

KYAI, POLITICS AND DAKWAH PATTERNS: READING POLITICAL NARRATIVES IN RELIGIOUS SPACES

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Abstract

The involvement of kiyai in political life can be seen from various sides, both religion and politics. From the religious side, the involvement of religious leaders in political dynamics could be seen to strengthen religious life because of political support. Meanwhile, from the political side it could also be seen to provide a positive point for political life because of the content of religiosity and morality. However, the involvement of kyai in political dynamics is seen to have reduced his central position as a reference for religious behavior and sources of knowledge for all groups without barriers, while political traditions often divide. The relationship between politics and religion often makes religious instruments become a part that frames or become a political packaging, persons, the institution and the activities including the activities of dakwah. This qualitative research was conducted with the approach of communication science in the perspective of theory leader opinion and influence. This research while the focus of the study was the preaching of the kyai in Banten in the 2019 presidential election. Through observation and in-depth interviews, it was found that the use of religious spaces and dakwah patterns were still regarded significant in socializing and building awareness including political choices. Even though there is political narrative in the activities of dakwah, it does not undermine the marwah and glory of the dakwah itself. Political content and narratives in the religious space is only as distractions in affirming their choices, it is not found any elements of manipulation or politicization which distort the religious itself. This happened along with social control through communication technology.

Keywords; *Kyai of Banten, political dynamics, religious spaces, Dakwah Patterns*

INTRODUCTION

Politics and religion are two different worlds, but they are connected and need each other, it is difficult to separate them both at a philosophical and empirical level. Religious life involves politics, and vice versa political life involves religion. According to Masykuri Abdillah the both intersectional relations are not always united and also not always separate.¹ Even though the results of the relationship are in harmony but it is also common to seem lame, far from ideal expectations, such as Islam which is only used as a packaging or political attraction.² Religion, religious symbols and messages are widely found and spread out as well as religious institutions and religious leaders are the destination of visit, their political support becoming the hope of many parties. Religious messages are often to be important political instruments that are awaited, because the involvement and religious moral messages of religious scholars especially contain political messages are seen to be a magnetic political effect.³

The previous study of *Kyai* and politics is still focused on the issue, how the political role of *Kyai* is directly involved in politics. Likewise, the political influence of *Kyai* as a central figure who has charisma and influence, in which advice and support is followed by worshipers, as Subiyakto studies, *Kyai's* political support is considered politically significant.⁴ The involvement of *Kyai* in political dynamics in the study of Miftah Faridl is seen to have caused a shift in his religious function, because it has been intervened by interests in carrying out other functions outside the religious standard,⁵ especially politics. The shift also occurred in the political behavior of *Kyai* and santri in Madura, as Zainuddin Syarif's study found, the differences in the political choices of *Kyai* with santri and their alumni, where there was a kind of non-compliance with the call for *Kyai's* political choices.⁶

Political involvement of *Kyai*, on the one hand, is a new hope for the building of a strong political system with a moral content. However, it is also a concern for many parties where *Kyai* can be involved in a black politics. Meanwhile, the systemic dynamics of politics are full of conflicts and interests or power and it is often to set aside aspects of morality. On the other hand, the direct involvement of *Kyai* in political dynamics has made *Kyai* no longer focus on his main task as an enlightenment and protector of *ummah* because *Kyai* spends much time on political affairs,⁷ thus he does not focus on his main task, as well as becoming insulated by political group religious activities and proselytizing that are familiar with the main tasks of

Kyai become an important part in education, political socialization. The questions in this study are: What is the attitude, support and political network of *Kyai* ? How is the pattern of *dakwah* with political narration carried out by *Kyai*? Why does religious space become significant in political life?

This research is based on the argument that the magnetic power of *Kyai*'s politics lies not only in the figure of *Kyai* as an influential charismatic figure, but also in messages and narratives that often use clothes or *dakwah* packages. Even though the patterns of *dakwah* by *Kyai* in principle are no different, the patterns and content of *dakwah* are often distinguished by the style and choice of diction. These differences are often used as indicators and categories of religious groups and even lead to stereotypes for certain groups that are critical, especially in political momentum.

REVIEW LITERATURE

Kyai Authority

Kyai/ulama, ustadz is a central figure in the religious structure as the heir to the Prophets. *Kyai* in the local languages of Banten and Java in general is a degree from the community to someone who is considered to have a depth of religious knowledge, in other words *Kyai* is a designation or another word from the *ulama*. *Kyai* refers to people who are experts in religion.⁸ The term *Kyai* was originally familiar with the pesantren environment, or traditional local religious leaders.⁹ According to Zamakhsyari Dhofier, the term *Kyai* was originally used for all three types of titles. Namely: First, as an honorary title for stuff that is considered sacred, for example "*Kyai Garuda Kencana*" is the golden train in the Palace. Second, honors for parents in general. Third, the title that given by community for *Ulama* as an expert in Islamic studies, and usually become the leader in *pesantren*.¹⁰

Someone could get a *Kyai* title, according to Abuebakar Aceh, there were several factors. First, they have knowledge of Islam. Second, they are as piety person. Third, they are from the offspring of *Ulama*, and fourth, the number of students. Meanwhile, according to Karel Stenbrink, there are at least five criteria a person can be called as *Kyai*, namely; 1) The principle of family or ancestry. 2) Orthopraxy or piety of a *Kyai*. 3) His service to the community. 4) The principle of authoritative interpretation (knowledge). Fifth, the principle of revelation or *Kyai* is considered to be the delivery of revelation.¹¹

Moreover, initially *Kyai* had not only expertise in religious knowledge, but also expert in magic, such as *kanuragan* and others. Even mysticism and wisdom as well as are generally owned by *tarekat* teachers. With the ability in various fields of knowledge, it adds strength and charisma of *Kyai*.¹² Based on the breadth of knowledge that *Kyai* has, it makes him became a place of learning and asking people in various life problems. *Kyai* becomes a place to share various problems of *ummah*, in addition to his existence which is close to the community at the grassroots level.

Kyai's leadership is social, moral and spiritual leadership. This aspect is actually more dominant in the life of *pesantren* and makes him strong in society. *Kyai* is the moral guide and faith of the community. The strong appeal of *pesantren* in attracting people's attention and trust also lies in the charisma of *Kyai*. According to Zamakhsyari Dhofier, the charisma of *Kyai* is supported by various factors: First, the breadth of religious knowledge that *Kyai* has makes him as a place for people to ask religious questions. Second, *Kyai* has high moral integrity, full sincerity in serving and educating people, and he can become as a role model. Third, the figure of *Kyai* has an independent economic capacity that makes him does not depend on assistance from anyone.¹³

Religion and Politics

The relation of religious and politics has three paradigms, namely; integralistic, symbiotic and secularistic¹⁴ First: the integralistic paradigm, the unity of religion and state, religion is executed based on divine laws (theocracy). Its implementation is the unification of religious and state authority (*waliyyul amri khalifatullah sayyidin panatagama*). As happened in some countries that make religion as an ideology in regulating the country. Islam is seen as the source of totality that governs everything, as in Mahmoud Syaltout's view of *addinwadaulah*, and NazihAyubi Islam addin, *dunyawadaulah*.¹⁵

Second: the symbiotic theory. They are different but need one another. The implementation of religion and politics is complementary and state politics is based on a religious spirit, even though it is not a religion state. However, the state guarantees its citizens to run their affairs and embrace their religious beliefs.¹⁶ Indonesia is categorized in the second category. Although Indonesia is not proclaimed as a religious state, Indonesia protects and guarantees its citizens to practice their

religion and be protected by the Law. *Pancasila* is a foundation to protect national life which has religious values.¹⁷

Third, the secularity paradigm, it rejects both integrative and symbiotic paradigm and the relations between religion and the state. State relations are based on logic of thought and the laws of agreement between humans and it has no relation with religion. As seen in the thought of Ali Abdur Razik who is popular in his work *Al-Islam wa Ushul al-Hukm*, he admits that the concept of state and religion has their respective claims and cannot intervene each other. The implementation is to separate religious affairs from political affairs, where religious affairs are carried out by religious leaders, and vice versa and politics is not authorized to regulate religion.¹⁸

In the long journey of the nation political history, there is dynamics in understanding the basic, ideological state. Although the *Pancasila* and the 1945 Constitution had been agreed upon by the ideology of the nation, it has various meanings. There were groups that tended to go right and others tended to take left. The dynamics are not only in the form of dialectics but also in movement. Efforts to separate politics from religion have been carried out by the Dutch colonial government. The emergence of westernization politics actually triggered the revival and movement of Muslims, as happened in some areas led by religious leaders, such as in some regions of Java and Banten.¹⁹

Politics Dakwah and Dakwah Politics

The symbiotic relationship between religion and politics makes religious instruments such as institutions, figures and religious activities, such as *dakwah*, become a political attraction. In an era of democracy in which the victory of a political party is based on the majority vote, every citizen has the same political rights and position, mass mobilization is one of the important instruments in the life of political democracy. The religious mass base is one of them. The religious masses are loyal to the teacher, or the *Kyai* as the leader of the congregation, so it is not surprised that religious leaders, *Kyai* or *ustadh* become politically attractive.²⁰ Some strategies are carried out in gaining voice support with a variety of approaches. One of them is religious approach with *dakwah* as a weapon. This was done by both political parties based on religion (Islam) and nationalists, because it was difficult to separate the *dakwah* from political life,²¹ even though the relationship has a plus-minus value. The plus value

is that both fill, complete and strengthen one another, where the political policy on *dakwah* makes *dakwah* become as a changing instrument for a better life. In addition, *dakwah* as the strength and spirit Islam is closer in people life and it strengthens the foundation of religion itself.

The relationship between *dakwah* and politics often also makes idioms and religious symbols as political tools. Religious symbols are used as campaign jargon. The use of religious arguments as an attractor and even an amplifier of political choice. Even the "politicization of religion" ²² is often found by using forums and religious spaces. The use of religion as political jargon regulation or politicization of religion is always to be avoided, in fact the religious marketing is still in demand, even by political parties which is not a religious basis.²³ The relationship between *dakwah* and politics also makes both *dakwah* politics and political *dakwah*. *Dakwah* politics means making politics as a way or strategy so that *dakwah* takes places structurally on all lines of life, including. Political policies that are responsive to the implementation of *dakwah*, which is called as structural *dakwah*. Although the structural *dakwah* is more specifically concerned on political policies that are responsive to religious life under the legalistic formal rules. In this case, for example the existence of laws or regulations that are responsive to the intentions and religious life of the community.

The closeness of *dakwah* and politics also makes political *dakwah* "or *dakwah* comes in and becomes an active part in the world of politics. The implementation is that almost all political institutions in government and legislature have religious activities. In fact, almost the majority of political parties have religious *dakwah* section, both for religious-based parties and non-religious-based parties or nationalist parties. The existence of such an institution could be a forum of aspirations and it brings closer to Muslim voters as a majority component. Besides, it is also an answer to attract sympathy, to keep loyalty to the party, maintain the party's image and ward off the negative stigma of the anti-Islamic party. It is undeniable that such a forum can expand and extend the support of Muslim voters."²⁴

The category of "Political *Dakwah*" is different for every party or institution. There are parties who clearly make *Dakwah* a party's mission and activities, make religion as its ideology. In this case PKS is included because it openly carries out the spirit of *dakwah* through parliament. PKS always reminded about the importance of "*dakwah*

through parliament".²⁵ Its implementation is always to support and encourage the realization of policies that strengthen and protect morality and the upholding of public religious life. Another form of political *dakwah* is the strengthening of spiritual mentality in internal and external circles and makes *dakwah* as a network of voters. Nationalist parties such as Golkar (has Al Hidayah) dan PDIP (has Baitul Muslimin) as a religion or *dakwah* section.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses qualitative methods in the perspective of theory leader opinion and influence.²⁶ This approach is carried out in order to see the use of the *Kyai* influence at the religious space as a means of education and political symbols, as well as the patterns of *dakwah* which contains political narratives carried out by *Kyai*, especially in Banten. The target of this research is focused on *Kyai* as a *pesantren* leader and a taklim coach who routinely actively do *dakwah* in the community. It is not *Kyai* who are not activists or members of political parties

The data collection is done through observation²⁷ The researchers observe some *dakwah* activities, recitation and activities that have correlations to *Kyai*'s view and attitudes in the target of research site. It is done either explicitly or implicitly both formally and informally. *Kyai* who become respondents are ones who have important positions in society, with various organizational backgrounds with varieties forms of support and political affiliations as well. Data collected is also conducted through in-depth interviews (in-depth interviews) and open (open interviews)²⁸ with parties related to the data source in this study. Interviews, conducted with several *Kyai* in the above categories. Interviews are conducted to obtain data and examine information related to research purposes. In addition, the data is collected through the study of documents related to the attitudes and political support of *Kyai* both written and illustrated through photographs, print and on-line, including social media.

RESULTS

Attitudes, Support and Political Network of *Kyai*

The involvement of *Kyai* from Banten in national political events is difficult to be ignored for *ummah*, various categories of involvement both involved directly or indirectly, both personally and institutionally for

example through religious organizations. The present situation is different from the periods of the 70s where religious institutions or organizations were de-politicized, not actively involved in political dynamics.²⁹ Personal and institutional involvement is now intensively carried out, although the rules of religious organizations show themselves to be independent or non-partisan but de facto many religious organizations are often trapped in political attraction. Even though involvement is carried out by individuals, there is also structural intervention both through the use of facilities and institutional structures and networks.

The involvement of *Kyai* both personally and institutionally was raised in this presidential election. *Kyai* have political support in several areas, especially in Banten and even to the rural areas. In contrast, to the *Kyai* in the past, especially *Kyai* from rural areas who stayed away from the political life of the country as Benedict ROG Anderson notes, there were two events of *kyia* political involvement, namely in the post-war 1945 and 1965.³⁰ *Kyai* both personally and religious organizations provide support to each candidate with various forms of support. Support was also carried out by religious organizations whose transferees showed their support and political attitude. For example, *Nahdhatul Ulama* (NU) has been giving their support for the Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin. Meanwhile, FPI, for example, has a clear political direction supporting the *ijtima* of Ulama of the Prabowo-Sandi. Muhammadiyah is in neutral position. PERSIS gives support to Prabowo-Sandi when they come to PERSIS headquarters in Bandung.

Kyai of *Nahdhatul Ulama* Banten in particularly helped the organizational structure up to the lower levels for winning Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin in which Ma'ruf Amin is the central figure of NU. It is not surprising that many structural of *Kyai* NU actively involved in the political process. Indeed, the cultural NU *Kyai* were also one of political engines of Jokowi-Ma'ruf. It was conveyed by *Kyai* Ma'ruf Amin at the Structural and Cultural Gathering of the Banten NU at An-Nawawi Tanara Islamic Boarding School, Serang Regency (16 December 2018) that he asked *Kyai* in the village in the process of winning Jokowi-Ma'ruf.³¹

According to Kuntowijoyo, the religious elite, in this case *Kyai*, *ulama*, *ustadh* and the like are potential leaders who become vote getters because they have a patron relationship with the masses. Moreover, *Kyai* in general have also had a network both through marriage and teacher

training.³² Other networks are a network of organizations, students, alumni or even pilgrims as the main mass. These networks not only develop *Kyai*'s influence in knowledge and religion, but also have great political potential, especially in political momentum. Religious elites, especially the charismatic *Kyai* in Banten became a political magnet in the presidential election. Print media, electronic media as well as online media, social media are decorated by the news of the charismatic *Kyai* of Banten, namely Abuya Muhtadi Dimiyati and Abuya Murtadho Dimiyati, both are children of *Kyai* Dimiyati, he is a charismatic and highly respected *Kyai*. Abuya Muhtadi Dimiyati gave his support to the Jokowi-Ma'ruf Amin, while *Kyai* Murtadho gave his support to the Prabowo-Sandi. The *Kyai* involvement in the presidential election made the *Kyai* split in their political choices including their followers. Although *Kyai* is not one of influence factor, there are also public figure and group of anti-incumbent and pro-change group, for example: "2019 movement group, replace President" which is headed by Mardani Ali Sera, Neno Warisman and also Ahmad Dhani and the influence other influences, especially social media.

There are four categories deals with political attitudes and *Kyai* support on the presidential election. First, groups that are openly provide support to particular candidates through their words, actions and symbols that are read by the public. In this first category, *Kyai* openly expressed his support and published by media or carried out in public room and ask his followers to certain choices, such as the support attitude of Abuya KH. Muhtadi Dimiyati prefers to Jokowi-Ma'ruf Amin as well as KH. Abuya Murtadho prefers to Prabowo-Sandi. Second, *Kyai* who vaguely provide support but are not published in public, they usually provide personal support through relaxed communication between individuals. In public, these *Kyai* only mention characteristics or indicators in general, such as criteria and party supporters and ideas, without mentioning names. However, based on these indicators it can already be read the direction

They generally put forward indicators of President's leadership in general, as well as policies that must care for Muslims, as well as anti-communism, it is clearly stated by KH. Ikhwan, KH. Karim, KH. Hilman. KH. Lili, for example, conveyed his personal political views to researchers. After expressing the criteria of a leader who is not a puppet, pro to the ulema and others who lead to candidate number 2, then it is confirmed by his opinion:

"If I choose number 2 because I don't know his mistake" ,, while if we already know his mistake and it hurts the *ulama* and Islam for what, and the main figure we choose is the President not the vice president"³³

Third, *Kyai* who choices are hidden and do not ask his followers to follow his choice. This category is passive in terms of not to mobilize support, despite having personal political choices. *Kyai* attitude and political support is still hidden only he who knows and his family. *Kyai* with this category are also very difficult to share information when he was asked for his views and political attitudes. *Kyai* often take distance and take a safe position, all parties could enter and stay in touch with him with the aim of embracing all parties not to show his partiality.

Fourthly, *Kyai* who are ignorant and do not care about political affairs. This group is those who do not consider political importance, for him to choose and not choose the same or called the white group (abstentions).

The political battle of presidential election is indeed over and it has been known who the winner is and the legitimate President and Vice President have been determined, Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin. Meanwhile, Banten itself, the land of Jawara and *Kyai*, was later won by the Prabowo-Sandi.

Many parties assessed Banten as the basis for Prabowo since the 2014 presidential election, but it is also questionable why there was a defeat when the formal leadership of the government and the informal leadership of the *Kyai* supported for the incumbent. Besides, in Banten, the santri and *Kyai* joined NU both structurally and culturally. Second, candidate of vice president Ma'ruf Amin is the native son of Banten. Thirdly, the support of government officials from the Governor and many regional heads who were directly involved for incumbent did not have a significant impact. Based on above phenomena, it can be seen that the *Kyai* and his network are not the only factors that influence the attitudes and political support of the people, because there are many other determining factors. Therefore, it can be seen that there has been a shift in the influence of the *Kyai* on the attitudes and political choices of the *ummah*, especially among the *Kyai* of *Nahdhatul Ulama* who gave political, both structurally and culturally.

Dakwah Patterns of *Kyai* and Political Narratives

Religious activities and *dakwah* often become a means of socialization and political instruments. As an obligation and religious activity, *dakwah* could not be separated from other aspects of life, including political activities. Even though, *dakwah* is in religious cultural space which has been functionally divided and distinguished from other spaces and functions. However, Lester Kurtz conveyed that religious aspects could not be separated from other aspects, where life and other interests will always be connected with religion, both in the social, economic and political fields.³⁴ Thus, it is difficult to separate and release religious life, including figures and activities from the dynamics and political interests.

Dakwah activities carried out by *Kyai* are routine activities, but in the political momentum, there is an additional message given in which aims not only for building religious awareness, but also influencing political choices of people through political narratives. In this case, there are several patterns that are often used by *Kyai* in the political momentum of presidential election, namely conventional and contemporary patterns, as following:

a. *Billisan Dakwah* pattern through *taklim*, *tabligh* and *khutbah*

This pattern is commonly practiced by religious leaders, *Kyai*, and religious teachers in applying this model to provide understanding of religion with the format of *taklim*, *tabligh* and *khutbah*.³⁵ Religious activities through recitation activities carried out in mosques, *majelis taklim* and *tabligh* from one place to another. In addition, the forum and format of religious activities has function as an means of information, socialization and confirmation of political choices

Kyai provide political understanding through mosque forums, *majelis ta'lim*, and also their *khutbah*. Political themes about the right to choose and recognize leaders such as fair leadership are often discussed in *khutbah* and *khutbah* materials. KH. Karim is among *Kyai* who often raise the theme of leadership in his *ta'lim*. KH. Karim as one of religious figure from *Cilegon Dakwah Council* often criticized secularism and communism. According to him, *ummah* must understand politics and must be accustomed to talk politics, not to be indifferent and allergic to

politics.³⁶ The same view was expressed by KH. Ikhwan Hadiyyin, according to him;

Kyai must provide political education to the community, so that they are smart in choosing good candidates and having a track record of the candidates and their supporting parties, as well as programs and attention for religious life and in favor of the interests of *ummah*.³⁷

The above view is also the same as KH. Hilman Ismail's opinions and KH. Lili, even though both of them never directed and mentioned the names of candidates who were supported, but only stated indicators of President. Thus, it could be read who president that they support. However, different views expressed by KH. Hakim and KH. Matin as NU figure in Banten, in their speech they directed *ummah* to choice candidate who is with *Kyai* from Banten. KH. Hakim put forwards:

"We want to have a leader with *Kyai* background who understands religion, now there is KH. Makruf that we know well about his track record and his services for the Nation, Even though Abah has his own choice, abah does not want to force *ummah*. Ones who follow Abah that welcomed and ones who have different choice with abah is welcomed too. We do democratic life. Having different choices is common and students are used to democracy with various mazhab in which they actually learn to practice democracy."³⁸

KH. Hakim has the same opinions with some other NU *Kyai*, who clearly narrate their political choices to *ummah* and expects them follow their political choices. Some NU *Kyai* even put up banners for showing their attitude and political support openly, as did the *Kyai* KH. Matin, a leader of NU in Serang, Banten. His political support was displayed in public spaces, like in the main road of Serang.

In addition to taklim pattern, *dakwahtabligh* pattern are also conducted by *Kyai*, *ustadh*. They do *dakwah* not only to the internal taklim but also to other institutions that invite them. *Kyai*'s activities have a higher mobility because *tabligh* are more open and various *ummah*, move from one place to another, from one momentum to others as well as from one activity to another activity. Moreover, if it is *tabligh*, it is

potential political assets because it involves various *ummah* across regions in large numbers.

In the political momentum, *tabligh akbar* has become a routine activity, especially when they coincide with events of religious holidays; even *tabligh akbar* is not infrequently sponsored by many parties, especially those who have political interests. For politicians and parties involved in political battles, religious activities are an effective way to socialize figures and candidates as well as their programs. In *tabligh akbar*, there is collaboration between local *Kyai* and *Kyai* from other regions who is well known or national figures, in accordance with the theme and objectives of activities which are considered to have broad impact. Some national *Kyai* also often involve in political activities in Banten, for example there are figures KH. Manarul Hidayat (NU), *Ustadh* Yusuf Mansur. Meanwhile, supporters of presidential number 2, they are from FPI and GNP, such as Habib Rizieq, *Ustadhah* Neno Warisman or Habib Bahar and several *Kyai* who support the *ijtima* of *ulama*.

Syiar dakwah on political momentum, on the one hand, is increasingly dynamic, vivid and more varied format of activity. It also brings *ummah* closer to their idol figures or *Kyai* who they often watch on television or social media, although it is only for short-term. However, on the other hand, *dakwah* is often used by politicians as a medium for “selling political figures” and impact for *dakwah* itself has not been felt optimally. Meanwhile, in fact, community remains same, for example there are still many problems and burdens of life, poverty, dropping out of school, high cost of living and social, economic, political and even security problems.

b. *Bil-Qalam* patterns through writing and the use of print, electronic and social media.

In the political momentum, the use of *dakwah* media both written and illustrated is also done with inserting campaign narrative and political advertising. However, the use of this media in general is not done by *Kyai*. Written, electronic media including social media, done by candidates or supporters of candidates. Indeed, *Kyai* very rarely uses print media or radio or television for delivering political message. Later it was found that some *Kyai* used social media to strengthen their political support.

Nevertheless religious messages with the context of political message both explicitly and implicitly could be seen in the posts of some *Kyai* in Banten. Among them, KH.Anang, for example, often uses Facebook (FB) to socialize his political views and attitudes. For example, he often posts the character of an Islamic leadership which is wise, strong and responsible for protecting the nation's self-esteem, not as puppets. There are also some critics of incumbent leadership policies. In addition, he posted his involvement and his existence in dzikir of zikir in the grand campaign of Prabowo-Sandi in Senayan. Likewise, *Kyai* Makmun uses *Facebook* to post his views on the spirit of nationalism, refusing hoaks, understanding traces of impressions and scholars, his admiration to *Kyai* Makruf, as *Kyai* who keep NKRI, refusing radicalism. Hidden political support is vague but it could be interpreted in the direction of political support.

Some *dakwah* media and *dakwah* content through the publication of *dakwah* materials, books, and articles are still very limited and rarely found. The other forms of *dakwah* are the distribution of yasin and prayers books with inserting the names and photo of candidates. The distribution of *yasin* and prayers book is done as a medium of socialization both in *taklim* and other forums. In Ramadan 2018 there was distribution of fasting and ruling schedules carried out by politicians and their supporters by inserting the photos of candidates, presidential and vice presidential candidates. Even the distribution of calendars and fasting timetable is carried out to various places of worship, *mushalla*, mosques, boarding schools and *taklim* forum.

The political momentum of presidential election this time was carried out simultaneously with the election of people's representatives and DPD election from city, provincial to the central level. Promotion media was spread out along the road even the pictures adorn the trees, print media, electronic and even social media. Not only candidates photos often appear, but also photo and narrative from religious leaders who also decorate public spaces, through banner, print media, electronic media, social media and even leaflets that are spread out in public spaces and people's home.

Interestingly, the promotion media was not only decorated by photo of candidate but also by supporters of candidate, especially public figures and also religious figures. Leaflets, banners, print media as well as television and radio, are including: social media become a part of this

political event. The promotion media also delivers religious messages, especially when they are accompanied by religious momentum, such as fasting, Ramadan messages, *zakat fitrah* with inserting information and political socialization.

c. *Muhasabah, Dzikir, Munajat and Istighosah* patterns.

Other religious activities that are often popular and carried out by politicians by involving and mobilizing religious and community leaders are *dhikr* together or *istighosah*, *munajat* and others. *Istighosah* itself means asking for help, praying for asking something difficult. Thus, it is done collectively or in congregation. *Munajat* means praying which is done alone in quiet and lonely night.³⁹ Calling to always remember God, asking for forgiveness and praying are recommended in religion. In the paradigm of *dakwah*, this pattern is categorized as *muhasabah*, where the *Kyai* invites his *ummah* to evaluate his mistakes by humbling himself and asking for forgiveness from Allah by multiplying forgiveness, *tahlil*, *tahmid* and *takbir*. Such activities are very positive and recommended in religion, remind and reinforce one another.

Interestingly, the religious activities are often held in the political momentum by involving a large enough mass. Regular *istighosah*, *kubro istighosah*, personal and *jamaah munajat* are also full of political interests carried out prior to the 2019 presidential election. *Munajat* of 212 alumni conducted on a large scale at the National Monument on 02-12-2018 became the biggest prayer event in this country. This activity was not only attended by Jakarta's Muslim citizens, but also was attended by various Muslims from various regions in the country, one of them are from Banten. Several *Kyai* from Banten, their students and *jamaah* shared their activities. Even the head of FPI Banten, *Kyai Kurtubi*, is one of the important figures in that event. It is difficult to deny the existence of political event in this sacred momentum, especially this activity was attended by national political figures and Parbowo Subianto, one of president candidate was present at the event. The *istighosah akbar* is also held by *Kyai* who support Probowo Sandi in Banten.

Moreover, *istighosah* was also carried out by supporters of the presidential candidate Joko Widodo-Ma'rufAmiin. BismillahBarukbug Islamic Boarding School in SerangDistrict, held an *istighosah* in commemorating of NU birthday on January 21, 2019. This activity was attended by Vice-President Makruf Amin who was also his first visit in

Serang District. During this momentum, the Joko Widodo-Makruf Amin volunteer team was also held.⁴⁰

In the view of *Kyai* Hakim, one of *Kyai* who is also a NU figure in Banten, he is often asked to lead and be involved in *istighosah* both in Banten and elsewhere. He explained that *political momentum is the great event of the nation that we are encouraged to pray 'involving God as regulator of everything in order to give strength, peace, security, smoothness, salvation and grant our intentions and goals. Praying is the weapon of a believer after endeavoring to be sure.*⁴¹

The significance of religious space in *Syiar* of Politics

Political momentum is often used by several parties so that there is a mutual symbiotic or service transaction. Politicians need space for socialization and support of people voice, on the other hand, *Dewan Kesejahteraan Masjid/DKM* (Board of Mosque) requires contributions to finance the construction of mosques or *mushalla* or other religious activities. Both parties mutually need each other. This condition is admitted by the *Kyai*. However, there must be permission from community for inviting political leaders who is well known their track records. Many political figures are already well known because they often go down to the community. Giving donations for houses of worship is a Muslim's obligation. However, it often occurs in certain times. KH. Hilman reminded that community must be smart to see who is closest to people from their track record not in a particular time they move closer.⁴²

Actually, in terms of regulations to maintain neutrality and conduciveness, religious spaces or places of worship and educational institutions are places that are prohibited as campaign sites, based on the Election Law No. 7 of 2017. It explicitly regulates where religious spaces or places of worship, as well as institutions education including religious education institutions and government institutions may not be used as a place of campaign. In article 280, paragraph 1 letter h, regarding elections, dealing with regulation of implementation, participants and campaign teams are prohibited to use government facilities, places of worship and educational institutions, for those who will be sanctioned if they meet indicators to hold a public meeting with campaign attributes are found. Some components of community including the Indonesian *Ulama* Council (MUI) of Banten and other community components declared a peaceful 2019 election and rejected the use of worship place as a

campaign site in order to divide unity and integrity.⁴³

In fact, political momentum, not only to utilize religious space but also other religious momentum. In addition, other momentum could be connected and used politically, either coincidentally or not to adjust for getting the legitimacy from public so that it is not too obvious politically such as the religious holidays, birthdays of institutions or specific organizational days. In this case, for example, the visit of a political figure, Sandiaga Uno will still be interpreted politically at Birthday of Islamic Boarding School in al-Mubarak in Serang, even though he did not do campaign and no campaign attributes. Likewise, even though KH. Mahmudi as a pondok chairman did not explicitly provide support in the form of statements in public, his political direction could be read. On the contrary, the presence of *Kyai* Makruf Amin on the commemoration of Islamic holidays in several *pesantren*.

Even though from the aspect of campaign regulation, it is clearly prohibited to use media and campaign attributes, however implicitly the symbolic of figures presence, their movements and actions have further explained the real political direction. Even without the campaign attribute of his physical presence, the mention of his name and actions have given meaning to his true purpose. The presence and interaction of figures and candidates to community, especially through religious spaces, provides psychological effects that could influence their attitudes and choices. In this presidential election, religious populism has re-emerged because each team brought up this issue. As partner number 1, Jokowi and Ma'ruf Amin, as MUI general chairperson and also a NU central Meanwhile, as partner number two, Prabowo Subianto-Sandiaga Uno, although they are not religious figure, they was supported based on *ijtihad* and religious consensus, *ijtima* of *ulama*. Religious population is no doubt to sharpen the polarization among the internal community, by carrying out each jargon.

Political education is urgent to be done not only as a matter of political awareness as a citizen of the nation but also as maturity of political attitudes. It is still considered weak, not only at the grassroots level but also at elite level. The debate and contradictions among the elite becomes one of triggering conflict at the grassroots level. Anxiety is also felt by the *Kyai*. Such a problem could not be allowed as *Kyai* live together with the community. They are the leading figures to provide political understanding or education. According to some *Kyai*, it is impossible to release the religious aspects from political dynamics, including gathering

the opinions of *Kyai* and involving them in education to build political awareness and maturity. Religious spaces become an important and effective means for the ongoing political education of the people. Religious space could not be sterile from the political space, especially in the process of enlighten.

Political discourse and discussion could not be prohibited, according to *Kyai* whom researchers met, such as KH. Hilman, KH. Karim, KH. Ikhwan, KH. Hakim. People discuss or express ideas and others may not be prohibited, and that is fine. What is banned is the campaign and its campaign attributes. Political discussions about political themes are also important for enlightenment and broaden people's thinking. KH, Karim, for example, is an example of *Kyai* who often conveys themes on leadership, justice, Islam, nationality and other political themes among his themes in several mosques, including in Masjid Agung. According to him, people must be familiarized with differences in views and choice, and keep prioritize in civilization and unity.⁴⁴

Religious spaces and forums become a part in cleaning the disruption of political life from hoaks, slander, hatred and even humiliation and the like. *Kyai* both personally and through the MUI at various levels, both from the province, district and city to refuse hoaks, slander and others spread massively, feared to be a justification if it is unchecked, besides it could endanger people life nation in general. *Kyai* generally agreed that it was important to carry out political education since early age, starting from religious spaces for santri as well as *ummah*. Defamation and hoaks must be completely eroded, and one of *dakwah* challenges is to crush the negative impact of social media which heighten political dynamics. Building a literacy tradition, especially political literacy is urgent to do. The use of religious space in the context of providing enlightenment and efforts to educate public's political literacy is not blameworthy, as long as there is no attempt to divide the community. Such messages must be followed by strengthening attitudes and mutual respect each other. There should also be an example given by religious leaders including public figures in general.

DISCUSSION

Political dynamics in the country often give religious spaces, both at the level of discourse and real action. The religious space which is actually positioned as a cultural space has additional functions. Interestingly, it occurs not only at grass root level but also at the middle class . They make religious space as a central point and a center of information for mobilizing political power, where politics tends to dominate religion.⁴⁵ How mosques become a means of mobilizing moral, material support and even a gathering point for particular political forces. The voices of people through religious activities and spaces become politically significant strengths. Such conditions are different from Egypt. According to Saba Mahmoud, religious activities in the community at the grassroots level are only limited to orthodox religious activities which have little impact on political landscape in Egypt.⁴⁶

Religious spaces become an important part that enlivens political dynamics every time the political momentum, both in elections and presidential elections.⁴⁷ Messages that build an atmosphere of political life through mosque, *mushalla*, *majelis taklim* including boarding schools are often heard. Political content messages for building political awareness and political participation of the community are legal and do not violate laws. For example, reminding people to use political rights and to build a morality political⁴⁸ atmosphere are moral messages from *Kyai* through religious spaces. It is conducted as religious space is a space that is familiar with people life. In addition, religious leaders such as the *Kyai* and *ustadh* are not only respected figures, but also sources of information and references trusted by the public. Dealing with this, Everet Rogers stated that *Kyai* are as influential figures or personal invoices, where the influence of *Kyai* is still determined especially in the 2019 presidential election in Banten.

Political education carried out *Kyai* is not just important as enlightenment for the community, not only at the level of practical politics in terms of political law but also to be accustomed to build political awareness at high political levels, namely politics which has moral, civilized, promote honesty, fraternity and responsibility,⁴⁹ not merely the power interests. Moreover *Kyai* is a reference to morality and religion that should stand firm without intervention,⁵⁰ in order to be not easily eroded by pragmatic interests and short-term power. The existence of portrait is very urgent dealing with the lack of moralist political figures. Then the figure of *Kyai* could be a counterweight in the middle much information including political issues which spread out through social media without control. The existence of this new media not only shifts the role of mainstream mass media (print,

electronics, such as radio and television), but also shifts conventional authority.⁵¹ In general there have been structural diversification both in terms of religion, social, economy, and lifestyle, including politics. However, this shift still places *Kyai* as an important part of the sources of influence in society,⁵² even though its existence is no longer dominant and no longer a single reference, because it has to compete with other influential sources of reference.⁵³

CONCLUSION

The closeness of politics and *dakwah* makes *dakwah* as a moral foundation in politics world in order to create political life with religious and morality values; and political behavior that is not good can be eliminated. However, there is degradation in *dakwah* value as *dakwah* is only used as a symbol and lip service, thus the closeness of politics and *dakwah* is no more than an effort to attract political profits. In turn it becomes o the politicization of religion or the politicization of *dakwah*. When *dakwah* is united with politics, it makes politics with religious symbols as a unity. Symbols are often seen as religion. Many people focus on the symbol rather than the substance of religion itself, thus it narrows the understanding of the universality of religion and *dakwah* itself. The symbiotic relationship of *dakwah* and politics need and strengthen one another. In one side, *dakwah* needs politics as the guardian of its journey, and politics also requires *dakwah* as a guardian of its morality and civilization. *Dakwah* is also an element of social society, nationality and even religion. Political differences often lead to tension, and even division within society. In this case *dakwah* becomes a unifying media that soothes, reconciles and strengthens ties of society and nationality. Moreover, *dakwah* is also a guardian of political morality which tends to be considered a "dirty world" because it is loaded with power interests that often deny ethical values. *Dakwah* could be a source that helps illuminate the dark world of politics.

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 - ³ Endang Turmudi, *Perselingkuhan KYAI dan Kekuasaan* (Jogyakarta : LKIS, 2004), 6
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 - ⁵ Miftah Faridl, “Kyai di antara Peran Agama dan Partisipasi Politik; Dilema sejarah dan Pencarian identitas “, *Mimbar Pendidikan*, No 4 /XX/2001
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 - ⁷ Abdurahman, “Fenomena Kiai Dalam Dinamika Politik :Antara Gerakan Moral danPolitik, *Karsa*, Vol XV, No. 1, April 2009
 - ⁸ Abdurahman, “Fenomena Kiai Dalam Dinamika Politik :Antara Gerakan Moral danPolitik, *Karsa*, Vol XV, No. 1, April 2009.
 - ⁹ Ulama, berasal dari kata ‘alim yang berarti mengetahui atau berpengetahuan. Dalam pengertian asli maka kata ulama menunjuk kepada orang yang memiliki pengetahuan atau berilmu, dari segala macam ilmu, baik ilmu agama, sosial, humaniora. Artinya dalam hal ini ulama sama dengan ilmuwan. Namun kata ulama di dalam al-Qur’an bukan sekedar menunjuk orang yang memiliki pengetahuan agama maupun kealaman, akan tetapi dengan pengetahuannya memiliki rasa takut dan tunduk kepada Allah Swt. Q.S. Fathir : 28 “ Sesungguhnya yang takut kepada Allah di antara hamba-hamabanya hanyalah ulama,,”. Namun dalam perkembangan berikutnya kata ulama menunjuk kepada orang-orang yang ahli dalam ilmu agama. Lihat, *Ensiklopedi Islam* (Jakarta : PT. Ichtiar van Hoeve, 2003).
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 - ¹¹ Aboebakar Aceh, Sejarah Hidup Wahid Hasyim dan Karangan Tersiar, sebagaimana dikutip, Asep Saeful Muhtadi, *Komunikasi Politik Nahdhatul Ulama : Pergulatan Pemikiran politik Radikal dan Akomodatif* (Jakarta : LP3Es, 2002), 51.
 - ¹² Karel A. Steenbrink, *Pesantren, Madrasah, Sekolah : Pendidikan Islam dalamKurunModeren* (Jakarta : LP3ES, 1986), 109-110
 - ¹³ ZamakhsyariDhofier, *TradisiPesantren...*, 43
 - ¹⁴ Din Syamsuddin, *UsahaPencarianKonsep Negara DalamSejarahpemikiranPolitik Islam* (Bandung : PustakaHidayah, 1999, cetke -1).
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- ³⁰Benedict R.O.G., Anderson, *Kuasa –Kata : Jelajah Budaya-Budaya Politik Di Indonesia*, (Yogyakarta : Mata Bangsa, 2000). 123-125,
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