

Culture And Religion As The Media Political Commodification

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Abstract : *The involvement of mass media owners in political parties has led to the issue of neutrality. Media neutrality becomes more challenged when media owners are also members of political parties competing in the political constellation as supporters of specific figures running for election. In the end, media content becomes a means to win the supported candidates. The phenomenon could be viewed on Metro TV and TV One stations during the Indonesian presidential election in 2014. The media was active in broadcasting programs to win public support through the creation of discourse that supported their candidates as the decent and ideal figures to be elected as the leader. Culture and religion became the main sources of discourse construction by attaching certain images, mainly based on Javanese and Islamic philosophy. The use of Javanese and Islam as the source of image construction made sense considering that both aspects have the largest mass base in Indonesia. The utilization of religion and culture by the media to win the candidates were analyzed using critical discourse model by Roger Fowler and his colleagues. As a result, Metro TV portrayed Jokowi-JK and TV One portrayed Prabowo-Hatta as the ideal leader, referring to the characteristics of Islamic Prophets and Javanese kings. Although using culture and religion as a reference, poorly, the behavior of the media in constructing political image towards candidates did not match with the values of Javanese culture and Islam religion. It can lead to a misperception about culture and religion especially Java and Islam.*

Keywords: *Commodification, Culture, Islam, Politic, News, Religion.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of one's participation in the General Election at the regional, legislative, and presidential levels is to gain public support. Public support is a key element to the vote which bears an impact on the winning of candidates in the political arena. Thus, it is not surprising that many political parties or candidates participating in the General Election resort to various ways to attract public attention from sympathetic campaigns to black campaigns, with an ultimate goal of gaining public sympathy and support in the voting booths, as what happened in the 2014 presidential election. The 2014 presidential election was a new history in the Indonesian press because this election was the starting point for changes in media behavior, especially on private television. Television was used as a means to gain public support and to support political power. The media that becomes a mouthpiece and

propaganda device for stakeholders is a new phenomenon after the reformation era. In the pre-reformation era, the media's affiliation with the ruling political party, which then bore an impact on the neutrality issue, was not surprising because at that time the Indonesian press was controlled by the ruling party (government) to support and maintain the status quo. The press was used to regulate public hegemony for legitimacy. The media was intensively supervised and controlled under the information department (Hill, 2011); (Surjomoharjo, 2002). The constellation of the 2014 presidential election caused a significant shift in media content as can be seen on *Metro TV* and *TV One* stations. In the beginning, after the rise of democracy, post the new order era, television blatantly became a mouthpiece and a means of propaganda for the stakeholders. Television explicitly displayed opposition to one party or acted otherwise. News from the two stations showed that there were partialities toward the candidates. *Metro TV* positioned itself as a supporter of Joko Widodo and Jusuf Kalla (Jokowi-JK) candidates while *TV One* supported Prabowo and Hatta Radjasa (Prabowo-Hatta) candidates. The form of support could be seen from the news content and the way both media presented their news. Support was not only centered on the presidential candidates but also the political parties and other issues related to the candidates. Of the several parties that supported the presidential candidates, there were two parties namely Nasdem Party under the leadership of Surya Paloh- the owner of *Metro TV*, and Golkar party under Abu Rizal Bakrie, the Chair of Golkar who is also the main shareholder of *TV One* station.

The active involvement of media owners in politics has consequences on the issue of news content. The neutrality of broadcast content is the most highlighted in terms of the political preferences of the media owners (BBC.com, 2014); (Kompas.com, 2014); (KPI, 2014); (Change.org, 2014). Some research results also concluded a lack of neutrality between the two media related to the political preferences of their owners (Aisyah, 2014); (Akram, 2015). Not only the neutrality issue, the effect of media ownership and politics also has an impact on the objectivity of broadcast content. This study focused more on how the two media used their broadcasting power or news content to win their supported candidates. The efforts to win the candidates were pursued through the creation of discourse regarding the candidates supported by the media owners' parties to gain public support. The discourse was built through image building of the candidates as the most ideal figures to be chosen as the leader of the country. Discourse creation was carried out towards presidential candidates by utilizing religious and cultural aspects as the source of its construction, particularly Islam and Javanese culture. Therefore, this study concluded that there was political commodification of Javanese culture and Islamic values by the mass media. In culture and religion, some values serve as guidelines for life and society. But when the existing noble values are used as an effort to obtain profits, that is where commodification occurs (Burton, 2008).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several researchers have conducted studies on the use of culture and religion for political purposes. It's just that their studies were still focused on the use of symbols or objects that were visible to the naked eye and have not touched on hidden aspects of media coverage. Previous studies focused more on the use of physical identities such as Muslim fashion such as veils, skullcaps, praying clothes, as well as the character of a person in a certain group (ethnicity or religion). That was like research which that highlighted the use of political

billboards containing moral messages by quoting verses in the holy book during the month of Ramadan. That was done to gain public sympathy regarding the elections in Seberang Jambi, South Sumatra (Malik, Abdul Batubara, 2014). During the 2014 presidential election, presidential candidates also used the mass media for political advertising using religious terms to gain public sympathy by television. The political advertisement was expected could boost electability, especially from the votes of Muslim voters as the biggest religious community in this country, both beginners and old voters (Akhsan, 2015). Meanwhile, the use of culture can be seen in the study of the ethnic partner in determining political candidates (Hasbullah, 2012). A similar study was also carried out by Alexander Yandra (2018) regarding the general election in the Pasaman region, West Sumatra. Culture in both studies above focused more on the use of ethnic and ethnic diversity to gain mass sympathy. From several studies that have been there before, it can be seen the novelty of this study because it includes a broader aspect, namely highlighting the use of religion and culture. This study criticized the use of news as a means of gaining power. Ironically, that was not done by the political success team but by the mass media. Whereas if referring to the rules and regulations, the mass media must be free from all kinds of interests and political intervention, to produce news that is accurate, balanced, objective, to fulfill the rights of the public, as well as to ensure the implementation of the supervisory function and social adhesive. The use of news for political purposes can lead to divisions at the community level due to ideological differences.

3. METHODOLOGY

The findings regarding the use of religion and culture, primarily Islam and Javanese as media-political commodities, are the conclusions of the research conducted using the critical discourse analysis model from Roger Fowler and his colleague. Analysis of this model can be used to analyze the discourse raised from media coverage through the use of diction and grammar. The preparation of word choices and language in news sentences can direct the public in understanding a reality based on media interests. For this reason, language is not seen as neutral but contains a certain ideology because diction has implications that benefit one party by harming or marginalizing the other party, or by building the image of one party positively and comparing it with other parties (Eriyanto, 2012). The analysis was carried out on documents in the form of news recordings of the two television stations during the 2014 Presidential Election campaign period, especially in the Programs of *Metro Hari Ini* (Metro Today) and *Apa Kabar Petang* (The Evening News).

Etymologically, commodification means making something as a primary commodity or merchandise (Depdiknas, 2008). In the global era, human needs are increasingly complex so that the concept of commodities also develops and undergoes changes. It makes commodities not limited to goods, services, and labor, but extends to everything that was previously unworthy of commodities, such as education, culture, religion, body, desire, and even death (Piliang, 1999). Commodification is different from commercialization. According to Mosco (2009), commodification refers to all exchange rates while commercialization is more to the economic value. In this study, commodification is interpreted as a form of changing the function of an object to gain profit. The intended benefits are not only limited to material or economic aspects but also for personal or group benefits. The commodification discussed in

this article is the use of religious and cultural values in media products. In religion and culture, there are teachings about certain values for community life. These values are used as guidelines for life and society so that a harmonious or ideal life can be realized based on their respective perspectives. But when these noble values are used for certain benefits, commodification occurs. In the mass media, commodification can be done on two aspects namely the commodification of content and audience (Mosco, 2009). In this study, the commodification discussed is the commodification of media broadcast content.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data analysis showed that both *Metro TV* and *TV One* news broadcasts were not value-free. There were ulterior intentions carried by the news aired by the two TV stations. News is a product and communication tool. In a critical view, communication is always considered as something that has a purpose and is never free of value, and always has the intention regarding what is being displayed (Eriyanto, 2012). Likewise in the news displayed by the two media, there were contested discourses regarding the ideal leader. The discourse was constructed by certain images. The image construction was carried out on the person and the supporting group. Each media constructed the character of their presidential candidate positively or superiorly by comparing him with the opposing party's candidate. The discourses were presented in reverse by the media whose owners were also members of the candidates' supporting political parties. In reporting each candidate, diction was a feature that was more widely used by *Metro TV* and *TV One*. Diction can bring up the classification, limit views, marginalize, and construct opinions in the battle of discourse. This paper does not discuss the construction of supporter groups.

The images displayed in both media were about the candidate's self-image and the image of their support group. The self-images displayed were (1) a heroic figure, a populist figure; (2) a leader figure who failed; (3) a figure of a king, a figure of a world leader; (4) a smart person who works for real, versus an accomplished and resolute orator; (5) a fraudulent figure; (6) a figure that is desired by the people; (7) a person with a dark background; and (8) a hypocrite, a liar who should not be trusted.

Jokowi is a hero, Prabowo is also a hero. The image of Jokowi as a hero was constructed through his success such as in the coverage of *Kartu Jakarta Sehat* (Jakarta Health Card / KJS) and *Kartu Jakarta Pintar* (Jakarta Smart Card/KJP) programs by *Metro TV*. Through articulated words, public views were directed at the success of the program due to Jokowi's figure which was presented in the forms of common citizen's gratitude who expressed that without Jokowi, the program would not have existed. The populist Jokowi was constructed through the news of his frequent activity of *blusukan* (visiting residents directly in public places or in their neighborhoods), mingling with common people, observing directly at the project site by walking without wearing footwear, by running, by riding a bicycle and taking public transportation. Meanwhile, Prabowo's heroism was constructed by his brilliant career while he was in the military. One of them was through his success in suppressing the Mapenduma Irian movement where he and his team rescued researchers of the Lorentz 95 Expedition who were held hostage by *Organisasi Papua Merdeka* (Papua Freedom Organization). Mapenduma's operation was recorded as the most heroic action that brought Prabowo to the highest position in the country's most elite force, Kopassus (Indonesian

Special Task Force). Prabowo was also popularized through the image of mingling with the common people (farmers, traders) such as sitting in the front seat next to a driver. Prabowo's character was also built as a great figure in delivering the public speech and his career in the military due to his achievements. The image as smart figures and accomplished orators was also constructed through the ability of each candidate to answer the panelist questions in the debate. The reading habits of the vice-presidential candidates, JK and Hatta, were also highlighted.

The issue of a failed leader figure was constructed by *TV One* against Jokowi through the failure of the KJS (Jakarta Health Card) and KJP (Jakarta Smart Card) programs which had the potential to be corrupted, and harming the country and many hospitals. KJP and KJS were claimed as imitation products. Prabowo was constructed as a figure who failed by *Metro TV* because he was fired from the Indonesian National Army concerning the 1998 human right violation case. A figure of a king in negative meaning was attached to Prabowo by *Metro TV*. Prabowo is not a populist, he always keeps a distance, and he does not want to be in direct contact with his supporters. Prabowo always goes everywhere by cars, helicopters, or planes, and he only says hello from the top of his car, he also walks on the carpet, he is even often carried out by his supporters' on their shoulders, and he only relies on the ability to rhetoric, not on really works. Meanwhile, according to *TV One* version, such description is covered as what precisely should be done by a world leader as part of maintaining the nation's authority. The way he smiles, waves his hands, and the way he delivers rhetoric are similar to those of national leaders such as Sukarno, Obama, and Ayatullah Khomeini who are respected for their charisma and their oration.

Then regarding the issue of a fraudulent figure, both Jokowi and Prabowo were shady. Prabowo reportedly made use of the power of his network in the Indonesian National Army by deploying Babinsa (military counselor for civilians), while Jokowi lobbied the Indonesian National Army to support his candidacy. The fraud was also constructed through other forms of the black campaign. Jokowi and Prabowo were described as figures desired by the public through the results of survey votes, leaders' and other community members' opinions, and even party members who defected to their opponents. Another presented image was regarding bad backgrounds. Jokowi was involved in corruption, his leadership during his Solo and Jakarta mayorships was not good, while Prabowo was said to be involved in humanitarian crimes related to the alleged kidnapping of reform activists. Jokowi and JK in the news were constructed as hypocritical, fickle, and unreliable. Jokowi was reported to have promised Prabowo's brother, Hashim, that he would not run in the 2014 presidential election while JK once underestimated Jokowi's ability and disagreed if Jokowi was nominated as president just because he was popular. Ironically, JK then joined with Jokowi and became his vice-presidential candidate in the 2014 presidential election. Prabowo was constructed as a hypocritical figure through the news when he refused to accept Jokowi's cheek greeting in the waiting room before the live broadcast of the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Debate but when on stage, Prabowo responded to Jokowi's greetings.

What was portrayed against the candidates above is a form of identity construction about the ideal leader according to Javanese and Islamic concepts. The concept of an ideal leader in the Javanese concept can be seen from the qualities attached to each candidate. This is where commodification was done through the use of Javanese and Islamic values regarding

leadership. For example, the image of Jokowi in the news as a leader who is resourceful with solution, simple, and close to the people is an ideal form of personality that should be owned by a leader in the concept of Javanese leadership. A leader who is close to the people is manifested in the characterization of *Punakawan*, four characters of god family in wayang (Javanese puppet show) who disguised themselves as human beings and servants in the society. *Punakawan* is a depiction of leaders who intentionally come down to earth and approach the people to understand their aspirations and strive to realize their welfare (Susetya, 2019). Such a concept is very readable in Jokowi's leadership model which is portrayed through media reports, especially *Metro TV*, particularly on one of his "hobbies," *blusukan*, where he is willing to approach or "extend" his hand first to the common people. Jokowi's *blusukan* activities are shown in *Metro Hari Ini* bumper program and news content. In the bumper, the image construction was shown through the scene where Jokowi visited and checked the development program implementation sites or the project location even though he had to go through a puddle of water during a flood barefooted, riding a bicycle, or simply riding public transportation. What is shown through the bumper is a form of Jokowi's personality who keeps trying to get close to the people while listening to the grassroots voice as described in the leadership pattern shown in the characterization of the *Punakawan* (Kyai Semar and his children), especially *Semar*. Semar itself is one of the characters in the wayang story presented in the form of a simple servant or commoner. However, Semar is the most loved figure and his presence is always awaited because Semar is the most powerful god. He descended from *kahiyangan* (heaven) and came to earth as a source of wisdom, the savior for citizens, and also as a form of criticism to the knights (rulers) for their deemed inappropriate behaviors so that the knights could improve their attitude following their purpose of living (Anderson, 2000), (Suseno, 1996). What was implemented in Jokowi's leadership as displayed in *Metro TV* news can be said as a strategy that adapted local wisdom values, especially the Javanese culture. Jokowi is a hero who can "save" his citizens from distress. Because of that, he was loved and desired, and his presence was awaited by his people. Such image was reflected in the selection of Jokowi's insert quoting his conversation with one of the residents where the resident gave Jokowi his compliment and prayers to be elected President of the Republic of Indonesia because he was touched by Jokowi's performance and attitude as a leader, "I always *dhikr*, I always pray to God that you become president, sir". This is reinforced by the selection of other dictions that emphasize the conclusion that Jokowi's presence is like Semar who is always anticipated and loved by the people, and able to provide solutions to every problem among the common people. Semar, who is a god, has the highest and most powerful position among other gods, but instead, he chooses to come down, putting himself among the commoners [20]. This attitude is shown in the news portraying Jokowi as a person who has the highest position but is willing or prefers to blend, come down, and get close to his people.

In addition to being popular, a good leader in Javanese *wewarah* (guidance/sayings) is said to be able to perform five things for his people. Two of them are *mulat* and *palidarma*. *Mulat* is understanding the condition of his people, while *palidarma* is being able to set a good example. The other three *wewarah* are *milala* (giving praise), *miluta* (guiding), and *palimarma* (forgiving) (Susetya, 2019). What Jokowi did, as shown in the news on *Metro TV*, is a manifestation of the concepts of *mulat* and *palidarma* where a leader is required to know

the condition of his people and be able to set good examples. *Mulat* as an obligation for leaders is also emphasized by Mangkunegara IV, the Grand Duke of Mangkunegaran palace, as *murinanirusakepraja* or to always be aware of the people's hardships (Priyanggono, 2015). Jokowi's efforts with *blusukan*, checking the implementation of projects on the sites himself, are forms of *mulat* or *murinanirusakepraja* and *palidarma* conducted by a leader. We can also find this *palidarma* issue in a slogan in Javanese stated by the national education figure, Ki Hajar Dewantara, "*Ing Ngarso Sung Tuladha*" (those in front must set examples). The concept of *Ing Ngarso Sung Tuladha* according to the researchers' assessment is still related to Semar's figure which is attached to Jokowi's self-image because Semar, besides being a problem-solving figure, is also a figure of critic and counselor for the knights regarding how they should conduct their roles (Suseno, 1996). Jokowi's decision that prefers to go to the field even though he is a supreme leader at the government level is a form of criticism and an example for the knights (officials) under his leadership to not just stand idly and wait for reports or just to be served by their subordinates. Instead, the officials must act actively without waiting for the cue or news from the subordinates so that decisions are taken according to the needs of the people. By continuing to observe firsthand in the community, Jokowi automatically arouses the awareness and enthusiasm of officials at his lower levels to commit to the policies that have been set, as well as to what should be done. Leadership that can inspire, set an example, and lead to commitment is referred to as an effective form of leadership (Sagala, 2018). What *Metro TV* showed by covering Jokowi's activities as a leader who often jumped into the community could be considered as a discourse constructed by *Metro TV* about examples/evidence of effective leadership. This is effective because Jokowi can set an example and also bring a commitment to the officials under him. This is in line with Sagala's opinion that reinforces the issue of Jokowi's self-image construction as someone who has decent and appropriate criteria to become a leader. The role of a leader, who must always be at the front line to provide good examples for his citizens, is also contained in *Serat Sastra Gending*, a Javanese Literature regarding the philosophy of Sultan Agung's leadership. One of the seven mandates that a leader must carry out in this literature is *bahnibahnaamurbengjurit*, a leader must be upfront to set examples (Supadjar, 2001). The nature of an ideal leader based on the Javanese philosophy can also be seen in Prabowo's discourse construction. This can be observed from the way *TV One* constructed his figure in the news. In addition to identifying Prabowo's attitude as similar to what Soekarno did (driving cars, jets, airplanes) during a visit/campaign to a place, in *TV One's* bumper version 3, for example, the scene where Prabowo rode a gallant brown stallion was shown several times. The scene shows Prabowo riding his horse towards the middle of the field where he has been awaited by his uniformed supporters (in a campaign at Gelora Bung Karno). The horse he rode is his personal Lusitano breed which was specially imported from Portugal. Lusitano is one of the leading horse breeds in the Iberian Peninsula of Spain [24]. Referring to Suryanto Sastroatmodjo's book (2006) regarding "*Citra Diri Orang Jawa*" (Javanese Self Image), the perfection of a leader's or knight's life is symbolized through the ownership of five things namely *wisma* (house), *wanita* (woman), *curiga* (ultimate weapon), *kukila* (bird pet), and *turangga* (horse for riding). While in Wawan Susetya's book (2019 : 51), only four things are mentioned without including *wanita* (woman) ownership as a symbol. They are *wisma*, *curiga*, *kukila*, and *turangga* as the identity symbol that are attached to the life of a Javanese

leader. In several shows, both in bumper and news content, Prabowo was always shown by *TV One* greeting and meeting his supporters while standing on the car and being paraded by his supporters, then taking a plane, riding a tank, and riding a horse. According to Sastroatmodjo and Susetyo's writings, horses, tanks, cars, and airplanes are the embodiment of *turangga* or horse for riding. *Turangga* in the concept of modern life certainly can no longer be interpreted as it is but it has developed according to the existing technology which in today's context, it can be in the form of cars, planes, tanks, and so on. From what *TV One* showed regarding Prabowo's *turangga* or prestigious ride ownership, it implies that *TV One* is similar to *Metro TV*, building the image of the person that it supported as the ideal leader concept that referred to the Javanese philosophy.

If Jokowi is attached to the leadership of *Punawakan*, especially Semar, then Prabowo is strong in the *turangga* aspect. *Turangga* is merely a symbol whose meaning is more than what is being displayed. As the ownership of *kukila* or a pet bird which is interpreted as a hobby or thing that can bring joy, *turangga* is a symbol of a path to a glorious tomorrow (Sastroatmodjo, 2006). By using an analogy of the story of Panembahan Senopati and Sang Gagak Rimang, a fight of a knight riding horse who later became a king, it can be concluded that if someone has and rides the right type of horse, the horse will even be able to take its rider to the battlefield, where he will find victory. The presentation of Prabowo with the principle of *turangga* can be interpreted in two terms, namely that Prabowo is a means (symbolized by a horse) or the way for this country to achieve glory, and secondly that Prabowo is the one who can bring this country to glory (shown through his ability to control the horse in the arena). This means that *TV One's* coverage contains the discourse that if this country wants to become a great, glorious country, then "use" Prabowo as a means. The word "use" here means that people must make Prabowo a leader. A great country (which is described as a gallant horse) is considered not enough, and that it still needs a leader who can control and manage it properly and appropriately (the ability to ride and control the horse). To be able to go to these glorious times, a strong and precise horse is also needed (symbolized by the possession of superior breeds of Lusitano). Prabowo is a strong and precise "horse" that can guarantee this country wins on the battlefield (glory). This was reinforced by the scene in the bumper regarding Prabowo's passionate speech on how to build this country into a big country, or the narrative in the Prabowo-Hatta campaign jingle where the country needs a strong leader with its slogan entitled "*Indonesia Bangkit*" (Indonesia Rising). "Who else can bring this country away from adversity? ... Prabowo-Hatta ... When else will we determine the fate of a nation that is still like being colonized? When else? It is now! .. Prabowo Hatta ... Indonesia is Rising". The narration correlates with the use of cars, horses, tanks, helicopters, and planes as symbols of the country's need for Prabowo (Hatta) to bring the country to a more glorious direction (currently considered not glorious as marked by the dictions such as "deterioration and being colonized").

The Javanese leadership philosophy can also be seen from other image constructions, namely as a smart or intelligent person. Both Jokowi and Prabowo were constructed as smart people. Jokowi's intelligence was also constructed by *Metro TV* through his ability to answer all the panelists' questions in the 2014 Presidential and Vice Presidential Debate which defeated Prabowo's abilities. Meanwhile, in the *TV One* report, Prabowo was portrayed as superior, able to answer panelist questions well while Jokowi was not, and submitted every answer to

JK. Intelligence is in the Javanese concept of leadership. Before becoming a king, the heirs of the royal throne were generally cared for by more than one person. The caregivers teach different subjects namely *olahkaprajuritan* (military), *olahkaprajan* (governance), *olahbeksa* (dance) and *olahtembang/swara* (singing), while others teach spirituality, ethics, and warrior's attitude (Moedjanto, 2006). All the abilities or skills are needed as a provision of excellence to become king. What the caregivers teach the princes is an advantage that must also be owned by the future king (president). Jokowi excelled in the field of civil service or governance that was constructed through the reporting of his successes while running his reins of leadership both as Mayor of Surakarta and the Governor of DKI Jakarta, while Prabowo excelled in military service which was constructed through the reporting of his brilliant career while serving as a member of the Indonesian National Army. *OlahKaprajuritan* is one of the determining factors for a person to become a successful leader. Java has the story of JakaTingkir alias Karebet who defeated DadungAwuk which later led him to become Sultan Hadiwijaya, the ruler of Demak Kingdom. In addition to Hadiwijaya, there was also a person who because of his abilities in *olahkeprajan*, became king, namely Sutawijaya, later called Panembahan Senapati. Sutawijaya succeeded in defeating Arya Panangsang who wanted to undermine the power of Demak Sultanate. The physical superiority of a leader is important to gather greater strength, including placing other rulers under their domination. Prabowo's ability to conquer the rebels and his brilliant military career were used by *TV One* as a basis to construct his figure as a candidate for leadership who would restore the authority and greatness of this country through the influence of military power.

Speech expertise, as constructed by aligning Prabowo with several world figures, is also an image construction under the category of intelligence, which is a good trait that must be possessed by leaders as mentioned in "*Negara Kertagama*" book written by EmpuPrapanca. A leader must have *wakjana*, which is the ability to deliver the speech and engage in diplomacy. *Wakjana* is needed by a leader to raise the enthusiasm of his organization's officials. A leader must also be an expert in diplomacy because diplomacy can be an effective means in negotiation with various parties (Fajrieansyah, 2017). A leader must have intelligence, brilliance, skill, and knowledge as what is confirmed in the *Serat Sastra Gending* which refers to the philosophy of Sultan Agung's leadership called *swadanamaharjengtursita*, that a leader must be an intelligent, resourceful, honest, and able to maintain his reputation and good communication among his people (Supadjar, 2001). Prabowo's oration which often emphasized more on the way to restore the sovereignty and dignity of the nation, including seizing assets that are mostly controlled by foreigners, is also mentioned in *Serat Sastra Gending*, which is called *druktisetyagarbarukmi*, that a leader is required to have an impeccable determination to gather all the power and potential for prosperity and national dignity (Supadjar, 2001).

The way to become an ideal leader in Javanese culture is also presented in the Ilmu Hasta Bratha which was introduced through the wayang story of Wahyu Makutharamaact. Hasta Bratha is the discourse of King Rama Wijaya to GunawanWibisana when he was going to lead the Ngalengkadiraja kingdom. Hasta Bratha symbolizes the ideal leadership as a manifestation of eight natural elements, namely; the earth (BatharaEndra), the sun (Bhatara Surya), fire (Bathara Brama), Ocean (BatharaKuwera), the sky (BatharaBaruna), the wind

(Bathara Bayu), the moon (Bathara Chandra), and the stars (Bathara Yama). Someone who can carry out the eight wisdoms or possess the eight qualities above is believed to be the perfect leader. A similar message was also given by Begawan Kesawa Sidi (Bathara Kresna) to Arjuna (Susetya, 2019). A leader must have the characteristics of the earth, sun, fire, water, sky, moon, and stars. A leader who has the nature of the earth is able to be the protector of his people and a generous figure. In a modern context, this philosophy can be interpreted as a leader who is able to prosper his people. Fire symbolizes the strength or ability to provide power for others, the wind represents the character who likes to investigate/conduct research on the field. The stars are associated with high and noble ideals. The moon regards the level of religiosity while the sky represents the breadth of insight, and the sun refers to a leader's ability to provide solutions, inspiration, and guidance for his people. Water represents the ability to adapt to the environment and reasoning attitude (Susetya, 2019), (Abeng, 2016). In the perspective of Hasta Brata pearls of wisdom above, Jokowi has the properties of earth, wind, sun, and water. He has the nature of the earth and also the sun because he is able to provide solutions and insight for his citizens, then the wind because of his nature who likes to "infiltrate"/"blusukan", looking for input downward, and water that thanks to this nature, he can align himself with common people and does not keep his distance to them. Meanwhile, Prabowo is depicted with the strong and decisive nature of fire due to his ability to ignite enthusiasm from his supporters through his speech expertise. In addition, Prabowo's nature of the stars is related to the charismatic nature attached to him who is being compared to Soekarno's persona, and his water character is shown by his friendly nature, not keeping a distance from the people, as illustrated in the media news.

The concept of an ideal leader is also found in Islamic teaching, which refers to the qualities possessed by the highest leader of its people, the prophets, and apostles. The qualities possessed by the prophets and apostles as the best figure of a divine-human are *Sidiq* (true/honest), *amanah* (trustworthy), *fathonah* (smart/intelligent), and *tabligh* (conveying). The opposite of the ideal traits based on the leadership of the Prophet are *kidzib* (dishonest/deceitful), *khianat* (betraying / untrustworthy), *kitman* (not conveying), *jahlun/baladah* (stupid) (Yusmansyah, 2008). The use of the mandatory characteristics of the apostle as reference material in this study is because this concept is in line with the word of God as set out in the Qur'an *surah Al-Ahzab* verse 21 which means: "There has certainly been for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern for anyone whose hope is in Allah and the Last Day and [who] remembers Allah often... ". In the context of the news political battle between *Metro TV* and *TV One*, the ideal image of a leader is similar to that of the prophets and apostles. In this connection, the concept of God's grace as mentioned in the above verse is all matters relating to prosperity, convenience, and the principle of benefits for choosing leaders who have the traits/characters as imaged by each media (referring to the nature of prophets and apostles). The mandatory qualities of the prophets and apostles above can be seen from what is attached to the figures of Jokowi and Prabowo, namely the nature of *fathonah*, intelligent/smart nature. Smart nature needs to be established for a leader's image as a guarantee for the ability to solve every problem that exists at the community level, as well as the ability to deal with other countries.

The ideal leader criteria are not only built by attaching positive qualities to the supported candidates but also by giving negative labels or the opposite characteristics/behavior to the

opposition candidates. This is done to strengthen the impression in public thinking that will ultimately influence their choices about the leaders. *TV One*, for example, constructed Jokowi and JK's negative image by reporting them as hypocritical, deceitful and untrustworthy because their words were unreliable, fickle, always changing, or different from what they had said previously. The words of a leader must be able to be held on to. It was also found in the Javanese philosophy of "*SabdoPandita Ratu*" which means that the words of a leader are promises. The *SabdoPandito Ratu* philosophy even became one of Prabowo's campaign materials and was recorded in a separate article written by Dirgayuza Setiawan (2015), which states that keeping promises is equivalent to trust. The existence of the book strengthens the researchers' assessment regarding the construction of Prabowo's discourse as an ideal leader based on the noble values in Javanese culture. Trust is the main capital for leaders. If trust is lost then a leader will never be able to lead his people. The concept of *SabdoPandita Ratu*, as mentioned in the book above, can be a means used to strengthen Prabowo's party in defeating Jokowi-JK when associated with their lying nature of not keeping promises. That leaders must be able to keep their promises is also found in the Islamic concept. The characteristics, which are contrary to the ideal portrayed of a leader like those of the apostles' as written above are the *kidzib* nature (lying/deceitful), as well as *khianat* (betraying/untrustworthy). Both Prabowo and Jokowi were also displayed as stupid (*jahlun/baladah*) in contrast to the nature of *fathonah*. The nature of *Jahlunin* Jokowi and Prabowo was shown by each media through the display of their inability to answer panelists' questions during the debate. Jokowi's failure in running KJS and KJP on *TV One*'s point of view could also be referred to as *jahlun* or *baladah*, even though in the program of *Metro TV* it was portrayed as superior or successful programs. In addition to being portrayed as stupid, the two candidates were also portrayed as deceitful through the reporting of the installation of disorderly campaign attributes and black campaign efforts to win votes in the 2014 presidential election. *Metro TV* reported that Prabowo used his power in the Indonesian National Army network by deploying officials, distributing rice in no-campaign periods, and sending letters to the teachers with money in it. Meanwhile, by *TV One*, the cheating or betrayal was displayed through the news on the efforts to utilize the power of the National Police, and the findings of the payment of electricity bills (PLN) with Jokowi's the picture.

Metro TV and *TV One News* in the 2014 presidential election was a real example of how the mass media had been misused for its benefits and functions, namely as a tool to gain power. The mass media was used as a political vehicle to gain public support or sympathy through certain images, the starting point of which is the acquisition of popular votes. The choice of news as a tool to win power is not surprising because news as a journalistic product has more advantages than artistic products (other media products). This relates to the normative nature of news which must be value-free so that it is considered more reliable than artistic products, for example, advertisements whose broadcasts are not value-free, due to their commercial nature. Amid the many media choices that can be used to spread messages, studies show that news is still the most trusted medium in spreading messages compared to advertisements or other paid products (O'Neil, Eisenmann, & Holman, 2019). News as a product of mass media has more advantages than other types of media products so that the use of news as a political communication channel, namely the conveyor of campaign messages is more subtle or less obvious. This is where media hegemony comes into play. The concept of hegemony is related

to the ability to influence or control others without physical coercion. The way this is done is through ideology and culture. In other words, the media perform hegemony through persuasive efforts by forming certain thoughts (O'Sullivan, Hartley, & Saunders, Danny; Montgomery, Martin; Fiske, 1998a); (Ibrahim, 1997). Raymond William explained that the power of hegemony is how it creates a certain dominant way of thinking or discourse which is considered true while other discourses are considered wrong (Eriyanto, 2012). In the coverage of Metro TV - TV One, we can very clearly see how the two media have made persuasion efforts by creating certain truths, especially about candidates and groups being supported and asserting that others are wrong, concerning the political opponents of the candidate being promoted.

News has the power to create an image of a certain thing or about a character. The image will form an impression. Impressions as written above have an important role because our impressions of other people form the basis for making some decisions in life (Tubbs & Moss, 2011). In the context of an election, the news is used as a tool to create a good impression in the eyes and minds of the public, and ultimately influence their decisions at the voting booth. By using mass media, political elites are not only able to reflect but also help to create mass expectations and myths that can be widely accepted (Nimmo, 2000). The presidential candidates have been facilitated by the mass media to introduce themselves and campaign for their political programs. Here, the mass media not only acts as a channel and source of information regarding candidates for voters, but also functions as a tool to shape an image through the political programs offered, or political discourse as they wish (Sulistiyowati, 2006). Through the construction of images in the news, it can also be seen that certain expectations are created from the candidate. Certain myths were also built to strengthen this political branding strategy. What hopes are raised or stuck in the minds of the public are of course related to the character/traits built by the character being carried, by comparing the negative character of the opponent, to strengthen and solidify the public's perception of their support for the 2014 presidential election. as mandatory for politicians. Imaging can create an impression, generate support, as well as become the key to how public support can be maintained (Arifin, 2006). The mass media has great power to do this through its ability to package and control information to a very wide audience, at a time that is simultaneous, fast and the message multiplied. From that, we can see why the dominant culture and religion is used as a reference source in shaping the image of the candidate.

Although using Javanese culture and Islam as a reference for construction, unfortunately, the behavior of the media in building an image to win a candidate is supported, instead of opposite to the Javanese attitude of life and the values taught in Islam. This is where the basis for assessing the existence of commodification of culture and religion is carried out by the media to hegemony the community. Culture and religion were used as tools to win candidates for support. The media were involved in efforts to attack each other and bring down each other to raise a supported figure. One news item was responded to by the appearance of other news that was contrary to the opposition media.

In the view of Javanese society, such behavior is called childlike behavior or is called Javanese who are not yet Javanese, or *durungnjawa / durungnjawani*. This concept is related to the recognition of the Javanese. A person who has not been considered Javanese is considered uncultured, ignorant of rules, even ignorant of manners so that he is seen as a

child whose behavior is wrong due to ignorance of rules, ethics, or something. A person is considered Javanese (already Javanese / *njawani*), one of which is seen from the way he speaks and respects others (Mulder, 2001). Javanese people are very socially harmonious. Unity, harmony is the main thing. It is not surprising that the Javanese will always get advice about it is better to yield than to impose their will (patience). Therefore, quarrels and disputes are things that Javanese people don't like because they can destroy the value of a harmonious life which is one of the main values in life. To achieve the concept of *rukun*, respect and courtesy are the keys that must be held in society (Mulder, 2001). Obviously, in the coverage of Metro TV and TV One, the concept of mutual respect and courtesy was not found because each piece of news was used as a means of attacking each other, a tool of rebuttal, a means of bringing down opponents. This practice is clearly at odds with the Javanese concept of life. Meanwhile, the image attached to the two candidates is one of them as an ideal leader in the view of Javanese society.

In dealing with other people, the Javanese also have to show *tepa slira* (apply something on one's terms). Therefore, if you want to do something you have to think about whether it will be fun if you apply it to yourself. The practice of understanding the concept is stated in commands such as, "don't annoy others, don't insult others, don't irritate others, be careful not to hurt other people's feelings, don't make others lose face, etc." (Mulder, 2001). In reporting the two media, there is nothing that applies to that concept. Each media insists on their respective opinions to produce a discourse according to their respective media. The sentences in the news, pictures, cutscenes, were deliberately chosen as part of favoring a candidate to be supported by insulting and humiliating the opponent. In fact, to control oneself, in Javanese society the term *laku* or ritual forms of concern are known whose main purpose is to control lust / bad things to create harmony, and harmony (Susetya, 2019). This is represented by a *sareh* (calm) attitude. Even if there are things that are not approved, the Javanese do not show their disapproval in the form of open protest, but in the form of *pasemon* (a Java proverb or soft innuendo). That means that the delivery of messages is vague or through parables or symbols so that there are no harsh, radical, painful elements, or things that can harm harmony in a relationship (Hadisutrisno, 2009).

In the perspective of religion, especially Islam, it is also inappropriate because one another is vilifying one another, indulging in ugliness for the sake of ugliness to increase the degree of the supported figure. How the media is used to create a positive image of a figure is carried out by not only showing but also indulging the bad image of the opponent's figure. From a religious perspective, that behavior against the Koran and also the Hadith. In the Al Quran, for example, it can be seen in Surah Al Hujurat verses 11-12 regarding the prohibition of making fun of or slandering one another because Muslims are brothers and must maintain harmony.

5. CONCLUSION

From the analysis of the news coverage broadcasted by *Metro TV* and *TV One* during the 2014 presidential election campaign, it can be concluded that the commodification of politics was carried out by the two media on Javanese culture and Islamic values, especially those concerning ideal leader. Commodification was not conducted frankly or subtly but vaguely through physical symbols as what was done by the candidates in political constellation such

aswearing religious clothing symbols like *koko* clothes, Moslem cap, sarong, and so on. Commodification was also carried out through the construction of identity. In political battles, candidates are nothing but products that are "sold" or "offered" to the public (consumers) to be bought (voted). Therefore, an identity or what is referred to as a "brand" is needed to facilitate consumers in choosing the product (Wasesa, 2011). In a political context, identity is a brand that symbolizes a product (candidate). This is based on some research which concluded that candidates or politicians need to pay attention to their personalities. An attractive politician's personality can influence the increase in votes (Wasesa, 2011). The construction of a positive image by displaying attractive personalities to the public is one form of political strategy that is quite effective to attract public sympathy which is expected to give their vote in the election. A positive image is even believed to be the most important part in growing the voters' preference toward certain candidates or parties. Positive images become a means to attract public attention without the need for material stimulation. Thus in the 2014 presidential election, the brand offered to the public was the ideal leader. The term ideal referred to here is based on the concepts of Javanese and Islamic leaderships. Javanese and Islamic leadership aspects are used as a reference to present political messages because both Jokowi and Prabowo are Javanese and Moslems. People will always internalize the values that exist in their culture. To be accepted by the environment in which they live, each member of the community must adapt, internalize, and uphold the values that exist in the culture / developing community. Javanese and Islamic references were chosen because Javanese are the most dominant ethnicity and Islam is a religion with the highest number of followers in Indonesia. The combination of philosophy or noble values in Javanese and Islamic leadership aspects is indeed a political strategy for gaining the most dominant public support that is expected to lead the candidate to victory. The use of cultural or religious values as a source of political image construction is legitimate as long as there is a genuine intention to realize it, or if the original conditions are true. However, when noble values are only used for personal / group benefit, the sanctity of the noble values contained therein is feared to be damaged due to the construction of incorrect perceptions about the Javanese as well as Muslims themselves.

6. REFERENCES

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