

Propaganda and Political Memes on Social Media in the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election

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Abstract

Political memes colored the 2019 Indonesian presidential election campaign on social media. Political memes have become one of the propaganda strategies to influence public opinion to gain political support from the public before the presidential election. This study aims to analyze and understand political memes as a medium of political propaganda in the 2019 Indonesian presidential election. This study uses critical discourse analysis to uncover the meaning behind the text. The data collection technique uses documentation in the form of political memes of the two presidential candidates, both in images and political symbols scattered on social media in the January – March 2019 period. Furthermore, the data will be analyzed using Fairclough's critical discourse analysis model to find out the meaning of the text. This study indicates that social media plays an essential role in political communication in the 2019 presidential election campaign. Social media is a cheap and fast means of spreading political memes that reach potential voters widely and massively. Through political memes, Joko

Widodo often talks about having links with the Indonesian Communist Party. Meanwhile, Prabowo Subianto is often spoken of by his political opponents as a supporter of the caliphate in Indonesia. These political memes are used as political propaganda to construct or deconstruct political presidential candidates' discourse and build or damage the reputation of presidential candidates to influence public opinion.

Keywords: *political meme, political communication, propaganda, indonesian presidential election*

Abstrak

Meme politik mewarnai kampanye Pilpres 2019 di media sosial. Meme politik menjadi salah satu strategi propaganda untuk mempengaruhi opini publik untuk mendapatkan dukungan politik dari publik menjelang pemilihan presiden. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dan memahami meme politik sebagai media propaganda politik dalam pemilihan presiden Indonesia 2019. Penelitian ini menggunakan analisis wacana kritis untuk mengungkap makna di balik teks tersebut. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan dokumentasi berupa meme politik kedua capres, baik berupa gambar maupun simbol politik yang bertebaran di media sosial periode Januari – Maret 2019. Selanjutnya, data tersebut akan dianalisis menggunakan model analisis wacana kritis Fairclough untuk mengetahui makna dari teks tersebut. Studi ini menunjukkan bahwa media sosial memainkan peran penting dalam komunikasi politik dalam kampanye pemilihan presiden 2019. Media sosial merupakan sarana murah dan cepat untuk menyebarkan meme politik yang menjangkau calon pemilih secara luas dan masif. Melalui meme-meme politik, Joko Widodo kerap berbicara tentang keterkaitannya dengan Partai Komunis Indonesia. Sementara itu, Prabowo Subianto kerap disebut-sebut oleh lawan politiknya sebagai pendukung khilafah di Indonesia. Meme politik ini digunakan sebagai propaganda politik untuk mengkonstruksi atau mendekonstruksi wacana politik calon presiden dan membangun atau merusak reputasi calon presiden untuk mempengaruhi opini publik.

Keywords: *meme politik, komunikasi politik, propaganda, pemilihan presiden indonesia*

INTRODUCTION

The speed in both distributing and consuming information is fully supported by internet technology and social media, which facilitates closeness and connectedness between humans and builds unlimited connectivity across space and time (A. L. Williams & Merten, 2011). Even in disseminating political information and state power, social media can shift the existence of mainstream mass media (Susanto, 2017). This power has led social media to become an effective campaign tool in the United States (Anshari, 2013). In Indonesia itself, in the 2009 presidential election, the campaign was still centered on conventional mass media and shifted to social media, especially the new Facebook in the 2014-2019 presidential election (Handini et al., 2019). The effective use of social media in the presidential election is due to the power of social media can accommodate people to form permanent communities and networks so that interactive communication through text, audio, and video is easier to do (Hrdinová et al., 2010). However, what is more substantive than that, social media has the power to influence people's cognition, affection, and opinion (Watie, 2016)

Social media is a collection of Internet-based applications that build on the ideology and technology of Web 2.0 and enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content to form online social networks (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Obar & Wildman, 2015). This convenience helps to construct patterns of behavior in public media so that social media, as stated by Astuti & Zulfebriges, is no longer seen as an alternative media to fill empty time but has become the center point and axis of life (Widyaningtyas et al., 2017). Of the 175.4 million internet users in Indonesia, 160 million were active social media users as of January 2020, increasing by 12 million between April 2019 and January 2020 (DataReportal, 2020). In 2017 the Indonesian Internet Providers Association found that 87.13% of internet users frequently access social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Google Plus, Twitter, and Linked In (APJII, 2017).

Social media has become an essential tool in the latest century in building social networks, conveying various forms of ideas and aspirations, from social to political aspects (Sohail & Chebib, 2011; Vromen et al., 2015; Hameleers & Schmuck, 2017). The above

conditions also occurred during the momentum of the 2019 Indonesian presidential election. Political ideas and campaigns, especially regarding the two pairs of candidates, Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin and Prabowo Subianto-Sandiaga Uno, were scattered on various social media platforms (Enli & Skogerbø, 2013; Nulty et al., 2016; Stier et al., 2018). Most phenomenal and full of humor, these ideas are conveyed in memes, intended to communicate politics humorous and satirical (Kulkarni, 2017; Bebić & Volarevic, 2018).

Phenomenal memes are not new, but how memes become fighting ideas in world politics tends to be unique (Fatanti & Prabawangi, 2021). his spreading of memes is, of course, due to the large number of people who are media literate, especially on the internet and social media, so this battle of ideas is inevitable. This condition is a momentum that so far has yet to occur in the jungle of Indonesian social media. Many previous studies have revealed that political memes are used to ridicule and handle the policies of political leaders, such as domestic and foreign politics, as well as domestic and foreign social issues (Bebić & Volarevic, 2018). Besides happening in other countries, using this meme is also one of the crucial

things in political competition in Indonesia.

Political memes have become a propaganda tool during the 2019 Indonesian Presidential Election campaign process. These memes are used not only as parodies but also to contain political messages and enhance or damage the reputation of politicians or presidential candidates. Indeed, that is the purpose of propaganda (Lukianova et al., 2019; Allifiansyah, 2017). On the one hand, these images become entertainment because the sentences and illustrations are both funny and satirical. But on the other hand, the messages contained in it have a clear political goal: to shape or destroy the political image of Jokowi and Prabowo Subianto, or in general, the two pairs of candidates who are competing in the 2019 Presidential Election.

First, Internet memes serve as a distinctive form of humor, and second, as an instrument for voicing public opinion through user comments on pressing politics and social issues (Kalkina, 2020). It can be said; that memes have become a tool for spreading propaganda and are a small part of the ideology and political culture that is easily digested and spread by netizens (DeCook, 2018) Thus, memes

are part of communication and political culture. All previous studies have shown a common thread in using changed memes. Memes initially turned a political joke into something serious; propaganda to gain votes during elections.

This research is essential when looking at the massive use of social media in the 2019 general election, which can predict that the 2024 presidential election will use the same media. If this political battle is not based on a rational campaign team, then political chaos will happen because each person will spread hatred through social media. Memes should use for criticism, as one of the purposes of caricatures is misused for political purposes (Laurent et al., 2021). This research will reveal how the use of memes during the 2019 presidential election is a fundamental basis for understanding and analyzing the use of memes in the 2024 presidential election.

Meme: Development and Strength

A meme is a concept for imitation, imitation, or replicating an object (Soebakir et al., 2020). This concept was first introduced by Richard Dawkins, who talked about the role of genes in biological evolution called replicators.

However, Dawkins chose another term in cultural evolution: memes, dissemination, and cultural imitation (Roosinda & Alfraita, 2020). In the view of Brodie (2014), memes are the main component of information in the mind whose existence impacts various extraordinary events so that more copies of the meme are created in the minds of others. The most critical elements in memes are humor and satire, which at the beginning of their appearance, were used to comment on and criticize oppression (Kulkarni, 2017; Dynel, 2016; Yoon, 2016).

In its development, memes have become an integral part of digital culture, and their spread is everywhere and very easy to identify (Shifman., 2013). People can easily convey their ideas through memes, including their criticism of political issues (Mina, 2014). Memes that are spread through the internet network (internet memes) are cultural information passed on from person to person but gradually develop into an extraordinary internet phenomenon and a shared social phenomenon (Shifman, 2013; Nugraha et al., 2015).

Therefore, memes have become a crucial temporary component of the media and represent a relatively new form of participatory culture that

offers opportunities for channeling political expression, engagement, and participation that might otherwise be inaccessible (Kulkarni, 2017; Shifman, 2013; Ross & Rivers, 2017). People are easier to enter and involve themselves in previously unreachable conversations. The existence of memes that bridge the authentic creations of internet users has led to an explosion of grassroots participation, enabling individuals to express their opinions more openly and freely (Gil de Zúñiga et al., 2012) scholars tested how digital media use for informational purposes similarly contributes to foster democratic processes and the creation of social capital. Nevertheless, in the context of today's socially-networked-society and the rise of social media applications (i.e., Facebook. This idea was first expressed by Jenkins (2009) with the term participatory culture, namely a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement and a strong drive for the production and dissemination of one's creations.

Internet memes are the creation of internet users, a form of their creation that is spread through various forms of social media. As Shifman (2014) explained, even though they are micro-spread,

these memes impact people at the macro level because they can shape their mindset, behavior, and actions (Dewi et al., 2017; Puteri & Mahadian, 2019). This condition happens because memes have strengths related to intertextuality, namely the ability to creatively adapt cultural texts and their emotions (Wutz, 2018; Kristeva, 1980). Another strength lies in visuality (Makhortykh & González Aguilar, 2020). This power contributes significantly to the affective appeal of memes by enhancing the so-called interpolative function, in which the memes 'call' viewers to identify with them, either by agreeing with the political sentiments expressed in them or by finding them funny—or not (Dean, 2019 Althusser, 2014). With this visuality, memes strengthen their use to communicate emotionally charged messages in a polyvocal way, thus causing memes to attract the public's attention at large (Milner, 2013).

Memes are used to convey information and form opinions that are suitable for serving as a propaganda tool and political communication (Bauckhage, 2011). Even though it is extraordinary, Williams (2016) mentions that memes have stolen attention in the context of world politics, which

indicates that the media of political communication is not static. A meme is an evolutionary form of political communication media, which has taken a dominant place over the last decade (Theisen et al., 2020).

People use memes that are spread through online public spaces to involve even more people in a debate about political issues. Those who actively use social media are involved in commenting and sharing it with other audiences. In the end, memes continue to be produced and disseminated so that more and more people are pushed into getting involved with political events (Brunello, 2012).

Political Propaganda

In the contemporary world, propaganda is one of the various methods of communication (Nurudin, 2008). Because of a method, propaganda is nothing more than a technique used to convey information. Propaganda as a method of communication developed widely since World War I, whose use was not only to convey information but also to win the war. In its development, political actors consider the propaganda method as an effective communication technique to gain votes and use

technological proxies in the form of proprietary algorithms and semi-automatic social actors—political bots—as a subtle effort to manipulate public opinion (Zakiyuddin, 2018; Woolley, Samuel C., Howard, 2016).

As a communication technique, propaganda is often associated with trying to manipulate public opinion. Propaganda is the management of attitudes—the tendency to act according to a definite pattern of judgments—collectively by manipulating important symbols (Lasswell, 1927). Propaganda is an attempt to spread social and political values to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and change behavior as desired (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2006; Kenez, 1985). According to Huang (2015), this is the general premise on which almost any theory of political propaganda (Lippmann, 1922; Lasswell, 1927). The main goal of this technique is to win the obedience of the masses and mobilize them to act or not act on the wishes of the propagandist (Soules, 2015).

As a technique, propaganda is often associated with something negative rather than something positive. Propaganda developed after World War II, where the names of Adolph Hitler and Josef Goebbels were associated with

propaganda, which was then juxtaposed with words such as 'lies,' 'deception,' 'manipulation,' 'mind control,' and 'indoctrination' (Jowett & O'Donnell, 2006). Goebbels himself used propaganda as a tool of political agitation (Lasswell, 1930). According to Koppang (2009), propaganda is organized mass communication originating from a hidden agenda on a mission to adjust beliefs and actions by manipulating mechanisms to avoid individual reasoning and rational choice.

From all existing definitions, propaganda is identical to a negative image. On this, however, Bernays (Bernays, 1928) argues that propaganda becomes vile and reprehensible only when its writers deliberately spread lies or when they spread them intending to destroy the common good. Propaganda carried out through memes is troubling if the propaganda means to spread hate and negative issues. Therefore, this research is vital in the context of the development of political theory, especially in the field of propaganda. Moreover, the future of politics in Indonesia is determined by how the propaganda is carried out, by what method (memes), and by what medium (social media) (Shang et al., 2021).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach. This qualitative approach gives different meanings with various methods that include interpretive and naturalistic approaches to the subject of study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The method in this study uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) or critical discourse analysis from Norman Fairclough. Critical discourse analysis focuses on discussing discourses related to power, ideology, and the social context in which the discourse exists (Fitrianita et al., 2018). According to Roosinda and Alfraita (2020), qualitative media content analysis is often used as an instrument or tool to analyze and examine various forms of documents, ranging from written texts, newspaper articles, images, videos, and all symbols that think about systems and meaning networks. In this case, all forms of documents are texts that can be analyzed in the presence of qualitative methods.

The data collected in this study are political memes related to the presidential candidates Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subianto on social media Twitter from January - to March 2019. The data collected was analyzed using critical discourse analysis. Fairclough's critical

discourse analysis emphasizes the joint integration of linguistics, social and political thought, which is integrated into social change (Eriyanto, 2008). These memes were analyzed not only to identify them as propaganda tools but also to uncover the meaning and ideology behind the text of the memes. The hidden but touching ideologies contained in it are propagated to garner sympathy and support from the public or prospective voters in the presidential election.

RESULT AND EXPLANATION

Joko Widodo's Pro-Communist Discourse

Political propaganda discourse in the political memes of the two pairs of candidates for the 2019 presidential election can be seen from the discourse in political memes that are built to reject the stereotypes or stigma attached to candidate figures and identity reinforcement on the one hand and the other. In several memes circulating on social media, there are attempts to talk about Jokowi's relationship with the forbidden party bearing the hammer and sickle symbol, namely the Indonesian Communist Party, as shown in Figure 1.

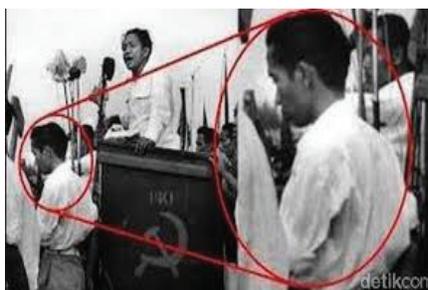


Figure 1. Jokowi's meme associated with Aidit

Figure 1 contains pictures of people suspected of being PKI members. Within the circle of red lines is a specially marked male figure, which is also the image's focal point. Next to the man is a picture of the hammer, sickle, and PKI inscription. This image is in black and white, except for the red line that circles the man.

The meme in picture 1 is entirely black and white, indicating that this photo was taken many years ago. In this meme, there is an image of the hammer and sickle symbol and PKI writing on it. This meme wants to show not only the writings and symbols of the PKI but also a man standing sideways. This man, at first glance, resembles the 2019 presidential candidate, Joko Widodo, who is being promoted as a PKI cadre. According to the information circulating, the use of a red line circling the man's face wants

to show that Joko Widodo is indeed a member of the PKI.



Figure 2. Jokowi and PKI memes

In the image above, the broad background of the image is red. There is a photo of Joko Widodo wearing formal clothes (white clothes, a tie, and a suit), standing in a respectful position, or placing his hand on his forehead. This image also contains a yellow sickle and hammer symbol with "Jokowi & PKI?" in the middle. Above the image of the symbol containing the inscription, as if pasted on it, is the inscription "Hoax" in a rectangular line that is entirely white.

As the discourse spread that Joko Widodo was part of the PKI, through this image, the meme maker propagated that the news that Joko Widodo was part of the PKI or had a special relationship with the banned party was false news. The image in which Joko Widodo seems respectful to the PKI, which indicates that Joko Widodo is the PKI, is unfounded or fabricated information to cover the truth.



Figure 3. Jokowi's meme and the hammer and sickle symbol

Figure 3 contains a peach color background image with Joko Widodo's cartoon face as the primary focus. Besides that, there is also an image of a hammer and sickle with a red background that contrasts significantly with the primary background color of the image. With the striking color red, a palm says "Stop" and a box that says "Hoax." Under the hammer and sickle symbol, outside the red box, there is the inscription "Jokowi & PKI" in red.

This meme uses symbols and colors identical to the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), a banned party since the New Order era. In the political campaigns of presidential candidate number 01, Joko Widodo, he is often associated with the PKI. In this meme, the creator wants to show that Joko Widodo is not part of or has no relationship with the Communists and considers that

the information circulating about Joko Widodo being the PKI is false information and has no basis. So far, the PKI has become a sexy issue and discourse every time it approaches the moment of the general election, both regional elections, and presidential elections.



Figure 4. People's memes move with Jokowi

The following meme image shows an interesting picture. This picture is filled with Joko Widodo's face, which looks like a group of people standing behind Joko Widodo as a leader with "People Move With Jokowi." At the bottom of this picture is the words "People's Leaders Without the Burden of the Past, And Not the Burden of the Future." In this picture, there is also a Pro Jokowi (Projo) volunteer logo in the top right corner.

There are two concepts in this meme. First is the concept where the people move with Jokowi. Second, the concept seems like trying to insinuate other parties or political competitors who seem to have the burden of the past. The presence of

writings that Jokowi is the leader of the people without the burden of the past and not the burden of the future, it means that other parties are trying to become leaders but have or are considered to have burdens from the past and are also a burden for the future. This concept statement will not be issued if there are no other symptoms or discourses that develop about parties who have had burdens in the past and are trying to keep advancing in the 2019 presidential election.



Figure 5. Meme Jokowi without the burden of the past

The meme in picture 5 is a continuation or has a concept almost the same as the previous meme concept. Both contain "Jokowi who does not have the burden of the past so that Jokowi is more comfortable working" in the future. This picture shows Jokowi drinking (maybe coffee or something else) with the main gray background with Ir. H. Joko Widodo as president and presidential candidate serial

number 01. In the lower-left corner, the inscription #jokowilagi with the 'nDUT logo in the lower right corner. It is widely known that Jokowi is often associated with the PKI, and the words "I do not have the burden of the past, so I am more comfortable at work" refers to competitors who are rumored to have a past burden, namely committing violations of human rights in Indonesia past. This statement was made to reassure the people that Jokowi has no responsibility for the past, the offenses which made him morally handicapped so that it would not interfere with his work in later days, especially when he became president for a second term.

Prabowo Subianto's Pro-Caliphate Discourse

In recent years, especially before the 2019 presidential election, there have been many issues or discourses from some people who want to replace the democratic government system with a caliphate. The writing in this picture is an issue or discourse attached to the pair Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno during the 2019 presidential election. As is known, the issue of the caliphate was once boiling in Indonesia, and at the same time, there were also many issues about religious radicalism. The discourse

on religious radicalism reached its peak in the last ten years in 2016 when the masses gathered in Jakarta to take action against charges related to the alleged blasphemy case. Moreover, the discourse of religion and nationalism is often used as a propaganda tool for winning in every Pilkada and Presidential Election.



Figure 6. The Prabowo-Sandi meme with the caliphate

The meme in picture 6 shows the background of people holding up black signs or boards with the words "We Need Khilafah Not Democracy" in white. Below the board is a picture of Prabowo Subianto and Sandiaga Uno, the presidential and vice-presidential candidates from serial number 02, wearing white shirts and black skullcaps.



Figure 7. Prabowo's meme insults the poor

In the seventh meme, the picture shows Prabowo Subianto standing behind the podium while raising his right hand. Prabowo Subianto wore a short-sleeved shirt and a skullcap. The second photo shows Prabowo Subianto pointing forward with his left hand and without a skullcap, as seen in the first picture or other photos. In addition to the two photos combined in one frame, there is also a caption or writing, "Often Insulting the Poor." This picture shows a Prabowo Subianto who likes or often insults the poor with very light body or hand gestures to point at or be directed at people with economic conditions at the lower level. In other words, Prabowo Subianto does not empathize and does not accommodate the interests of the poor who have become part of the public interest.



Figure 8. Meme Prabowo as Naruto

The meme in picture 8 uses a light black background with a fascinating illustration, namely Prabowo Subianto in the style of

a Japanese cartoon star, Uzumaki Naruto, in the Naruto anime series. In addition to the illustration that uses the characteristics and characters of Uzumaki Naruto, there is also the inscription "I will not give up on being president because that is my ninja way" with Uzumaki Prabowo's name written below it.

As is known, Uzumaki Naruto is a passionate ninja who desires to become a Hokage, the leader or village head of Konohagakure. In 2009 this anime series became a favorite television cartoon for Indonesian children and teenagers, and in 2019 it entered the top three of the ten best anime summarized by the digital news portal detik.com (Devi, 2019). Like Uzumaki Naruto, who wanted to become Hokage and was achieved, Prabowo Subianto also ran for president for the second time. Just like Uzumaki Naruto, who uses the ninja way to achieve his desires, in the meme in picture 8, it is illustrated that Prabowo Subianto also uses the same path.



Figure 9. Meme Prabowo speech

The meme in picture 9 shows a brown background with an illustration of Prabowo speaking using a loudspeaker on a podium. In this picture, Prabowo Subianto asserts something with his index finger. Complementing the illustration is the inscription or text "If We Lose Indonesia Will Be Extinct." In detail, in writing, the word "Indonesia" is colored in red while the other words are in black. Every color has its meaning. Black means sorrow, emptiness, and mystery. Meanwhile, red means courage, adrenaline, passion, and strength. Nevertheless, on the other hand, it also means passion and lust. This meme shows that if Prabowo Subianto loses, then Indonesia will face the threat of extinction.



Figure 10. Prabowo's meme talking about unicorns

The meme in picture 10 illustrated when Prabowo Subianto participated in the debate process for presidential and vice-presidential candidates for the 2019 presidential election. At that time, Jokowi had

the opportunity to ask Prabowo Subianto questions about strategies to improve strategies for increasing unicorns. However, Prabowo did not seem to understand the question's meaning and answered, "The online one?". Even though Prabowo later said that his party would reduce regulations and restrictions because startups were experiencing rapid development (Widyastuti, 2019), Prabowo's first answer was still the subject of public jokes, especially among netizens. They grouped made a meme of Prabowo's answer, as shown in figure 10. This meme can be interpreted as an expression of satire on candidate number 02, especially Prabowo Subianto, who does not understand what Jokowi's question means and also does not understand the unicorn itself, which refers to startups or startup companies that have a valuation value of more than the US \$ 1 billion to the US \$ 10 billion (Camelia, 2019), which in recent years has experienced very rapid development.

Memes as Political Propaganda

Political memes are propaganda material used by political candidates and their supporters to change public discourse and perceptions (Elmore & Coleman, 2019). Memes are not something new in the digital world and even more so in

the various momentums of political events. From regional elections to presidential elections, memes are used for political propaganda, either to create and strengthen the identity of a figure or to exacerbate and undermine the identity of a competitor's stronghold.

During the process of holding the 2019 presidential election, the two pairs of presidential and vice-presidential candidates fought in the conventional-mainstream debates and campaigns and through the propaganda of political memes, which were massively distributed on various digital channels. In this case, there are two intentional prototypes: first, memes as political artifacts; second, memes as funny artifacts (Soh, 2020). However, this funny political artifact contains a satirical meaning that gives two possibilities, strengthens and brings down. At first glance, these memes contain illustrations and humorous words, but they deliver a very satirical and striking message.

In the context of political memes during the 2019 presidential election, the propaganda of political memes attacked the two pairs of candidates. This political condition can divide into two discussions. First, memes specifically intended to attack and undermine the credibility

of candidate number 01, especially Joko Widodo, by being propagated as PKI. The discourse of regional heads and presidents being linked as PKI has been going on for a long time and is significantly often propagated before the presidential election until the regional general election. The issue that Jokowi is the PKI emerged and began to spread two months before the 2019 presidential election took place, namely when the *Obor Rakyat* tabloid published news regarding Jokowi's history as a presidential candidate. Since then, political issues and propaganda that Jokowi is the PKI have spread widely and massively that, also happened ahead of the 2019 presidential election. Discourse and propaganda that Jokowi is the PKI resurfaced, and more massively through memes spread on the internet and various social media platforms.

Through these memes, Jokowi is described as PKI. Not only as a former member of a banned party but also as a person who will threaten the establishment of a democratic state. This kind of propaganda is intended to change public opinion about the figure attached to Jokowi, who is described as a populist leader and is waiting for his breakthrough to solve various problems of the nation. From another perspective,

this propaganda aims to win the empathy and voice of the people who form the beginning have not chosen one of the pairs of candidates so that with this propaganda, the group will be closer to the candidate pair number two and give their votes to the candidate pair.

The PKI and its attributes, the hammer, and sickle, are compassionate matters. The PKI discourse is not something to be afraid of for people who are educated and have an open mind. However, for ordinary people and conservatives, this issue is susceptible, especially for those massively influenced by post-truth propaganda. Like an educated society, Jokowi's PKI propaganda will not be digested raw but must still be verified and believed to be accurate based on valid facts. However, this propaganda is very profitable for ordinary people and especially people who believe in the truth of certain information without having to re-examine the basis for its truth. The public will be consumed by this propaganda and change the direction of their vote on candidate number 02.

However, this propaganda attack was met with a counter-meme, which illustrates where Jokowi is not the PKI, that the information is just a hoax spread

by people who want the Jokowi as a figure to decline. In this context, the discourse contestation is Jokowi PKI vs. Jokowi, not PKI or Jokowi PKI is false information (hoax). However, although there are counter-discourses, the discourse that Jokowi's PKI is a propaganda message is never finished spreading. This kind of propaganda will continue to be rolled out before the general election momentum from the regional to the main level. The counter-discourse issued to break the propaganda launched by competitors is not only that but also propaganda in which Jokowi is described as a leading figure who does not have the burden of the past, which is indirectly directed at candidate number 02, especially Prabowo Subianto. Who was hit by the issue of having violated Human Rights (HAM) in the New Order?

Second, memes are directed at candidate number 02 by being propagated as a candidate who carries the caliphate political system. The figure of Prabowo Subianto is described as a person who is close to people who want to replace the Pancasila state basis and replace the democratic government system with a caliphate. In Indonesia, the Khilafah is a system of government promoted by conservative Muslims.

It tends to be orthodox so that Indonesia becomes an Islamic state as a consensus of the fact that the majority of the population embraces Islam. At this point, there is an attempt to clash between the nationalism of Jokowi's camp and the religion attached to Prabowo Subianto's ranks. The issue of the struggle between nationalism and religion has always been a hot topic in Indonesia since the cultural tragedy in 1965-1966. It is reasonable if there are parties who try to confront religious propaganda with nationalism propaganda.

At this point, there are two possibilities. First, the propaganda that Prabowo Subianto or presidential and vice-presidential candidate number 02 carries the *Khilafah*, attempting to destroy Prabowo Subianto's figure. As is known, Indonesia is a country with a democratic system of government. For a long time, the majority of the people have rejected the aspirations of a group of people trying to make the caliphate the basis of the state or system of government. In this aspect, such propaganda has degraded the credibility of the presidential and vice-presidential candidate pair number 02. Second, there is a possibility that conservative plus orthodox Muslim groups want

the caliphate to become the basis of the Indonesian state truly, and that can only be realized if they are behind Prabowo Subianto and win the political contestation. However, this blatant effort is difficult to win the empathy and voice of the people if they look at the reality where the pro-*Khilafah* group is on the minority line. Therefore, the goal desired is that this propaganda is carried out to undermine Prabowo Subianto's credibility.

The purpose of propaganda is to complete when Prabowo Subianto is propagated as a leader who does not take sides and protects the poor, who uses the *ninja way*—ways synonymous with blood and violence in another meme—to achieve his desire to become president. Prabowo is even described as a person who threatens that if his party loses in the 2019 presidential election, Indonesia will be extinct on the second occasion that he has entered as a presidential candidate after doing so in 2014. Although there are no signs of Indonesia going extinct, the words included in the meme are sufficient to describe the propaganda that describes Prabowo Subianto's leadership figure. As if that were not enough, Prabowo Subianto was also promoted as a figure who did not understand enough about

global business competition, which led to start-ups and other digital businesses.

CONCLUSION

Political memes are part of political communication and culture. Memes are used as a propaganda tool to raise and strengthen the figure of one party as well as attack and bring down the figure of another party. In the 2019 Indonesian presidential election, many political memes emerged to uplift and or damage the image of the two presidential candidates, Joko Widodo and Prabowo Subiyanto. Joko Widodo is described as part of the PKI. This accusation has become public consumption since the 2014 presidential election, which aims to change people's views about the populist figure of Joko Widodo growing in society. Apart from that, this propaganda was also intended to gain the empathy and voice of the people who had decided from the start not to vote for the two pairs of candidates and for them to give their votes to the presidential candidate number two.

Meanwhile, on the other hand, Prabowo Subianto is described as a leader who carries the aspirations of conservative Islamic groups, namely making the caliphate the basis of

the state or system of government, which incidentally is at odds with the system or basis of the Pancasila state. Some of Prabowo Subianto's supporters are Islamic groups who are fighting openly to make Indonesia an Islamic state with a caliphate as its main foundation.

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