Reconsidering the Stigma of Political Opportunism Among the Kiai: A Critique of the Modernist Perspective

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Abstract

This study is rooted in a deep dissatisfaction with research that stigmatises the political activities of kiai as opportunist. Using an empirical basis, this article examines the political activities of the kiai during the internal conflicts of the Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB, National Awakening Party), hoping to show that the political activities of kiai are not opportunistic. Bourdieu's theory of social practice, with its conceptual framework (i.e. habitus, field, and capital) is borrowed to examine the political activities of kiai. This article presents qualitative research using an emic approach. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies. This study finds that the political activities of the kiai during the PKB's internal conflicts were not opportunistic but rather a social praxis, unique in its representation of dialectic between the kiai's symbolic capital within the PKB and their application of their pesantren habitus and the Islamic value of Ahlusunnah wal jamaah (Aswaja). Politics, as viewed by the kiai, is a tool for realising truth and justice (Iqomatul Haq wal 'adl). They attempted to create balance by applying their pesantren habitus in political life to ensure that the PKB continued to follow the values of Aswaja Islam. The kiai, who had previously supported Gus Dur in the PKB's first internal conflict, became critical and shifted their support to Alwi Shihab during the PKB's first internal conflict, advising Gus Dur to control his ego, position himself correctly, and be consistent in his speech and actions while leading and administering the PKB.

Keywords: *Politics, Kiai*, *Pesantren, Habitus, Conflict*

Introduction

Research into the political activities of the *kiai* in the Islamic organisation Nahdlatul Ulama (henceforth NU) has often involved stigmatisation. A negative portrayal of *kiai*'s political activities during the Old Order was presented, for example, by Ernst Utrecht (1959),

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who identified NU as an extremely opportunistic party. Similarly, Mochtar Naim suggested that the NU acted opportunistically in its political activities (Naim, 1960, p.159). Daniel Lev (1966) wrote that the opportunism of the NU was widely accepted, despite some leaders being excessively opportunistic.[2] Arnold Brackman depicted the organisation as a free agent that frequently affiliated itself with the highest bidder, willing to work with anyone, even the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI, Communist Party of Indonesia), so long as their financial demands were met and their religious sensitivities were not disturbed (Brackman, 1963, p.173).[3] Similar opportunism during the New Order was described by Munir Mulkan, who argued that NU used a *fiqhiyah* approach to legislate religion in accordance with its theological understandings in the face of its objective socio-political situation. As a result of this approach, the political attitudes and behaviours of NU changed drastically. Where, in the 1982 election and previously, NU had issued a *fatwa* (decree) requiring Muslims to vote for Indonesia's Islamic party, in the 1987 election the organisation issued an opposite *fatwa*, requiring members to vote for the dominant Partai Golongan Karya (Golkar, Working Groups Party).[4]

Rooted in dissatisfaction with this stigmatisation,[5] this study uses an empirical basis to examine the shift in political support among the *kiai khos* during PKB's second internal conflict. This shift in support, from Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) to Alwi Shihab, is interesting to consider for several reasons. *First,* some—such as Kamarudin (2013), Imam Suherman, and Firman Noor[6]—

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2 See also Lev, 1966, pp. 105-263.

3 For further detail, see Fealy, 2009, pp. 4–7. One *kiai* and NU politician considered opportunist is KH. Idham Chalid. Also see Fealy in Muhajir 2007, pp. ix–xiii.

4 For further discussion, see Mulkan, 1992 p. 114.

5 Inspired by Fealy, 2009, pp. 1–15. Fealy wrote that two main academic discourses have emerged regarding the historiography of the NU. The first is critical of the NU, and may be considered dominated by modernist discourses. The second, which uses a sympathetic approach, may be considered a discourse that respects tradition.

6 Imam Suherman and Firman Noor, Resolusi Konflik Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa: Studi Kasus Tahun 2008–2011, Seminar Paper, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Indonesia, 2013.

have considered this a form of opportunism, which they claim characteristic of NU. This study, however, indicates that the PKB's second internal conflict was rooted in the pragmatic issue of which position best reflected the party's foundational values. Second, the *kiai khos* were created and popularised as a group by Gus Dur to improve his bargaining power with the Central Axis. The *kiai khos* were senior religious leaders who provided religious knowledge to the members of NU. They had long supported the policies and political activities of Gus Dur, including in the PKB's first internal conflict. This study uses Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, and capital to examine the shifting political support of the *kiai khos* during the PKB's second internal conflict and show that it was not opportunistic.

Understanding the Modernist Perspective

Behind the critique of the *kiai khos* and their shift in political support as opportunistic is a dominant modernist perspective. This perspective is one used by people "outside" NU to understand the political activities of the *kiai* through an etic approach (*scientist point of view*), i.e. with distance between the observer and the observed. This modernist perspective assumes that *kiai*, as economic beings, only consider their own benefits and interests. This perspective represents the rational choice theory promoted by James S. Coleman (2010), as well as the social exchange theory of George C. Homans (Ritzer, 2012). In the theory of rational choice, human beings are assumed to actively choose actions that will maximise their profits/benefits while minimising their costs/losses. Meanwhile, the theory of social exchange explains the principle of rational choice by assuming that human social behaviours represent the exchange between two parties, the seen and unseen, and frequently manifested through the negotiation of cost and reward. According to this theory, in

dealing with outside offers, individuals are motivated essentially by calculations of cost and reward. As such, human behaviour is at its essence economic (material/non-material), intended to reap the most reward for the least cost (Anand, Pattanaik, and Puppe, 2009, p. 156; see also Bungin, 2007, p.40).

The main supporters of such a perspective are modernist Muslims in Indonesia, as well as Western scholars and observers. Modernist Muslims may be defined as those who support the reformist movements that began to emerge and develop in the late 19th century, characterised by an acceptance of *ijtihad*,[7] the adoption of modern technology, and the "purification" of Islam from syncretic cultural elements (Asyari, 2010, p.16; see also Noer, 1994, p.114). These modernists are committed to removing non-Islamic elements from the faith, and adapting Islamic teachings to accommodate modern technology, organisations, and education. They criticise the religious faith and traditional practices, which they see as not being based on Islam's primary sources, mixing Islamic doctrine with non-Islamic teachings, and distancing Muslims from the true spirit of Islam. In their opinion, traditionalist Muslims seek only to promote their personal and community interests through their political activities. Such a perspective informs the negative stereotyping of *kiai*'s political activities as mentioned above.

The modernist perspective's greatest weakness is its tendency to negatively characterise religious practices and the traditional political behaviours of religious leaders. This perspective also ignores the fact that religious leaders, in this case the *kiai*, do not exist within only one world. Studies have identified many models and types of *kiai*. For example, Suprayogo (1998) identifies four types of *kiai*. *First*, spiritual *kiai*, the *kiai* who only administer and teach at *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) and concentrate on

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[7] The word *ijtihad* denotes 'an opinion or interpretation'. It indicates the use of one's abilities and mind to consider the rules embedded within the Qur'an, following certain criteria. A *mujtahid* is a person who does *ijtihad*. See Team for the Formulation of the Greater Dictionary of the Indonesian Language. (Ijtihad, 1990).

worship. *Second*, advocate *kiai*, those *kiai* who teach actively at *pesantren* but are also concerned with social empowerment. *Third*, adaptive political *kiai*, those *kiai* who are close to the government and show concern for political organisation and power. *Fourth*, critical political *kiai*, those *kiai* who show concern for political organisation and power, but are critical of the government. A different classification of *kiai* has been offered by Turmudi (2004) and Wartono (2003). Seeing *kiai* leadership as generally focusing attention on cultural and political aspects, Turmudi identifies *kiai* as *kiai pesantren*, *kiai tarekat*, *kiai politik*, and *kiai panggung*.[8] Aside from this diverse typology, there is *de facto* evidence that the *kiai* have contribute roles in their communities. Clifford Geertz (1959), for example, writes that *kiai* serve as cultural brokers, holding back the negative influences of cultural transformations on social life. Meanwhile, Hiroko Horikoshi (1987) writes that the *kiai* do not serve as mere cultural brokers, but also as bringers of change and balance in the midst of modernisation. *Kiai* are respected individuals and problem solvers in their communities.

As such, it is not simple to generalise about the political activities of *kiai*, given their diverse classifications and roles. *Kiai* may occupy diverse roles depending on their educational, economic, cultural, political, and leadership backgrounds. Likewise, their different levels of devotion can be seen from their educational background and knowledge of Islam, as well as their positions within Islamic organisations. This all indicates the complexity of investigating *kiai* and the traditional power relations between

[8] A *kiai pesantren* is a *kiai* focused primarily on teaching at the *pesantren*. Such *kiai* are greatly respected by *santri* and by the communities around the *pesantren*. *Kiai tarekat* are those who focus their activities on developing the mind and heart. *Kiai politik* are those involved in practical politics to further the NU. Meanwhile, *kiai panggung* are those *kiai* who seek to promote Islamic *dakwah* through sermons. Turmudi's research also indicates that, in reality, a *kiai* may fall under more than one category. A *kiai politik* may simultaneously be a *kiai pesantren* and a *kiai panggung*, or a *kiai tarekat* may serve simultaneously as a *kiai pesantren*. Similarly, Wartono identifies three categories of *kiai*: organic intellectuals, traditional intellectuals, and simultaneous intellectuals. These categories were formulated based on research into the function of the *kiai* within the state under Gus Dur, using a Gramscian perspective.

them (Dirjosantoso, 1999).[9] Based on this explanation, the stigma of opportunism with which *kiai* have been branded, seems quite shallow. Modernism suffers the fallacy of dramatic instance, owing to its tendency for overgeneralisation, using only one or two cases to make a general argument.

Table 1:
Assumptions, Characteristics, and Shortcomings of the Modernist Perspective

Assumptions and Characteristics	Represents the theories of rational choice and social exchange using an etic point of view (scientific point of view).
	(1) *Kiai*, as people, actively consider how they can maximise the benefits to them. *(2)* *Kiai* are rational actors who act based on economic calculations. (3) The actions of *kiai* are exchanges between two parties, and employ cost-benefit calculations in their interactions with outside parties.
	Depicts the political activities of the *kiai* using an outsider cultural perspective, constructing the culture of the *kiai* through the context of an outsider culture. Limited observations conducted, without broad, in-depth, or detailed interviews.
Shortcomings	(1) Not all actors behave rationally; some mistakes are frequently repeated. (2) The boundaries of rationality are too narrow, and thus frequently ignore the motives of altruism and humanitarianism. (3) Ignores structural considerations, even though the political activities of *kiai* cannot be viewed without considering the influences of the social structures and contexts.
Conclusion	The stigma of opportunism indicates the limited depth of modernist analysis, as it ignores the structural values, norms, traditions, and cultures that provide the context for the actions of the *kiai*. Research results lack depth, as they limit themselves to the negative stereotypes of the actions of the *kiai*, using an external perspective without comparing it with an internal perspective.

[9] As writen by Abdurrahman Wahid, in Introduction pp. xii-xiii.

Habitus and the *Pesantren* Field

Bourdieu's theory of social practice and its conceptual framework (habitus, field, and capital) are used here to examine the political activities of the *kiai khos* during the PKB's second internal conflict. Bourdieu defines habitus as a subjective structure, one internalised within one's unconscious mind (Bourdieu, 1992, p.53). Field, meanwhile, is an objective structure, in which people establish relations and practice their individual habitus (Bourdieu & Waqcuant, 1992, p. 97). Capital, meanwhile, is the capacity and property possessed by someone, which determines its position in the social hierarchy and social relations (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 112). There are four types of capital: social capital, economic capital, cultural capital, and symbolic capital. According to Bourdieu, habitus, field, and capital are all interlinked, and create what may be termed social practice.

Habitus, field, and capital are described as forming a structuring structure, one that depicts people as influencing and changing their environment, as well as a structured structure, as a space in which social interactions are produced by people's behaviour. Habitus can only be manifested within practice, and are highly influenced by the capital possessed by agents, while the field is an expansive structure in which the habitus is situated. For Bourdieu, habitus is a system of dispositions, influenced by agents' backgrounds and classes. According to Bourdieu, once habitus is formed, it tends to serve as a reference or guideline for agents' actions, as habitus is enduring. However, at a certain point, habitus must adapt to the field, and as the field changes the habitus also changes. As the *kiai khos* are part of the pesantren community, their activities are guided by the pesantren habitus, characterised by simple living, surrender, *zuhud, tawaddlu'*, and life as worship, as well as a devotion to upholding the truth and justice; this latter point serves as an important influence on the political activities of the *kiai*.

Habitus is constructed through three elements: processes,

personality, and social logics (Bourdieu, 1984, p.24). These three aspects thus shape the views of the *santri* (students at *pesantren*) and would-be *kiai*. For example, the political views of *kiai* are continuously socialised using various arguments, both scientific and religious, such as through the passing of *fatwa* mandating certain behaviours among communities. Such *fatwa* shape the personalities of the *santri*, who respect the *kiai* for their attitudes, speech patterns, and comportment. This personality shapes their logic, and after the *santri* graduate and leave the *pesantren* they use this logic when interacting with their communities. In other words, the education received at the *pesantren* shapes the habitus of the *santri* (Febrina, Mustika & Dedees, 2014).

In *pesantren*, the *kiai* occupy a special and honoured position. Their everyday behaviours and activities offer guidance to the *santri* and to the local communities. The *kiai* are perceived as being devout individuals, with extensive religious knowledge and better character than ordinary people. As the *kiai khos* were born, educated, and raised in a *pesantren* context, their positions and habitus were quite similar. Of the three *kiai khos* with important roles in NU during the period studied, only K. H. Abdullah Faqih held social and academic networks that reached the religious scholars in Saudi Arabia, as he had studied in Mecca under Sayyid Alwi bin Abbas al Maliki. These networks gave him greater capital in a *pesantren* context. Meanwhile, K. H. Mas Muhammad Subadar and K. H. Abdurrahman Chudlori only had social and cultural capital among the *nahdliyin*, *pesantren*, and their communities. It was the social, cultural, and symbolic capital of K. H. Abdullah Faqih that gave him an edge over the other *kiai khos* when a leader was chosen for the Langitan Forum.

Within NU *pesantren*, there is a phrase *sami'na wa atho'na* (I listen, and I obey). This phrase indicates the patronistic relations between the *kiai* and the santri. The santri are expected to *tawadlu'* the *kiai* not only in spiritual affairs, but also in worldly affairs, including political affairs. The *santri* do not only respect the *kiai*, but also their sons and even their grandsons. In the context of such

patronistic relations, the three *kiai khos* were the leaders of *pesantren* with thousands of students. K. H. Abdullah Faqih led the Langitan *pesantren* in Tuban, K. H. Mas Muhammad Subadar led the Roudlatul Ulum *pesantren* in Pasuruan, and K. H. Abdurrahman Chudlori led the API *pesantren* in Tegalrejo, Magelang. Langitan is the oldest *pesantren* in East Java, and as such occupies a central position. It has produced numerous *kiai* who have gone on to establish their own *pesantren*, including K. H. Hasyim Asy'ari, the grandfather of Gus Dur, founder of NU, and the Tebuireng *pesantren* in Jombang. K. H. Chudlori, the father of K. H. Abdurrahman Chudlori, was a student of this *pesantren*. Based on the networks discussed here, it is clear that the NU *kiai* were one large family, united not only by Aswaja Islam, but also kinship bonds. These bonds were an important part of the *kiai*'s existence.

Capital in the Power Relations of the *Kiai*

The legitimacy of the *kiai* within *pesantren* is strongly determined by the capital they hold. Bourdieu recognises four types of capital, all of which may be held by a *kiai*: economic, social, cultural, and symbolic. The land owned by *pesantren*, as well as the various means of production and finance are considered economic capital. This is the most easily converted to other forms of capital. Social networks and kinship bonds between *kiai* and social position are considered social capital. Knowledge of religion and its transmission, including the preparation of diplomas, *tsaqofah*, speaking and writing abilities, as well as rhetoric, are considered forms of cultural capital. Charisma, the titles of *kiai khos* or Wali Allah (*Waliyullah*), and elements related to symbolic power such as official positions, titles, and social/institutional consecration are included as symbolic capital.

According to Bourdieu, every field contains a dominant and dominated group. Dominance is determined by the situations, strategies, and capitals possessed by agents, which shape the power

relations between them. Capital, thus, is the principle cause of differentiation and hierarchisation within the field (Bourdieu, 1995). In NU tradition, *kiai khos* occupy a special position and are greatly honoured. They occupied such a dominant because they possessed all forms of capital, not only social (*pesantren* networks), cultural (genealogy and knowledge), and symbolic (titles and prestige) capital, but also financial capital. These *kiai khos* are descended from the great *kiai*, owners of large *pesantren* and their facilities. However, studies have found that cultural and symbolic capital are more prominent in the legitimisation of *kiai* than social and economic capital. Dirdjosanjoto (1999), for example, notes that the legitimacy of *kiai* power is founded primarily on their command of cultural and symbolic capital. The greater the knowledge of a *kiai*, the greater his potential charisma; the greater the charisma of the *kiai*, the greater his power and influence (Horikoshi, 1987).

The involvement of *kiai* in the PKB indicated an expansion in the space in which they could become active, reaching from the *pesantren* to politics. The political openness following the end of the New Order offered NU members the ability to establish their own political party, one through which they could channel their aspirations. Although its establishment was coloured by controversy, the PKB represented NU's response to its decades-long lack of a vehicle for conveying and manifesting its political aspirations. This party was able to stimulate the *kiai*, making them more active in political abilities than they had been in the New Order era. The *kiai* enthusiastically supported the establishment of the PKB, certain that it would further the interests of Muslims and the greater good of the nation, reflecting the status of Islam as *rahmatan lil 'alamiin* (a blessing for all). They saw it necessary to promote the values of Aswaja Islam using a political approach.

NU's expansion into the political sphere brought with it changes in patterns of dominance and the role of capital. K. H. Abdurrahman Wahid (henceforth Gus Dur) took a dominant position within the PKB, replacing the *kiai*. His dominance indicates

the importance of social capital, along with cultural and symbolic capital. The *kiai* and Gus Dur possessed a relatively similar habitus. Although Gus Dur was also influenced by the habitus of the Arab and Western world, the *pesantren* habitus remained dominant. Gus Dur and *kiai khos* also occupied similar economic positions. They were all descended from great *kiai* who owned expansive *pesantren* and their facilities. However, they had different social, cultural, and symbolic capitals. Gus Dur had more social and cultural capital than the *kiai khos*, resulting primarily from his intellectual capabilities and genealogy. He occupied a dominant position owing to his networks, patron-client relations, habitus (resulting from *pesantren*, Arab, and Western influences), as well as his ability to speak and work together with different religious, ethnic, national, and ideological groups. As the son of a government official (specifically, Minister of Religion), from his youth Gus Dur had interacted with diverse groups visiting his father. Gus Dur's symbolic capital was also stronger than that of the *kiai khos*, as he was known not only as a *kiai*, but also as a scholar, cultural critic, and politician.

According to Bourdieu, to improve one's position within the field, one can exchange or convert one form of capital for another. Social, cultural, and economic capital can be converted to symbolic capital, and then reconverted to economic capital through an economisation program. In the PKB, the economic, social, and cultural capital possessed by the *kiai* was converted by Gus Dur into symbolic capital: the *kiai khos*. This was done to improve his political bargaining position vis-à-vis the Central Axis. The PKB's political power itself was insufficient to support Gus Dur's position in parliament.

Gus Dur skilfully created new symbols within the political sphere. This indicates that Gus Dur was capable of using his habitus and transforming his social and cultural capital into political power. The role and charisma of the *kiai khos* were used in monumental and important political activities. Where the *kiai khos* were attendant, the media provided coverage, and thus in a short time they received

national attention. Gus Dur and the *kiai khos* maintained mutually beneficial relationships. For the *kiai*, the title of *kiai khos* offered them social, political, and financial benefits. Gus Dur worked hard to ensure that the *kiai khos* became not only *kiai pesantren*, but also resected national figures. Meanwhile, the social and symbolic capital of the *kiai khos* offered Gus Dur political support and legitimacy. As in an orchestra, there existed mutual symbolism, with each voice reinforcing the other. Gus Dur was active in practical politics, promoting the aspirations of the *kiai*, while the *kiai khos* remained active in the spiritual domain and in gathering public support and legitimacy for Gus Dur.

The increased social and economic status of the *kiai khos*, from local figures to national ones, brought with it increased capital and solidified their position within the PKB (Ngatawi, 2009, p.178). The *kiai khos*, alongside Gus Dur, became important actors within the party. Their networks, as part of their social capital, were no longer limited to other *kiai*, but also included government officials and national entrepreneurs. Likewise, their capacity as *kiai*, as part of their cultural capital, became included in politics on a broader level, reaching the national scale. Previously, they had only used their capital to teach at their *pesantren* and give sermons within a certain distance of their schools. Their views regarding *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), which had previously only been shared through such forums as *bahtsul masa'ail* and *halaqoh* among *kiai*, became part of the public discourse owing to widespread media coverage. The views of the *kiai* were no longer limited to *fiqh ibadah, munakahat* or *muamalah*, but also expanded to *fiqh siyasah*.

The positions of Gus Dur and the *kiai khos* after this expansion of the field can be seen from their different forms of capital.

Table 2
The Positions of Gus Dur and the *Kiai Khos* Following the Expansion of the Field

Name	Position, Reputation, and Power Influences
K. H. Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur)	1. The strong man in the NU and PKB 2. Through his networks (including the patronage of *kiai*/santri), genius, education, and career, he positioned himself at the peak of authority among ulama. This authority included the guideline *sami'na wa atha'na* (listen and obey), as the ulama are viewed as the heirs of the Prophet. As such, the *kiai* were expected to listen to and obey Gus Dur, rather than the opposite. If Gus Dur were to listen to and obey the various *kiai*, it would only be because their view reflected that of Gus Dur. Where their views were opposed to his, he would not follow. 3. Gus Dur used the *kiai khos* discourse to support his political legitimacy, improve his bargaining power with the Central Axis and improve the socio-economic status of the *kiai khos* and their communities
K. H. Abdullah Faqih	1. A senior and respected *kiai* (*khos*), influential both in NU and in Langitan. 2. The main reference for the Nahdliyin, particularly as related to public interest; he studied in Mecca under Sayyid Alwi bin Abbas al Maliki (the father of Sayyid Muhammad bin Alwi al Maliki) 3. The Langitan *pesantren* served as the basis for the political consolidation of Gus Dur and the PKB.
K. H. Mas Muh Subadar	1. Spokesman for the *kiai khos*, administrator of the *pesantren* Roudlotul Ulum, Besuk Pasuruan, Rois Syuriah NU (Pasuruan Branch), and Deputy Syuriah of NU, East Java Branch. 2. Education completed entirely within *pesantren* (Besuk, Pasuruan and Lirboyo, Kediri, East Java)

K. H. Abdurrahman Chudlori	1. Administrator of the API Tegalrejo *pesantren*, Magelang, Central Java, an alumnus of the Ploso *pesantren*, Kediri, East Java. 2. The *kiai khos* who laid the foundation for *kiai* politics and head of the Syura Council of the PKNU's Central Administrative Council. 3. The API Tegalrejo *pesantren* is one of the most influential in Central Java.

The Political Contestations of the *Kiai*

Bourdieu understands the field as a place in which members of society and social groups compete to improve and maintain their positions, both in power and in the accumulation of economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital. In such contestation, people's habitus plays a determinant factor, for it determines their ability to utilise their economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital, as well as to accumulate these forms of capital (Dirdjosantojo, 1999, p. xxvi).

Through the lens of Bourdieu's theory of social practice, the PKB's second internal power may be seen as a symbolic contestation between Gus Dur and the *kiai khos* over the questions of constitutionality versus unconstitutionality, inclusive Islam versus exclusive Islam, and *kiai khos* versus *kiai kampung*. Those supporting Gus Dur viewed the non-activation of Alwi–Syaifullah and the holding of the PKB's Second National Caucus in Semarang as constitutional, while those following the *kiai khos* held the opposite view. Gus Dur insisted that the PKB had to be an inclusive party (as a representation of NU's own inclusiveness), and therefore could not use Islam as its sole basis; meanwhile, the *kiai khos* took a more exclusive view of Islam. According to the *kiai*, as a party founded by NU, the PKB had to be rooted in Aswaja Islam. The *kiai* did not approve of the term *kiai khos*, particularly its being contrasted with *kiai kampung*. They held that the distinction between *kiai khos* and *kiai kampung* was created by Gus Dur to promote his own political interests.

Based on this explanation, it can be inferred that the PKB's second internal conflict was not static, but dynamic. The blocs of Dur and the *kiai khos* were competing for influence and the achievement of one single goal: victory. The habitus and capitals of these groups were highly visible in this contestation. Each claimed to have the strongest basis in the party's constitution and the most correct path. Each claimed that it was using its capital to cultivate influence among supporters and erode the influence of its opponents.

Contestations between different discourses were nothing new in NU. As a religious organisation (*jam'iyyah diniyah*), NU established several *Lajnah Bahtsul Masa'il* (special sections). *Forum Bahtsul Masa'il* accommodated diverse views that spanned the spectrum from approval to disapproval. As such, discussions and findings of fact, as well as the identification of Quranic grounds for decisions, required considerable time. Those supporting and opposing certain views would spend days debating their views using their religious citations. Where no resolution or compromise could be reached, decisions would be made following the two or three most common views, which were viewed as equally correct. The diverse views held by NU members would not be the basis for arguments. None were considered the most correct at the expense of others. All views could be considered correct, so long as they had a legitimate basis in *fiqh. Fiqh* occupied a central position in the social lives of NU members. In their everyday activities, including their political activities, they considered the *fiqh* perspective. Such attention is given to *fiqh* as it is considered the standard for determining whether or not an activity is acceptable. *Fiqh*, understood as knowledge of religious laws and their basis in scripture, granted all views—both pro and con—equal opportunities in the resolution of different problems. All views, pro and con, had strong arguments. This "agree to disagree" mechanism guaranteed a flexible decision making within the organisation (Wahid, 2007). As such, contestation was a deep-rooted tradition in *pesantren*.

The symbolic contestation between Gus Dur and the *kiai*

khos during the PKB's second internal conflict reflected the internal dynamics of two different groups within the organisation. Gus Dur represented inclusive Islam (realistic), while the *kiai khos* represented exclusive Islam (idealistic). Each group had its own basis in *fiqh*. This symbolic contestation also reaffirmed the position of Gus Dur as the dominant class and the *kiai* as the marginal class. Gus Dur's dominance in the PKB also indicates the habitus and capital he held, including social, cultural, and symbolic capital: social capital in the form of national and international networks; cultural capital in the form of knowledge and scholarship; and symbolic capital in the form of formal and informal titles and awards.

The unilateral non-activation of Alwi–Syaifullah, the establishment of the PKB as an inclusive party not based solely in Aswaja Islam, and the delegitimisation of the *kiai khos* through the creation of alternative *kiai* (i.e. the *kiai kampung*) shows Gus Dur's power within the party. His cultural legitimacy, in the form of his relations and his structural offices (i.e., as head of the party administration's Syura Council), not only leant him a position of strength, but also accelerated his entry into what Robert Michels calls the "iron law of oligarchy". According to Michels, any democratic organisation, no matter how modern, cannot entirely reject tendencies and practices that suggest a non-democratic attitude. The most important characteristic of this oligarchic tendency in political parties is the leadership's tendency to ignore or reject all criticism (Michaels, 1984).

The *kiai*, meanwhile, felt uncomfortable with the authoritarian actions of Gus Dur. The *kiai* regularly provided advice during meetings intended to resolve the conflict within the PKB. They did not remain silent, simply praying and saying their remembrances (*zikir*), but actively spoke out. The *kiai* considered several of Gus Dur's controversial public policies, as head of the PKB's Syura Council, to have violated the party's constitution and religious norms. They believed that Gus Dur's personal dominance within the PKB would lead only to *madharat*, i.e. internal conflict.

Responding to the advice of the *kiai*, Gus Dur not only showed opposition, but deliberately initiated more progressive manoeuvres by establishing the Majelis Silaturrahmi Ulama Rakyat (Masura, the Council for Social Interactions among the Ulama). This forum was intended to provide the *kiai kampung* with a means of discourse while simultaneously delegitimising the *kiai khos*.[10] The *kiai kampung* were depicted as *kiai* who remained sincere in their public service, while the *kiai khos* were depicted as having become elites trapped by political intrigue, and thus distant from the common people. Gus Dur believed that the time of the *kiai khos* was over, and that they must be replaced with *kiai kampung*. The *kiai kampung* were small-scale *kiai*, leading such religious institutions as *langgar*, *mushola*, mosques, and small *pesantren*. In general, they were active at the grassroots, involved in activities and reaching places that were untouched by those in power. *Kiai kampung* were presented as best knowing the pulse of the common people. Although they had little social and cultural capital, the *kiai kampung* were intensively involved with the faithful. As such, they were seen as being uncontaminated by practical political interests, lacking political ambition and the desire to gain power and high office (Asfar, 2007).

The willingness of the *kiai khos* to criticise the controversial actions of Gus Dur emerged after the latter declared the PKB to be inclusive, unilaterally non-activated Alwi Shihab–Syaifullah Yusuf, and held the Second National Caucus in Semarang. This was followed by a shift in political support to Alwi Shihab, extraordinary as to that point they had approved of Gus Dur's political activities. According to the *kiai*, Gus Dur's political activities were reckless and unconstitutional, and his personal dominance would lead to sub-optimal party operations (Arifin, 2008, p.151). Borrowing from

[10] Information on the activities and establishment of Masura is available through the newsletters accessible on www.dpp-pkb.org. Including "Tujuh Ribu *Kiai* Kampung Ngaji Bersama Wahid" and "Wahid: *Kiai* Harus Senantiasa Bersama Rakyat," first newsletter, pp. 8–9. "Masura Jawa Timur: *Kiai* Kampung Padati Masjid Sunan Ampel", and "Masura Jawa Tengah: Kaum Muslimin Juga Harus Mengetahui Makna Al-Qur'an", May 2007 newsletter, p. 5.

Max Weber's concept of charisma, Gus Dur's charisma could not be institutionalised in a permanent form, as doing so would sever the inter-institutional relations provided for within the PKB's constitution. This can be seen, for example, in the special position taken by the PKB's Syura Council while it was under the leadership of Gus Dur, who was simultaneously a member of the Tanfidz Council, the party's main decision-making body. Gus Dur, thus, had a determinant role in setting party policy (Analisis, 1994).

Regarding the contestation between Gus Dur and the *kiai khos*, Choirul Anam stated that the fragmentation between them was no longer a mere difference of opinion. As he argued:

> There was an anti-climax of sorts in the relationships between the senior *kiai* and Gus Dur, leading to a situation of *mufaraqoh* (self-segregation). It appeared that it was no longer a simple difference of opinion, but rather at the level where they were evaluating their differences, using a syar'iy perspective. Were Gus Dur's attitudes towards socio-political, religious, and social issues still at a tolerable level of differences? Could they still be followed by the faithful? Or were they already too deviant, and thus should no longer be followed? (Choirul Anam, Personal communication, July 2013).[11]

Similarly, K. H. Abdurrahman Chudlori—a *kiai khos* who headed the PKB's Syura Council for Surabaya—stated:

> … the party has exhibited behaviour that has deviated far from the political ideals of the *kiai*. As a result, the *kiai*, prominent figures in the NU, have agreed that the party cannot be used as a tool in its political struggles. Because it has deviated too greatly from the motivation for its establishment, including in its behaviour, platforms, structures, and—primarily—ideology …(Chudlori, 2007, pp 7-20).[12]

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[11] Choirul Anam, Chairman of the PKNU Central Administrative Council. See also Zaim and. Kaiyis (2007.), pp. iii–iv.
Original: Ada semacam *antiklimaks* (kekecewaan) dalam *relationship* (hubungan pertalian) antara *kiai* sepuh dan Gus Dur sehingga melahirkan sikap *mufaraqoh* (memisahkan diri). Dan agaknya, kali ini bukan lagi sekedar perbedaan pendapat. Melainkan sudah pada tahap penilaian terhadap perbedaan itu sendiri, dari sudut pandang syar'ii. Apakah sikap-sikap Gus Dur terhadap berbagai persoalan sosial politik, keagamaan, dan kemasyarakatan selama ini masih dalam domain wilayah-perbedaan pendapat yang bisa ditolerir atau tidak? Masih bisa dianut umat atau tidak? Atau, sudah terlampau jauh berada pada wilayah penyimpangan yang tidak perlu lagi diikuti?

[12] Original: … partai ini mempertontonkan tingkah laku yang melenceng jauh dari cita-cita

Pursuant to the *pesantren* habitus, which taught that all forms of *madharat* had to be eliminated, the actions of these *kiai* were understood as an affirmation of truth and justice (*iqomatul haq wal 'adl*). The non-activation of Alwi–Syaifullah, the holding of the caucus in Semarang, and the declaration that PKB would be inclusive were all seen as ignoring the advice of the *kiai* who had helped establish the party. The *kiai* continuously sought to improve the PKB and provide advice to Gus Dur. Various meetings were held, facilitated by the *kiai*, who sought to improve the party. As some of its founders, the *kiai* were unwilling to let the PKB collapse owing to poor management.

Strategies for Shifting Political Support: Social Praxis

The shift in political support to Alwi Shihab indicated the end of the mutual symbiosis between Gus Dur and the *kiai khos*, as well as the establishment of mutually beneficial relations between Alwi Shihab and the *kiai khos*. This occurred as Gus Dur's charisma eroded and the *kiai khos* gained increased legitimacy. As such, where during the PKB's first internal conflict all of the *kiai* had backed Gus Dur, during the second internal conflict, almost all of the *kiai* abandoned him. Gus Dur lost his main support: the *kiai khos*, who were well respected among NU members and had loyally supported him in politics and in conflict. After this shift in political support, there were no longer any senior or charismatic *kiai* on whom he could rely or whom he could respect. Although several party elders, including K. H. Mustofa Bisri and K. H. Muchit Muzadi, showed their concern, they were those he had frequently met or who had advised him, or who truly supported him in his political activities and his conflicts (Noor, 2015, p.238).

Meanwhile, Alwi's bloc gained political legitimacy through

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politik *kiai*. Akibatnya para *kiai* yang merupakan tokoh-tokoh NU terkemuka bersepakat bahwa partai ini tidak dapat dijadikan sebagai alat perjuangan politiknya. Karena, sudah menyimpang dari rancang bangun partai politik yang diharapkan baik dari sisi perilaku, platform, struktur dan terutama ideologi…

the blessings of the *kiai khos*, who in turn received economic blessings. This represented a mutual symbiosis between them. As the *kiai khos* discourse became increasingly entrenched, government officials and entrepreneurs frequently met them at their *pesantren*, seeking to further various interests. Their presence brought with it various logistics and material benefits for the *pesantren* and the families of the *kiai*. The de-legitimisation of the *kiai khos* by Gus Dur, perpetrated through the discourse of *kiai kampung* proved ineffective. Although Gus Dur considered the National Caucus of Alim Ulama and the PKB Central Administrative Council Working Meeting, held in Surabaya in 2005, to be improper, these were still capable of drawing numerous *kiai*. The *kiai khos*, through their symbolic capital, still had considerable influence, and thus attracted a number of religious leaders: 1,220 participants in total, with 714 *kiai*, including 25 *kiai khos*, and 406 non-*kiai* participants.[13]

Regarding the meetings held by the *kiai khos* to improve the PKB, K. H. Anwar Iskandar, the head of the Syura Council in the party's East Java branch:

> The *kiai* joined together not to speak about individuals. Not to talk about Gus Dur, Muhaimin, Alwi Shihab, or Gus Ipul, but they were united to straighten that which was out of shape. This party (PKB) has gone off the rails. If this were let be, the party would have no future, as it would not be managed by a system, but only by likes and dislikes. And that would be dangerous. As such, the *kiai* have united to seek a means of fixing that which has gone wrong.[14]

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[13] Choirul Anam, the Committee Chairman, stated that after K.H. Abdullah Faqih, the most influential *kiai* within the Forum Langitan, gave his blessings and permission for the 2005 National Caucus of Alim Ulama and the PKB Central Administrative Council Working Meeting, all of his supporters and *santri* came to attend the event. The National Caucus was attended by 714 *kiai*, including 25 *kiai khos*; the Central Administrative Council Meeting was attended by 28 Regional Leadership Councils (140 total attendees). Furthermore, the PPKB sent a delegation of 36 people, Garda Bangsa sent 50 people; and 150 people came from the 30 PKB Regional Councils in East Java. See "Speech of the Committee Chairman, of the National Caucus of Alim Ulama and the PKB Central Administrative Council Working Meeting", 1–2 October 2005, Surabaya, pp. vi–vii.

[14] 2005 National Caucus of Alim Ulama and the PKB Central Administrative Council Working Meeting documentation, Surabaya, p. 181.
Original: Para *kiai* berkumpul dengan semangat bukan bicara orang per orang. Bukan

According to the *kiai*, the rationales cited and procedures for the non-activation of Alwi Shihab and Syaifullah as the party's chairman and secretary general (respectively) were unjust, unilateral, and went against party policy. The *kiai*, through the National Caucus, hoped to send Gus Dur another reminder and help Alwi–Syaifullah regain their positions.

Similarly, K. H. Idris Marzuki stated:

> The ulama supported this Working Meeting based only on a desire to improve and *ndandani* (beautify) the PKB, so it can become a good party in the eyes of the ulama, in accordance with the awakening of the faithful (*nuhudlul ummah*) and our supporters, most of whom are with the NU. So not according to the opinions of just one person. Once the duties of the ulama and *kiai* is to guide and improve the party as a vehicle for its people are concluded, it is clear that the ulama will return to their everyday activities: prayers, teaching, and other activities. And this is the important role and function of the ulama in improving (*ishlah*) the social lives and politics of the faithful.[15]

Based on this discussion, it may be concluded that the criticism of Gus Dur's controversial activities and shift in political support to Alwi Shihab was not an opportunistic power grab. The *kiai*, rather, sought to improve the party that represented them and all members of the NU. The political activities of the *kiai khos* were

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bicara soal Gus Dur, Muhaimin, Alwi Shihab, atau Gus Ipul, tapi substansi semangat para *kiai* adalah bagaimana meluruskan yang bengkok. Partai ini (PKB), sudah keluar dari rel. Kalau dibiarkan, partai ini tidak akan punya masa depan karena tidak diatur dengan sistem. Tapi hanya melayani dengan *like* dan *dislike*. Dan itu berbahaya. Karena itu, *kiai-kiai* berkumpul untuk mencari solusi guna meluruskan yang bengkok-bengkok tadi.

[15] Welcoming speech of the Syura Council PKB Central Administrative Council, K.H. Idris Marzuki, at the National Caucus of Alim Ulama and the PKB Central Administrative Council Working Meeting 2005.
Original: Para ulama ikut serta mendukung pelaksanaan Mukernas hanyalah berdasarkan keinginan untuk memperbaiki sekaligus *ndandani* PKB agar menjadi partai yang baik menurut para ulama, menurut kebangkitan umat (*nuhudlul ummah)* dan para pendukungnya yang mayoritas warga NU. Jadi tidak menurut hanya seorang saja. Jika tugas ulama dan *kiai* mengantarkan dan ndandani partai yang menjadi wadah umatnya sudah selesai, maka sudah barang pasti, ulama akan kembali ke dunianya sehari-hari, yakni pengajian, pendidikan dan aktivitas lainnya di tempatnya masing-masing. Dan inilah pentingnya peran dan fungsi ulama dalam proses perbaikan (*ishlah)* di wilayah kehidupan sosial kemasyarakatan dan perpolitikan umat.

thus in accordance with the *pesantren* habitus, specifically Aswaja Islam, which positioned politics as a means of affirming truth and justice (*iqomatul haq wal 'adl).* Their shift in political support can also be recognised as an attempt to contest their symbolic capital, assert their own position in the PKB, and advise Gus Dur. Their sharp criticism of Gus Dur was not rooted in hatred; as stated by one *kiai* to Alwi Shihab in Surabaya in 2005, the *kiai* still loved Gus Dur, but their love for truth was greater than their love for him (*nahnu nuhibbu Gus Dur walaakinnal haqqa ahabbu ilaina min Gus Dur*).[16]
The political activities of the *kiai khos*, i.e. the criticism of Gus Dur's controversial activities and shift of political support towards Alwi Shihab in the PKB's internal conflicts, can be summarised as in the following table:

Table 3:
Political Activities of *Kiai Khos* as Social Praxis

Political Actions of *Kiai*	Explanation	Social Praxis
(1) Critical of Gus Dur's controversial activities: Establishing PKB as an open party, establishing dialogue between *kiai khos* and *kiai kampung*; freezing the activities of Alwi-Syaifullah; and holding the Second Caucus of the PKB.	(1) *Kiai* as a critical marginal class within the PKB, owing to their dominance in their *pesantren.* (2) Same habitus shared by *kiai* and Gus Dur: *pesantren* habitus. However, types and amounts of social, cultural, and symbolic capital.	(1) Critical before the shift in political support was the unique way in which *kiai* provided advice to Gus Dur, hoping that he would follow the "rules of the game" and not act recklessly while in power.

[16] Speech of Alwi Shihab as Chief of the PKB Central Administrative Council (Alwi–Syaifullah Group) at the Opening of the National Caucus of Alim Ulama and the PKB Central Administrative Council Working Meeting 2005 at the Sukolilo Hajji Dormitory, Surabaya, 27–29 May 2005.

Political Actions of *Kiai*	Explanation	Social Praxis
(2) Shifting political support to Alwi during internal conflicts within the PKB.	(3) Different types and amounts of social and cultural capital, influencing different understandings of Islamic political parties.	(2) Alwi-Syaifullah received support as they worked intensively to approach *kiai* in a humanitarian manner, while Gus Dur used a confrontative approach. (3) Shift of political support to Alwi Shihab as peak of *kiai* disappointment towards the controversial activities of Gus Dur.

Conclusion

The results of this study have identified changes in the political activities of the *kiai khos*. Although they had previously supported the political activities of Gus Dur, including in PKB's internal conflicts, they became critical and shifted their political support to Alwi Shihab in the party's internal conflicts, not owing to power-oriented opportunism, but social praxis a la *kiai*. A political praxis emerged from the dialectics between the creative strategies of the *kiai* and their use of symbolic capital within the PKB, where the *kiai* applied their habitus, i.e. Aswaja Islamic values. Pursuant to the *pesantren* habitus, politics was used as a tool for promoting truth and justice (*Iqomatul Haq wal 'adl*). The *kiai* attempted to create balance by applying the *pesantren* habitus within political life, to ensure that the PKB remained a party that followed the values and promoted the goals of Aswaja Islam.

The findings of this research have revised the results of previous studies into the political activities of *kiai* within the context of PKB's internal conflicts, which argued that the shift in

political support towards Alwi Shihab represented a new form of opportunism among the *kiai* of NU. The results of this research have shown that the political activities of the *kiai khos* involved advising Gus Dur to control his ego, to position himself appropriately, and to be consistent when leading and administering the PKB.

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