

Representation of the Identity of the Indonesian Ulama Council in Fatwa Regarding Religious Blasphemy in the Case of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok)

Mery Kharismawati¹, Arief Hidayat²

¹*Japanese Language Study Program, Vocational School, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta*

²*Cultural and Media Studies, Graduate School, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta*

Mery.kharismawati@ugm.ac.id

Abstract

MUI's fatwa in the case of blasphemy and insulting clerics by Ahok is a complex event. It not only signifies the rise of political Islam in the arena of contestation but also symbolizes the presence of identity representation. MUI through its fatwa seems to confirm the presence of sectarian identity based on religion. This refers to Johnson's concept that the media text leads to something behind it. By analyzing the fatwa, it becomes clear that through its text, MUI not only shows itself as an affirmation of Islamic identity as the dominant but also as a binary differentiator in the cultural representation of Indonesian society in various other dimensions. By using a text analysis approach and also a literature study, the author concluded that MUI has opened political identity in the electoral arena. The issuance of MUI fatwa text in Ahok's case has opened a new level of cultural representation dynamics, through religious identity that goes hand in hand with electoral contestation.

Keywords

MUI Fatwa, Identity Representation, Text, Islam

Introduction

This article discusses the portrayal of the Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulama Council (Majelis Ulama Indonesia-MUI) on religious blasphemy in the case of Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok) in the representation of the MUI fatwa text, which describes the meaning behind the text itself. Even

though this issue is deemed to be in the past and has been handled, a comparable case is quite likely to occur amid increasingly dynamic political contestation, particularly in the run-up to the 2024 electoral year. Ahok's case began with remarks made by Ahok during a business visit to Jakarta's Seribu Islands (Hidayat,

2019). At the moment, Ahok, the governor of DKI Jakarta, paid a working visit and addressed the 2017 Jakarta regional election.

Ahok ran as an incumbent in the 2017 Jakarta Pilkada, partnering with Djarot Syaiful Hidayat, who was promoted by PDI Perjuangan. The "212 Movement" was formed in response to Ahok's alleged insulting remarks about religion. The number 212 refers to the time of the big action, which occurred on December 2, 2017. At the time, protesters filled the first ring of the State Palace, which is located in the National Monument (Monas) area, as well as the Hotel Indonesia Roundabout, which is located very close to the President's Office.

Mass demonstrations paralyzed activities throughout the Jakarta area, particularly those within the reach of the mass action. Many predicted that the mass action would devolve into anarchy, but the 212 action organizers stated that the action was peaceful and did not disrupt the order. They only demanded that Ahok's religiously insensitive speech be properly investigated, even though he was the incumbent and was supported by the PDI Perjuangan, the winning party in the 2014 election.

The 212 incident is reminiscent of the global wave of Islamic populism, particularly in the Middle East (Hadiz, 2021). Many experts argue that Islamic populism was able to

reach Indonesia through the wave of the Arab Revolution, also known as the Arab Spring, because of dissatisfaction with social and political-economic conditions caused by repression during the New Order in power (Hadiz, 2021; Kusumo & Hurriyah, 2018; Muhtadi, 2019)

The birth of the political Islamic movement that overthrew Algerian dictator, Ben Ali, the election victory of the Muslim Brotherhood (IM) in Egypt, and the revolutions in Yemen and Syria were all the result of the presence of a larger political Islamic movement (Hadiz, 2016). In Indonesia, the 212 Movement is not a symbol of resistance to a dictatorial ruler, but rather a catalyst for Ahok's religiously insulting speech. In other circumstances, Indonesia has deposed the authoritarian New Order and implemented a more democratic political system, so there are differences in the contexts of the two actions in the Middle East and Indonesia (Hadiz, 2021; Hidayat, 2019; Muhtadi, 2019)

Ahok's case cannot be separated from the role of the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) which issued a fatwa that Ahok was deemed to have insulted Islam (Kusumo & Hurriyah, 2018). The fatwa issued on October 11 2016 at least expressed views regarding 5 (five) matters, including:

1. Al-Quran Surah al-Maidah verse 51 explicitly prohibits using non-Muslims as leaders.
2. Ulama are obliged to convey

the contents of Surah al-Maidah verse 51 to Muslims that electing Muslim leaders is obligatory

3. Every Muslim is obliged to believe in the truth of the contents of Surah al-Maidah verse 51 as a guide in choosing leaders

4. Stating that the content of Surah al-Maidah verse 51 which contains a prohibition on making non-Muslims as leaders is a lie, is haram, and constitutes a desecration of the Al-Quran.

5. Saying lies to the ulama who conveyed the argument of Surah al-Maidah verse 51 regarding the prohibition of making non-Muslim leaders is an insult to the ulama and the Muslim community.

With the MUI's views regarding Ahok, KH. Maruf Amin, who at that time served as Chairman of the MUI stated that:

"... based on the above, Ahok's statement is categorized as committing religious blasphemy and insulting ulama which has legal consequences,"

(www.okezone.com/2016/10/11).

Seeing the strong position of the MUI, the Ahok case indicates a very important discourse, which makes the MUI seem capable of representing Muslims. Although the MUI is only a collection of ulama from various Islamic organizations. MUI was founded as a result of meetings or deliberations of ulama,

intellectuals, and zu'ama who came from various parts of the country, including twenty-six ulama representing 26 provinces in Indonesia at that time, 10 ulama who were elements of mass organizations -Islamic mass organizations at the central level, namely, NU, Muhammadiyah, Syarikat Islam, Perti. Al Washliyah, Mathlau'l Anwar, GUPPI, PTDI, DMI, and Al Ittihadiyyah, 4 ulama from the Islamic Spiritual Service, Army, Air Force, Navy, and POLRI as well as 13 figures/scholars who are individual figures. From these deliberations, what emerged was an agreement to form a forum for the ulama to deliberate (<https://mui.or.id/histori-mui/>). The identity of Muslims, which is synonymous with the presence of the MUI, seems to say that the MUI is an extension of the opinions shared by all Muslims in Indonesia.

Figure 1. MUI Fatwa Related to the Statement of the Governor of DKI Jakarta Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (Ahok)

Source:

<https://news.detik.com/berita/d-3318150/mui-nyatakan-sikap-soal-ucapan-ahok-terkait-al-maidah-51-ini-isinya>

This is where the text of the fatwa that the MUI has issued has the power to encourage greater support

for bringing Ahok to justice through mass action 212. The MUI itself has firmly stated that Ahok has insulted the Islamic religion and insulted the ulama. This view confirms an authority that legitimizes the MUI in interpreting Ahok's remarks as blasphemy and insulting. For this reason, the main question in this article is how the MUI represents its identity in the event of religious blasphemy committed by Ahok? This research itself is a form of analysis of the MUI fatwa text which was carried out from mid-11 November to 3 December 2022, using a literature study.

Saying something or framing the world in a way that makes sense to other people is called representation (Hall, 1997). Depiction is what is meant by the term representation. The word refers to more than just outward looks. This word also has connotations related to artificial appearances. The way people appear and behave in these representations of groupings is a surface-level form of social critique. We can understand the meanings of representation by comprehending this surface. The group's beliefs about power and mythology are the main domains of meaning (Burton, 2012).

The intricate interrelationship between signals, pictures, and reality is explained by Jean Baudrillard. Initially, it is stated that an image is a reflection of reality, which is a sign that serves as a representation of reality. Second, the image-masking

and reality-distorting nature of evil (malefic). Third, like with magic (sorcery), the image conceals the lack of reality. Fourth, because the image is a pure simulacrum of itself—a process known as simulation—it has no relation to any reality (Piliang, 2010).

The way reality or objects are shown is called representation. The representation process, according to John Fiske in Eriyanto, consists of three stages, which are as follows: Events at the first level are labeled as actual (encoded). How the media fabricates these incidents as fact. When considering anything to be real, the second level has to do with how reality is portrayed. The third level consists of the internal, ideologically approved conventions that organize the event. What is the operation of representation codes? Linked and arranged into social cohesiveness, such as societal class or prevailing ideologies (Fiske, 2010). Furthermore, the term "text" refers to any practice that involves meaning (to signify), not just written words. As a result, identity is a product of negotiation, connection, creativity, and resistance rather than being imposed or taken for granted (Hall, 1997). It becomes challenging to have meaningful conversations on diversity and the ongoing changes in culture (Howarth, 2020). But literature (Martin & Nakayama, 2022) makes it abundantly evident that different cultural practices, identities, personalities, social

groups, and power dynamics all contribute to different kinds of communication. Increased representation in identities that are emancipatory or positive for marginalized groups is crucial for fostering identity formation in public settings (Budarick & Han, 2013; Couldry & Dreher, 2007; Husband, 1999).

Discussion

a. The Rise of Islamic Identity In Indonesia

Three activities have marked the rise of Islamic revival in Indonesia in the last ten years, namely (1) In the form of activities to strengthen Islamic symbols; (2) Activities to instill and socialize Islamic values in formal educational institutions; (3) The rise of Islamic political discourse activities in the government system. All of this is aimed at a main goal, namely Islamic revival which is operationalized in various Islamic da'wah programs through mass media, as well as institutionalized face-to-face media such as recitation forums. This movement to strengthen Islamization became increasingly institutionalized when Islamic politics succeeded in controlling the government. Various Islamist-laden policies

continue to increase in both frequency and intensity (Wahyono, 2001).

Looking at the content of the MUI fatwa, especially related to Ahok, it is very close to what was conveyed by Wahyono (2001) that the revival of Islam as a religion was driven by the strengthening of Islamic symbols, the socialization of Islamic values and Islamic political discourse. This also coincided with the 2017 Jakarta Pilkada contestation, where Ahok was predicted to win based on the release of several credible survey institutions, and became the capital for him to be re-elected in his second term of office in DKI Jakarta.

In the 2017 Jakarta Pilkada, many people said that hardline Islamic movements had begun to emerge. The phenomenal emergence of "hardline Islam" shocked the consciousness of political people and those who did not expect this movement to become massive. Hundreds of thousands of people who took part in the 212 actions demanding that Ahok be prosecuted for insulting the Muslim holy book became a snowball that rolled hard and got bigger. This momentum is getting hotter because it is faced with the

political stages of the 2017 DKI Jakarta Governor Election. From several pollster releases, the candidate pair for Governor and Deputy Governor, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama- Djarot Saiful Hidayat, has a higher level of electability compared to other pairs, namely Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono-Silvia Murni and also Anies Baswedan-Sandiaga Uno. Satisfaction with Ahok's performance in the previous period is considered good capital to re-nominate in the 2017 gubernatorial election. From the release of the existing survey, it is also rational that the incumbent who is evaluated and gets a good score has a greater chance of being re-elected in the period both of them.

Starting from the case of religious blasphemy and insulting ulama accused of Ahok, it is important to see that the Islamic identity that is present is attached to a Muslim, both individually and collectively. Individually, for example, by displaying syar'i clothing (covering the private parts), headscarves and headscarves for women, and so on. Collectively or communally, the institutionalization of Islam in the world of education with the presence of madrasas. This is a reference to more specifically

knowing what reflects oneself as an Islamic identity, especially concerning the presence of Surah al-Maidah verse 51.

“O people of faith, do not take Jews and Christians as (your) leaders; some of them are leaders, some of them are others. Whoever among you takes them as leaders, then indeed that person is among them. Indeed, Allah does not guide the wrongdoers” (QS Al-Maidah: 51).

Explicitly, the letter Al-Maidah Verse 51 provides recommendations regarding the collective election of leaders by followers of the Islamic religion, where prospective leaders from other religions (Jews and Christians) should not be chosen as leaders for Muslims. The definition of political Islam then emerged as a new discourse in the context of elections or general elections which are often present in political dynamics in Indonesia.

b. MUI and Representation of Islamic Identity

In its understanding, representation refers to two meanings that are present, namely re-presentation, which means bringing back the meaning of the presentation not in its actual condition, and representation, which means representing part of

a group or group or representing a particular entity that comes from various sources. interest. This second meaning is often mentioned and used to describe the pattern of representation in politics which describes the representation of votes from constituents through people's representatives (Noviani, 2020). Giles & Middleton, (2008), define to present, with three variations of meaning: first, to stand in for. This can be exemplified by, for example, a country's flag which reflects the country's presence at a sporting event. Second, to speak or act on behalf of, for example, the Pope who speaks and acts on behalf of Catholics. Third, to represent. In this case, for example, historical or biographical writing can bring back events from the past. Johnson et al., (2004), sees that representation is not true meaning. In text form, for example, the text is not studied according to the importance of the text itself, but rather to explore the cultural or subjective forms that can be understood or obtained from it. In this case, the text is only a means and raw material through which certain forms of narrative, ideological problematics, and subject

positions can be abstracted.

According to Hall, meaning in the context of representation can be produced and exchanged between members of society. So representation itself is a way of producing meaning (Hall, 2020). Therefore, the most important thing about this representation is that it depicts the presence of an exchange of meaning between certain groups who have an identical (almost the same) understanding.

Referring to Stuart Hall's explanation, thinking and feeling are also a form of representation. This is where thinking and feeling can be directed to interpret something. An important role that influences feelings and thinking requires a shared understanding of images, concepts, and ideas. It also says that representation does not work like a mirror, which only reflects or only presents, or displays fixed meanings. So when representation is understood as a process of re-presenting, basically there is a practice of giving meaning.

Based on this definition, institutional representation of MUI means falling into the category of speaking or acting on behalf. MUI speaks as if it

represents the opinions representing the Muslim community. However, when compared with the text in the fatwa issued, the symbolic meaning that exists refers to the re-present, namely the complexity of ideology, the power of domination, power relations, and the confirmation of Islamic political identity is very strong. The text of the fatwa does not reflect what is present in the Muslim community as a whole but rather is the MUI's "political expression" in the face of the heated Jakarta Pilkada.

During its journey, the MUI did not immediately issue the text of the fatwa. Several parties then pushed for the MUI to issue a fatwa to confirm the evidence that Ahok was considered to have blasphemed religion and insulted Islamic scholars. KH. Dien Syamsuddin told the mass media that POLRI could not forward a report on the alleged blasphemy committed by Ahok without a fatwa from the MUI (Sasongko, 2017). This statement seemed to confirm that the POLRI was urging the MUI to intervene in the investigation process and investigations carried out by the POLRI. In fact, as a state institution, the POLRI cannot rely on objectivity in the

investigation process of mass organizations such as the MUI. Apart from that, several elements of other mass organizations also urged the MUI to issue its fatwa, because the MUI is considered to represent the opinions of Muslims in Indonesia. This error arose because previously the MUI was believed to be the sole authority for interpreting religious truth in Islam. Authority in the form of religion has been accommodated by the government by establishing the Ministry of Religion. This means that the holder of authority is not a single person but also the MUI body itself.

On a further occasion, if the constellation concerned concerns the religious interests held by Indonesian society (especially Islam), then the Islamic Guidance of the Ministry of Religion should be able to provide a solution to this polemic. The subordination of state institutions and the strengthening of mass organizations that urge the issuance of MUI fatwas negate the role of the state in the form of formal institutions and hand over public affairs to the MUI. This form of awareness was then captured by some mass organizations with a narrow religious orientation, urging and carrying out "control" practices

under the pretext that they were not by Islamic law and MUI fatwas. This condition allows many parties who do not join the MUI as a representation of the majority of Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia to be accommodated.

Mark Jurgensmeyer, who researched religious revivalism movements, stated that there was fundamental confusion regarding religious doctrine which was understood as a legitimate basis for carrying out violence against a state that was considered secular (Jurgensmeyer, 2000). Appleby also stated the same thing when he stated that there was ambivalence in sacred religious doctrine and the violence committed (Appleby, 2003).

Setara Institute research released in the media stated that throughout 2016 there were 270 acts of violations of religious freedom in the 24 provinces they studied and thirty acts were carried out by Islamic social organizations, including the MUI. The number was relatively stagnant in 2018 with 202 violations. Ruhmadi, a Setara activist, said that it was very unfortunate when people used the MUI Fatwa to carry out intolerant acts and then the MUI acted as if

they were not responsible for the fatwa they issued. By looking at this context, MUI should realize that as an institution that houses Islamic mass organizations, it provides shade and comfort in the religious field. This is confirmed in the history of the founding of the MUI which states that the MUI protects all religious activities of Muslims. Apart from that, it provides a harmonious feel for intra- and extra-religious adherents. This Setara research seems to reveal the practice of misusing fatwas issued by the MUI as a legitimizing tool to repress other religious activities that are not the same as those believed in and carried out by MUI mass organizations.

Islamic identity which is related to the issue of electing leaders within the state does not need to be negated in the public sphere. If affirmations and understandings within a religious (Islamic) framework are expressed in the public sphere, it will give rise to polemics. This is what has prompted some parties to consider that the MUI fatwa is like opening Pandora's box regarding preferences regarding the election of leaders in Islam. Even though the consensus in Indonesia is clear, it does not state that

Indonesia is a religious country that implements Islamic law, but rather a democratic country based on the noble values of Pancasila (Khotimah, 2020). This consensus must be upheld, as a reminder of the unity of the nation and state. In this case, let's not contest the election of leaders like electoral politics, capable of dividing us as a great nation based on democracy.

c. Text and Context of The MUI Fatwa

Based on the text of the MUI fatwa that has been released regarding the Ahok case, there are at least 5 (five) points that are used as entry points, including:

a) First Point Text

Al-Quran Surah al-Maidah verse 51 explicitly prohibits using non-Muslims as leaders.

In Islamic religious beliefs, leadership and the method of election are regulated in the religious domain. This decision has consequences for a monolithic expression of religion, a kind of single interpretation and negating other opinions (interpreting textually). In the Ibrahimiyah religious belief (the successor to the teachings of the Prophet Abraham), a follower of a religion (Islam), for example,

is required to elect a leader who comes from his religion (Mujahidin, 2016). This lateral meaning is attached to Surah al-Maidah verse 51. This dictum dominates the text issued by the MUI, as a form of negation of Islamic identity. Islam is diverse, but its identity seems to be narrowed down to the "MUI version" of the truth. The affirmative diction in al-Maidah verse 51, illustrates the existence of Islamic sentiment from a narrow perspective. The true face of Islam represents a desire for unity and oneness above narrow, chauvinistic religious sentiments (Ramadhan, 2016). Religious determinism in religious interpretations that prioritize Muslim leadership seems to confirm the presence of the politicization of religion which is a private domain. Preferences in choosing leaders according to an individual's perspective cannot be compared with other individuals, even if the person concerned has the same religious narrative. In a country with democratic principles, it is not permissible to express this tendency, because it is feared that it will become a polemic and the basis of wider national problems (Mauluddin, 2018).

b) Second Point Text

"Ulama are obliged to convey the contents of Surah al-Maidah verse 51 to Muslims that electing Muslim leaders is obligatory"

This narrative illustrates that there seems to be repetition regarding the obligation of ulama to convey to the people to elect Muslim leaders (from the Islamic group and Sich). Every Muslim knows the contents of this text, but some scholars have different opinions on this matter. This needs to be seen as an excess of the political context, whether this is politics of everyday life as a result of a more masculine approach to understanding religion. Masculinity in question includes the dominance of men who are presented as leaders while negating women who are considered as makmum (followers) (Darwin, 1999). This narrative context is important to state as one of the reasons for the presence of the MUI fatwa text which seems to bring back the existence of the figure of a Muslim leader amid electoral political events and competition which were increasingly heated at that time. The aspect of complexity that arises in the dictum of this second text has given rise to many

interpretations that ideologically divide voters (Islam) into two diametrical sides. On the one hand, there is an expression of religious devotion by electing Muslim leaders, and on the other hand, there is limited freedom to choose leaders according to rational analysis. For those who are Muslim, there is concern that electing leaders outside the Islamic faith will create a new stigma as people who are sinful, un-Islamist, and can even be called hypocrites (Chotban, 2018).

c) Third Point Text

"Every Muslim is obliged to believe in the truth of the contents of surah al-Maidah verse 51 as a guide in choosing leaders"

Referring to the opinion that says that every Muslim is obliged to believe in the truth of Surah al-Maidah verse 51, this is a form of negation that does not need to be mentioned. A Muslim's understanding of the Koran, which is the provisions set out in the pillars of faith (belief in God's book), is interpreted as a form of total belief in the text of the holy book that was revealed by Him. However, the expression of opinions that imitate the re-election of Muslim leaders, men,

as a representation of the requirements for leaders who tend to be masculine is still debated by some ulama opinions. The meaning of identity representation that emerges then revolves around dialectical debates regarding derivative issues that emerged after belief in the text of the Koran. Some of these derivative issues are, for example: Can women become leaders? Can Muslims choose a leader who is weak in intelligence but is a Muslim compared to an intelligent non-Muslim, or can a Muslim leader be appointed only based on religious sentiment and not because of his ability and capability to lead? The text which was compiled to ensure that al-Maidah 51 or the text of the Al-Quran as a whole has truth content, has been reduced to the points of the MUI fatwa sentence itself. In this case, the political meaning of the MUI fatwa directs voters at the election for the Governor and Deputy Governor of DKI Jakarta to choose someone other than Ahok. MUI wants people to reconsider electing a leader who is intelligent but dares to insult the teachings of other religions. In this case, the MUI wants voters to choose other than Ahok.

d) Fourth point text

"To state that the content of Surah al-Maidah verse 51 contains a prohibition on making non-Muslims as leaders is a lie, the law is haram and constitutes a desecration of the Al-Quran."

The content conveyed in the text of the fourth point in the MUI fatwa underlines the "accusations" made against Ahok and states that Ahok's words contain lies, are haram, and constitute an insult to the Koran. This expression focuses on the MUI's subjective view of "trying" Ahok before there is a proper and comprehensive test of Ahok's actual speech in the Seribu Islands, DKI Jakarta. This clarification of Ahok's remarks is to address the issue objectively, without any political bias and interests at play behind the text of the MUI fatwa. It is noteworthy that the Police urged the MUI to immediately issue a fatwa regarding Ahok to ensure that complaints of alleged religious blasphemy and insulting ulama could be processed by the Police (Sasongko, 2017). This can be interpreted as an attempt to ensnare Ahok by adding evidence that was not factually available at the time the alleged speech was uttered. The pressure and demands of the masses to defend Islam 212 and also the police,

made the MUI fatwa not purely based on the idea of the interests of Muslims on a wider scale, but based on normative interests to legitimize further actions. The text included in the MUI fatwa cannot be said to be a clear representation of the socio-political dimension of the chaos that arises due to religious sentiment, but rather to fulfill political support data which tends to be less objective and full of pressure.

e) Fifth Point Text

"Declaring lies against the ulama who conveyed the argument of Surah Al-Maidah verse 51 regarding the prohibition of making non-Muslims as leaders is an insult to the ulama and the Muslim community."

In the transcript of the recording presented in the trial facts, Ahok did not say anything about lying to the ulama. The fifth point of the MUI fatwa seems to open a new discourse regarding the "ulama's lies" which were conveyed by Ahok. In context, of course, this is related to the real distortion of information which arouses the anger of Muslims.

d. Identity hardening in the 2019 elections

In the 2019 general election, anti-establishment identity politics will likely be strengthened again with the circulation of narratives with populist concepts. Uniquely, this anti-establishment identity is linked to religious identity, which is always used by populist politicians to convey that the government is marginalizing Muslim groups. For example, the "2019 Change President" movement, "Party of Satan vs. Party of Allah", people power, no trust in established institutions (KPU and MK) or independent institutions (quick count, etc.). If used continuously, anti-establishment religious identity politics, which pays attention to the spirit of groups and parties rather than the spirit of unity, causes widespread polarisation in society and among political elites (Ardipardanto, 2020).

Before the 2019 presidential election, several groups 'predicted' that populism based on identity politics would emerge strongly in the 2019 presidential election. After Jokowi chose Ma'ruf Amin as his vice-presidential running mate, Peter Mumford, an analyst at the US-based Eurasia Group, warned: "Religion is going to play a bigger role in Indonesian politics.

Despite Indonesia's national motto "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika", which means "diverse but still one", the majority Muslim community's feelings towards the minority ethnic Chinese, who are seen as controlling much of the country's economy, have led to bloodshed in the past. Indonesia's democratic values will again be at stake if the conservative Muslim community grows stronger as a result of the 2019 presidential election (Al-Rasyid, 2019).

Several groups believe that identity politics played a very important role in the presidential election campaign, even after the 2019 presidential election. There is a belief that data and facts do not have a significant impact on the number of votes in the election. Identity politics with a post-truth strategy turned out to be more effective in the 2019 presidential election. Identity politics has become a winning template. It is usually 'married' to a post-truth strategy. This strategy seems to be more electorally 'lucky' when compared to data and facts. Identity politics has been shown to lead to sharp polarisation. The Political Indicator's exit poll of 2,975 respondents who had just voted on the 17th of April 2019 provides a picture of the state of Indonesian

society. The split indicator found that traditionalist Muslim and non-Muslim groups tended to vote for Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin, while modernist Muslims tended to vote for Prabowo Subianto-Sandiaga Uno. The number of non-Muslim voters who chose Jokowi-Ma'ruf reached 97 percent, an increase of 15 percent compared to 2014. Similarly, voters close to NU chose Jokowi-Ma'ruf. In the 2019 presidential election, 56 percent of Nahdhiyin residents declared their vote for Jokowi-Ma'ruf, an increase of 12 percent from the 2014 five-year election. In contrast, Prabowo-Sandiaga won a landslide victory among members of Muhammadiyah, Persis, and other modernist mass organizations. As a result of identity politics, voters had their minds made up long before the start of the open campaign period (Ristianto, 2019).

Conclusion

The description of the MUI fatwa in the Ahok case in a text approach contains complex and multi-faceted situations scape. The entire narrative regarding alleged religious blasphemy and insulting ulama as part of Ahok's speech cannot be separated from the context and situation that existed at that time.

The complex spectrum that covers the birth of the MUI fatwa text should be seen as a dimension that is not easy to explain, so if you look at this it does not only lie at the point of hate speech and blasphemy, but rather the confirmation of the symbol of Islamic identity which is considered a majoritarian religion.

From the several things that have been mentioned above, it seems that several things can be drawn as a common thread from the discussion regarding the identity representation of the MUI fatwa, including First, the MUI as a religious institution whose founding was an initiation from various Islamic mass organizations through its fatwa emphasized confrontationally between the definition of Islam which has nuances of Islamic law and other contexts in terms of diversity in the national system. The condition of the MUI which issued a fatwa amid political polemics, is a snowball that at any time can be exploited by irresponsible parties in the name of religious expression. The misuse of the MUI fatwa text itself has been clarified from research conducted by Setara which stated that there were

subsequent acts of intolerance caused by the presence of the MUI fatwa.

Second, the MUI's representation as a forum for Muslims should not issue a fatwa amid electoral political issues. This will be biased and show partisan alignment between the MUI as the authority to protect the religion of Muslims and other parties who are partisan slices of the contesting politicians. In terms of political benefits, of course, this is not justified by encouraging a dichotomous attitude between Islam and non-Islam. This is none other than because Indonesia is a nation that has agreed to uphold national principles and is based on Pancasila democracy. The strengthening of religious symbols through the text of the MUI fatwa indicates that there are unfinished problems in the political Islamic movement in Indonesia. Third, the text narrative conveyed by the MUI through its fatwa should not have a political binary opposition. MUI must remain upright to maintain the moral and spiritual fortress of Muslims. Influence in the context of the Jakarta Pilkada, it becomes an entry point with the presence of strong and increasingly sectarian Islamic

leadership. This is like opening Pandora's box to the presence of religious bias which is used as a political tool and to gain power. Therefore, through the existing text, the MUI seems to be once again immersed in sectarian dynamics within the framework of religious issues by abandoning the consensus values agreed upon by the founding fathers of the nation.

References

- Al-Rasyid, H. (2019, May 11). *Populisme, Politik Identitas dan Pemilu 2019*. Detik News. <https://news.detik.com/lokom/d-4545249/populisme-politik-identitas-dan-pemilu-2019>
- Appleby, R. S. (2003). The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation. *Pro Ecclesia*, 12(1), 116–118.
- Ardipardanto, A. (2020). Dampak Politik Identitas Pada Pilpres 2019: Perspektif Populisme [The Impact of Identity Politics On President Election 2019: Populism Perspective]. *Jurnal Politica Dinamika Masalah Politik Dalam Negeri Dan Hubungan Internasional*, 11(1).
- Budarick, J. N., & Han, G.-S. (2013). Positive Stories: Why and How African-Australian media matter. *Australian Journal of Communication*, 40(3), 97–103.
- Burton, G. (2012). *Media dan Budaya Populer*. Jalasutra.
- Chotban, S. (2018). Hukum Memilih Pemimpin Non Muslim. *Sangaji: Jurnal Pemikiran Syariah Dan Hukum*, 2(2).
- Couldry, Ni., & Dreher, T. (2007). Globalization and the Public Sphere: Exploring the Space of Community Media in Sydney. *Global Media and Communication*, 3(1).
- Darwin, M. (1999). *Maskulinitas: Posisi Laki-Laki Dalam Masyarakat Patriarkis* (No. 4).
- Fiske, J. (2010). *Introduction into Communication Studies*. Routledge.
- Giles, J., & Middleton, T. (2008). *Studying Culture: a Practical Introduction*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Hadiz, V. R. (2021). *Populisme*

- Hall, S. (2020). *The Work of Representation. In The Applied Theatre Reader* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Hall, S. (editor). (1997). *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices* (S. Hall (ed.)). Sage .
- Hidayat, A. (2019). *Strategi Pemenangan Partai Keadilan Sejahtera dalam Pemilihan Umum Legislatif Tahun 2019 di Era Populisme Islam*. Universitas Gadjah Mada.
- Howarth, C. (2020). *Towards a Visual Social Psychology of Identity and Representation: Photographing the Self, Weaving the Family in a Multicultural British community. In A Handbook of Visual Methods in Psychology* . Routledge .
- Husband, C. (1999). *Differentiated Citizenship and the Multi-Ethnic Public Sphere. The Journal of Interational*
- Johnson, R., Chambers, D., Raguram, P., & Tincnell, E. (2004). *The Practice of Cultural Studies*. Sage Publications .
- Jurgensmeyer, M. (2000). *Terror in The Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*. University California Press.
- Khotimah, H. (2020). Penerapan Pancasila Perspektif Islam. *Penerapan Pancasila Perspektif Islam*, 6(2). <https://uia.e-journal.id/Tahdzib/article/download/1037/586/>
- Kusumo, R., & Hurriyah. (2018). *Populisme Islam di Indonesia: Stu Kasus Aksi Bela Islam oleh GNPF-MUI Tahun 2016-2017. Jurnal Politik* , 4(1).
- Martin, J., & Nakayama, T. (2022). *Intercultural Communication in Contexts* (8th ed.). McGraw Hill.
- Mauluddin, A. (2018). *Dilema Agama Dan Pancasila Di Ruang Publik Indonesia. Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Politik* , 8(2).

- Muhtadi, B. (2019). *Populisme Politik Identitas dan Dinamika Elektoral: Mengurai Jalan Panjang Demokrasi Prosedural*. Intrans Publishing .
- Mujahidin, A. (2016). *Islam dan Kepemimpinan (Catatan untuk Pemimpin dan Calon pemimpin Muslim*. <https://uin-suska.ac.id/2016/04/18/islam-dan-kepemimpinan-sebuah-catatan-untuk-pemimpin-dan-calon-pemimpin-muslim-akhmad-mujahidin/>
- Noviani, R. (2020). Politik Representasi di Era Serba Media. In W. Udasmoro (Ed.), *Gerak Kuasa: Politik Wacana, Identitas, dan Ruang/Waktu dalam Bingkai Kajian Budaya dan Media*. Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia (KPG).
- Piliang, Y. A. (2010). *Semiotika dan Hipersemiotika* (4th ed.). Matahari .
- Ramadhan, H. (2016). *Deradikalisasi Paham Keagamaan Melalui Pendidikan Islam Rahmatan Lil'alamiin (Studi Pemikiran Pendidikan K.H. Adurrahman Wahid)*. UIN Malik Ibrahim.
- Ristianto, C. (2019, May 29). *Politik Identitas Dianggap Sebagai Winning Template di Pilpres 2019*. Kompas.Com.
- Sasongko, J. P. (2017). *Dien Syamsuddin: POLRI Minta MUI Keluarkan Fatwa Soal Ahok*. Republika.Co,Id. <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20170118210112-20-187285/din-syamsuddin-polri-minta-mui-terbitkan-fatwa-soal-ahok>
- Wahyono, S. B. (2001). *Kejawanan dan KeIslaman: Suatu Pertarungan Identitas*. JSP: *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik* , 5(1).