

**THE SOCIOPOLITICAL
ENTANGLEMENT OF SUFISM**
**A Geneological Approach to the *Tarekat Qadiriyyah*
Wanaqsyabandiyah in Contemporary Indonesia**

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Abstract

Sufi group (tarekat) mainly dictates its followers to distance themselves from worldly affairs and to live in religious seclusion (zuhud). This article offers a distinct perspective on the study of sufism through examining the political activities of the sufi group the Tarekat Qādiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah of Cukir in Indonesia and the group's political patron, the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP). The article benefits from a French philosopher Michel Foucault's concept of geneology and the notion of knowledge to better comprehend the nature of political activism of a sufi group. It further argues that basic concept of student and master (murshid) relationship in Sufism is explaining the politics of sufism in contemporary Indonesia. The mutual relation between leaders of the sufi group and the PPP has facilitated the crossing boundaries of Sufi basic principle of non-participatory politics.

[*Tarekat mengajarkan kepada pengikutnya agar tidak mengagungkan konglomerat, menjaga jarak dengan pejabat dan aparat, dan hidup zuhud termasuk dalam urusan politik. Tetapi Tarekat Qādiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Cukir (Tarekat Cukir) Jombang justru terlibat aktif dalam politik praktis sebagai pendukung Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP). Artikel hasil riset etnografi ini—meminjam pendekatan relasi kuasa Foucault—mengkaji tentang pola relasi yang terjadi antara Tarekat Cukir dengan PPP dan mencari latar belakang bagaimana relasi tersebut bisa terjadi. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa antara Tarekat Cukir dan PPP terjadi pola relasi yang saling menguntungkan (simbiosis mutualisme) dari sisi keTarekatan, sedangkan sebaliknya dari sisi politik-ekonomi, para jamaah Tarekat Cukir merasa dirugikan. Penyebab dominan Tarekat Cukir mendukung PPP karena adanya ketergantungan Santri terhadap Mursyidnya yang merupakan politisi PPP. Hal ini diperkuat adanya ikatan historis kedua belah pihak dan ikatan rohani yang menghubungkan antara guru Mursyid yang politisi PPP dengan para Santrinya].*

Keywords: *Tarekat Qadiriyah Wanaqsyabandiyah, PPP, Sociopolitical*

Introduction

The *Tarekat Qādiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah* is a local sufi group introduced by a Sufi *Sheikh* Ahmad Khathib as-Sambasy (1803-1875). In the 19th century, the group developed rapidly through three geographical representatives (*caliphs*) in Indonesia: Abdul Karim of Banten, Ahmad Tholhah of Cirebon and Muhammad Hasbullah of Madura.¹ The *Tarekat Qādiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah* of Cukir -well known also as *Tarekat Cukir*-from the Madura representative of *Tarekat Qādiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah* and *Tarekat Qādiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah* Rejoso (*Tarekat Rejoso*).² The *Tarekat Cukir* established as a particular *tarekat* group in 1978 with its centre at the Cukir village in Jombang, East Java.³ The *Tarekat Cukir*

¹ A. Aziz Masyhuri, *Ensiklopedi 22 Aliran Tarekat dalam Tasawuf* (Surabaya: Imtiyaz, 2014), p. 225-234.

² Aly Mashar, "Genealogi dan Penyebaran Thariqah Qadiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah di Jawa", *Al-A'RAF*, Vol. 13, No. 2, 2016.

³ Sukamto, *Kepemimpinan Kiai dalam Pesantren* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1999).

particularly traditionalizes the ritual of reciting the *Kitāb Manāqib*; a hagiography of *Sheikh* ‘Abdu’l Qādir al-Jīlānī. the *Kitāb* partly dictates the Sufi practitioners to distance themselves from worldly affairs and politics.⁴ *Tarekat* Cukir teaches its followers to dedicate themselves on hereafter lives (*akbīrat*) for the sake of Sufi stage of *al-iḥsān* (perfect).⁵ The followers of *Tarekat* Cukir practice *zuhud*,⁶ a Sufi way of life to avoid worldly affairs.

Despite the doctrine of *zuhud*, leaders of the *Tarekat* Cukir seems to drive the group to the other way as the group served as a backbone of an Indonesian political party, the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP) and involved in supporting candidates of local regent (*bupati*). Nevertheless, as a study by the Indonesian Research Institute (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia/LIPI) demonstrates, the PPP has recently been seen as a political party that is not “promising” political party, compared to other political parties that were established following the fall of the New Order in 1997, such as Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS), Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB), and Partai Amanat Nasional (PAN).⁷ The image of PPP further worsened following the arrest of two important leaders of the PPP; Surya Dharma Ali and Romahurmuzy. It later invited the *Tarekat* Cukir to shift its political support to PKB which maintains the same organizational affiliation with the PPP, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU).

However, seen from the history, the relationship between NU and the PPP is dynamic. The NU Congress in Situbondo 1984 resulting

⁴ Muṣliḥ bin ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, *Al-Nūru’l Burbānī* (Semarang: Karya Toha Putera, 1422), p. 47.

⁵ It means “you worship God as if you saw him, and even if you do not see him, he actually sees you”. Al-Bukhārī, *al-Jāmi’ al-Ṣaḥīḥ al-Mukhtaṣar* (Beirut: Dār Ibnī Kathīr, 1987), p. 27.

⁶ *Zuhud* is the term used when someone is staying away from worldly matters because they have the knowledge that the world is low and inglorious when compared to the after life. Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, Juz III (Beirut: Dār al-Naḥḍ al-‘Arabīyyah, 1998), p. 313-315.

⁷ Moch. Nurhasim (ed.), “Stagnasi Electoral Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP)”, *Masa depan Partai Islam di Indonesia: Studi tentang Volatilitas Electoral dan Faktor-Faktor Penyebabnya* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar & LIPI, 2016), p. 194.

in a decision to returned to the 1926 *khittah*, in the sense that NU no longer involved in politics was indeed an effort to defeat the PPP. The *Tarekat Cukir* was disatisfied with the result of the congress and sent its political supports to the PPP. In other case, the NU and the PPP are in the same boat as supporting a candidate for Jombang regent in the 2013 election, but in the 2018 local election, both organizations favoured different candidates, resulting in a political conflict between the two. These political dynamics of a Sufi group clearly indicate the entanglement between Sufi which is supposed to non-political force, and political pragmatism. The sociopolitical entanglement of a sufi group shows a form of what Foucault mentions as “power relation”.⁸ “Power” is understood as a complex strategy in a society with certain equipment, maneuvers, techniques, and mechanisms. Clearly, power can be said to be more operational than possessed. Power is not a privilege obtained or maintained by the dominant class, but is a result of its overall strategic position.⁹

This article discusses the sociopolitical entanglement of *Tarekat Cukir* in contemporary Indonesia. It offers a glimpse the impact of globalization on Islamic discourse and movements in Indonesia today.¹⁰ There have been studies on Indonesian Sufi groups and their political activism by Indonesian scholars. Chabib, for instance, discusses internal politics between *santri*¹¹ and *mursyid*¹², while Mu’min¹³ examines *Tarekat*

⁸ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interview and Other Writings 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), p. 141-142.

⁹ Haryatmoko, *Membongkar Rezim Kepastian: Pemikiran Kritis Post-Strukturalis* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2016), p. 15.

¹⁰ Martin Van Bruinessen, “Kitab Kuning, Pesantren, dan *Tarekat*” (Yogyakarta: Gading Publishing: 2015), p. vi.

¹¹ The *Santri* are people in Javanese who practice a more orthodox version of Islam.

¹² *Mursyid* is a spiritual guide in *sufism*. Chabib Musthofa, “Relasi Mursyid dan Murid dalam Bimbingan Tarekat Shadiliyah di Pesulukan Tarekat Agung Tulungagung”, *Teosofi*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 2017.

¹³ Ma’mun Mu’min, “Pergumulan Tarekat dan Politik; Peranan *Kiai* Haji Muhammad Shiddiq dalam Tarekat dan Politik di Kudus, *Fikrah*,” Vol. 2, No. 1, 2014.

Qādiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah in Kudus, Central Java, that has been a strong supporter of the New Order political party, Golongan Karya/Golkar. Another scholar, Ziadi¹⁴ focuses his study on the *Tarekat Nahdlatul Wathan* in Lombok and the fundamental principle of *maslahah* (common good) explaining the politics of this sufi group. Some other scholars tried to portray the Sufi groups' political activities at local level which included the works by Arsyad,¹⁵ Sadri,¹⁶ and Setiyawati.¹⁷ Nur Syam's study focused on the views of the *jamaah* on the affiliation between *Tarekat* Cukir and PPP. Nur Syam argued that the political entanglement of Sufi group is closely related to an effort of *ijtimā'i* (social) requirement.¹⁸ Endang Turmudi study on *Kiai's* leadership in East Java, is too general¹⁹ as is also Sujuthi's research on three *Tarekat* communities in Jombang: *Tarekat* Rejoso, *Tarekat* Kedinding Lor and *Tarekat* Cukir.²⁰ This article on the other hand offers a geneological approach as a lens to explain the sociopolitical entanglement of *Sufi* group in contemporary Indonesian politics.

A Geneological Approach to the *Santri* and *Mursyid* Relationship

A French philosopher Michel Foucault defines "power" as, *first*, various kinds of power relations, which are immanent in the field of power relations that apply, and are the forming elements and their

¹⁴ M. Rohman Ziadi, "Tarekat dan Politik; Studi Living Sufisme Tarekat Hizib Nahdlatul Wathan", *Living Islam*, Vol. I, No. 2, 2018.

¹⁵ Muhammad Armin Arsyad and M. Basyir Syam, "Preferensi Politik Pengikut Tarekat Qadiriyyah di Majene dalam Pemilukada Kabupaten Majene Tahun 2011", *Adabiyah*, Vol. XIV, No. 1, 2014.

¹⁶ Sadri Chaniago, et.al., "Elit Tarekat dalam Pusaran Kontestasi Pilkada; Dukungan Politik Tuanku Tarekat Syathariyyah terhadap Kandidat pada Pilkada Sumbar Tahun 2010", *9th International Conference on Malaysia-Indonesia Relations (PAHMI 9) Faculty of Social Sciences*, Yogyakarta: Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, 2015.

¹⁷ Elen Setiyawati, "Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah dalam Ranah Politik Lokal", *Journal of Demokrasi dan Otonomi Daerah*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2017.

¹⁸ Nur Syam, *Pembangkangan Kaum Tarekat* (Surabaya: Lepkiss, 2004).

¹⁹ Endang Turmudi, *Struggling for the Ulama: Changing Leadership Roles of Kiai in Jombang, East Java* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 1996).

²⁰ Mahmud Sujuthi, *Politik Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Jombang: Hubungan Agama, Negara dan Masyarakat* (Yogyakarta: Galang Press, 2001).

organizations; *second*, a game which by the way of endless struggle changes, strengthens, and turns it around; *third*, the various power relations that support each other so as to form a series or system, disparity, and contradictions that isolate each other; *fourth*, the strategy by which power relations have an impact, and its general design or crystallization within institutions manifest in the state apparatus, the formulation of the law, and social hegemony.²¹

Power and knowledge are two side of the same coin, they are indeed related. In other words, knowledge is never located outside of power or does not have power, but rather to be in power. Thus, there are no power relations that are not related to the formation of a field of knowledge, and there is no knowledge that either does not presuppose and, at the same time, or form a power relationship. The knowledge that continues to give birth to the effect of the power of knowledge, is nothing but a relation of power itself.²² Moreover, knowledge itself is something that is seen as “truth” by certain communities of people, and with certain strategies, the actors build trust through language, scientific discourse and the institutions that produce it, and “force” others to accept it. This view on power and knowledge is applicable when we see relationship between *santri* and *murshid* in Sufi groups and explaining the sociopolitical entanglement of *Tarekat Cukir*.

Tarekat Cukir's political support to the PPP is linked to the power relations that occurred internally within the community. *Tarekat Cukir* is a reproduction institution of knowledge, including *Tarekat* knowledge in the form of values that govern the *Murshid* and *Santri* according to their position and their relation, as stated in the guidance book of *Tarekat*.²³ Reproduction of knowledge is usually conveyed at events on a smaller

²¹ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol. I (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), p. 92-93.

²² Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of The Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), p. 27.

²³ Aboe Bakar Atjeh, *Pengantar Ilmu Tarekat: Uraian Tentang Mistik* (Jakarta: FA. HM. Tawi and Son, 1966), p. 65-76.

scale, specifically in their respective areas through the Caliph.²⁴ For instance, the program “*Senenan*” which is held once a week at the *Tarekat Cukir*, not only discusses the religious issues. It is used to reconstruct and normalize individuals through discipline and control which aims to create *Santri* who are obedient to the authorities and are willing to accept social and spiritual control. Then, obedient will eventually lead to power.²⁵ The emergence of a civilized relation system, *Santri* will know that submission and obedience to *Murysid* is one way to achieve their goals.

For *Murysid*, self-discipline and normalizing the ethics of the *Santri* is essential to deliver a pious Muslim, resembling the Prophet Muhammad. As for *Santri*, it is intended to have a character similar to the companions of the prophet, the *sababat*. The relationship between *Murysid* and *Santri* mirrors the relationship between the *Sababat*²⁶ and the Prophet Muhammad. *Kiai Mad*, during the procession of *baiat*,²⁷ explained that the sitting position was like the *tahyyāt akbār* position in *salat*.²⁸ The explanation is repeated every time because in Monday there is sure to be a new *jamaah*, and that must be explained. This has implications for the attitude of the *jamaah* towards *Murysid* as polite as possible, as the attitude of the *Sababat* towards the Prophet Muhammad.

The *Santri* also believe that *Murysid* knows and always controls *Santri* everyday, including the routine of *zikir*.²⁹ The *Santri* always feels that his *Murysid* is present in themselves, especially when carrying out *rābiṭah* which is performed after *salat*. *Rābiṭah* is an activity who connects self to the spiritual of *Murysid*, and then connects to God.³⁰ This activity

²⁴ Interview with Kasmuri on June 14, 2018 in Mojoagung Jombang. Kasmuri is one of the officials of that afterwards become an official of PPP.

²⁵ Haryatmoko, *Membongkar Rezim Kepastian...*, p. 24.

²⁶ A companion is one who saw the prophet Muhammad and believed in him and died as a Muslim.

²⁷ *Baiat* is an agreement to give obedience.

²⁸ Interview with *Kiai Mad*, on October 15, 2018 in the Great Mosque of Cukir Jombang. *Kiai Mad* or *Kiai Ahmad Sholihudin* is a *Rais* and also a *Murysid* in *Tarekat Cukir*.

²⁹ *Zikir* is a way to remember all the greatness and power of Allah.

³⁰ Interview with *Kiai Mad*, on October 15, 2018.

can be social and spiritual control for *Santri*. Likewise, for the *Mursyid*, he always felt supervised by his deceased *Mursyid*. *Kiai* Mad, told about his mystical experience, in an activity to *baiat*, he saw the deceased *Kiai* Adlan Aly also present for watching. Besides being supervised by his deceased *Mursyid*, they also feel always watched by Allah SWT.³¹ In other words, every attitude of *Santri* and *Mursyid* are not free from spiritual monitors and controls. This relation is seen as a tradition that has survived from one generation to another generation as a form of practice of *Sahabat* who depend on the Muhammad SAW's guidance at the time. In this case, the courtesy of a *Santri* to *Mursyid* is manifested in a true love.³²

The love of *Santris* of *Tarekat* Cukir for their *Mursyid* manifests in the form of obedience which results in spiritual and social behavior. Spiritual obedience, seen in their obedience in doing spiritual, such as *zikir jahr* and *zikir sirr* according to the *Mursyid's* instructions. While, social obedience manifests in the form of their political support to the PPP as the message or will of the deceased *Mursyid*. In this case, *Kiai* Maftuh explained, *Kiai* Adlan had advised the *jamaah* to vote for the PPP so long the party has still existed. If the PPP no longer exists, the *jamaah* is advised to vote another party as long as it is based on Islam.³³

Kiai Maftuh also practices compliance by actively participating in PKB. But by his father he was ordered to return to PPP. According to *Kiai* Maftuh, the order was personally, there were no specific orders for *jamaah* to follow him.³⁴ The founders of the *Tarekat* Cukir were people who had militancy to PPP.³⁵ In this context, *Kiai* Makki Ma'shoem—a *Mursyid* of *Tarekat* Cukir—once argued in the Congress of *Jam'iyah*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² 'Abd al-Wahhāb Al-Sya'rāni, *Al-Anwār al-Qudsiyyah fī Ma'rifati Qawā'idī's Ṣūfiyyah* (Jakarta: Dinamika Berkah Utama, t.t.), p. 114.

³³ Interview with *Kiai* Maftuh, on July 11, 2018 in Tegalsari Mojowarno Jombang. *Kiai* Maftuh is a *mudir* and also a *Badal Mursyid* at *Tarekat* Cukir.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ Nur Syam, *Pembangkangan Kaum Tarekat*; Mahmud Sujuthi, *Politik Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Jombang...*

Ablith Thoriqoh Al-Mu'tabaroh An-Nabdliyyah) JATMAN XX (2000) in Pekalongan. He said that *Santri's* obedience to his *Mursyid* was not only religious but also political matters. The political problem arises because of the new reality of socio-political developments in Indonesia as a result of *Reformasi* policies marked by freedom of expression. As a result, many new parties with Islamic labels, such as PKB and PKS. PKB was also formed as a forum for the political aspirations of NU communities. While PPP, which also has a mass base of NU, is increasingly marginalized. It's a difference not only supported by the factors of religious arguments but also supported by the political interests of the parties on the debate. The parties who supported the opinion about the obligation of a *Santri* to follow the political choices of his *Mursyid* were *Kiai* Abdurrahman Badawi from *Tarekat* Mranggen (Demak). Meanwhile, prominent figures in supporting the opinion that *Santri* are not required to attend *Mursyid* in political affairs are *Kiai* Muhaimin Gunardo from Temanggung, and *Kiai* Jufri from Jember. The political interests of each party are striking, because both are active in different political parties. *Kiai* Makki Ma'shoem and *Kiai* Abdurrahman Badawi were active in PPP, while *Kiai* Muhaimin Gunardo was a PKB activist.³⁶

The opinion of *Kiai* Makki Ma'shoem is applied indecisively in the *Kiai* Maftuh Makki era. Political choice matters are left to the individual of *Santri* and *Mursyid* cannot force individual political rights to them. *Kiai* Adlan once explained about his existence at the PPP, if only the *Santri* wanted to keep meeting him.³⁷ In the current context, if the *jamaah* of *Tarekat* Cukir wishes to preserve their spiritual relationship with *Kiai* Adlan, they should be voting for the PPP. This statement was also confirmed by *Kiai* Maftuh, if *Santri* had different choices with *Mursyid*, including in politics, his spiritual relationship could be disconnected. The basis of this belief is sourced from the book of *manaqib* about the

³⁶ M. Muhsin Jamil, *Tarekat dan Dinamika Sosial Politik; Tafsir Sosial Sufi Nusantara* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2005), p. 122-123.

³⁷ Interview with *Kiai* Maftuh, on July 01, 2018 in Tegalsari Mojowarno Jombang.

history of the greatness of Sheikh ‘Abdu’l-Qādir al-Jilāni: “*wa’l-mukhālafat sababu’l-firāq.*”³⁸ The same is true to *Kiai* AA who said that supporting the PPP was in accordance with *Kiai* ‘Adlan Aly’s instruction to his *Santri*. He said as long as the PPP is based on Islam it must be sustained. However, if there is a shortage at the party, there is no need to leave it, instead, it must enter to correct it.³⁹ Its doctrine is gradually reproduced as a cooperation contract, so that *Santri* always obeys his *Mursyid* including in the political field.⁴⁰

Tarekat Cukir has two *Mursyids* who used to *baiat*, namely *Kiai* Mad as *Mursyid* and *Kiai* Maftuh as a substitute for *Mursyid* if the main *Mursyid* is unable to come, and both of them has a different habit. *Kiai* Mad is more concerned to spiritual matters; *da’wah* to young community and inviting them to *zikir*. *Kiai* Mad also carried out *baiat* and *kebususiyah* routines in his village of Brangkal. He has wisdom, *ruqyah*, and other mystical abilities. He distanced from politics, even though he was part of PPP. In contrast, *Kiai* Maftuh was often involved in political activities, starting to be a member of the Dewan Pengurus Cabang (DPC) and the Dewan Pengurus Wilayah (DPW) PPP Jombang. *Kiai* Maftuh also appeared as an expert in spiritual cultivation. Many people come to share about family problems to find a solution to him. Spiritual guidance, in the form of *murāqabah*, was also carried out in his house Mojowarno, mainly on Monday before he left for Cukir to attend the “*Senenan*” routine.

Nevertheless, the different political interests of the two *Mursyids* affect the political attitude of the *jamaah*. Some of them are of the view that they are neutral towards political affairs and prioritize the affairs of eschatologies. It’s a reflection of *Kiai* Mad’s attitude in politics. Neutral—in this context—is defined as not focusing too much on political matters.

³⁸ Different from the *Mursyid* is the cause of the disconnected spiritual relationship. The informant does not want his name to be mentioned in this paper.

³⁹ Interview with *Kiai* AA on July 11, 2018. *Kiai* AA is a politician of PPP Jombang which then pledged allegiance with *Tarekat* Cukir, and afterwards promoted to be one of the leaders in *Tarekat* Cukir for *ghusniyah*.

⁴⁰ Nur Syam, *Pembangkangan Kaum Tarekat...*

As revealed by Sunari, a *jamaah* who came from Kediri for “*Senenan*” event at the Cukir Great Mosque, that his participation in *Tarekat* was to closer Allah SWT.⁴¹ Some of them are interested in political affairs, as a reflection of the behavior of *Kiai* Maftuh who is often involved in practical politics. But in general, political matters are seen as private matters. The *jamaah* is believed to have understood that political affairs have become a private domain. This opinion is also reinforced by Gus H,⁴² as part of *Tarekat* Cukir and PPP in Jombang. He said the *Tarekat* affair was more important than the temporal political affair.⁴³

Therefore, as far as the above discussion is concerned, it can be understood that the *Santris*’ obedience to the *Mursyid* in the *Tarekat* Cukir is solely to obtain the spiritual virtues. Therefore, even though the *Mursyid* politically tends to PPP, the *jamaah* also follow him. This is a form of obedience and efforts to connect *spiritual* between *Santri* and *Mursyid*, despite the fact that this patron-client model is not explicitly required in political affairs.

***Tarekat* Cukir’s Political Performance**

In 2008, *Tarekat* Cukir refrained from the organisational umbrella of Sufi groups in Indonesia, *Jamaah Ahl Tariqoh an-Nahdliyyah/JATMAN*. *Kiai* Maftuh proposed *Tarekat* Cukir as an independent institution called “*Thoriqoh al-Mu’tabaroh Qodiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah an Nahdliyah*”, and was legally registered under the Ministry of Law and Human Rights in 2016. In political tendencies, the nine founders of *Tarekat* Cukir active in PPP Jombang. In other words, *Tarekat* Cukir foundation dominated not only *Tarekat* but also participant of PPP. The total 38 committee of the *Tarekat*, 81% were dominated by PPP, the rest come from PKB,

⁴¹ Interview with Sunari, on October 15, 2018 in the Great Mosque of Cukir Jombang. He is one of the *jamaah* and does not have any position, both in *Tarekat* Cukir and in PPP.

⁴² The informant does not want his identity to be revealed.

⁴³ Interview with Gus H on June 06, 2019. He is one of leader of *Tarekat* Cukir which then also became the official of PPP.

academic and neutral backgrounds.⁴⁴

Historically, the process of establishing the *Tarekat Cukir* in 1978 was inseparable from the *jamaah* whose PPP minded. Since 1978, the dominance of the PPP to *Tarekat Cukir* has proceeded as a strategy to withstand the pressure of the *Orde Baru* through a de-ideologization program and the abolishment of political parties. It has forced Islamic parties to be merged into one party: PPP.⁴⁵ Meanwhile, Golkar, which is supported by the authorities, with all of its strategies was able to seize some of the *Tarekat* community which actually had been strongly supported by the people who initially supported the PPP. It seems to have made the NU community in PPP play their strategy to survive by forming a rival *Tarekat* community in Cukir village. The *jamaah* of this *Tarekat* mostly come from *Tarekat Rejoso*, who does not want to join Golkar. The PPP played out its strategy by persuading NU whose loyalty to PPP was undoubted, and knowledge of *Tarekat* is reputable. There was an official letter from the NU Jombang number 2095/Kpts/Tanf/B-I/1978 regarding the formation of the “*Thoriqot Al-Mu’tabarob*” a branch of the Jombang. The letter was signed by KH. Najib Wahab as the first Rais, H. Mochammad Baidlowi as the Chairperson, and Drs. Hafidh Ma’shoem as the Secretary.⁴⁶ It means that *Tarekat Cukir* has been dominated by the members of PPP since its birth, and public calls it as *Tarekat PPP*.

After *Orde Baru*, PPP played its strategy by including seniors in the *Tarekat Cukir* as management at PPP or vice versa. Such as, *Kiai AA*, which was active in PPP, and *baiat* in *Tarekat Cukir* later. He was appointed as management of *Tarekat Cukir* in *Idārah Ghusniyah*, the sub-district level.⁴⁷ The dominance of PPP is a symbolic violence. Although by some *jamaah*

⁴⁴ The tendency of following a party based on the statement of *Kiai Maftuh*, and a cross check to Decree of Officials of PPP Jombang.

⁴⁵ Fachry Ali and Bachtiar Efendy, *Merambah Jalan Baru Islam* (Jakarta: Mizan, 1985), p. 95.

⁴⁶ Interview with Hafidh Ma’shoem on February 09, 2018 in Jagalan Jombang. He is a senior politician of PPP that is involved in founding *Tarekat Cukir*.

⁴⁷ Interview with *Kiai AA*....

considered something natural happens. Because according to them, the suggestion to choose PPP as a testament to the Islamic struggle. However, it is clear that there have been efforts to change made by *Kiai* Maftuh. He tried to present himself differently from the previous generation by choosing to be active as PKB management. Despite in the end, he was forced to out and include the management of PPP because pressure from his father.⁴⁸ According to Gus JS, the influence of PPP on *Tarekat* Cukir is historical heritage. The historical heritage, not only reproduced by the internal *Tarekat* Cukir, but also the PPP. In political perspective, PPP does not want the *Tarekat* Cukir to be separated from the influence of PPP. The reason is to preserve history and to assign clerics above executive management, because he is the heirs of the struggle of the prophets.⁴⁹ In conclusion, the dominance of PPP in the management of the *Tarekat* Cukir, on one hand, is an effort to bring them closer to the practice of *Sufism*, but on the other hand, it also causes the image of the *Tarekat* to be political. This finding reinforces the theory domination is not constant, but it is dynamic, as the basic character of power is diffuse.⁵⁰

During the *Orde Baru*, both of members of PPP and *Tarekat* Cukir were active in the DPR and DPRD, such as, *Kiai* Syansuri Badawi, *Kiai* Adlan Aly and *Kiai* Makki Ma'shoem. This condition is different from the post-reform era, the management of the *Tarekat* Cukir was unable to get seats in the DPR and DPRD by means of PPP faction. There is only one name that was once a member of the legislature in 1999, and failed in the next period. His name is Nuryanto, *Tarekat* Cukir's secretary. According to *Kiai* Maftuh, Nuryanto's election as a legislative of the PPP Jombang faction was more due to an accidental luck. He benefited from the electoral system which prioritizes the serial number. Five years later, the electoral system changed; no longer based on the serial number, but the direct selection model that further emphasizes the individual.

⁴⁸ M. Muhsin Jamil, *Tarekat dan Dinamika Sosial Politik*..., p.122.

⁴⁹ Interview with Gus JS on July 07, 2018.

⁵⁰ Michel Foucault, *Power/ Knowledge*..., p. 133.

Nuryanto volunteered as a candidate for legislative member. However, he is not known among the public, both internally in the *Tarekat* Cukir and outside. He is better known for his signature than his personality. Nuryanto cannot play his strategy to gain the dominance of votes in legislative elections. Finally, he lost and did not get a seat in the legislative.⁵¹

Politics is a battle for positions between PPP *Tarekat* and Non *Tarekat*. Nevertheless, *Kiai* Maftuh countered it and said prefers to focus on the spiritual quality of the *jamaah*.⁵² Gus JS also stated that there was no competition between the two parties. According to him, party rules free members and even outside members to nominate themselves as candidates from the PPP. But in fact, from among the PPP members themselves many do not register as legislative candidates, due to the lack of capital that they have.⁵³ *Kiai* Maftuh, as a leader of *Tarekat* Cukir, could nominate himself as a member of the council. Moreover, he could take advantage of charisma his father's name, namely *Kiai* Makki Ma'shoem who is famous for his militancy as a PPP politician. However, *Kiai* Maftuh was not interested in getting involved in the struggle for legislative, even he felt more comfortable as a *Kiai Tarekat*.⁵⁴

There are at least two main factors both internal and external, why no one of the *Tarekat* Cukir leaders is interested in winning legislative seats lately. *First*, they want to prioritize the affairs of the hereafter and focus more on improving the spiritual quality of their *jamaah*. *Second*, weakening economic capital. *Third*, the quality of his human resources, including the interest of the *Mursyid*, which is sharper in his closeness than his political instincts. While external factors, namely the increasingly open competition because party policy provides an opportunity for anyone to register as a legislative candidate even though he is not a PPP cadre. Mental readiness and economic capital are important for the means to

⁵¹ Interview with *Kiai* Maftuh...

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Interview with Gus JS....

⁵⁴ Interview with *Kiai* Maftuh....

advance to become legislative candidates, and this is what the non-*Tarekat* PPP people present.

Conflicts and Resistances

Kiai Maftuh assume the relationship between *Tarekat* Cukir and PPP as a coincidence.⁵⁵ *Kiai* Maftuh was consciously dominated by PPP, therefore he struggled to reverse it or strengthen his position as a spiritual community based on politics based on Islamic teachings and under certain conditions could not be intervened by politics. *Tarekat* Cukir exercised his power by rejecting the female Regent candidate nominated by PPP in the 2018 Jombang Regent Election. In this case, *Kiai* Maftuh actually escorted and supported the incumbent candidate of the Jombang Regent from the Golkar party. Whereas PPP has agreed to bring its members forward as one of the candidates, while the presence of *Kiai* Maftuh himself is active management of PPP. Gus JS stated, *Kiai* Maftuh's action was no resistance, but a lack of understanding of the party mechanism. In other words, his actions were based on the message he took from Islamic teachings, while Gus JS was based on political interests.

Mundjidah, a district leader candidate is the daughter of KH. Wahab Hasbullah from Tambak Beras Jombang, which was carried by PPP. She has indeed been active in Ikatan Pelajar Puteri Nahdlatul Ulama (IPPNU). Previously, she was active in DPW PPP East Java (SK. DPW PPP East Java 2016). However, *Kiai* Maftuh did not support her for several reasons. *First*, individually Mundjidah never made the slightest contribution to the *Tarekat* Cukir. *Second*, the *Tarekat* Cukir has never received significant contributions from PPP organizations.⁵⁶ This is reinforced by what was said by Hafidh Ma'shoem that the PPP had never provided material assistance to the *Tarekat* Cukir community.⁵⁷ *Third*, carrying female candidates is contrary to the ideology adopted by *Tarekat*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Interview with *Kiai* Maftuh on February 27, 2018.

⁵⁷ Interview with Hafidh Ma'shoem, on February 09, 2018.

Cukir: namely choosing female leaders is not permitted in the Islam.⁵⁸

To reinforce his argument, *Kiai* Maftuh quoted religious propositions, from the general meaning of the *hadith* Bukhari's about the history of women's leadership. It's commonly used as an interpretation of verses of Qur'an Surat Al-Nisa': 34. For *Kiai* Maftuh, this was the truth was used as the basis for choosing the regent in the 2018 Jombang Regent Election. Some of the *jamaah Tarekat* Cukir also acknowledged that they preferred leaders from among men, they did not care about win-lose, the most important thing for them was choose male candidates because of the intention to obey Allah SWT.

The gender factor, as revealed by *Kiai* Maftuh, was denied by PPP because it was seen as having weaknesses. Gus JS stated that there was another factor behind *Kiai* Maftuh's refusal.⁵⁹ Hafidh Ma'shoem explained the existence of a previous "giving material" factor from incumbent candidates.⁶⁰ For Gus JS, the weak point of *Kiai* Maftuh's argument lies in his commitment in escorting and supporting the Nyono Suharli-Mundjidah pair in the 2013 Jombang Regent Election. Because, the male regent was unable to attend, of course, the one who replaced him would be the female regent representative,⁶¹ and it is proven that when the regent was caught by the KPK, Mundjidah automatically replaced him as regent.

Regarding this criticism, especially related to the issue of moral duty, *Kiai* Maftuh played his strategy by silence. Yet the problem of "property" for the *Tarekat* is still seen as taboo and far from the attitude of *zuhud*. *Kiai* Maftuh also seemed reluctant to explain who supported this move, both of the *Tarekat* Cukir and the PPP.⁶² But from the content of the informants' conversation, *Kiai* Ikhsan was seen supported *Kiai* Maftuh's view. In other words, it's a temporal conflict between the PPP

⁵⁸ Interview with *Kiai* Maftuh...

⁵⁹ Interview with Gus JS...

⁶⁰ Interview with Hafidh Ma'shoem...

⁶¹ Interview with Gus JS, Saturday...

⁶² Interview with *Kiai* Maftuh....

and the *leader* of *Tarekat Cukir*. Because PPP needs support from *Tarekat Cukir*, especially for the interests of the five-year electoral politics. While *Tarekat Cukir* also needs PPP as an effort to the will of the founders to choose PPP. It can be said, the relation between them is a mutual pattern. But, in certain conditions, for example economically and politically, it is not profitable for *Tarekat Cukir*.

Conclusion

The above discussion reveals a sociopolitical entanglement of Sufi group in contemporary Indonesia which has been coloured by political pragmatism. The relation between *Tarekat Cukir* and the PPP is mutual as the former exercised its political influence, while the later was benefited by the political support. Nevertheless, the relationship between the two occurs in a process of interdependence, mutual influence, to dominate each other, as well as resistance and conflict. As this article shows, there have been internal factors explaining the roles of *Tarekat Cukir* in political mobilisation: *first*, *Santri* dependence on their *Murysid*; the centrality of *Murysid* delivers a charismatic model of relationship that demands obedience of *Santri*, otherwise the spiritual connection between the two is damaged. *Second*, the efforts to dominate one to another as PPP seems to avoid the *Tarekat Cukir*'s dominatio. Nevertheless, *Tarekat Cukir* is still attempting to drive the PPP activists to the practice of *Sufism*. This finding reinforces the power relation is not constant, but it is dynamic. The passive-politics and non-partisant of *Sufism* does not mean that religion is separated from the politics altogether. The *Tarekat Cukir* has demonstrated how a *Sufi* group expands the *Sufi* to sociopolitical dimension as building networks and alliances to an Indonesian Islamic Party, the PPP.

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