some are excerpts of question-and-answer sessions or lectures with broader themes, which were then re-uploaded with specific titles related to flag salutation. Although a more significant number of videos can still be obtained with a more stringent

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<sup>14</sup> Teun A. van Dijk, 'Critical Discourse Analysis,' in *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, ed. by Deborah Schiffrin, Deborah Tannen, and Heidi E. Hamilton (USA: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), pp. 352–371.

search method, the author considers these 20 videos to be reasonably representative and relevant to the topic and objectives of the research.

## Results and Discussion

### Dynamics of Lectures on the Law of Saluting Flag

Mapping of lectures on the theme of the law of flag salutation can be started from the dynamics that appear on social media. The dynamics are around the legal decisions, who delivered, and how the public responded to the lecture. Basic information about the lecture, as well as who the lecturer was, can be seen in the following table:

**Table 1. Informasi Umum Ceramah tentang Hukum Hormat Bendera**

No	Lecturer topics	Preacher	Channel	Upload dated	Duration (Minutes)
1	Law on Putting Up National Flags on August 17	Khalid Basalamah	Islam Teduh	01/08/2016	1:32
2	Law of National Flag Salutation	Tengku Zulkarnain	Wahyudi Yudi	13/12/2016	3:15
3	Is saluting the National flag considered <i>syirik</i> (polytheism)	Firanda Andirja	Abu Khalev	25/10/2017	2:51
4	Gus Anam Talks About the Law of National Flag Salutation	Gus Anam	Gus Anam Channel	06/01/2018	1:21
5	Law of National Flag Salutation	Dzulqarnain Muhammad Sanusi	Dzulqarnain MS	22/02/2018	1:43
6	Law of National Flag Salutation at Ceremonies	Muflihin Safitra	Ustadz Muflih Safitra Official	30/05/2018	0:59
7	Law of Saluting the National Flag - Islamic Thought Series	Muhammad Urip	Jakartanicus	14/06/2018	1:15
8	Law on Saluting the National Flag and Singing the National Anthem	Said Seif Alwi	Abu Khalev	31/08/2018	8:00
9	Beware!!! Hoax is Kufir, and respecting the national flag is gratitude.	K.H. Thobary Syadzily	NU Channel	07/01/2019	39;38

No	Lecturer topics	Preacher	Channel	Upload dated	Duration (Minutes)
10	Is National Flag Salutation <i>Syirik</i> (polytheism)?	Maududi Abdullah	BiASTV	28/05/2019	1:50
11	National Flag Salutation and Nationalism	Muhammad Khoirul Huda	Harakah Islamiyah	17/08/2019	1:00
12	Law of National Flag Salutation	Syeikh Muqbil bin Hady al Wadi'iy	Video Fawaa'id	17/10/2019	4:27
13	Is National Flag Salutation <i>Syirik</i> ?	Habib Syekh	AH Official	21/11/2019	3:03
14	Is Saluting the National Flag Haram?	Buya Yahya Zainul Ma'arif	Al-Bahjah TV	23/12/2019	5:15
15	Is Saluting the National Flag Haram?	Syarif Hidayatullah	Syarif Hade	18/03/2020	2:12
16	Saluting the National Flag is called <i>Musbrik</i> , <i>Infidel</i> , and <i>Taghut</i> .	Gus Muwafiq	A.H.L.	19/03/2020	19:10
17	Law of National Flag Salutation	Bahauddin Nursalim	HADRUNNABI	18/08/2020	9:15
18	Saluting the National Flag in Islam	Muhammad Izzul Mutho'	bincangsyariah	17/11/2020	4:27
19	Is it True that Saluting the National Flag can damage monotheism?	Syaikh Nashiruddin al-Albani	Hudzaifah al-Jawi	08/04/2021	0:50
20	Law of National Flag Salutation	Lukman Arake	Panrita Institut	17/08/2021	10:08

(Source: Author compilation based on data accessed on October 1, 2021)

The table above shows that the earliest video discussing flag salutation on YouTube social media was Khalid Basalamah's lecture, which was broadcast on August 1, 2016. After that, other videos with similar themes continued to appear, both short and long. In response to the contents of the lectures and videos about the law of flag salute, netizens showed their attitudes by choosing likes and dislikes, and their comments were both positive and negative. The exact picture is as shown in the following table:

**Table 2. Dynamics of Responses to Video Lectures on the Law of Saluting the Flag**

No	Name of the Preacher	Law	Number of Viewers	Like	Dislike	Pro Comment	Counter Comment
1	Dzulqarnain Muhammad Sanusi	Allowed	45.689	1.000	40	7	0
2	Buya Yahya Zainul Ma'arif	Allowed	12.126	416	10	44	5
3	Firanda Andirja	Allowed	75.012	1.100	91	55	3
4	Bahauddin Nursalim	Allowed	470	15	0	0	0
5	Said Seif Alwi	Allowed	2.466	70	2	5	0
6	Muhammad Izzul Mutho'	Allowed	474	20	2	5	2
7	Maududi Abdullah	Allowed	3.842	70	9	4	2
8	Muflihah Safitra	Allowed	11.818	231	5	9	1
9	Muhammad Urip	Allowed	1.557	23	2	1	1
10	Muhammad Khoirul Huda	Allowed	746	22	3	2	5
11	Syarif Hidayatullah	Allowed	214	4	0	1	0
12	K.H. Thobary Syadzily	Allowed	1.693	130	1	8	0
13	Khalid Basalamah	Allowed	20.174	202	27	84	16
14	Zuhrul Anam Hisyam	Allowed	5.100	81	0	4	0
15	Lukman Arake	Allowed	76	6	0	6	0
16	Habib Syekh	Allowed	980	26	0	2	0
17	Gus Muwafiq	Allowed	662	7	0	0	0
18	Tengku Zulkarnain	Allowed	3.000	343	6	7	1
19	Syeikh Muqbil bin Hady al Wadi'iy	Not Allowed	581	13	1	4	2
20	SyeikhNashiruddin al-Albani	Not Allowed	651	39	0	0	0

(Source: Author compilation based on data accessed on October 1, 2021)



The table above shows that out of twenty preachers, only two stated that it is *harâm* (not allowed); the rest allow it, although with certain limitations. In terms of the number of viewers, the lecture stating that the flag salutation is *harâm* received a low rating because it was only watched less than 1,000 times, while the video stating that saluting the flag is permissible was watched by many people, some reach the thousands, some reach tens of thousands, and some even reaching tens of thousands. If ranked based on the number of viewers, the prohibiting videos only ranked 15th and 16th out of twenty.

Furthermore, the number of viewers positively correlates with the number of likes and positive comments. Firanda Andirja's lecture video, which is the most watched video, has more than 75,012 viewers and received 1,100 likes, with only 91 dislikes. The choice of likes for the video can be interpreted as a form of agreement or support for the lecture's content. Meanwhile, in the comments section, there are 55 positive comments and only three negative comments.

Likewise, Yahya Zainul Maarif's lecture video has been watched up to 12,126 times. This video received 416 likes and ten dislikes. In terms of comments, there were 44 positive comments and only five negative comments. The same thing can also be seen in the video of Khalid Basalamah's lecture, which has been watched up to 20,174 times and received 202 likes and 27 dislikes. In terms of comments, 84 comments were positive, and 16 comments were negative. Positive comments are generally displayed through expressions of agreement, such as the words "*setuju* (agree)," "*benar* (correct)," "*ajib* (extraordinary)"; thank you, good prayers for the speaker, or in the form of an invitation for netizens to spread this lecture so that more people know it.

Meanwhile, for comments that disagree, arguments accompany some, and some are not. The arguments here include counterarguments highlighting the values, norms, or dogmas they believe. For example, in Yahya Zainul Ma'arif's lecture, the comment "*penghormatan yang disertai kekhusyuan dan rasa khauf hanyalah milik Allah* (respect accompanied by solemnity and a sense of fear belongs only to

Allah,"<sup>15</sup> was found. This comment shows that the author disagrees with the permissibility of saluting the flag because, according to him, it shows obedience to someone other than Allah. Although based on dogma, it can still be considered an argumentative comment.

As for comments that are not argumentative, this can be a cynical assessment of the speaker's personality. In Firanda Andirja's lecture, for example, comments were found that doubted the speaker's seriousness with two possibilities. First, the speaker is considered to be pretending that what he conveys is different from what he believes. Comments that have a tone like this, for example, "*tumben bener* (what an unusually true)" or "*Alhamdulillah* (praise be to Allah)," "*Wahabi lagi benar* (Wahabi is at right," and so on.<sup>16</sup> The comment "*tumben bener* (what an *unusually true*)" shows that Firanda Andirja has been considered misleading by the commenter. Likewise, with the comment "*Wahabi lagi benar* (Wahabi is at right)," the commenter seems to be saying that Firanda is a Wahabi and someone who is not correct. Regarding the term "Wahabi," this has indeed become a stigma in some communities. Firanda Andirja has denied and tried to correct this stigma in several of his lectures. However, the stigma of "Wahabi" is still developing in the broader community. The comment "*tumben bener* (what an unusually true)" also shows that this comment targets the speaker personally, not the statement of the lecture itself. In the philosophy of logic, refuting a statement by judging the speaker is called *argumentum ad hominem*, which is a form of logical flaw.<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, another form of response considers the Preacher inconsistent because his legal logic in this matter contradicts his thinking in other matters. This assessment can be understood in the following comment:

*This ustaz is also fickle. According to him, saluting the flag is not a shirk because the flag is an inanimate object, and there is no intention of worship.*

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<sup>15</sup> Yahya Zainul Maarif, *Apakah Hormat Kepada Bendera Adalah Sebuah Ke Haraman?* (Indonesia: Al-Bahjah TV, 2019) <[https://youtu.be/cD8fJBk\\_Zz0](https://youtu.be/cD8fJBk_Zz0)>.

<sup>16</sup> Firanda Andirja, *Apakah Hormat Kepada Bendera Termasuk Syirik* (Indonesia: Abu Khalev, 2017) <<https://youtu.be/KyXzWtVq5D8>>.

<sup>17</sup> David Hitchcock, 'Is There an Argumentum Ad Hominem Fallacy?', *On Reasoning and Argument*, 30.1 (2017): 409–19 <[https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-53562-3\\_26](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-53562-3_26)>.

*However, why is displaying photos of haram when praying in a mosque a grave problem?*<sup>18</sup>

Here, the commentator compares Firanda Andirja's lecture on the law of saluting the flag with his lecture on the law of displaying photos at home. The lecture in question can be seen on YouTube with the title "Law on Displaying Photos or Images of Living Creatures - Ustadz Dr. Firanda Andirja, M.A." which was broadcast on the Kajian Review channel, November 28, 2020, and has been watched 279 times. In this lecture, Firanda stated that displaying photos is haram because there is an element of respect in it. Here is an excerpt from his statement:

*Although some scholars are allowed to take photos, it is not for display. For example, if there is a need to prove an aid., taking a photo is not a problem. But not for display.*<sup>19</sup>

Based on this excerpt, the comment that Firanda is indecisive in his lecture is supported by strong arguments. On the one hand, Firanda allows saluting the flag because it is merely respect, not worship. However, he forbids displaying photos because they are included in respects other than Allah. Here is Firanda's statement in the first video (about saluting the flag):

*The flag has been a state symbol since ancient times, since the time of the Prophet SAW. So, the firm opinion, wallah a'lam, is that it is okay for us to salute the flag because it is not the flag we respect.*<sup>20</sup>

Firanda did not issue a single statement of clarification or confirmation between lectures in either video. Hence, viewers who observed the two videos considered Firanda inconsistent in his reasoning. Respect for the flag is a higher level of respect than displaying a photo because respect for the flag is genuinely respected with a unique attitude and solemn atmosphere. In contrast, respect for a photo is merely displayed. Using the logic of *qiyâs aulâwî* (comparative reasoning),<sup>21</sup> if displaying a photo

<sup>18</sup> Andirja, *Apakah Hormat Kepada Bendera Termasuk Syirik*.

<sup>19</sup> Firanda Andirja, *Hukum Memajang Foto Atau Gambar Makhluk Hidup* (Indonesia: Kajian Review, 2020) <<https://youtu.be/yXVSxmrzID8>>.

<sup>20</sup> Andirja, *Apakah Hormat Kepada Bendera Termasuk Syirik*.

<sup>21</sup> Muhd. Farabi Dinata, 'Qiyas Sebagai Metode Penetapan Hukum Islam', *Al-Ilmu: Jurnal Keagamaan dan Ilmu Sosial*, 5.2 (2020): 168–81 <<https://jurnal.kopertais5aceh.or.id/index.php/AIJKIS/article/view/110>>. About Qiyas see

is already considered *harâm*, then respecting the flag is undoubtedly even more *harâm*.

Furthermore, despite the many rejections of the lecture that forbids saluting the flag, some comments agree. Comments that agree with this lecture mean agreement with the prohibition of saluting the flag. Of the two contents that forbid saluting the flag, one contains no comments, while the other contains six. The video that contains comments is a lecture by Sheikh Muqbil bin Hady al-Wadhi'iy. Six comments were found here. Four contain comments that agree, even writing "the profession of soldier and police is forbidden." Meanwhile, comments that disagree read "*kadrun*," a cynical expression towards certain groups considered wrong. The expression "*kadrun*" is an acronym for "desert lizard," a term of ridicule (stigma) that has developed on social media towards groups that are textualist and exclusive.

The description of the dynamics above provides an initial picture of the position of preachers in Indonesia and their audiences in the discussion space of national insight. The number of speakers who allow flag salutes is much greater than those who forbid it. Likewise, the public response shown by clicking the like button and positive comments on the sermons that allow flag salutes is much greater than dislikes and negative comments. Moreover, the two speakers who forbid it are not Indonesians but were merely uploaded, titled, and commented on by Indonesians.

### Analysis of Salafi Group National Insight

As a discourse, religious sermons contain a particular ideology or perspective that is often not stated explicitly but implied through text structure, word choice, narrative, and communication patterns.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, religious sermons delivered by Salafi group preachers in Indonesia can be used as material objects to understand their national insight.

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<sup>22</sup> Teun A. van Dijk, 'Principals of Critical Discourse Analysis,' *Discourse & Society*, (1993): 249–283 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926593004002006>>; Peter Smagorinsky, 'Thinking and Speech and Protocol Analysis,' *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 5.3 (1998): 157–77 <[https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca0503\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327884mca0503_2)>.

Lexically, preachers from the Salafi group, including other popular preachers, allow flag salutes. This permission is conveyed not only with a legal reasoning structure that refers to fiqh but also based on the historical insight of the nation possessed by each Preacher. However, because this article only focuses on preachers from the Salafi group, the following description is only addressed to Salafi preachers.

Of the number of preachers, there are five famous Salafi preachers whose videos are widely spread on various social media platforms, namely Khalid Basalamah, Firanda Andirja, Dzulqarnaini Muhammad Sanusi, Muflih Safitra, and Maududi Abdullah. The sermons of the five figures above will be analyzed using the Characteristic Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach developed by Van Dijk, with an emphasis on the dimensions of text structure (micro), social cognition (text superstructure), and social context (macro text).

### Lecture Text Structure

A text structure analysis is necessary to understand how the five preachers above delivered the lecture on the law of respecting the flag. This analysis reveals key elements in linguistics, such as diction, sentences, language style, and argument patterns.<sup>23</sup> These elements are important to understand the preachers' message, ideology, and views, as they are linked to their national insight and commitment.

In terms of diction, it is seen that each speaker uses a choice of words that emphasizes a moderate attitude and maintains a balance between religious teachings and social practices. Khalid Basalamah uses the phrases "*tidak apa-apa* (it is okay)" and "*bendera itu hanya simbol* (the flag is just a symbol)" to emphasize that respecting the flag is not something sacred. Firanda Andirja emphasizes the phrase "*bukan kesyirikan* (not polytheism)," which indicates that she wants to refute the opinion that respecting the flag is polytheism. Dzulqarnaini Muhammad Sanusi uses the diction "*itu hanya kebiasaan* (it is just a habit)" to contextualize respecting the flag as a usual social practice. Muflih Safitra emphasizes

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<sup>23</sup> Van Dijk.

the word "*boleh* (allowed)," and it emphasizes that saluting the flag is not a forbidden act. Meanwhile, Maududi Abdullah also allows it by adding "*hati-hati, jangan berlebihan* (be careful, do not overdo it)" as a warning so that respect for the flag is not sanctified like an act of worship.

In terms of sentences, the five speakers showed varying styles. Khalid Basalamah often used complex sentences to justify based on historical facts, such as "*bendera kan di zaman Nabi sallallahualaihiwasallam juga dipakai ya? (was not the flag also used in the time of the Prophet sallallahu 'alaihiwasallam)?*". Sentences like this provide the effect of relevant historical justification. In addition, he showed a moderate attitude through explanatory, confrontational, and clarifying sentences, which gave the impression of a logical and adaptive approach. Meanwhile, Firanda Andirja used various types of sentences, including complex, descriptive, and rhetorical, strengthening her argument. She used descriptive sentences with repetition to strengthen the message of symbolism and dialogical rhetoric to help the audience understand the limits of respecting the flag so as not to fall into polytheism. She provided a logical and concise conclusion in ending the argument.

Dzulqarnaini Muhammad Sanusi uses complex sentences to provide in-depth explanations, as well as to convey practical solutions in certain situations, for example, "*hormat bendera itu kebiasaan berjalan di dalam negeri ini, dan sejumlah ulama memfatwakan bahwa itu masuk di dalam bab kebiasaan* (respecting the flag is a custom in this country, and a number of scholars have issued a fatwa that it is included in the chapter on customs)". He also uses descriptive sentences to emphasize sharia values and rhetorical sentences to convey criticism of extreme views. He wants to impress the flexibility of Islamic law in dealing with social realities. Muflih Safitra, on the other hand, tends to use simple sentences to provide conclusions, for example, "*jawabannya tidak!* (the answer is no!)". Similarly, Maududi Abdullah uses complex sentences containing hypotheses to illustrate extreme possibilities and emphasizes caution by using reflective hypotheses.

Regarding language style, Khalid Basalamah uses dialogical rhetoric with direct questions such as "*masak bendera digituin?* (how come the

flag is treated such)". Firanda Andirja, through historical narratives and repetition, builds arguments supported by dialogical rhetoric and analogies, such as comparing respecting the flag with insults through ID cards. Dzulqarnaini Muhammad Sanusi combines satire and dialogical rhetoric to criticize excessive attitudes, supported by descriptive language such as "*nikmat keamanan, nikmat kemerdekaan* (the pleasure of security, the pleasure of independence)." Of the five speakers, Muflih Safitra displayed a more precise and more concrete language style. In contrast, Maududi Abdullah displayed a more reflective language style. Muflih Safitra tends to use practical analogies and provides direct solutions such as "*hormat kepada bendera itu tidak masalah* (respecting the flag is no problem)." Meanwhile, Maududi Abdullah displayed caution in a hypothetical style such as "*kalau seseorang menghormati bendera dengan penuh keyakinan* (if someone respects the flag with full confidence)." He gave a warning moderately.

### Social Cognition of Lecture

Regarding argument patterns, the five speakers demonstrate an approach that balances Islamic law with social context. Khalid Basalamah uses comparative rhetoric, such as "*coba kalau salat, azan, ditahan gak mobil?*" (try praying, calling to prayer, will the car be stopped?) to criticize excessive attitudes. Firanda Andirja emphasizes logical deduction and analogy, such as comparing saluting the flag with insulting through an ID card. Dzulqarnaini Muhammad Sanusi utilizes the legitimacy of the ulama's fatwa, where a fatwa can be used practically,<sup>24</sup> such as "*kalau antum di sebuah lembaga, tidak apa-apa* (if you are in an institution, it's okay)" to provide practical solutions. Muflih Safitra tends to be more practical, emphasizing arguments based on social reality, such as "*contoh sekolah yang hampir ditutup karena menolak hormat bendera* (an example of a school that was almost closed because it refused to salute the flag)." On the other hand, Maududi Abdullah tends to use hypotheses to remind the audience of the dangers of excessive attitudes.

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<sup>24</sup> Dirga Achmad and Azlan Thamrin, 'Anomali Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia dalam Sistem Hukum Indonesia: Telaah Hukum Responsif', *Al-Qisthu: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu-Ilmu Hukum*, 22.1 (2024): 23–42 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32694/qst.v22i1.3011>>.

Based on the analysis of the text structure, the five Salafi preachers stated that saluting the flag is permissible for Muslims. Such is seen in the choice of diction, sentence structure, and language style. However, from the aspect of argument patterns, it is reflected that the five preachers showed caution, implying the dilemma they faced behind the topic. Such is because the Salafi group tends to reissue and often throws accusations of heresy against things considered normal by scholars. In this topic of respecting the flag, there is an impression that the five preachers are bound by a perspective that tends to blame. However, they also risk being punished according to favorable laws in Indonesia. Therefore, in all preachers, an argument pattern is always found that contains conditional diction, such as "*tidak apa-apa selama tidak menyembah* (it's okay as long as you don't worship)" and the like. Such shows that the arguments of the five preachers are more strategic than ideological.

In the analysis of social cognition, the focus is on how the preachers understand, process, and convey their views on the issue of respecting the flag based on their understanding of Islamic law. This analysis includes mental models, cognitive schemes, ideologies that shape their views, and how they adapt the message to a particular audience and social context. These aspects are important to reveal in order to see the relationship between the individual thinking of the preachers and the social structure that influences the substance or content of the lectures they deliver.<sup>25</sup>

Understanding the preachers' mental models is an essential first step in understanding how specific topics are embedded in their minds. These mental models influence how they think, act, and convey messages to the public.<sup>26</sup> In this context, the mental models of the five preachers show a strong influence from their strict mindset in understanding and applying the concept of bid'ah (heresy). Such is reflected in their tendency to question things that most scholars consider standard everyday practices.

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<sup>25</sup> Van Dijk.

<sup>26</sup> Donald A. Norman, 'Some Observations of Mental Models,' in *Mental Models*, ed. by Dedre Gentner and Albert L. Steven (New York: Psychology Press, 2014) <[https://books.google.co.id/looks?hl=id&lr=&id=G8iYAgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=model+mental&cots=aOqNwYHxcv&sig=Y4DoSd1P8Ruq\\_eC-0tjPWEFHqLY&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=model+mental&f=false](https://books.google.co.id/looks?hl=id&lr=&id=G8iYAgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=model+mental&cots=aOqNwYHxcv&sig=Y4DoSd1P8Ruq_eC-0tjPWEFHqLY&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=model+mental&f=false)>.



For example, the Salafi group often sees certain practices as deviations, such as celebrating the Prophet's Birthday and Yasinan, or when many scholars believe in the *bid'ah hasanah* (good innovation), the Salafi group rejects the concept.<sup>27</sup> From here arises the public's suspicion that this group also has the potential to forbid saluting the flag, which is considered by the majority of scholars in Indonesia as a standard action.<sup>28</sup>

The speakers base their arguments on various sources to support their views. Some, such as Khalid Basalamah and Firanda Andirja, refer to the Prophet's Hadith regarding the appointment of the flag bearer in the Mut'ah War.<sup>29</sup> Dzulqarnaini M. Sanusi and Muflih Safitra base their opinions on the views of previous scholars without mentioning specific references. While Maududi Abdullah and Khalid Basalamah used the principle of *shirk* as a benchmark, Dzulqarnaini and Firanda emphasized saluting the flag as a form of gratitude and love for the homeland. This cognitive structure reflects their mindset that every action of Muslims must be based on clear evidence and be as far away as possible from heresy and *shirk* (polytheism). Such shows how they process, store, and convey their views to the public in a particular context.

Saluting the flag is usually accompanied by the song Indonesia Raya, which is mainly accompanied by music, as explained in Law Number 24 of 2009 concerning the Flag, Language, National Emblem, and National Anthem.<sup>30</sup> In the Salafi group's understanding, singing, especially accompanied by music, is a forbidden activity. Of the five preachers, only Dzulqarnaini included a discussion of music, and he emphasized that the act was forbidden, while the other four preachers did not mention it at all. Such reflects that the Salafi preachers face a

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<sup>27</sup> Sofyan A. P. Kau, Zulkarnain Suleman, and Irwan Irwan, 'Traditional Islamic Religious Practice Arguments: Criticism of The Concept of Bid'ah of Islam Salafi-Wahabi,' *Al-Ulum*, 23.1 (2023): 1–20 <<https://doi.org/10.30603/au.v23i1.3498>>.

<sup>28</sup> M. Khoirul Ikhsan and others, 'Haruskah Hormat Bendera? (Deskripsi Tafsir Nusantara Atas Q.S. Al-Baqarah [2]: 34)', In *The International Conference on Quranic Studies*, 2023, pp. 267–286.

<sup>29</sup> Muhammad bin Isma'il Bukhari, *Al-Jami' Al-Shahih* (Bayrūt: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 1973), p. 143.

<sup>30</sup> *Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia No 24 Tahun 2009*, 2009 <[https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Download/27970/UU Nomor 24 Tahun 2009.pdf](https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Download/27970/UU%20Nomor%2024%20Tahun%202009.pdf)>.

dilemma when discussing the law on saluting the flag. The threat of criminal subversive acts haunts them because it will appear to prevent citizens from saluting their flag or singing their national anthem, or at least appear to clash Islamic teachings with state regulations.

The delivery strategy used by the preachers shows a combination of moderate, logical, and interactive approaches. They display a moderate attitude by emphasizing that saluting the flag does not violate Sharia, such as rejecting accusations of polytheism. Logical persuasion is used through explanations based on evidence, such as the Prophet's Hadith about flag bearers in the Mu'tah War or the opinions of scholars regarding customary law. Rhetoric is also important, for example, through rhetorical questions or comparisons relatable to the audience. In addition, efforts to interact are made by using practical analogies to explain the law in a way that is easy for listeners to understand. This strategy reflects their efforts to convey messages based on religious principles but relevant to the social context.

Furthermore, netizens' responses to the five preachers' videos can be categorized as positive or negative, indicating their acceptance/rejection of the messages conveyed. In the video of Dzulqarnaini Muhammad Sanusi, comments such as "*Alhamdulillah*," "*terima kasih*," and "*jazâkallah*" showed support for the clarity and moderate views conveyed. Likewise, the video of Muflih Safitra received comments such as "*barakallah* (may Allah blessth you)" and responses such as "*hormat bendera itu bukan ranah ibadah* (saluting the flag is not a matter of worship)," which, although at first glance, seemed like a rebuttal, implied an understanding of the message conveyed. The video of Maududi Abdullah also received similar responses, such as "*jazâkumullah* (may Allah rewardth you)" and "*izin mendownload* (permission to download)," which showed the audience's appreciation for the information conveyed.

On the other hand, negative comments on the videos of the lectures reflect the dynamics of sharp criticism of the Salafi group. In Maududi Abdullah's lecture, for example, comments such as "*perkara receh kayak gini jadi topik* (a trivial matter like this becomes a topic)" show some people's anxiety towards the Salafi group, which is considered to too

often blame the religious practices of the general public. Sharper criticism appears in the form of sarcasm, such as "*intinya yang tidak berbau keontaan, itu namanya kirik* (the point is if it is not camel-like, it is a dog)," which is a harsh satire by twisting Islamic terms to mock their views. This response also gave rise to opposing responses from other viewers, such as "*apaan sih?* (what the hell?)" and "*ngomong apa sih lu ?* (what the hell are you talking about?)" which, although showing disagreement with the comments or support for the speaker, have created polarization among the audience. This tendency is in line with the existence of the Salafi group, which, in general, often encourages polarization between its group members and the Muslim community.

Likewise, regarding the video of Muflih Safitra's lecture, comments such as "*nenek moyangnya ni orang mananya, nggak punya jiwa nasional* (who are these ancestors, they do not have a sense of nationalism)" criticized views that were considered less supportive of state symbols, but other audience responses such as "*afwan anti ngomong apa ya? Udah denger ceramahnya sampai habis?*" Sorry, what are you talking about? Have you listened to the lecture until the end?" indicates that these comments arose from misunderstanding the lecture's content. These criticisms, although misdirected or irrelevant in the video, reflect public concern about the impression that the Salafi group often blames the practices of Muslims in general. This phenomenon emphasizes the importance of clarity of delivery in public discourse to avoid distortion or broader misunderstanding.

### **Social Context of the Lecture**

The flag in Indonesia is not only a symbol of the state but also symbolizes the history of the nation's struggle. Therefore, respect for the flag is often associated with respect for independence heroes, most Muslims. In addition, the flag's symbol is also closely related to national identity. It is part of a legal obligation, as emphasized in Law Number 24 of 2009, concerning the Flag, Language, and State Emblem and the National Anthem. In the socio-political context of Indonesia, flag salutes are often understood as a form of strengthening unity and an expression of nationalism.

On the other hand, the discussion of the law on flag salutes by Salafi preachers in Indonesia reflects the dynamics between Islamic law and national insight. In their sermons, Salafi preachers have their understanding of flag salutes, which they position as a neutral activity, not as worship, but rather a habit that is permitted as long as it is not accompanied by excessive belief or contains elements of idolatry.

Preachers such as Firanda Andirja and Dzulqarnaini Muhammad Sanusi associate flag salute with togetherness, nationalism, and gratitude to Allah for independence. None of the five preachers position flag salutes as an expression of religion. Instead, they emphasize that this salute is only a form of permissible social custom and contains no worship content.

In the legal context, flag salutes are regulated as a legal obligation in Indonesian laws and regulations. This tendency creates socio-political pressure for the Salafi group, which ideologically does not support the concept of a nation-state or recognition of state symbols<sup>31</sup>. However, to maintain stability and avoid the stigma of being a subversive group, Salafi preachers adopt a flexible attitude, which in *ushûl fiqh* terminology is called *sadd al-dzari'at*, namely taking an anticipatory stance so as not to be faced with more significant problems.<sup>32</sup> They expressed opinions that allow flag salutes, in contrast to the more rigid views of global Salafi fatwas, such as the fatwa of Lajnah al-Da'imah in Saudi Arabia or the fatwas of leading Salafi figures such as Sheikh Muqbil bin Hady al-Wadi'iy and Sheikh Nashiruddin al-Albani who are known to be relatively rigid, textualist, and always convey uniform opinions.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Aksa, 'Gerakan Islam Transnasional: Sebuah Nomenklatur, Sejarah dan Pengaruhnya di Indonesia', *Yupa: Historical Studies Journal*, 1.1 (2017): 1–14 <<https://doi.org/10.30872/yupa.v1i1.86>>; Hawre Hasan Hama, 'A Comparison Between Marxism and Islamic State's Salafi Jihadism', *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*, 6.1 (2021), 45–61 <<https://doi.org/10.1177/2057891119888583>>.

<sup>32</sup> Muhammad Khalilurrahman, Aficandra Eficandra, and Dodon Alfiander, 'Sharia-Based Customs in Unregistered Marriage Rules (Case Study in Rambatan Village, West Sumatra)', *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam*, 7.2 (2022): 579–96 <<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v7i2.5543>>.

<sup>33</sup> Ahmad 'Ubaydi Hasbillah, *Nalar Tekstual Ahli Hadis di Indonesia: Mencari Formula Kultur Berbasis Tekstualisme*, 1st edn (Ciputat: Mktabah Darus-Sunnah, 2017), p. 107.

The preachers adjusted their sermons to Indonesian audiences, who respect state symbols. This attitude shows accommodation politics, where they try not to conflict with government policies or community culture. In their sermons, flag salutes are discussed carefully to avoid the impression that they oppose state symbols. The conflict around state symbols vs. Islamic values is a local social dynamic that often arises in society, especially related to religious practices that are seen as contradicting local traditions or state laws.

Some speakers, such as Firanda Andirja, use historical context to strengthen their arguments, for example, referring to the Hadith about the Mu'tah War, where the flag bearer fought tooth and nail to defend the symbol of the Islamic army, then trying to correct the misunderstanding through logical arguments and analogies.<sup>34</sup> Such is possible, considering that the terminology and reasoning of the science of ushul fiqh can be conveyed with expressions adjusted to the language of the audience's understanding to sound friendly. Negative comments from the audience who criticized this discussion as a "*perkara receh* (trivial matter)" were answered with an assertion that Sharia law should not be taken lightly and that saluting the flag is not a form of worship. This approach shows their efforts to remain relevant and acceptable to diverse audiences.

With the combination of legal, social, and historical approaches explained above, Salafi speakers-representing their group-not only frame saluting the flag as an acceptable practice within the boundaries of Sharia but also succeed in maintaining their existence in Indonesia. Their rhetoric is often firm in determining Sharia law but tends to be careful and not explicit when touching on issues about the state. In the treasury of fiqh, some rules allow them to build a moderate image like this without sacrificing ideological principles, where a law is subject to change due to changes in situations and conditions.<sup>35</sup> By allowing sensitive practices such

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<sup>34</sup> Repelita Repelita, Nuzul Iskandar, and Mursal Mursal, 'Ushûl al-Fiqh Literacy for the Local Community: A Study on Shaykh Mukhtar Ambai's Manuscript', *Al-Ahkam*, 33.2 (2023): 133–56 <<https://doi.org/10.21580/ahkam.2023.33.2.17045>>.

<sup>35</sup> Muhammad Faisol, 'Hukum Islam dan Perubahan Sosial', *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah*, 18.1 (2019): 33–44 <<https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v18i1.1397>>. See also Suci Ramadhan, "Islamic Law, Politics and Legislation: Development of Islamic Law Reform In Political Legislation of Indonesia." *ADHKA: Journal of Islamic Family Law*, 2.1 (2020): 63-76; Maulidi, Maulidi. "Menggagas Fikih Responsif: Upaya Progresif Modernisasi Fikih." *Al-Adalah*, 14.2 (2018): 507-528.

as flag salutes to a certain extent, they are trying to avoid state suspicion of anti-nationalist views often associated with global Salafi groups while at the same time showing that they are legally not problematic.

This strategy effectively maintains relations with the Indonesian public, most of whom support national symbols. This attitude reflects their tactical flexibility in a complex socio-political context where maintaining relevance while adhering to religious principles is challenging. Salafi groups show that by carefully navigating sensitive issues, they can continue to be accepted by the public while avoiding more significant pressure or scrutiny from law enforcement. This strategy is a form of adaptation that ensures sustainability in an environment full of dynamics and potential ideological conflict.

## Conclusion

This study shows that Salafi preachers in Indonesia generally allow flag salutes because such actions are outside the realm of faith and more of social customs. Their arguments are built with a moderate approach, Islamic legal arguments, and national insight but are still framed with caution so as not to conflict with the principles they hold. The public response to these sermons was primarily positive, reflecting an appreciation for a moderate perspective that balances Islamic law with socio-political realities. Regarding legal reasoning *fiqh*, they utilize the *khilâfiah* (a matter of differing opinion) space to choose a view that allows flag salutes without explicitly advocating it. This approach not only reflects the adaptation of the Salafi group to the Indonesian context but also shows a rhetorical strategy to avoid the stigma of anti-nationalism and ensure their acceptance in a multicultural society. This study confirms that religious lectures in digital spaces are an important arena for understanding the national insight of religious groups.

## Authors Contribution

Muhammad Ridha DS is responsible for planning the research, preparing the framework, and collecting data. Afridawati is responsible for processing the data and compiling the initial draft of the manuscript. Nuzul Iskandar supervises and adjusts the methodology and completes

the data. Mursal is responsible for editing, checking references, and perfecting the final draft.

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