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Symbol of Political Communications by Nahdlatul Ulama in East Java, Indonesia

Hamim, Suwandi Sumartias, Dadang Rahmat Hidayat, Dadang Sugiana

Faculty of Communication Sciences, Padjadjaran University, Bandung, Indonesia

Abstract: For the people of East Java, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is not just a symbol of the organization. It is an interpretation of religious teachings in practicing politics. Although Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was created by religious figures, it was not designed to place religion as an ideology or an Islamic party. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is an open organization in the sense of across religions, ethnicities, races, and groups manifested in the form of a vision, mission, struggle program, membership, and leadership. This research uses the qualitative method with inductive thinking. In-depth interviews provided data collection, and data analysis was based on the subjective researchers' interpretation. Herbert Blumer's symbolic interaction theory is very relevant to be used as a tool for analysis. It is also assisted using the constructivism paradigm that explains how events or reality are created and how reality is symbolically shaped by the nahdliyin (members of Nahdlatul Ulama) in East Java. This study aims to provide an understanding of the importance of scientific studies between communication and culture of the organizational community as a tool for building political culture in the organization's role in preaching and politics.

Keywords: symbols, political communication, Nahdlatul Ulama.

纳德拉杜尔·乌拉玛在印度尼西亚东爪哇省进行政治交流的象征

摘要：对于东爪哇人来说，纳德拉杜尔·乌拉玛（NU）不仅仅是该组织的象征。这是对政治实践中宗教教义的一种解释。尽管纳德拉杜尔·乌拉玛（NU）是由宗教人物创建的，但其设计目的并不是将宗教视为意识形态或伊斯兰政党。纳德拉杜尔·乌拉玛（NU）是一个开放的组织，其跨宗教，种族，种族和群体的意义表现为愿景，使命，奋斗计划，成员和领导力。本研究采用定性方法和归纳思维。深入访谈提供了数据收集，并且数据分析基于主观研究人员的解释。赫伯特·布鲁默的符号相互作用理论与用作分析工具非常相关。建构主义范式还可以为它提供帮助，该范式解释了事件或现实的产生方式以及东爪哇的纳德利因（纳德拉杜尔·乌拉玛的成员）如何象征性地塑造了现实。这项研究旨在提供对交流和组织社区文化之间科学研究的重要性的理解，这是一种在组织在宣讲和政治中的作用中建立政治文化的工具。。

关键词：符号，政治交流，纳德拉杜勒·乌拉玛。

1. Introduction

The openness of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is not only symbolized in pluralistic management. However, it is even more substantial to see the openness in social attitudes, political behavior and the formulation of ideas

in line with Pancasila. The people of East Java highly accept Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) because they are, in many ways, in line with people's thinking that can form a Nationalist generation as a successor of leaders based on

Received: 27 October 2020 / Revised: 26 November 2020 / Accepted: 24 December 2020 / Published: 29 January 2021

About the authors: Hamim, Suwandi Sumartias, Dadang Rahmat Hidayat, Dadang Sugiana, Faculty of Communication Sciences, Padjadjaran University, Bandung, Indonesia

Corresponding author Hamim, hamim.fikom@gmail.com

values and norms in society and supported by religious teachings through provision at Islamic boarding schools.

This research departed from the 2018 East Java regional election, which was dominated by candidates from Nahdhiyin background, namely Saifullah Yusuf, who was then deputy governor of East Java Abdullah Azwar Anas (regent of Banyuwangi), supported by (PDIP, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle) and Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB, National Awakening Party). Meanwhile, Golkar Party's second rival, Khofifah Indar Parawansa, currently serves as the head of the Muslimat NU, an NU women's organization, accompanied by Dardak.

Both of them stepped forward and fought over NU's support, both by kiai (experts in Islam) and Nahdliyin residents. NU dominated in the 2018 Regional Elections. On a personal level, the psychological distance between the regional head and citizens was closer. It also built a degree of accountability from the regional head for the programs that he or she promised during the regional elections (campaign).

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was able to gain a significant amount of popular support on its way. NU was born with a clear support base, namely Nahdhiyin residents, especially in East Java. This phenomenon has created an ideology and culture of the people who think that Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) has always been interpreted as the twin of PKB, and vice versa. These two organizations have a close relationship and share the same ideology in achieving a goal; East Java is the biggest base of this organization.

There is a strong synergy between Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) as a socio-religious organization and Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB) as a political party. This means that PKB needs Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) organization, and vice versa. NU will not be effective without PKB to act as a political sword. NU would not have arms for the extension. Likewise, PKB politics is merely a transactional market without the spirits of NU.

For this reason, charisma through the NU symbol must be attached to anyone who wants to pursue a career in the peak of power, especially in East Java, such as regents, mayors, especially if they want to run as a candidate for governor. Political parties' background is sometimes not so affected by candidates, but rather their closeness or affiliation with the largest Islamic mass organization/NU [1].

Cultural politics in the context of contestation political communication will be euphoric for the people of East Java because the phenomenon of the 2018 East Java regional election political stage was dominated by two phenomenal candidates and both Nahdhiyin or Nahdlatul Ulama cadres.

The 2018 East Java (Jatim) simultaneous regional elections for governor and deputy governor were phenomenal because the candidates were well-known people who became national figures and also possessed backgrounds from Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) members or Nahdhiyin, the largest Islam organization in Indonesia, which is very influential in East Java. It is predicted that the implementation of the East Java Regional Elections will be very interesting. From the explanation above, the writer is interested in studying it as a political communication study in the current order [2-6].

Saifullah Yusuf and Khofifah Indar Prawansah fought for the same seat. Both of them are genuine NU candidates and understand all the risks of this battle, which will impact the harmony and division of the NU people in East Java since East Java is very dominant with its Nahdhiyin base, so NU symbols in the political struggle are needed.

2. Research Methodology

Qualitative research is flexible and open by emphasizing inductive analysis [7-10]. The fact implies that the researcher tries to present the research subject naturally without any engineering. The researcher does not manipulate research settings, meaning that individual mental constructs are excavated and formed in natural settings [11].

This study emphasizes more on meaning and value by using a constructivist paradigm. Constructivists have explained how the event or reality is constructed; in what way the construction is formed. In communication studies, this constructionist paradigm is often referred to as the paradigm of production and exchange of meaning. It is often contrasted with the positivist paradigm or the transmission paradigm [12, 13].

3. Results and Discussion

The symbol of political communication through the movement of kiai in the world of politics has made a long trail for Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). The traces have even been tracked back since the Dutch colonial era. The establishment of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was motivated to defend the ideology of Ahlu Sunna Waljama'a and the nationalism motive to fight against Dutch colonialism. The political movement of the kiai then continued until the independence era. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) even had time to become a separate political party after previously joining the Indonesian Muslimin Syuro Council (Masyumi) political party, then moved to PKB.

Nahdlatul Ulama, often abbreviated as NU, is one of Indonesia's largest community organizations, especially in East Java. With a very large mass base, the role and struggle of Nahdlatul Ulama' (NU) are also quite significant in each period. NU, originally established as a

mass organization, experienced various situations that later changed its direction to become a political party.

There is a strong synergy between Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) as a socio-religious organization and the National Awakening Party (PKB) as a political party, which means that PKB needs Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) organization, and vice versa. NU without PKB's political sword will not be effective, and it will not have arms for extension. Likewise, PKB without the spirit of NU, politics is merely a transactional market. For that, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) needs PKB, and vice versa. This is a sign of the need for solid party support from the nahdliyyin circles. PKB is the only party whose AD / ART is in line with NU. In its politics, PKB was able to obtain a significant amount and its popular support. This success is expected to be repeated in the 2018 East Java regional elections.

The symbol of the 2018 East Java regional election political communication presented political maneuvers of political figures and parties, and scholars as well; kiai also took part in the five-year democratic party. The kyai symbol reminds the public of dozens of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) kiai who sent letters to PKB. The letter asked PKB to involve the kiai in making political decisions about the figures to be carried in the East Java regional elections.

Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) symbol through political maneuvers was also carried out by a group of kiai who called themselves Kiai Kampung Forum. This group sent a letter to President Jokowi to immediately allow Khofifah Indar Parawansah (Minister of Social Affairs) to struggle in the 2018 East Java Regional Elections. There were groups of kiai who changed course to hold a declaration in support of Gus Ipul. Meanwhile, the Khofifah camp cannot be far from the symbol of the kiai. In fact, the Head of the Muslimat Nahdlatul Ulama '(NU) submitted the name of his representative to Team 9, which contained a senior kiai. After Team 9 determined the name of Khofifah's deputy candidate, it was then communicated with the supporting parties.

Each bearer's party machine must work harder, especially to convince Nahdlatul Ulama figures in the East Java region to garner support for only one candidate. East Java (Jatim) has been the strongest base for nahdliyyin residents since a long time ago because Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was actually born and raised in the East Java region. For this reason, the charisma of NU must be attached to someone who wants to pursue a career in the peak of power, such as regents, mayors, especially if they want to run as a candidate to the governor.

Political parties' background is sometimes not so affected by candidates, but rather their closeness or affiliation with the largest Islamic mass organization/NU. The two candidates cannot possibly sit in the same chair together because they were eyeing the seat of power to become governor, not deputy governor. Even though, in fact, if the two are paired, the choices of the Nahdliyyin residents will be more random. Thus, it would make the chances of both of them winning over other pairs tend to be greater, even though different parties supported them.

This situation is in accordance with the mechanism for participating in political contestation through political parties' support. Certainly, the candidates who come from the independent path are too heavy to participate in the political contestation arena, as was done by the two candidates that represent NU politics. Namely, Gus Ipul and Khofifah will officially register through the political parties with close ties to NU. To map the strength of Nahdliyyin for competing candidates, we must first look at the voter culture in East Java.

Seeking citizens' support with the symbol of Nahdlatul Ulama is indeed a must. NU believes that the role of the kiai is very supportive as a symbol of political power; therefore, a candidate needs to get the support of the kyai. Apart from the background, what makes East Java political communication even more interesting is that the support base with a crucial voice. The domination of a fairly heterogeneous vote base can determine who wins.

The journey of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) has passed a very long time until now. Various problems and upheavals have often been experienced, making this organization more mature in facing various challenges. To demonstrate its existence, NU established a forum for democracy, namely the PKB. East Java (Jatim) has always been the strongest base for nahdliyyin residents because Nahdlatul Ulama' (NU) was actually born and raised in the eastern region of Java Island.

NU provides democratic freedom for Nahdliyyin and East Java people to choose prospective governors who will advance in the 2018 East Java Regional Elections. On the other hand, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) votes can be split if Saifullah Yusuf (Gus Ipul) and Khofifah Indar Parawansa both advance. As a mature organization, NU gives a positive signal to the democratic election process through each candidate's political stage.

Even though NU was born from religious leaders, it was not designed to position religion as an ideology or an Islamic party. Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is an open organization in the sense of across religions, ethnicities,

ances, and groups manifested in the form of a vision, mission, struggle program, membership, and leadership.

This phenomenon can construct the reality of a society that holds the view that Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) is always interpreted as synonymous with PKB, and vice versa, these two organizations have a close relationship and have the same ideology in achieving a goal, the largest base of this organization is East Java. The people of East Java highly accept the presence of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) organization. It is considered to be very in line with the thinking of the community that can form a nationalist generation as a successor of leaders based on values and norms in society and supported by religious teachings through provision at Islamic boarding schools.

The openness of the Nahdlatul Ulama is symbolized in the presence of the plural management or membership but what is even more substantial is the openness in social attitudes and political behavior and the formulation of ideals in line with Pancasila. In its political journey, NU has been able to gain a significant amount of popular support because NU was created with a clear support base, namely Nahdhiyin, especially East Java.

From the perspective of political communication [2-6], the 2018 East Java regional election contestation became euphoric for the people of East Java. Two phenomenal candidates will dominate the political stage phenomenon, and both Nahdhiyin cadres or Nahdlatul Ulama, Saifullah Yusuf and Khofifah Indar Prawansah, will fight for the same seats. Both of them are genuine NU candidates and understand all the risks of this battle, which will impact the harmony and division of NU residents in East Java because East Java is a very dominant base for Nahdhiyin.

This phenomenon demanded the candidates' efforts to be careful in constructing the reality of the East Java society that is dominant in NU. This fact can be interpreted as an effort to show strength; it can also be interpreted as an affirmation of the political attribute that when the kiai supports the candidate, the kiai's followers will support the candidate they carry, even though in reality, this is not always the case, the students may have different choices.

In general, the East Java region's voter base is grouped into three, namely horseshoe covering the areas of Probolinggo to Madura, Mataraman covering Tulungagung to Banyuwangi, and Arek covering Surabaya to Malang. The three regions have their respective political currents. Tapal Kuda is a voter base with a santri or student background, Mataraman with abangan or nationalist background, and Arek with rational voter background. NU's political contestation.

To win this contest, candidate supporters needed an understanding of voter mapping. The typology and classification of voters for the 2018 East Java regional election are given in Table 1.

Table 1 2018 East Java regional election voters' typology and classification

No	Typology	Demography	Characteristics
1.	Mataraman	Ngawi, Madiun, Pacitan, Magetan, Kediri, Nganjuk, Tulungagung, Blitar, Trenggalek, Tuban, Lamongan, dan Bojonegoro	Having an abangan or nationalist background, having local rituals and traditions.
2.	Tapak Kuda	Pasuruan, Probolinggo, Lumajang, Jember, Situbondo, Bondowoso, dan Banyuwangi, hingga Madura	Having a voter base with a santri background and pursuing religious teachings.
3.	Arek	Surabaya, Sidoarjo, Gresik, Mojokerto, Malang	Rationalist and ethical values and Priyayi traditions.

To map the candidate groups and supporters beforehand, we must first look at the competing candidates' backgrounds. Let us consider the backgrounds of the two candidates, NU students, who have declared themselves the 2018 East Java Prospective Governor. Both are important figures in the elite ranks of Nahdlatul Ulama'. Gus Ipul currently serves as deputy chairman of the NU board, while Khofifah is the general head of the Muslimat NU.

Through the 2018 political stage contestation, candidates are the main actors and voters as spectators. Political communicators will be very good at playing roles even popular candidates can bind the political masses to move the political machine. The awesomeness of the popularity of figures has a stronger influence on the political stage. Being popular and charismatic figures will be able to transform into heroes (heroics) as effective communication tools trying to win the contestation. The symbol of political communication carried out by the candidates tries to create an atmosphere and conditions of interaction, giving its own meaning to society. The emergence of the meaning of this symbol really depends on the social background of the community itself and a society that can adapt to various situations and styles of political life formed.

This phenomenon can create an impression through social construction in the 2018 East Java regional election candidates' political representation. Based on the constructivist paradigm view, the reality of social life is not natural but is formed from construction results. Therefore, the concentration of analysis in the constructionist paradigm is to discover how the event or reality is constructed, in what way the construction is formed.

The tendency to the increasingly strong rivalry between Gus Ipul and Khofifah is what many people fear will make the East Java Regional Elections become like the Jakarta Governor Elections, noisy with opposition and polarization. However, with the increasingly strong rivalry between Gus Ipul and Khofifah, if not managed and controlled well, the polarization will appear at NU's grassroots. Therefore, the East Java community is expected to have a central axis, which is considered to be able to dilute NU residents. The phenomenon of the contestation of the Nahdhiyin (NU) in the 2018 East Java regional election will be even more interesting because there is a collaboration of political parties between candidates, PKB, PKS, PPP, PDI, Nasdem, Gerindra, and Democrats as well as the role of santri, kiai and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) figures.

Therefore, this contestation became more interesting and provided a new color for the NU 2018 East Java regional election. NU returned to its identity of a religious organization even though its members can still be involved in politics. The role and struggle of NU in every historical periodization cannot be doubted. NU is one of the forefronts, as well as a cultural symbol of the people of East Java.

In the election contest, verbal and nonverbal communication symbols are very dominant to be used as a tool to attract people's attention. As supporters of the contestation of the candidates, it is inseparable from party support. In the political stage for the East Java regional elections, there were two popular candidates, Khofifah was supported by the democratic party, while the PKB supported Gus Ipul. Both of them are genuine NU members. The supporting parties started to play political contestation through these two figures. This phenomenon has become controversial among NU members because it is feared that it will create a negative image towards the Nahdhiyin in determining their voting rights.

From the description above, it can be concluded that symbolic interactions are all things that are interrelated with the formation of the meaning of an object or symbol, both inanimate objects, and living things, through the communication process both as a verbal message and non-verbal behavior, and the final goal is interpreting the symbol (object) based on mutual agreement prevailing in a particular area or community group [14].

4. Conclusions

Nowadays, Nahdlatul Ulama' (NU) is an organization that is synergistic in carrying out its vision and mission. In the history of the journey of Nahdlatul Ulama' (NU) is in a dynamic space, Indonesian and Islamic in nature. NU has been increasingly aggressively strengthening its citizens in responding to the various changes in state life. NU has been a political party for decades and part of a political party. However, since returning to its habitat, NU has been returned to its habitat, namely, the world of education, preaching, economic development, and community service. NU has always been consistent in maintaining the nation's unity and spends its energy guarding politics and power (power building). This movement gave birth to a new generation concerned with the community empowerment movement with various variants of social activities and developed political geology.

NU and PKB are organizations that are synergistic in carrying out their vision and mission. It is undeniable that PKB is a political party for NU members because it was born from the NU organization considering its history. Through the NU symbol, actors take advantage of NU's role and existence as a medium to convey messages to nahdliyin members as well as targets/audiences for political actors. One of the most influential NU political actors in East Java is the kyai.

The issue of kyai involvement in political struggles in East Java is actually not something new. Amidst the community, kyai are communication actors who can play roles in social change. Specifically, among Muslims, kyai is one of the elite groups with a very respectable position among other elite groups. From that, the content of the 2018 Regional Elections from Nahdliyin scrambled to ask the elderly kyai.

Therefore, symbolic interactions in the East Java regional election contestation can be reflected through verbal and nonverbal communications carried out by the candidates in representing themselves and interacting with prospective voters/Nahdliyin members in East Java 2018.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank the Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education (Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan/LPDP), the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Indonesia, for providing financial support for the research on which this article is based.

We express our special thanks to Padjajaran University, Jl. Raya Bandung Sumedang KM.21, Kec.

Jatinangor, Kabupaten Sumedang, Jawa Barat 45363 Indonesia.

17 Agustus 1945 University Surabaya (Fisip-Untag), Jl. Semolowaru No.45, Menur Pumpungan, Kec. Sukolilo, Kota Surabaya, Jawa Timur 60118 Indonesia.

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