

The Political Behaviors of Muhammadiyah Elite of North Sumatera in 1995-2005, Medan, Indonesia

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Abstract: The reformation era and the change of configuration of elite leadership in Muhammadiyah caused the changes in political behaviors, especially among the Elites either at the national or regional levels such as in North Sumatera. The configuration of the leadership of Muhammadiyah elites in North Sumatera in the period of 1995-2005 occurred with the alternation the leadership of ulama/scholar figure to the figure of the scientist and politician. This leadership configuration change caused the tendency of politics in the Muhammadiyah elites in the period of 1995-2005 in North Sumatera. The Muhammadiyah of North Sumatera Elites in the period of 1995-2005 shows three political behaviors, first the accommodative political behavior, second the idealist political behavior and third is the pragmatic political behaviors. The accommodative side of the Muhammadiyah Elite's behaviors is that they develop a good cooperation to build and to advance the region. While the idealistic side is that the Muhammadiyah elites take a position in the government without distinguishing what party supports him, then they support government policies that are considered to advance society and provide constructive criticism of the government if the government policies are not considered appropriate and harmful to the people. While the pragmatic attitude of Muhammadiyah Elite shows the political behavior that develops cooperation and good relationship with the government, but it tends to integrate themselves in the power environment according to the political pattern of the government.

Keywords: *behavior; politics, elite, Muhammadiyah; North Sumatera*

I. INTRODUCTION

As a religion organization, Muhammadiyah¹ declares that it is not practical politics which means it is not involved in the political activities related to the process of power struggle as performed by formal political forces. However, in certain momentum, political issues always enter the Muhammadiyah organization movement either directly or indirectly. It proves that Muhammadiyah is not passive and does not know anything about politics. Muhammadiyah actually views that by taking part in the life of nation and state is one manifestation of the purpose and function of implementing the *da'wah* of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*.

All parties know that Muhammadiyah is not a political organization and has never been a political organization. Although in Muhammadiyah Doctrine states that "Muhammadiyah avoids practical political activities" but the political dimension of the Muhammadiyah movement cannot be ignored. In the Muhammadiyah body there has been a smart pattern of thinking about Muhammadiyah's political position.²The thought is that Muhammadiyah does not neglect politics, but it does not mean that Muhammadiyah has no response to the current social conditions. This thought has emerged and was applied in the early period of

¹ Muhammadiyah is the name of the Islamic organization founded by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan in Jogjakarta on 8 Dzulhijjah 1330 H. exactly in November 18, 1912. The word "*Muhammadiyah*" is attributed to the Holy Prophet, which means as the followers of the Prophet Muhammad. In the organizational Statutes of Muhammadiyah mentioned that "this association is called Muhammadiyah, is the movement of Islam and *Da'wah* of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*, act in Islamic way and sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah" Muhammadiyah name means the followers of the Prophet Muhammad in fighting backwardness in Islamic societies. See: PP Muhammadiyah, *Pedoman Bermuhammadiyah*, (Yogyakarta: Badan Pendidikan Kader PP Muhammadiyah, Cetakan III-1996), h. 39; Ahmad Syafii Maarif, *Studi tentang Percaturan dalam Konstituante: Islam dan Masalah Kenegaraan* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1996) h 67; Lihat pula Haedar Nashir, *Perilaku Politik Elit Muhammadiyah di Pekajangan*, (Yogyakarta: Tarawang, 2000), p. 3 footnote.

² Hikmawan Syahputra, *Peran Politik Muhammadiyah Tahun 2010-2014*. Jurnal Ilmu Pemerintahan Brawijaya Semarang, semarang, 2014, p. 1

Muhammadiyah, and was reiterated by Amien Rais (The Chairman of PP Muhammadiyah) in 1997, with a new term: High Politics or *politik Adi Luhung* (high level).³

Speaking of Muhammadiyah and Politics, it is not intended to bring the idea to the realization of Muhammadiyah as a political organization, let alone a political party. However, as far as we can observe throughout the history of Muhammadiyah's participation in the dynamics of the Indonesian Nation, it is natural to think again the role of *amar makruf nahi munkar* which has been a trade mark of Muhammadiyah, not only in the social plains, but also in the social and political plains. Lately many comments claim that with the entry of Muhammadiyah in the practical political discourse, it means it has abandoned its *khittah* as a movement of *amar makruf nahi munkar*. In order to understand how the political elite of Muhammadiyah really is, we cannot simply say that Muhammadiyah is a religion social organization that has no relationship with political parties. It is a very simple and innocent statement. To understand how Muhammadiyah's attitude is actually about its relationship with politics and political parties, we need to conduct historical-empirical studies since this organization established in 1912 to the present. During that time, there were at least four times with different political situations, namely the period of Liberal Democracy, the period of Guided Democracy, the period of New Order, and the period of Reformation.

The prevalence of political representation of the Muhammadiyah of North Sumatra elites in the local parliament also indicates a variety of responses to the political *ijtihad* of the former Chairman of Muhammadiyah, Amien Rais. However, it is undeniable that there has been a significant change in the elites' behavior in the Muhammadiyah of North Sumatra with many elites who participated in practical politics after New Order, something that never happened in the past, especially in the New Order.

The occurrence of polarization of Elite attitudes above caused in Elit configuration changes in Muhammadiyah related to the instruction letter from PP Muhammadiyah that the daily leaders in all leadership levels shall not concurrent positions with political parties. This change is needed to be seen in the sociological dimension because it is empirically proven to the effect on the elite configuration of Muhammadiyah leadership after New Order with many intellectuals who lead this organization often with diminished influence of the old Elite. The political roles and attitudes of Muhammadiyah as previously described imply to us that this Islamic organization which is identical with modern Islam is one example of unusual civil society. First, since post-reformation, this 'unfamiliarity' is demonstrated by involvement of extra parliamentary in which the role of civil society becomes a critical group of government institutions to be part of the parliamentary, although the number is not too significant. At least there is a visible change in the form of personal combination, not institutional. The second is Muhammadiyah as a semi-corporatist organization to the state. This group has independence in its ideas and suggestions but can compromise to the state policy to enable it to survive and to vote in the legislative or executive bodies.

II. METHODOLOGY

2.1 The Political View of Muhammadiyah Elites of North Sumatera

The touch of Muhammadiyah and the polity cannot be separated, even in certain momentum; political issues always enter the Muhammadiyah organization movement either directly or indirectly. It proves that Muhammadiyah is not passive and does not know anything about politics. Muhammadiyah actually holds that by taking part in the life of nation and state is one manifestation of the purpose and function of implementing the *da'wah* of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. Under such conditions, the cadres and the members of Muhammadiyah who are involved in politics are viewed as a positive attitude in view of the political struggle and perform the function of criticism in accordance with the principle of "*amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*" for the sake of the establishment of a democratic and civilized state political system. The same thing is expressed by Arbain:

The Muhammadiyah citizens view positively towards the elites who joined the political parties, even among the Muhammadiyah elites who held positions in the government with a harmonious relationship. The elite remains respected. When an elit is in government (participates in politics) he is shunned by Muhammadiyah. What happen is Muhammadiyah empowers the elites who participate in politics, especially those who are serving. The

³ The politic of *Adi Luhung* is politics where Muhammadiyah is not only concerned with the religion but also cares about the social reality. Muhammadiyah must be sensitive and need to respond to various issues such as: KKN, national leadership, poverty, global injustice, conflict and various social phenomena in Indonesia. So Muhammadiyah in this context needs to have political independence. Thus means Muhammadiyah organization is born is for the sake of the people, and not the devotion to the leaders or the Muhammadiyah elites must appear in the devotion of society without the burden of political and personal interests. Muhammadiyah by internal constitution put forward the principle of political for *da'wah*, not *da'wah* for politics, this is clearly illustrated in Muhammadiyah's personality, in addition to being an Islamic movement and *Tajdid* movement, Muhammadiyah emphasizes itself as a *da'wah* movement. All activities in education, social, including politics are held for the purpose of *da'wah*.

cadres as well as the elites who serve always try to contribute as well as possible to the general public and especially for Muhammadiyah itself.

In fact, Muhammadiyah in its viewing attitude that politics is a means of preaching (*da'wah*). So that it is not surprising that Muhammadiyah gives freedom to every member or cadre to use their right in politics. The 42nd Congress (Muktamar) held in Yogyakarta in 1990 the *kyai* or *ulama* began to experience a significant movement. The conference created to a number of new elites who experienced intellectual enlightenment by achieving the highest academic degree.⁴ The elit configuration brings a direct application to the change of political attitudes and the different organization's views from the previous leadership and this implies the Muhammadiyah elites throughout Indonesia, including in North Sumatra. This can be proved by the number of Muhammadiyah elites who became party leaders or even have positions in *legeslatif*.⁵

Besides the leadership shift from the figure of *Kiai* to the intellectual figure, the reform era that opened the freedom as much as possible becomes the factor in the change in viewing, attitudes and political behavior of the Muhammadiyah elites. According to Firdaus Haly, politics is important in making improvements in all aspects of life, thus Muhammadiyah elites are not enough just to take care of the religious affairs only but they must enter the politics. Furthermore Firdaus explains that politics is part of *da'wah* for Muhammadiyah. By joining the politics, the mission of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* will be more workable.⁶ A similar view to Firdaus is also explained by Lazuardi that Muhammadiyah must participate in the politics. Lazuardi also explains that although Muhammadiyah declares itself as not a political organization and although Muhammadiyah will not be a political organization but it is inseparable from politics in the the political history of Indonesia.⁷ Indeed, Muhammadiyah has declared itself not involved with political practice, because it is an organization of spirituality that will not become a political organization. It will be seen that this condition can be said that Muhammadiyah has or at least the Muhammadiyah elites of North Sumatera tend to get involved in political practice or politics in a dignified way as mentioned by a Muhammadiyah elite, Sabri 'Ali who explains.⁸ *First of all Muhammadiyah organization does not want to be involved in political practice, but the people of Muhammadiyah should be given direction to use their political rights. In the last few years, Muhammadiyah's relationship with politics is not good enough. It becomes homework for us how to make the best Muhammadiyah cadres who are able to take roles in politics in a dignified way.*

It is interesting to observe the statement of Yursaun PDM Labuhan Batu that currently Muhammadiyah especially in Labuhan Batu area is less contribute in politics. This means that Muhammadiyah in Labuhan Batu has little role in politics so that Muhammadiyah must perform coaching on cadres in the politics. Thus Muhammadiyah will be more able to contribute and contribute in defending the people especially in *amar ma'rud nahy munkar*, improving the region and determining the direction of the government policy in North Sumatra. Even the more interesting thing is the statement of Muhammadiyah elite that the attitude of Muhammadiyah which declares itself not involved in the political practice though it has been proper but still needs to be evaluated and reviewed again.

2.2. The political behavior of Muhammadiyah Elites of North Sumatra

The study of political behavior can be focused on individuals as the actors who play the role. It can also be done to groups or institutions (organization) both religions, social, political and economic. Although it focuses on the individual, the study will still be associated with the institution. Its political behavior is not only directed through formal rules and procedures that in the organization or institution formally, but it can also be the actual behavior and self-orientation of influential individuals or the backbone of the institution.⁹ In relation to Muhammadiyah, it is intended as an action or a number of Muhammadiyah activities in allocating Islamic values that are binding on the members and the society as well as participate in the process of making and implementing the public policies.

⁴ The elites formation changes with the presence of Amien Rais as the Chairman of PP Muhammadiyah, known as an independent intellectual figure who is critical of a number of government policies that harm the people

⁵ The interview result with Muhammadiyah elites of North Sumatera in the periods of 1995-2005. Medan, December . 2016.

⁶ Firdaus Haly The Chairman of PWM priode 1995 - 2000. Personal interview, Medan 2016.

⁷ Lazuardi, *sekretaris PDM Tapanuli Selatan Pride 2000 s/d 2005*. Personal interview, Sidimpuan 2016.

⁸ Sabri 'Ali, PDM Deli serdang Secretary of PDM Deli Serdang (educational figure), personal interview perbaungan. December 2016.

⁹ Suwarno, "Muhammadiyah, Islam dan Runtuhnya Orde Baru", Tesis S2 (Yogyakarta: Program Studi Politik Fisifol UGM, 2000) p. 15.

In the view of Maarif, Muhammadiyah is accommodative (flexible) in facing the political development in Indonesia.¹⁰ Secondly, the pragmatic attitude that shows political behavior which develops the good cooperation and relationship with the government, but tends to integrate itself in the power environment in accordance with the pattern of government politics. Third, the idealist political attitude shows political behavior that tends to take the position of power (government). If the government is good, it will be supported and if the government makes a mistake, it will be warned.

In line with the view of Shafi'i Maarif above, the accommodative and idealistic attitude is also indicated by the behavior of Muhammadiyah elites of North Sumatera. Yamin Lubis states:¹¹

The political behavior of the Muhammadiyah cadres especially in North Sumatera is still harmonious with the government. We have good relations and communication with the government. If the government policy is on the society's side and no value is violated then we support it but if the policy is in conflict with the value of life in society let alone it harms and not on the society's side then we give criticism as the input to government.

Next Abd Khlaik Lubis¹²

We are as Muhammadiyah cadres must be neutral. With the existing position, we do not distinguish the party. Our cadres are in various parties such as in PAN, Golkar, Gerindra, PPP, PKB.PDK, and other parties. Although our cadres are in various parties, all cadres still behave well towards the government. Our cadres always practice good values according to the guidance of religion. Our cadres also have a good relationship with the government. Our cadres who are in the position are the representatives of the people so what they strive for are the voice of the people.

Bahdin Nur Tanjung explains that until now the cadres who participate in politics still behave well. The religious values implanted by Muhammadiyah are embedded in the attitude of being in the politics. Muhammadiyah has the concept of *Adi Luhung* politics and social *tauhid* developed by Amin Rais. All of our cadres are guided by the concept. In living our political activities and other cadres have good relations and communication. The cooperation in development programs with the government we do, we also escort the policies of the government. The things which are appropriate and on the society's side, we will support but on the contrary we will criticize them. According to Imran Khaitamy Daulay, the political behavior of Muhammadiyah cadres is classified as moderate. This means that our cadres will neither insist and nor lean towards one camp. The good relationship with the government elites is always our guard. So we have a good relationship with the government. We also provide inputs to the government related to the policy and the development in the regions.

III. DISCUSSION

The factors of a social change in a community have two sources, first they come from within the community itself (internal) and the second they come from outside the community (external). The process of social change begins with the process of disintegration in various fields, then in the progress of creating reintegration. Muhammadiyah especially the elites experienced a change in political behavior. Because the main cause of change in the development of society is the practice of religious life, then affects to other areas of life. The changes that occur in the behavior of Muhammadiyah elites are the change in political views and behavior, while there is no change in the value.

Changes in the behavior of a group occur because of some good things that are sourced within the community itself as well as those from outside the sources. Surjoo Sukanto explains that there are two sources of the behavior change factor in a community, first it comes from within the community itself (internal) and the second is it comes from outside the community (external). After conducting the research on Muhammadiyah elites of North Sumatera, the writer found that the factors influence the political behavior of Muhammadiyah elites of North Sumatera in 1995-2005 periods can be classified into two parts, namely internal factors that come from Muhammadiyah itself and external factors which originated from outside Muhammadiyah.

According to Bahdin Nur Tanjung,¹³ the change of Muhammadiyah's political behavior is a natural thing, because Muhammadiyah through several *muktamar* and *tanwir* decisions have arranged how the attitude,

¹⁰ Ahmad Safii Maarif, "Muhammadiyah Lebih Lentur Pada Perubahan Politik", *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, 6 April 1995.

¹¹ Yamin Lubis, Ketua PWM –SU/ 199-2002 (Ketua PAN Sumatera Utara), personal interview. Medan, December 2016.

¹² Abdul Khalik Lubis, Ketua PDM Deli Serdang (MPP PAN), personal interview. Perbaungan, December 2016.

¹³ Bahdin Nur Tanjung, vice head of PWM Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara/ Vice Head of DPD Golkar North Sumatera in the priod of 1996-2001, personal interview. Medan December 2016.

position and relationship of Muhammadiyah to the politics. The result of the congress became the instruction of PP Muhammadiyah of all districts, regions and sub-districts throughout Indonesia. Besides the figure of Amin Rais with the idea of high politics and social *tauhid* succeed in applying the religious values in doing politics, even Amin Rais can attract many sympathetic from the society. Amin Rais who was the Chairman of PP Muhammadiyah became a role model and followed by other Muhammadiyah elites to the elite other regions. This can be seen by many Muhammadiyah elites who join the political party, become the Chairman in the region, even at the level of sub districts. In further developments the elites see that the opportunity to carry out the *da'wah* is increasingly widespread, added with the reforms that have occurred giving freedom to everyone to express opinions. Besides Muhammadiyah's instruction on politics and Amin Rais with his party, this freedom is a factor that pushes the elites to politics similar to Bahdin also presented by Yamin Lubis:

Basically Muhammadiyah is not a political organization. But we can see in the history range that Muhammadiyah never kept quiet with politics. Since the time of the predecessors of Muhammadiyah KH Dahlan, Ki Bagus, H. Muzakir and others they participated in politics although they are not incorporated in any party, then the presence of Masyumi and Parmusi also received a lot of support from Muhammadiyah leaders and many Muhammadiyah leaders who joined, Not until there, I think that at first PP Muhammadiyah instructed to all regions and area to support Parmusi. By adding with the presence of Amin Rais who founded PAN party, I think this is a major advance in Muhammadiyah. We who recently saw the predecessors of Muhammadiyah in fighting for the people and the nation to be inspired our hearts. So the Muhammadiyah people who now get involved in politics because they follow our predecessors who managed politics by applying religious values. The next factor that is the decision of the muktamar about politics which becomes the instruction of PP Muhammadiyah throughout the regions also encourage us to be more enthusiastic in striving in politics. Next the condition of our nation Indonesia is also a factor that encourages us to get involved in politics. The era of reform gives freedom to everyone to express his opinions. If we are not in politics who will convey our aspirations? Furthermore I think that the driving force for elites to politics is the ability and trust of the people.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the factors driving the Muhammadiyah elites of North Sumatera to participate in politics are as follows:

- a. The internal factors (the factor that is from within Muhammadiyah) are the shining example of the Muhammadiyah predecessors, the Muhammadiyah congress's decision on Muhammadiyah's attitude and the position on politics, political ability and financial ability.
- b. The external factors (factors that originate outside) are the change of social condition in the nation which are characterized by the reform and the freedom of expression, the availability of political parties to accept the Muhammadiyah elites of North Sumatera as the party member, high trust and support from the people of North Sumatera, especially the citizens of the organization.

IV. CONCLUSION

The configuration of the leadership of the Muhammadiyah elites in North Sumatera in the period of 1995-2005 occurred with the shift or movement of leadership of *ulama*/scholar figure to the figure of the politicians. The Muhammadiyah elites of North Sumatera in the period of 1995-2005 show three political behaviors, first the accommodative political behavior, second the idealist political behavior and third is the pragmatic political behaviors. The accommodative side of the Muhammadiyah elite's behaviors above is that they develop a good cooperation to build and to advance the region. While the idealistic side is that the Muhammadiyah elites take a position in the government without distinguishing what party supports him, then they support government policies that are considered to advance society and provide constructive criticism of the government if the government policies are not considered appropriate and harmful to the people. While the pragmatic attitude of Muhammadiyah Elite shows the political behavior that develops cooperation and good relationship with the government, but it tends to integrate themselves in the power environment according to the political pattern of the government.

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