

# ESENSIA

Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin

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*Fatmawati, Kalsum Minangsih,  
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# ESENSIA

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# Understanding the Contestation of Multi Political Parties in Indonesia Through Nietzsche's Conflictive-Agonistic Power and Elias's Figurative Power Conception

Alim Roswanto

UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta  
[alimroswa@yahoo.com](mailto:alimroswa@yahoo.com)

## Abstract

*Observing the contestation of the political parties in the last two decades in Indonesia encourages us to know the political power they understood and the political power logic they practiced. To disclose the understanding, the paper explores the notion of Nietzsche and Elias on power. Nietzsche's will to power becomes an immutable basis for an individual to get his power against the others. It confronts individual against the other individual in a social-political contest. Individual must use his freedom to rise his strength potentials to win power. The contestation among individuals in the social-political sphere is performed in order to master and rule one another. Nietzsche's power seems to be conflictive-agonistic. Meanwhile, Elias understands power not by confronting each individual's strength to others' ones. Power, for him, exists in the interdependence of individuals. Power is figurative or configurative. The contestation of multi political parties in Indonesia so far, seen from the conception of power by Nietzsche and Elias, showing the conflictive-agonistic power rather than the configurative one.*

**Keywords:** *Conflictive-Agonistic Power, Figurative Power, Ideological-Partisan Power, Mentality of the Nation's Servant*

## Abstrak

Mengamati persaingan partai politik dalam dua dekade terakhir di Indonesia, mendorong kita untuk mengetahui kekuatan politik yang mereka pahami dan logika kekuatan politik yang mereka praktikkan. Untuk mengungkapkan pemahaman, artikel ini mengeksplorasi gagasan Nietzsche dan Elias tentang kekuasaan. Gagasan Nietzsche terkait "hasrat untuk berkuasa" menjadi basis abadi bagi seorang individu untuk mendapatkan kekuatannya melawan yang lain. Hal ini menghadapi satu individu melawan individu yang lain dalam kontes sosial-politik. Seseorang harus menggunakan kebebasannya untuk meningkatkan potensi kekuatan dalam rangka memenangkan kekuasaan. Kontestasi antar individu dalam bidang sosial-politik dilakukan untuk saling menguasai dan memerintah. Gagasan kekuatan versi Nietzsche nampaknya bersifat agonistik-konflik. Sementara itu, Elias memahami kekuatan bukan dengan mengkonfrontasi kekuatan seorang individu dengan kekuatan orang lain. Kekuasaan, baginya, ada dalam saling ketergantungan individu. Kekuasaan bersifat figuratif atau konfiguratif. Kontestasi multi partai politik di Indonesia sejauh ini, dilihat dari konsepsi kekuasaan oleh Nietzsche dan Elias, menunjukkan kekuatan konflik-agonis daripada kekuatan konfiguratif.

**Kata kunci:** *Kekuatan Konflik-Agonistik, Kekuatan Figuratif, Kekuatan Ideologis-Partisan, Mentalitas Pembantu Bangsa*

## **Introduction**

Power is one of the concepts often discussed in political theory and philosophy. Power, in general, is comprehended as one's strength and ability to obtain real goodness in the future. It should not be confused by the meaning of authority. Authority is one's right to perform an action.<sup>1</sup> Power becomes the way of politician to get his goal. The power fought over in the political world produces a political power, that is, one's or group's force to gain the goodness and all at once to have right to make law. The character of political power depends on the way to achieve it. If to be simplified into two kinds of power, at least there are authoritarian and democratic power. The authoritarian power is gained by the violent and coercive way, whereas the democratic one is obtained by a fair selection involving all people participation.

Indonesia has been applying for a long time the practice of democracy in politics, and even it had begun in the election of 1955 with 172 political parties taking apart. In the election of 1977-1997, the contest for fighting the political power in every five years only involved three parties. But since the general election of 1999 until now, a lot of political parties consisting of both the nationalist and religious ones participated in the contest. Democracy with multi political parties, in the last two decades, has shown the political progress by involving a lot of participation of society, on the one hand, but on the other hand, it has emerged a lot of money politic, corruption, and negative politicization particularly through hoax news.

The phenomena probably occurred because of the egoism and conflict of interest among the political parties including the Islamic ones. After the ruin of New Order (Orde Baru) regime under the rule of president Soeharto, the

political euphoria happened. It could be seen in the general election of 1999. The euphoria was signed by the proliferation of political parties. At first, there were 142 political parties that consist of approximately 102 nationalist political parties and 40 Islamic political parties, but after selection by the Team of Eleven (Tim 11), the committee decided to just choose 48 political parties<sup>2</sup> consisting of 31 nationalist ones and 17 Islamic ones that were eligible to take apart and would contest the election.

The contest of multi political parties needs consolidation of democracy among them. It is not easy to do because of the conflicts of interest. The logic of power each party shared which accommodate the interests and represent each party is the main subject to answer in this writing. The writing tries to understand the contestation of multi political parties in the election. The writing uses the philosophical perspective of the power conception of Nietzsche and Elias. Nietzsche's will to power becomes an immutable basis for individual action that confronts an individual against the other individuals in order to master and rule one another. Nietzsche's power seems to be conflictive-agonistic. Meanwhile, Elias understands power not by confronting individual's strength to others' ones. Power, for him, exists in the interdependence of individuals. Power is figurative or configurative. From these approach, the paper intends to understand whether the logic of conflictive-agonistic more dominated than that of distributive-configurative power or not in the contestation of multi political parties particularly in the last two decades in Indonesia.

## **Power in Nietzsche's Philosophy**

Frederich Wilhelm Nietzsche was born in Röcken di wilayah Sachsen, Prussia, on October

<sup>1</sup> Frank Lovett, "Power" dalam Robert E. Goodin Philip Pettit and Thomas Poge, *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*, vol. 1, (Malden, Oxford, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2007), 709.

<sup>2</sup> Azyumardi Azra, "Islamic Perspective on the Nation-State Political Islam in Post-Soeharto Indonesia," in *Al-Jami'ah Journal of Islamic Studies*, Volume 39, Number 2, July-December 2001: 302.

15, 1844.<sup>3</sup> He grew up and was educated in his Lutheran-Protestant Christian family.<sup>4</sup> His father, Carl Ludwig Nietzsche (1813-1849, was a Lutheran-Protestant Christian priest. His mother was Franziska that her maiden name was Oehler (1826-1897).<sup>5</sup> His grandfather was a pious Lutheran-Protestant Christian. His father passed away when he was five years old. Nietzsche himself was also a Lutheran Protestant Christian until his teenage age. He became an atheist in his twenty years old. He wanted the human freedom to think and act in order to answer the problems of human life for the sake of the progress of human civilization. And the existence of religion, for him, was the big barrier of human freedom and progressive civilization.<sup>6</sup>

He studied theology, classic languages, philology, literature at Bonn University. As a student, he was interested in Schopenhauer's philosophical ideas and Richard Wagner's music. The influence of Schopenhauer's philosophy led him to study theology and traditional Christianity. From Wagner, he got the passion of human will. His admiration of Spencer and Darwin was difficultly asserted, but their notion of "survival of the fittest" had inspired him particularly in constructing his philosophical ideas of human being and humanity.<sup>7</sup> In his twenty-three years old, he should take the military conscript, but because of his physical weakness, he was freed from the military conscript. In 1869, when he was twenty-five years old, he became a professor in

Basel, Swiss. He gave the authentic and original lecture that attracted many students' interest, but the other professors did not like it. He was retired in 1879.<sup>8</sup>

Nietzsche's writings are many enough, even though his age was not so old. He passed away in fifty-six years old, but he had produced many works in philosophy and literature. Among of his great works are *Morgenrote/Red Dawn* (1880-1881), *Die Frohliche Wissenschaft/Enlightening Science* (1882), *Also Sprach Zarathustra/So it was Zoroaster Speak* (1883), *Jenseit von Gut und Boesel/Beyond Good and Bad* (1886), *Zur Geneologie de Moral/On Moral Origin* (1887), *Ecce Homo Look at Human* (1888).<sup>9</sup>

In 1889, he got insanity in Turin, Italy. During his insanity, he was taken care by his mother and old brother. He passed away in 1890. He was well-known as "a philosopher with the hammer", "prophet of the death of God", and "prophet of a non-religious religion and an unphilosophical philosophy."<sup>10</sup>

The philosophy of Nietzsche rests on will he considers as a forcefulness of activator existing inside human self. He was inspired by Schopenhauer' philosophy. Schopenhauer was a Germany Philosopher he idolized. Schopenhauer had strongly influenced his thought. Schopenhauer bases his philosophy on will, and so does Nietzsche. Thus both of them leans their philosophy on will, but Nietzsche applies will in his philosophy more radical than Schopenhauer. If Schopenhauer bases human life on a will to life (*wille zur lehen*), Nietzsche bases it not merely on the will to live, but on the will to power (*wille zur macht*).<sup>11</sup>

Will to power (*wille zur Macht*) is the key

<sup>3</sup> F. Budi Hardiman, *Filsafat Modern dari Machiavelli sampai Nietzsche* (Jakarta: PT. Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2004), 257.

<sup>4</sup> Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, Volume 7 Part 2 (from Schopenhauer to Nietzsche) (New York: Image Books, 1963), 164.

<sup>5</sup> Misnal Munir, "Pengaruh Filsafat Nietzsche terhadap Perkembangan Filsafat Barat Kontemporer," in *Jurnal Filsafat*, Vol. 21, Nomor 2, Agustus 2011: 135.

<sup>6</sup> Save M. Dagun, *Filsafat Eksistensialisme* (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 1990), 53.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 53-54.

<sup>8</sup> Fuad Hassan, *Berkenalan dengan Eksistensialisme* (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1992), 41.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Julius Seelye Bixler, "Nietzsche", dalam Vergilius Ferm (ed.), *An Encyclopedia of Religion* (New York: the Philosophical Library, 1979), 535.

<sup>11</sup> Misnal Munir, "Pengaruh Filsafat Nietzsche terhadap Perkembangan Filsafat Barat Kontemporer," 138.

concept of his philosophy. It is basic mover for a human in undergoing his life. Will to power creates values in accordance to the direction he wants. The strong impulse from inside human self will perform and produce the morality of master and that a slave. The good thing for human being is the feeling of high and mastering human soul. This condition results in the spirit of master. In contrast, the good thing, for most people with slavery mentality, is a condition that is securely, mercifully, and pleasantly coerced by the outer forces. It is this that emerges the slavery spirit. For the master, the bad thing is a condition that usually and generally occurs, whereas for the slave, the bad thing is what the master considers as the good one.

Will to the power gains the peak of mastering the world perfectly in perfect man or superior man (*übermensch*). This mastering is achieved through suffering and struggle. The most powerful man is one who is the most suffering and struggles very hard in which he thinks and acts. One who seriously thinks will become the master. Those who just follow and subject to other people and their outer world, they will be weak people. Within superman, history will achieve its completion, but every completion wills new beginning. From this principle, Nietzsche convinces that life is cyclical in character. It means that every event had already occurred in the past, and will occur again in the future. He affirms this regard in his doctrine of the eternal recurrence.<sup>12</sup> The force encouraging such thought is Nietzsche's belief of the death of God. If God died, there is no God. If there is no God, a man himself becomes "God".<sup>13</sup> Nietzsche wants every human being to be able to become "God" for himself.<sup>14</sup> He

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* look also at D. Collison, *Lima Puluh Filosof Dunia yang Menggerakkan (Fifty Major Philosophers)*, trans. Ilzamuddin Ma'mur and Mufti Ali (Jakarta: PT. Raja Grafindo Persada, 2001), 177.

<sup>13</sup> Harry Hamersma, *Tokoh-tokoh Filsafat Barat Modern* (Jakarta: PT Gramedia, 1983), 81.

<sup>14</sup> Masulil Shofa, "Eksistensi Manusia dalam

becomes a superior self. The eternity leaned on God is replaced by the cyclical view of life. His concept of power is based on his philosophical spirit putting human freedom so high that to get his full freedom man must be *übermensch*.

Power is a term that is as abstract as freedom, violence, and so on. In general, it can be said that power is an authority of force owned by a person or a group of people by which he or they can control the actions of other people. One is seen as owning power when he can condition the scaring, subjecting, and obedient phenomena for other people. The contrasting phenomena such as one's rebellion to the others or the protest of a group of people to the other group both in the reactive-dialogic form and reactive-anarchistic actually indicates that human being does not want to be forced, without resistance, by the others. It shows that human being always fights the power over the others because, inside the power, a human being feels to have and even control his freedom.

Nietzsche was right with his statement that human nature is will to power. He, through his metaphysical doctrine of human being, asserts that will to power is the most fundamental nature, or deepest principle, of the human being.<sup>15</sup> Although it cannot be denied that the deepest principle of man is his will to power, the power philosophically cannot be understood as just to master other people. To have a power actually is a description of human will to get his freedom, that sometime for the sake of the freedom, man should do the violent action to the others. In this regard, the problem is not whether those who have the power always oppress the others or not. The problem is that the power cannot be independently understood. It is always related to other reality.

Pemikiran Nietzsche" in *Jurnal Filsafat dan Pemikiran Keislaman Refleksi*, Vol. 12, No. 1, Januari 2012: 133.

<sup>15</sup> Margaret Chatterjee, *The Existentialist Outlook*, (New Delhi: Orient Longman Ltd., 1973), 31.

Power philosophically cannot be comprehended apart from other reality. That is why when the thinkers or philosophers try to elaborate on the meaning of power, they relate it to other realities such as violence and freedom.

Return to Nietzsche statement that power gains the meaning in existentially human reality. Human existence is the manifestation of the deepest nature of human being, that is, will to power. Nietzsche's notion that man has natural passion for power is not his original idea. It is also a central focus of Thomas Hobbes' philosophy. Hobbes' notion of desire to power is based on man's simple impulse to avoid death and to fulfill the human basic needs, that is, survival.<sup>16</sup> Nietzsche original contribution is to make the will as a fundamental force underlying all emotions, sentiments, and morals. If we see the history of human thought, his notion seems to be obviously derived from Darwin's theory of natural selection of the evolution of all forms of life within which there is a struggle for survival amongst the different species. His "will to power" is the deepest basis for all kinds of life, because it discloses will keep alive in the world. Thus, the notion of "will to power" is a development of theoretical concepts of Darwin's theory of "the struggle for survival" in the human world.

*Will to power* is the existential nature of human being. It is an innate character of the human being. Even though, he does not mean it in a metaphysical framework. It is not a substance as an immutable basis but actually, for Siegel, as dynamically moved phenomena. *Will of power* is continuously becoming. It is the will that expresses itself in a constant expenditure of transformative energy, rather than in mere devotion to its own preservation.<sup>17</sup> Will in

itself is product of internal conflict of human self between different instincts and reactions governing him. Will emerges when man's passion to rule the others become increasing. Self-consciousness and intention, for him, merely rise with the will to power, occurred when man's encouragement has achieved its force in ruling the others.

Nietzsche states that will to power is a passion of freedom and self-freeing. Passion of liberation is unseparated from actions of power. His statement concerning the relation of power and freedom can be seen in his work, *Beyond Good and Evil*: "Freedom of will is the expression for that complex condition of pleasure of the person who wills, who commands and at the same time identifies himself with the executor of the command—who as such also enjoys the triumph over resistances involved but who thinks it was his will itself which overcame the resistances."<sup>18</sup> Man's action to determine other people or other group is an asserting that his self is a ruler, actor, and executor. Thus, from here it becomes clear that Nietzsche sees human freedom more as a conflict rather than a relation because by letting others' freedom to plunder one's pleasure of life means loss of his selfness and power. Power, for him, means independence or to be free from other people.

Nietzsche realizes that the internal struggle of human-self rising passionate push to have a free will cannot be separated from social struggle emerged from individuals that from their instinctive claims, they mutually struggle very hard to gain their satisfaction of life. It is competitive since, in a social organization, the equality of regulation can only be reached through the involvement of individuals in competition and even conflict. It encourages

<sup>16</sup> Bonar Hutapea, "Psikologi Politik Hobbesian: Analisis Teoritis tentang Basis Antropologis Kontrak Sosial dalam *Leviathan* dan Relevansinya," in *INSAN*, Vol. 14 No. 01, April 2012: 18.

<sup>17</sup> Read Part V. Modern Visions and Illusions on section "Will, Reflection, and Self-Overcoming:

Schopenhauer and Nietzsche" in Jerrold Siegel, *The Idea of the Self, Thought and Experience in Western Europe since the Seventeenth Century* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 538.

<sup>18</sup> Frederick W. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), 49.



the social group winning the competition and conflict tends to force their will to the other ones. The statement is reflected in his words: "In all willing, it is absolutely a question of commanding and obeying, on the basis ... of a social structure composed of many 'souls'".<sup>19</sup> Besides that, there is another support of his opinion that freedom is a human instinct that is so passionate in the war and the winner reaches the mastering of other instincts. It is no wonder if he states that "the free man is a warrior."<sup>20</sup>

The metaphor of freedom with a warrior indicates that power can only be reached by warring or fighting to win the competition and conflict. Therefore, the Nietzsche's notion of the will to power and social-political struggle is an unsociable view of man in a society in which the social-politically power relations are not considered as a fundamental thing for the human existence in his social-political interaction. Power and freedom only exist in superior men because they are the chosen warriors.

Agonism stems from the word *agon* which means contestant of competition of individuals or of social groups in the public sphere. The contest is based on freedom that is the precondition of the possibility of power usage. In any relation of power, each contestant is a limit for other contestants in embodying his freedom of action. The agonistic relation describes the permanent contest of individuals or groups. A contest in which there is the possibility of conduct is a precondition of the rising of power relation. There is an interconnection of power and freedom. Both power and freedom are not seen as the contrasting forces, but as the permanent elements contained in the relation of contestants. Power and freedom are not forces but aspects of the social relation of a contest. Both power and freedom are analyzed and

comprehended as relation, not as two separated things. Freedom is a strategy, not a rival, of power in a contest.

The winner of a contest becomes the ruler, or "the master", while the defeated becomes the ruled, or "the slave." Man owning force and strategy can reach power. Man, in order to reach power, should be a "superman." A weak man will only be the ruled one. A weak man who is able to use his freedom can arrange the strategies to make himself to be more forceful, and in turn, he has a chance to fight over the power from the ruling contestant.

### **Power in the Philosophy of Norbert Elias**

Norbert Elias was born in Breslau, Prussia, on June 22, 1897. Elias was born and educated in the Jewish family. He was the only son of the couple, Hermann and Sophie Elias. His parent's job was a textile entrepreneur with a well-established condition of the economy. Although Elias realized that his identity as Jews in Germany at that time was so difficult, he kept having the intention to be an educated person or a scientist. He was fond of reading Germany's greatest figures as Heine, Goethe, Schiller, and Immanuel Kant.<sup>21</sup>

Like the other young men of Germany, Elias underwent the military conscript in 1915. He joined the military conscript after completing his study in Johannes Gymnasium. He was involved in the war at the border of France. His task was the holder and operator of telegram. After his military conscript, he studied in the University of Breslau. His reading of the Germany thinkers when he was in Johannes Gymnasium led him to study philosophy. In addition, his short experience in the war and

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Frederich W. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), 102.

<sup>21</sup> Breslau waktu kelahiran Elias termasuk ke dalam wilayah Prussia, nama lama Jerman. Sekarang Breslau berubah nama menjadi Warclow yang masuk ke dalam wilayah Polandia. Look at Anton Novenanto, "Mengenalkan Norbert Elias pada Sosiologi Indonesia," in journal *Masyarakat, Kebudayaan, dan Politik*, Vol. 24, No. 3, July-September 2011: 184.

saw how the medical workers nursing the war victims encouraged him to study medicine. He then took the course of medicine.<sup>22</sup>

Being aware of the difficulty of taking the two courses, Elias decided not to continue his course of medicine. Instead, he focused on studying philosophy. His love of philosophy led him to study philosophy not only in Breslau University but also in Freiburg University and Heidelberg University. He studied along with the eminent professors that were known as the great philosophers such as Heinrich Rickert, Karl Jaspers, Edmund Husserl, and Richard Honigswald. The last philosopher, a neo-Kantian philosopher, deeply influenced his thought. It was Honigswald that became promoter of his dissertation on *Idee und Individuum: Eine Kritische Untersuchung zum Begriff der Geschichte* (Idea and Individual: A Contribution to Philosophy of History).<sup>23</sup>

His encounter with Karl Jaspers, when Elias studied at Heidelberg University, led him to Weber's thought. After his difficult time, since his parent's business enterprise underwent a significant loss because of the financial crisis in Europe, he was forced to work in a steel factory as a pipe seller and returned to his old university, Heidelberg University. His experience in the military conscript and worked as an employee of the factory encouraged him to study real life.<sup>24</sup> His return to Heidelberg University, he met Alfred Weber. Alfred Weber, Max Weber's young brother, became the promoter of his habitation. He read a lot of the works of Karl Marx dan Georg Simmel. His colleague developed and he met a private dozent, Karl Mannheim. He then worked as his non-formally assistance and did not get a salary. The difference between Alfred Weber's thought

from Karl Mannheim's made Elias's connection to Alfred Weber became worse. Finally, he followed Karl Mannheim getting a job as formal dozent in Frankfurt University. And Elias became a formal assistance of Mannheim after completing his habitation under Mannheim's promotion.

The state of politic in Germany in 1933 that was a very difficult time for the Jewish people, moreover for those who had liberal thought, conditioned Elias to leave Frankfurt. He tried to look for a job as a lecturer in Swiss and France, but he failed. Finally following his friend's recommendation, he moved to London, England. In London, he successfully wrote the two volumes of *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation* (The Civilizing Process). The death of his father and mother in a concentration camp at Auschwitz made his soul shaken and traumatized. In 1954, he moved to Leicester to teach sociology at London University. He retired at Leicester University. After his retirement, Elias became a professor at the Ghana University in Lagon. He also appointed as a professor of sociology at Amsterdam University. Elias breathed his last breath at the age of 93 years in his work chair in Amsterdam.<sup>25</sup>

Power, for Norbert Elias, different from Nietzsche, should not be ruled by a certain individual or group. He says that power is not a force owned by one person and not owned by other people. Power is a characteristic of the relation of all human beings. Power, therefore, should not be considered as "a thing that one can put in one's pocket like a key."<sup>26</sup> In reverse, he understands power as a figuration of social relation that makes individuals to be dependent one another in various ways. Figuration is a term

<sup>22</sup> Anton Novenanto, "Mengenalkan Norbert Elias pada Sosiologi Indonesia," 184-185.

<sup>23</sup> Robert. van Kreiken, *Norbert Elias* (London: Routledge, 1998), 11-12.

<sup>24</sup> Robert. van Kreiken, *Norbert Elias*, 14.

<sup>25</sup> Anton Novenanto, "Mengenalkan Norbert Elias pada Sosiologi Indonesia," 185-186.

<sup>26</sup> Norbert Elias, "Knowledge and Power: an Interview by Peter Ludes," dalam N. Stehr and V. Meja (eds.), *Society and Knowledge: Contemporary Perspectives on the Sociology of Knowledge*, (New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1984), 251.

he uses to represent the web of interdependences formed among human beings and which connects them, that is, a structure of mutually oriented and dependent persons. In this web, human being cannot live alone because he needs the other human beings. He exists if he relates to and interacts with the other human beings.<sup>27</sup> Human beings were born in interdependent relations that emerged a real dynamic of social figuration continuously existing in a relatively stable change.<sup>28</sup> In a network of mutual dependence, the opportunities of certain groups of society emerge to enhance and develop their domination over the other groups, because each of them have their own sources of power. The sources of power can be militarily, economically, and culturally controlling forces or functionally ones such as in market, bureaucracy, and government. These controlling forces are comprehended as determined by each function of them in a figurative network in which there is mutually social dependence. This interdependence is transformed into spontaneous loyalty to an internalized rule.<sup>29</sup> In doing so, this figurative network will dynamically perform and control a process of mutual bargain and intercommunication among the differently social groups in order to form a balancing common power.

Power seems in Elias' thought as a figurative relation of the different forces existing in society. The relation of forces is needed to condition the balance of individuals or groups in society. In doing so, there will never be a case of single group in society who has an absolute power, whereas the others have no power at all. He analogizes the work of figurative relation of power with a game. He writes, "... people's

<sup>27</sup> Sunyoto Usman, *Transformasi Sosial, Diktat Kuliah Jurusan Sosiologi Pascasarjana Fisipol UGM* (Yogyakarta: UGM Press, 2013), 2-4.

<sup>28</sup> S. Loyal and S. Quilley (eds.), *The Sociology of Norbert Elias* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 161.

<sup>29</sup> Simonetta Tabboni, "The Idea of Social Time in Norbert Elias," in *Time & Society*, Vol. 10 (1), 2001: 11.

interdependence as players exerts constraint over each of the individuals bonded together in this way; the constraint stems from the particular nature of their relatedness and interdependence as players. In this instance, too, power is the structural characteristic of a relationship."<sup>30</sup>

With this description, Elias intends to assert that the power is more a teamwork of all social groups rather than an individual work. For instance, in a football play, the power of play is lied on the high skill of an individual player, but on the collective work of all players. If there is any single player who intends to master the ball alone just to show his own highly skillful play without sharing the strategy with other players, then it can be made sure that the collective work will not function, and finally, the team will be easily defeated. The team will significantly lose the power.

In a team of football, it is impossible for the coach to just choose striker, midfielder, or defender players. The coach will surely choose the best combination of the defender, midfielder, and striker players. Since the combination of different forces of players will create the team's stability and balance. Every player has his own power, and the balancing relation of powers will form a figurative strength in which each player's role and function can be accommodated as a solid teamwork. The players support each other to reach the goal, that is, to win the game.

From the mutually social dependence, Elias begins to relate power to freedom. The strength of a team of various individuals in taking the autonomous action is an empirical issue based on a figurative model considering power and freedom as interconnected. Both power and freedom are structural feature of the network of interdependence. Everyone finds the different level of strength for his own autonomous action that gives the contribution for the sake of the common goal. There is no

<sup>30</sup> Norbert Elias, *What Is Sociology*, (London: Hutchinson, 1978), 96.

anyone in the figurative work who can use his strength to do something without concern of others. No one who is "independent of other people."<sup>31</sup> Its statement is different with Nietzsche one. Nietzsche states that to be free is to be independent of other people, or in order to be free, man should manifest himself as an isolated individual. Whereas, for Elias, in order to be free, man should manifest himself as a cooperated individual or as an open minded individual to change.

Relation of power, for Elias, is a process of balancing the individuals in a social group. Power is not a domination, but a balance of all human beings in a social relation.<sup>32</sup> Power is a process of accommodating the uniquely different strengths of individuals in a society that continuously make a negotiation of different interests of individuals to embody the self-existence through the spirit of mutual respect. The process is an expression of each individual's freedom as member of society. Freedom, related to power, is a medium and simultaneously strategy by which a lot of individuals and social groups varying and coloring in culture, economy, politic, education, etc. knit a figurative power. Freedom is relative power an individual or a social group owns to determine attitudes and actions along with other individuals or social groups within a mutually dependent network. When we discuss an individual freedom in determining his action, we actually are discussing on the individual's relative power trying to develop his power among other individuals inside the social network which is dependent, supportive, and empowering one another. The power never exist in individual, but in a mutually dependent, supportive and empowering collectivism.

Power is an activity focusing on the figuration. It is nexus of interdependences

<sup>31</sup> Norbert Elias, *The Court of Society*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 31 dan 144.

<sup>32</sup> Sunyoto Usman, *Transformasi Sosial*, 5-6.

among people, structure of mutually oriented and dependent individuals or groups. Bauman mentions that Elias's social figurations have intimate affinity with Simmel's search for the social geometry of forms. Both Elias and Simmel meet in the notion of an intrinsic dynamic of the figuration that serves as nucleus of interconnecting energies among individuals or groups in order to accommodate social-political needs for all elements of society.<sup>33</sup>

### **From Power as an Instrument of Exclusion to Power as That of Inclusion**

Nietzsche's notion of power tends to be characterized with the relation of master and slave. The relation with this feature rises the logic of power that is more dominative rather than collaborative between subject and object in the context of interrelation among human beings. For him, relation of power is problem of level. No one owns an absolute autonomy within the different people's relation of power, as can be understood in his conception of superman. Although individual never have an absolute autonomy, but, for him, individual tends to rule other individuals. Man tends to push himself through his will to be master, to be subject, or to be mover other human beings. This notion of superman has similarity to Sartre's notion of absolute freedom of human being. Indeed, Sartre developed the concept of absolute freedom under inspiration of Nietzsche's superman. Power described by Nietzsche, and Foucault was inspired by this description, does not contrast to the feudalistic-monarchistic power that the usage of power is top-down and centralized.<sup>34</sup>

If we return to the explanation, power in Nietzsche's concept tends to be deterministic,

<sup>33</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, "The Phenomenon of Norbert Elias," in *Sociology*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (January 1979): 118

<sup>34</sup> Hubert L. Dreyfus, "Being and Power: Heidegger and Foucault", dalam *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, Vol. 4 (1), 1996: 9.

hegemononic, and top-down. This tendency emerges because he understands the relation of power and freedom as a conflictive-agonistic relation. In order to rule or to have power, man has to be superman. It means that the attainment of fully freedom can only be reached by man becoming a master who is not wanted to be enslaved by other people.

Whoever becoming a master of other people, he surely has a power. He is a ruler. Power, therefore, is one's "robbery" of others' freedom for the sake of his own one. The true power is the absolute freedom. Consequently, to rule, or to be a ruler, means the elimination of all kinds of subjection, obedience, and slavery to other people as the manifestation of fully freedom. Nietzsche's will to power is indeed a natural thing that will happen to everyone to gain his fully freedom. This is why Nietzsche denies the altruistic morality. For him, the best are lacking when egoism begins to be lacking, and man is finished when he becomes altruistic.<sup>35</sup> By getting his fully freedom, man becomes superman, that is, man who becomes a master or a ruler. He becomes subject actor, mover, and determinator other people. This kind of Nietzsche's philosophy, for Solomon, is in existentialist tradition that is rich of the passion of individual inner life.<sup>36</sup>

Such Nietzsche's power conception leads one to conclude that power is understood and used as an instrument of exclusion, that is, as an instrument to put out other people who are different with him. Power is a medium and tool for a certain group to exclude the other groups. Every social group will build the strategy to have a force, take the chance, and then rob the power mastered by the other social groups.

When any social group has gained the

power, this group became the ruler. By becoming the new ruler, this group will push aside the other groups. An individual is like a warrior who through his freedom, he arranges the strategy to win the fight. The victory makes him to be a master fully ruling to determine, direct, instruct, and form the defeated. The defeated is conditioned to be subject to the winner. The master always rule the slaves, and this condition cannot be reversed in the logic of Nietzsche's conflictive-agonistic power.

Power and freedom, for Elias, is two things that mutually fulfill and cannot be separated. Both power and freedom relate one another as two sides of a coin. Freedom does not oppose power, and power cannot be understood as barrier of freedom. The relation of power and freedom are like a game describing a much more complicated interplay. Both interact in a complex way to create a mutually balancing state. In this interaction, freedom can rise well as power usage, and in the same time, serve as precondition of power as well, since freedom has to exist to enable everyone to struggle for his own power that can be bargained to the other power. Freedom is not only as precondition for power, but also as its permanent support. Power without freedom will be similar to the physical determination. Relations of subordination and superordination characterize fields of domination within configurations, in such a way that webs of interdependent men and human groups act together or in opposition in a determinate direction.<sup>37</sup> The essence of relation of power is the firmness of will and the strength of freedom. Power, supported by sphere of freedom provided for all, will be a figurative interconnectedness and interplay. Power is a relation describing a reciprocally struggle among individuals and among social groups.

Elias understands relation of power as a

<sup>35</sup> K. Rogers, *Self Interest, an Anthology of Philosophical perspectives* (London: Routledge, 1997).

<sup>36</sup> Kathleen M. Higgins, "Living with Solomon Living with Nietzsche, A Reply to Tubert and Soll," in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (Autumn 2015), 451.

<sup>37</sup> Tania Quintaneiro, "The Concept of Figuration or Configuration in Norbert Elias' Sociological Theory," in *Teor. Soc.* Vol. 2. No. 2 se Belo Horizonte 2006: 6.

figurative interplay. In the relation of figurative power, human being, both as individual and social group, is seen as the contestants of power. The power of each contestant is the limit of the other contestants' powers in manifesting each freedom of action. Freedom describes power as an interactively relating forces. It is an aspect of social relation among the contestants to win the power.

In relation of conflictive-agonistic power, power is the object of all contestants. The strategy of a certain contestant will always face that of the other contestant. The strategy that wins the competition and the fight will bring the user to obtain the power. But, because there is no the absolute power, the power he has already been obtained will always get resistance of the other contestants that with their own strategies they are not satisfactory with and try to take over the power owned by the winner contestant. The resistance actually indicate a freedom, or the existence of the free subjects who always want to realize their freedom with the goal of getting the power.

In the nowadays Indonesian context, the philosophical model of Nietzsche's power seems to be not supporting, because Indonesia is the plural nation. The philosophical model of Elias' power seems to be more successful to avoid the dichotomical view as can be seen in conflictive-agonistic style of power. The principle of balancing and harmonizing of the difference forces into a uniting relation of power is to be more prioritized rather than that competing and fighting of the different ones into a winner-loser relation of power. The more harmonious the relation of existing forces in the figurative interplay web of social life, the more balanced the resulted power. Power is always collectively owned by the existing forces of all social groups in a society. It is not only owned by a certain social group.

### **Analysis of Conflictive-Agonistic Power and Figurative One to the Contestation of Political Parties in Indonesia.**

Indonesia in the last decades after reformation and rezime of the New Order under the ruling of President Soeharto, the political activities in Indonesia celebrated the euphoria of political freedom proved by the rising of multi political parties. The nationalists' parties and Islamic ones rose and participated in democratic election of both executive and legislative candidates. They competed one another to win the election.

The presence of multi political parties in Indonesian politic shows the good sign on the one hand because the various interests of the different people of Indonesia can be represented, but it cannot be avoided that the democratic practice of multi political parties of Indonesia also have the potential to rise the tensions and even conflicts among various social-political groups, whether among the religious groups affiliated to the religious parties, or among social groups supporting the nationalists' parties, or among social groups supporting the nationalists' parties and social ones supporting the religious parties.

The goal of the various tensions and conflicts among these religious and political groups is the ensurement of *status quo* of power and the attainment of power. When the political parties both the nationalist and the religious, and the supporting social groups, are stated to be the winner of general election in Indonesia and hold the power, in the last two decades, seem to bring out their one political egoism. Most of the political positions both in executive and legislative are given to their own representatives. Only few representatives outside their parties that are given the political positions. Professionalism of those who are worthy to accept the positions is disregarded. The party's people are prioritized eventhough in

term of the professionalism they are not worthy and not adequate.

This regard rises the strong impression in public view of Indonesia that the ideological-partisan mentality seems to strongly penetrate the winner of political power. Ideally, when whoever from whatever party wins the power, the winner should change the political mentality, from the worker or servant mentality of political party to that of the nation of Indonesia. Sticking out of the ideological-partisan mentality is vulnerable to ignite the horizontal conflicts of the Islamic partaies, of the nationalist partaies, and of the Islamic parties and the nationalist ones.

The increase of ideological-partisan attitudes from the politicians of political parties who have already occupied the executive, legislative, and judicative political positions shows the practice of logic of power that is still conflictive-agonistic in character. From the perspective of Nietzsche's conflictive-agonistic power conception, phenomena of this mentality shows the fight of political contestants in order to gain the power. The power is used by politicians of the winner political parties to reinforce their own political parties' power. To make their own power to be more powerful will make their own party to superparty, or to be the master party ruling the defeated political parties. If it happens, mentality of the ideological partisan power of a certain political party that is holding the power will tend to exclude the power of the other political parties so as to they are conditioned in the relation of master and slave. The master is the winner political party and the slave are the loser political ones.

Elias' figurative power does not will the rising of a conflictive-agonistic power. The political party that wins the competition of getting the power, through the logic of conflictive-agonistic power, will feel to be the superior party oppressing and continuously

trying to condition the loser political parties as the dictated and directed political parties. Instead, Elias' figurative power wills the winner political party to permanently position the loser political parties as the political partners that have to be embraced and involved in consolidizing the common power for the sake of the nation of Indonesia, not for the sake of the political parties. Moreover, the winner political party has to involve the social, cultural, and professional groups as well. Indonesia can never be only owned by the winner political party. Indonesia is possessed by all political parties both the winner and the loser, and all other social, cultural, and professional groups.

The coalition of political parties, in the perspective of Elias power conception, is based on the attainment of a figurative power that is contributed by each members decided by the rational agreement, not by the emotionally economical or political one. The rational agreement is consensus reached by the argumentative reasons for the sake of the nationally Indonesian progress developing more just and prosperous for all elements of peoples. The rational consensus should be preferred, emphasized, and prioritized to have an objectively figurative power. All political parties have to avoid and discard the emotionally political consensus and the emotionally economical one. The emotionally political consensus is the consensus dominantly determined and dictated by the winner political party. the emotionally economical consensus is the agreement reached by money politic.

The merely political and/or economical ways, in the Nietzsche's concept of conflictive-agonistic power, can still be affirmed, because the winner political party becomes the superior party and can rule other parties as the party wants. It cannot be affirmed by Elias figurative conception, because the true power is the power synergizing the excellency of each political party

into a common power as the result of their effort to harmonize and balance the configuration of all political parties' powers working like an orchestra music.

The question regarding why Islamic-political parties had never won the general election in two last decades, even since the first election in 1955, in Indonesia is relevant to be presented here. The question depicted the irony. Indeed, Indonesia is not religious state, but the greatest number of Indonesian people are muslims so far, but the facts showed that Islamic political parties had never won the elections.

As we know, Indonesia had performed eleven times of elections. The first election was held in 1955 under the first president of Indonesia, Soekarno. The election was followed by 172 parties. As a result, four parties, that is, respectively Partai Nasionalis Indonesia (Indonesian Nationalist Party), Masyumi, Nahdhatul 'Ulama, and Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party) dominated the election. The Islamic political parties failed to win the contest. They just won 43.7% votes.<sup>38</sup> The winner were Indonesian Nationalist Parties, not the Islamic parties.

Ten parties<sup>39</sup> had participated in the general election in 1971. The election was won by Golkar with 62.8% votes, and the Islamic-political parties only obtained 26.2 % votes contributed by Partai Nahdhatul 'Ulama Nahdhatul 'Ulama

Party (18.6%), Partai Muslimin Indonesia/ Indonesian Moslems Party (5.3%), and Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia/Indonesian-Islam Alliance Party (2.3%). Because of the rise of the Government Regulation, i.e., Undang-undang Nomor 3 Tahun 1975, the general elections in 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, and 1997 were just followed by three political parties, that is, Golongan Karya (Golkar), Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (Indonesian Democracy Party), and Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (Development Union Party).

There are some answers of the question as mentioned before, that is, why has never the Islamic political parties won the general election in two last decades. According to Manan's opinion, and the similar opinion can be found in the book edited by Basyaib and Abidin, the defeat of Islamic political parties was caused by the existence of differentiating between "cultural Islam" and "structural Islam." And the rise of Islamic political parties actually were a political expression of those categorized as the supporters of "structural Islam." Instead of the supporters of cultural Islam trying to manifest the substantial values of Islamic messages through a conscious acceptance and the change of human being mindset, the politicians of structural Islam emphasized the effort to manifest them through both the Islamic political policies and the establishment of national regulation.<sup>40</sup> The opinion of is similar to that of Manan. For Azra, the defeat occurred because of three reason. Firstly, These Islamic political parties have just caused acute political fragmentations, schisms, and conflicts between the muslim political leaders and the muslims at the grass-root level. Secondly, these parties have mostly been trapped in romanticism of Islamic politics and "illusion" of numerical majority

<sup>38</sup> Look at Lili Romli, "Partai Islam dan Pemilih Islam di Indonesia," in *Jurnal Penelitian Politik*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2004: 41-44.

<sup>39</sup> Those ten parties were Partai Katolik (Catholic Party), Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia (Indonesian-Islam Alliance Party), Partai Nahdhatul 'Ulama (Nahdhatul 'Ulama Party), Partai Muslimin Indonesia (Indonesian Moslems Party), Golongan Karya (Golkar), Partai Kristen Indonesia (Indonesian Christian Party), Partai Musyawarah Rakyat Banyak (Peoples Consultation Party), Partai Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Party), Partai Islam Persatuan Tarbiyah Islamiyah (Islamic-Educational Union Party), and Partai Ikatan Pendukung Kemerdekaan Indonesia (Indonesian Independence Supporters' Union Party).

<sup>40</sup> Munafrizal Manan, *Pentas Politik Indonesia Pasca Orde Baru* (Yogyakarta: IRE Press, 2005), 138, look also at Hamid Basyaib and Hamid Abidin (ed.), *Mengapa Partai Islam Kalah?* (Jakarta: Alfabet, 1999), 216-222.



of the muslims of Indonesian population rather than in political realism. Thirdly, they underestimated the nationalist parties particularly the PDIP and Golkar.<sup>41</sup>

In addition to those answers, this paper, from the viewpoint of power conception of Nietzsche and Elias, gives the answer that the failure of Islamic political parties in the contests of the Indonesian general elections was caused by the Islamic-political parties in Indonesia so far still preferring to practice the ideological-partisan mentality. If the ideological-partisan obstacles can be eliminated, they can jointly work to be a more forceful power. If there are no ideological-partisan obstacles, mentality of the worker and servant of their own party can be replaced by mentality the worker and servant of the substantial vision and mission of Islam.

Religious ideology of the Islamic political party is still prioritized more than the substantial vision and mission of Islam, that is, to build and develop the life of having a just, tolerant, and prosperous nation. The existing islamic-political parties, by the general election in 2019, does not show yet an effort to unite in order to build the commonly figurative power. Instead, each islamic-political party endeavors to have a coalition with the nationalist political parties just to get the allocation of power in the politically public positions. In doing so, they felt defeating the other Islamic-political parties cooperated with the other nationalist political parties that has been defeated. This indicated that the logic of conflictive-agonistic power worked to move the Islamic-political parties. Thus, it is no wonder if they never be the big parties so far.

If the Islamic-political parties existing in Indonesia can avoid the polemic of religious ideologies among them, and try to synergize

and harmonize the specific strengths each of them has, the Islamic-political parties can unite to build a commonly configurative power. Indeed, the interests of religious ideology cannot be avoid. It is natural. But, it cannot be allowed to occur that for the sake of their own religious ideology, the Islamic political parties allow the ways that transgress and break the rules and the moral principles of Islam. Every Islamic-political party surely has each interest of religious ideology, nevertheless, in the effort to synergize and harmonize the specific strengths of the existing Islamic-political parties to be a configurative power, they have to prioritize the rational and substantial morality of Islam rather than the emotional and subjective one. Moreover, the rasional and substantial morality of Islam has to meet the rationally public morality both in the Indonesian context and the global one.

How a political party or a coalition of political parties winning the general election do not use the power to just the individual interest. Instead, they use the power to empower and strengthen all existing political parties. Unfortunately, this seems not to be the spirit moving the the political activities in Indonesia.

## **Conclusion**

The power geared in the political practices in Indonesia so far did not depict yet the pattern of power relation mutually synergizing the strengths of all political parties both nationalist and religious ones and all professional resources outside the parties. The pattern of conflictive-agonistic relation strongly dominated more than that of figurative or configurative one. Each political party competed and raced to be the superior party ruling and mastering the other ones. Power in multi political parties in Indonesia there seemed to be comprehended as something fought for rather than jointly and commonly synergized, harmonized, configured, and owned.

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<sup>41</sup> Azyumardi Azra, "Islamic Perspective on the Nation-State Political Islam in Post-Soeharto Indonesia," in *Al-Jami'ah Journal of Islamic Studies*, Volume 39, Number 2, July-December 2001: 303-304.

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