THE DYNAMICS OF POLITICAL BEHAVIOR IN MADURA: From the Kingdom to the Digital Democracy Eras

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Abstract

The political history of Madurese society reflects dynamic changes across different periods. This study examines the political behavior of the Madurese people from the kingdom era in Sumenep, Bangkalan, and Pamekasan, through the Dutch colonial and post-independence periods, to the New Order and the digital democracy era of 2019. Using a descriptive qualitative approach, data were collected through document analysis and in-depth interviews with historians, cultural experts, and political experts. The findings reveal that Madurese political behavior has evolved significantly over time. During the kingdom era, it was marked by respect and obedience to kings. In the Dutch colonial period, political behavior shifted toward armed resistance against oppression. In the post-independence era, the focus was on resisting colonial influence, while in the New Order era, resistance targeted political manipulation. In the digital democracy era, political behavior became shaped more by psychological factors, emphasizing individual preferences and pragmatism. These transformations are driven by sociological factors,

particularly religion, and later by psychological influences. The study highlights that voter behavior is dynamic, shaped by evolving social, economic, and technological contexts, providing insights into the fluid nature of political engagement.

Sejarah politik masyarakat Madura menunjukkan dinamika yang terus berubah di setiap era. Artikel ini membahas perilaku politik masyarakat Madura sejak era kerajaan di Sumenep, Bangkalan, dan Pamekasan, era kolonial Belanda dan pasca-kemerdekaan, era Orde Baru, hingga era demokrasi digital pada 2019. Menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan, data dikumpulkan melalui analisis dokumen dan wawancara mendalam dengan sejarawan, budayawan, dan pakar politik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perilaku politik masyarakat Madura terus mengalami perubahan. Masa kerajaan diwujudkan dalam bentuk penghormatan dan ketaatan terhadap raja. Pada masa kolonial Belanda, perilaku politik ditunjukkan dengan perlawanan fisik dan bersenjata terhadap penjajahan. Pasca kemerdekaan, mereka fokus melawan pengaruh kolonialisme, sementara era Orde Baru, masyarakat melakukan perlawanan terhadap manipulasi politik. Pada era demokrasi digital, perilaku politik dipengaruhi oleh aspek psikologis, menegaskan preferensi dan pragmatisme personal. Studi ini menyoroti bahwa perilaku pemilih bersifat dinamis, dibentuk oleh konteks sosial, ekonomi, dan teknologi yang terus berkembang, serta memberikan wawasan tentang sifat fluiditas dalam keterlibatan politik.

Introduction

Madurese society's politics have historically experienced significant dynamics. The era of kingdoms in Madura began in 1017. Among the four regions in Madura, the most prominent kingdom was Sumenep, whose palace still stands today (Zamroni 2012, 163). The beginning of Indonesia's independence was marked by Madura's political autonomy, with the region designated as a State Unit on September 8, 1949 (Sumardi 1999, 10). However, the state of Madura was later dissolved and integrated into

Indonesia following the enactment of the integral motion by Moh. Natsir (Latif et al. 2024, 842).

During the New Order era, particularly in the 1971 General Election, the Madurese people predominantly supported the NU Party, which secured 817,561 votes in Madura (Pribadi 2014, 7). When Golkar attempted to secure a victory in Madura through undemocratic means, resistance arose, particularly in regions like Sampang. At the onset of the Reformasi era, the political dominance of the *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP) shifted to the *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*. Over time, the political landscape in Madura became increasingly dynamic, with non-religious parties gaining influence. For instance, in the 2024 General Election, *PDI Perjuangan* secured the most seats in the Sumenep Regency Regional People's Representative Council, winning 11 seats. Meanwhile, the *Nasdem* Party won the most seats in the Sampang Regency Regional People's Representative Council, with 15 seats.

This research addresses the historical specifics of Madura's kingdoms and the evolution of its political dynamics over time. Understanding the history of a society is a virtue, and understanding the transformations within it is equally virtuous. Analyzing the history and evolution of political behavior within a society is essential (Reinert & Kvangraven 2023, 79). Such analysis is relevant to understanding the legal and societal changes that occur. Every society undergoes transformations, whether progress or decline, in both political and economic dimensions (Hanlon & Heblich 2022, 26). A failure to comprehend these changes can lead to a biased perspective, potentially causing communities to fall into the abyss of failure (Bogart 2022, 10). The history of one society provides valuable lessons for others, encompassing both the causes of decline or destruction (Porcelli 2022, 223) and the factors contributing to societal advancement (Kuzuhara 2022, 46).

Social scientists attribute societal changes to several factors. According to John Rawls, cultural shifts and political behavior within a society are shaped by the diversity of beliefs, religious doctrines, philosophies, and morals held by its members (Rawls 2008, 11). Birkinbine asserts that economic conditions, both local and global, play a pivotal role in influencing changes in political behavior (Birkinbine 2020, 1). Paul Sabatier suggests that societal transformations are also driven by policies enacted by political forces and the government in power (Sabatier 2019, 368). Massey highlights the influence of natural conditions and geographical location on societal behavior (Massey 2020, 366). Additionally, Barberá et al. argue that social

media plays a significant role in shaping political behavior and societal changes (Barberá et al. 2019, 885).

Several studies have previously examined the political behavior of the Madurese people. For instance, research by Abdul A'la and Ahwan Mukarrom explored the relationship between religion and politics, focusing particularly on the roles of traditional and modern ulama in Madura (A'la & Mukarrom 2020). Similarly, Wilda Rasaili conducted a study on the implementation of democracy in local politics in Madura (Rasaili 2023). Mohammad Abdullah and Kusaeri investigated the transformation of religious figures in Madura, highlighting their shift from educators to politicians (Abdullah & Kusaeri 2024).

However, none of these studies specifically focus on the historical evolution of Madurese political behavior, from the royal era to the digital age. Related research on the political history of Madura has been conducted by Moh. Romli, who examined the struggle for power by the Madurese king Prince Trunojoyo against Mataram in 1677 (Romli 2023). Another study by Abdur Rozaki delves into the history of political power associated with *blater* (thugs) in Madura (Rozaki 2009).

This study seeks to reveal the political behavior of the Madurese people across different historical periods. The novelty of this study lies in its comprehensive approach, tracing the transformation of Madurese political behavior from the Kingdom era, through the early years of Indonesian independence and the New Order era, to the digital age. Notably, it examines how the advent of information technology and social media significantly influenced political activities during events like the 2019 presidential election. This article describes the significant changes in the political behavior of the Madurese people, reflecting their adaptation to various historical, social, economic, political, and psychological contexts. The analysis offers valuable insights into how these factors have shaped and redefined political engagement in Madura, transitioning from traditional systems of governance to the modern digital democracy era.

Research Method

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach to analyze the history of political behavior in Madura over time. Data were collected using two primary methods. *First*, a document search was conducted. Three types of documents were explored: books on the history of Madura, journal articles

on politics and the political history of Madura, and online media sources documenting the political dynamics and key political figures in Madura. These three sources served as the foundation for the study, providing secondary historical data. Primary historical sources, such as artifacts and physical evidence (e.g., buildings and stones), are no longer available in Madura, making their inclusion in this study impossible. Additionally, online media offered crucial documentation of the political behavior of the Madurese people in the digital era. Online media sources used in this research included Media Indonesia, Radar Madura-Jawa Pos, Kompas, and Antara News.

Second, in-depth interviews were conducted. These interviews involved historians, cultural experts, political analysts, academics, and cultural practitioners familiar with Madura's political history. Informants from diverse backgrounds were intentionally selected to validate and compare data collected from other sources. Three historians in Madura were interviewed: ED, TA, and KS. Likewise, three cultural figures (IB, JH, and AS) and three political experts (WR, RH, and ZN) participated in the interviews.

To ensure data validity, cross-checking and triangulation techniques were applied. Two types of triangulations were employed. First, technical triangulation was involved using multiple data collection techniques, document searches and in-depth interviews. Data obtained from books, journal articles, and online media were cross-verified through interviews with informants. Second, source triangulation is applied using diverse informants as sources of verification. Each group of informants (historians, cultural figures, and political experts) consisted of three members, ensuring the inclusion of varied perspectives.

One limitation of this study, in the context of historical research, is the absence of artifact-based evidence. This limitation stems from the deficiency of physical resources related to the political behavior of the Madurese people, particularly during the royal era and the Dutch and Japanese colonial periods. To address this deficiency, secondary sources were emphasized, including significant historical works such as *Social Change in Agrarian Society: Madura 1850–1940* by Kuntowijoyo and *Treasures of Archipelago Manuscripts: Track Record and Contemporary Development* by Wiwin Indiarti and Suyami.

Political History of Madurese Muslim Society: From the Kingdom to the Digital Era

The history of Madurese political behavior can be divided into five periods: the Kingdom era, the Dutch East Indies and Japanese colonial era, the post-independence era, the New Order era, and the digital era.

The Kingdom Era

The Kingdom era in Madura dates back to the 11th century, beginning around 1017. The kingdom in Madura was centered in Sumenep Regency, where royal heritage remains preserved, such as the burial site for the descendants of kings, known as Asta Tinggi (Zamroni 2012, 161). In 1624, Mataram conquered Madura, and Sultan Agung then Raden Praseno as the king of Madura under the title Cakraningrat I, with the palace located in Madegan, Sampang. Cakraningrat I ruled over all of Madura until 1680, after which his successor, Cakraningrat II, oversaw the division of the kingdom into West and East Madura (Hidayat et al. 2023, 99). In East Madura, the Sumenep Kingdom flourished under Panembahan Sumolo Asirudin, also known as Raden Aryo Atmonegoro or Sultan Notokusumo I, beginning in 1672. Later, Sultan Abdurrahman, also referred to as Pakunataningrat I or Sultan Notokusumo II, led the kingdom from 1811 to 1854, during which Madurese society experienced significant development (Alghar & Marhayati 2023, 318).

According to interviews with Madurese historians, during the Kingdom era, the political behavior of Madurese citizens reflected loyalty and obedient to royal authority. ED, a historian, noted that despite internal power struggles among royal families, the people remained submissive to their rulers.

> "*For example, Sultan Abdurrahman was not only regarded as a king, but also as a cleric*" (ED, interview, 2024).

TA, another historian, highlighted the overlap between formal leadership and religious influence during this time:

> "*This caused the people of Madura to greatly respect the kings. In addition, in Madura, there are teachings of Buppa-bebbu, guru, rato (father-mother, teacher, king), so the king was respected as much as parents and teachers*" (TA, interview, 2024).

KS, another historian, acknowledged the existence of royal family conflicts but emphasized that these did not undermine public loyalty to the monarchy:

> "*Madurese still accept whoever became king. In that era, Madurese people did not understand practical politics; they only understood respect and obedience to the ruling king*" (KS, interview, 2024).

The Era of the Dutch East Indies and Japan

In the early 18th century, the Dutch East Indies government, under the command of Raffles as Governor of Java, extended its control to Madura (Syukur 2017, 45). Raffles implemented policies asserting government ownership of assets and land, which forced local residents to either rent land from the Dutch or manage it under government directives. Agricultural harvests were also controlled by the Dutch, with indigenous people obliged to pay taxes either in the form of agricultural produce which then be paid in cash (Widyanti & Setiyonugroho 2022, 118). The Dutch issued liberalization and reorganization policies affecting the Pamekasan region in 1853, Sumenep in 1883, and Bangkalan in 1885 (Raditya 2022, 26).

When the Dutch were replaced by the Japanese, who then colonized Indonesia, several people in Madura became members of the Hieho. When the Japanese left Indonesia, they returned to being ordinary citizens (Budiarto 2021, 41). Japan's policy focuses on managing natural resources for the country's economic interests, turning Madura into one of the areas with focal point of economic potential, particularly in salt production (Mufliha et al. 2021, 162). Japan promoted strict discipline and frugal living through savings movements to improve the welfare of salt industry workers (Mahdiyar et al. 2022, 5). Japan also turned Madura into a stronghold. During its colonization of Indonesia, Japan, which was facing war with America and its allies in World War II, implemented a policy in Madura by forming the Workers' Soldiers' Assistance Agency to help Japanese soldiers fighting against the Allies (Suwignyo 2019, 389).

One of Japan's bizarre regulations was implementing isolationist policies, prohibiting Madurese people from traveling outside the region (Rachmawati et al. 2024, 74), and banning the carrying of sharp weapons when traveling or outside the house (Basundoro 2012, 10). However, these restrictions were mostly ineffective because the Madurese frequently use

tools like sickles in their daily routines for cutting grass to feed livestock or for various kitchen purposes.

The Post-Independence Era

Following Indonesia's declaration of independence on August 17, 1945, the Dutch attempted to reestablish control by forming a federal system known as the United Republic of Indonesia. As a result, several regions in Indonesia became federal states (Susilo & Wulansari 2021, 33), one of which was the State of Madura, declared on September 8, 1949 (Rasid 1949, 253; Mursal & Bakaruddin 2020, 219). However, this arrangement was short-lived, as Prime Minister Moh. Natsir's integral motion in 1950 dissolved the federal states, integrating Madura into the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (Fauzan et al. 2024, 27). In Indonesia's first general election in 1955, the *Nahdlatul Ulama* Party became the dominant political force in East Java, including Madura (Wirayuda 2024, 28).

The New Order Era

During the New Order era, Madura's political condition was dynamic as it experienced both stability and turmoil. The political map in Madura began from the 1971 General Election. In the election, the Nahdlatul Ulama Party received 817,561 votes (66.55%), far surpassing Golkar's 300,399 votes (24.45%). The rest votes belonged to other parties such as Perti and Parmusi. However, in 1973, the New Order government merged the parties in Indonesia. The Islam-based parties, including NU, merged into the *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP). At that time, NU declared itself a non-political religious organization. Even so, many NU figures still joined PPP. Meanwhile, the nationalist parties merged into the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI, *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia*). This reorganization gradually eroded PPP's influence, while Golkar gained dominance (Van Bruinessen 2012, 117).

Cultural narratives about the Madurese during this period often painted them as aggressive or troublesome, but cultural figures contest this stereotype. IB, a cultural figure, explained:

> "*Madurese are often misunderstood. They are willing to fight or die if their families are disturbed. The same thing extends to politics. For example, in the*

past, some sold their possessions only to attend PKB events" (IB, interview, 2024).

JH argued that resistance to the New Order in areas like Sampang reflected Madurese insistence on defending their rights:

"*The PPP, symbolized by the Kaaba, was seen as a Madurese party. When it was marginalized by the New Order government, people fought back*" (JH, interview, 2024).

Another cultural figure, AS emphasized that the Madurese are inherently peaceful but are unafraid to stand up for their honor when provoked:

"*Many disputes in Madura often arise from family matters. For Madurese, it is an honor to defend their family, even at the risk of death*" (AS, interview, 2024).

The Era of Digital Democracy

The era of digital democracy in Indonesia began during the 2019 general and presidential elections, marked by the widespread use of gadget-based social media (Harahap 2020, 4). This trend also emerged in Madura, where the Madurese people, as part of Indonesian society, demonstrated increasing digital literacy, including active participation on social media platforms. This development significantly influenced the outcome of the 2019 presidential election in Madura. As the incumbent in the 2019 presidential election, President Joko Widodo (also known as Jokowi) received extensive coverage in mainstream media, including television, radio, newspapers, and online platforms. Despite this, his vote share in Madura was notably lower than that of his opponent, Prabowo Subianto. For instance, in Sumenep Regency, Jokowi secured 242,305 votes (35.67%) compared to Prabowo's 436,931 votes (64.33%), leading to a clear defeat. Similar results were seen in Pamekasan Regency, where Jokowi garnered only 102,931 votes (16.22%) against Prabowo's 531,561 votes (83.78%). In Sampang Regency, Jokowi received 187,189 votes (24.70%), while Prabowo amassed 570,597 votes (75.30%). Jokowi's sole victory in Madura occurred in Bangkalan Regency, where he narrowly won with 440,129 votes (57.74%) compared to Prabowo's 322,131 votes (42.26%). Overall, Jokowi suffered a significant defeat in Madura.

Table 1 reveals intriguing patterns in the political behavior of Madurese voters. Notably, Jokowi's decision to select Ma'ruf Amin, a senior figure in Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), an influential Islamic organization deeply rooted in Madura, as his vice-presidential candidate, did not translate into electoral success in the region. Despite the predominance of NU followers in Madura, Jokowi lost in most regencies. Several political experts from some universities in Madura expressed surprise at this outcome, highlighting how it deviated from the usual expectations of Madurese political behavior. WR, a political observer, commented on this unexpected phenomenon:

> "*Kiai Ma'ruf Amin is a charismatic and central figure in NU, but he could not secure a victory in Madura, where 90 percent of its citizens are Nahdliyyin*" (WR, interview, 2024).

Table 1
Vote Acquisition of Presidential Candidate in Madura of 2019 Election

Presidential Candidate Pairing	Sumenep Regency	Pamekasan Regency	Sampang Regency	Bangkalan Regency
Jokowi-Amin	242,305 (35.67%)	102,931 (16.22%)	187,189 (24.70%)	440,129 (57.74%)
Prabowo-Sandi	436,931 (64.33%)	531,561 (83.78%)	570,597 (75.30%)	322,131 (42.26%)

RH, another political expert, stated that this reflects the high level of democracy among Madurese voters, who feel free to express political differences even with family or respected figures like their teachers:

> "*If we examine the 2019 election, especially the presidential election, it was remarkable. It showed that many students in Madura did not vote for candidate pairs with kiai affiliations*" (RH, interview, 2024).

Additionally, ZN, a political expert from a private university in Pamekasan, highlighted the role of information technology and social media as key factors in shaping modern political behavior in Madura:

> "*I think one of the main causes is the presence of social media. Madurese are among the active social media users in the 2019 presidential election. They comment a lot on social media and actively re-share political content from candidates they like and support*" (ZN, interview, 2024).

The results of the 2019 legislative elections in Madura further illustrate the shift in political preferences. Contrary to expectations, the highest votes were not secured by religious parties but by a nationalist party candidate. The candidate with the most votes was Imron Amin from the Gerindra Party, who received 242,437 votes. He was followed by Ahmad Baidowi from the PPP, who secured 227,170 votes. Other significant results included, Willy Aditya from Nasdem Party (190,814 votes), Said Abdullah from the PDI Perjuangan (176,981 votes), Hasani Bin Zuber from the Demokrat Party (170,859 votes), Syafiuddin from *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* (142,303 votes), Slamet Ariyadi from *Partai Amanat Nasional* (133,495 votes), and Zainudin Amali from the Golkar Party (121,351 votes). Only two religious parties, PKB and PPP, secured seats in the Indonesian House of Representatives from the Madura electoral. When combined, the nationalist parties gained more votes than the religious ones.

Political Behavior of Madurese Muslim Society Across Different Eras

The political behavior of Madurese society has experienced significant dynamics throughout various phases of its political history. These changes are inseparable from the social, political, and economic situations of the time, including the psychological conditions of the Madurese people. From the royal era to the digital era, the political behavior of the Madurese people has evolved from passive acceptance and fatalism to active and independent engagement, no longer entirely dependent on political elites. This evolution can be explained as follows:

Political Behavior During the Kingdom Era

In Madurese society, political behavior during the Kingdom era was deeply rooted in familial and cultural traditions, passed down through generations. The Madurese adhered to a social hierarchy symbolized by the phrase "*buppa' babbu' guru rato*" (father, mother, teacher, and king). Although the king's position is mentioned last, it is equated with parents and teachers, who must be respected and obeyed (Fikriyati et al. 2021, 57). Demonstrations of this respect included bowing and hand-kissing, symbolic of obedience and admiration (Harits 2023, 989). This also reflects the acceptance of patrons in Madurese society, indicating that during the royal era, the community was generally harmonious (Rahman 2022, 195). The

king received not only respect but also various offerings and tributes as part of a tradition of presenting what was owned by the ruler (Hefni 2012, 20).

At the time, Madurese society was primarily agrarian, with livelihoods dependent on farming. This agricultural lifestyle, coupled with Islamic teachings emphasizing obedience to parents, teachers, and rulers, heavily influenced their political behavior. The Madurese people's sociological and religious context shaped their acceptance of authority and fostered a culture of submission to the king's rule.

Political Behavior During the Dutch and Japanese Colonial Eras

The Dutch colonial government in Madura imposed severe economic constraints on the population. Dutch policies caused widespread economic hardship, leaving most Madurese residents unable to mount significant resistance. Instead, their focus was on daily survival. However, as oppression intensified, feelings of injustice led to resistance. One of the earliest resistances against Dutch colonial rule in Madura was led by Kiai Semantri, also known as Kiai Lanceng, in the Prajjan area of Sampang. Along with his students, Kiai Semantri fought against Dutch troops when his langgar (prayer house) was attacked (Kuntowijoyo 2017, 351-359). Earlier, in the 1600s, Trunajaya had also led a rebellion against the Dutch, driven by the belief that colonial forces were infidels (Indiarti & Suyami 2023, 55-78). During the colonial era, Muslim political behavior in Madura was defined by resistance to tyranny. This behavior is driven by sociological aspect, rooted in Islamic teachings that oppose oppression and colonialism. Such struggles were considered acts of *jihad fii sabilillah* (striving in the way of God), embodying a combination of religious devotion and political resistance.

Political Behavior After Independence (Post-Colonial Era)

In the post-independence era, during the Old Order period, the political landscape in Madura was marked by the existence of the *Barisan Tjakra Madura* (BTM). Established on September 1, 1946, BTM was initially formed by the *Koninklijke Nederlandsch Indische Leger* (KNIL). It was used to help the Dutch' military forces maintain power in Indonesia. In other words, BTM played a role in assisting the Dutch in their attempts to regain control of Indonesia after independence (Lombard 1972, 263). BTM was formed with the help of Captain Moehni and Asad, who were former members of the KNIL. BTM served the Dutch in three missions. First, it was deployed to

Sumatera to confront groups considered extremist by the Dutch. Second, in Java, it helped push Indonesian fighters out of Surabaya and Sidoarjo into the Mojokerto area. Third, in Madura, BTM was used to spy on Indonesian fighters. On August 4, 1947, the Dutch launched an attack on Madura, utilizing BTM alongside Red Beret troops and the Yuliana battalion (Pratama 2023, 105).

In response, resistance forces in Sampang, including the *Sabilillah* troops and the Indonesian Republic Army (TRI), successfully repelled Dutch attacks on September 1, 1947. However, in November and December of that year, the Dutch regrouped and launched larger attacks, enabling them to temporarily regain control of Sampang and capture *Sabilillah* and TRI members. The conflict between BTM and the *Sabilillah* forces persisted until the disbandment of BTM following the withdrawal of KNIL troops from Indonesia as decreed by Queen Juliana of the Netherlands (Ramadhani 2016, 747). During the post-independence era, the political behavior of the Madurese people was characterized by armed resistance to prevent the Dutch from reestablishing colonial rule in Madura. As in the colonial period, Islamic teachings remained the dominant sociological factor shaping this resistance. For the Madurese, rejecting colonialism was an extension of their religious principles, further demonstrating their deep commitment to Islamic values in both spiritual and political life.

Political Behavior During the New Order Era

The New Order regime's efforts to dominate political parties through Golkar, often using undemocratic approaches, led to widespread dissatisfaction and resistance (Mahdiana & Wisnu 2018, 49). In every general election, the New Order employed various manipulative strategies to secure Golkar's victory across Indonesia. In Sampang, Madura, where the *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP) enjoyed significant support, voters resisted the manipulated elections, resulting in the first recorded re-election at the district level (Perdana 2021, 35).

The mass mobilization in Sampang during this period was remarkable, occurring under the firm control of the New Order in the Madura region. Thousands of people, primarily supporters of PPP and members of the Islamic organization Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), gathered from rural areas across Sampang. They convened in the city, marched in a convoy, and carried sharp weapons, such as machetes and sickles. The situation escalated,

with uncontrolled mobs setting fire to several buildings (Mulkhan 2003, 30). This indicates that when peaceful political efforts were undermined by the New Order's manipulation, the Madurese resorted to mass action, which at times descended into anarchy.

In 1993, opposition to the government's plan to build the Nipah Reservoir in Banyuates District, Sampang, exemplified resistance during the New Order. Residents from eight affected villages opposed the plan. Their resistance intensified due to unsympathetic actions by officials conducting land measurements. Clashes erupted between residents and security forces on September 25, 1993, resulting in violence and four victims (Abdurrahman 2012, 30). Similarly, the construction of the Suramadu Bridge faced opposition, spearheaded by Alawy Muhammad, a charismatic cleric and key PPP figure in Madura. Such resistance underscored the sociological aspect of Madurese political behavior during this era, particularly their commitment to protecting religious symbols like the Kaaba, which represented the PPP.

Political Behavior in the Digital Democracy Era

In the digital era, the Madurese people have embraced social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp, significantly altering how they access and share information. Social media has become a primary medium for news dissemination, reducing reliance on mainstream media like television, radio, newspapers, and online news outlets. This changes people's behavior toward accessing information. The mainstream media consumption is also decreasing (Badi'ah et al. 2021). In addition to consuming information, people have freedom to actively share news and opinions through their social media accounts. Thus, the authority to convey information to the public is no longer monopolized by the mainstream media (Ritonga & Syahputra 2019, 79).

Social media's accessibility and affordability have empowered Madurese citizens to engage with political information during presidential election. With just a click, a vast amount of political information shared daily can be accessed. Additionally, some of them obtained information through mass media, such as television, radio, newspapers, and online media. Through social media, residents in Madura also participated in discussions and debates or exchanged political information regarding the presidential

election, especially in groups focused on political issues. Unlike traditional media, social media offers two-way communication, making it more appealing to users. The successful programs of the Jokowi government and the campaign programs carried out by the winning team in the mass media did not have a linear impact on the cognition and behavior of voters in Madura.

Despite the success of Jokowi's administration and his campaign efforts in mass media, these achievements did not translate into electoral success in Madura. During the presidential election, the psychological alignment of voters with candidates played a significant role. For instance, Prabowo Subianto, perceived as a firm and resolute figure, resonated more with Madurese voters, reflecting their preference for strong leadership.

In legislative elections, political behavior in Madura has shifted significantly from previous eras. Madurese voters no longer identify strictly with specific political parties, including religious-based ones like PPP and PKB. Instead, their choices reflect a more pragmatic approach, favoring candidates or parties that offer tangible benefits and services, including financial incentives during campaigns. This shift toward political pragmatism reflects a growing rationality among voters in determining their political preferences.

Theoretical Insights into Madurese Political Behavior

Madurese political behavior has historically been shaped by sociological and religious factors. During the royal era, obedience to authority was rooted in religious teachings that emphasized respect for parents, teachers, and leaders. Similarly, resistance during the colonial era was motivated by Islamic principles opposing tyranny. Figures like Kiai Semantri and Trunajaya considered Dutch colonialists to be infidels and framed their resistance as *jihad fii sabilillah* (striving in the way of God). This religiously inspired political behavior persisted into the post-independence era, where Madurese resistance to Dutch military aggression and their involvement in *Sabilillah* troops were viewed as acts of devotion. The founder of NU, Hasyim Asy'ari, emphasized that defending independence was a form of *jihad*.

During the New Order era, the Madurese people showcased their political behavior by opposing manipulated elections in Sampang. This resistance emerged from dissatisfaction with the New Order regime's overt

efforts to dominate elections by favoring Golkar, often employing undemocratic and coercive tactics. The *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP), with its symbolic representation of the Kaaba, had deep cultural and religious significance among Madurese voters, who associated the party with Islamic values and identity. Mobilization efforts by PPP supporters reflected their commitment to protecting not only their political preferences but also their religious identity. However, this religiously motivated political behavior began to diminish in the digital era.

In the digital democracy era, voter behavior has become more pragmatic and less influenced by religious affiliation. Despite Jokowi's choice of Ma'ruf Amin, a respected religious leader, as his running mate, Madurese voters favored Prabowo, whom they perceived as a firm and decisive leader. This indicates a shift in Madurese political behavior, where psychological alignment with a candidate's personality and perceived strength outweighs traditional religious considerations. The digital era reflects a significant evolution in Madurese political behavior, shaped more by psychological and pragmatic factors than by sociological or religious influences. Social media's influence further highlights the shift from traditional collective affiliations to individualized, issue-based political engagement. Table 2 provides an overview of the political behavior exhibited by the Madurese people across different eras.

Table 2
Differences in Muslim Voters' Political Behavior in Each Era

No.	Era	Description
1	The kingdom era	The Madurese people were primarily an agricultural society. Their livelihoods were entirely dependent on farming, and they sustained themselves through the results of their agricultural labor. In addition to this economic framework, sociological aspects such as the Islamic religion significantly influenced political behavior. One of the key teachings emphasized obedience to parents, teachers, and the king, reflecting the hierarchical structure of Madurese society.

2	The era of the Dutch East Indies and Japan	Most Madurese residents did not openly resist the colonial powers due to their lack of resources and strength. They were preoccupied with fulfilling their daily needs. However, feelings of oppression gradually escalated, culminating in resistance movements such as the uprising in Prajjan, Madura. This political behavior was driven by sociological and religious factors, particularly Islamic teachings, which opposed tyranny and colonialism. The struggle against colonial rule was regarded as an act of devotion to God, or *jihad fii Sabilillah* (striving in the way of God).
3	The post-independence era	The political behavior of the Madurese people was characterized by armed struggle to prevent the Dutch from regaining control over Madura.
4	The new order era	The Madurese people demonstrated their political behavior through mass actions, which occasionally escalated into anarchy. These actions represented the final recourse when peaceful efforts were undermined. Political behavior during this time was shaped by sociological factors, particularly the commitment to upholding and protecting religious symbols. One such symbol was the "Kaaba," representing *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (PPP), which was deeply cherished and defended by Muslim voters in Madura.
5	The digital democracy era	The political behavior of the Madurese people has been influenced primarily by psychological factors. Their preference for an ideal presidential candidate emphasizes qualities such as firmness, a trait embodied by Prabowo Subianto. Prabowo's portrayal in mass and social media as a resolute and firm leader resonates with the Madurese people, who value such characteristics. In legislative elections, voter behavior has shifted towards political pragmatism, with decisions increasingly influenced by tangible benefits and

practical considerations rather than ideological or religious affiliations.

Conclusion

During the kingdom era, the political behavior of the Madurese people was characterized by acceptance and loyalty to the prevailing institutions, with deep respect and submission to the king, including paying tribute. Over time, the political history of Madura, particularly the political behavior of the Madurese people, has undergone significant changes. Madurese society no longer relies on royal institutions or even educational institutions like Islamic boarding schools as primary references for political preferences. Instead, the Madurese people have become increasingly independent in their political choices.

Furthermore, with the growing influence of personal social media, the ability of religious figures and state institutions to direct political preferences has diminished. This shift was evident in the 2019 presidential election, where President Jokowi, running for re-election alongside Ma'ruf Amin–a charismatic cleric rooted in *Nahdlatul Ulama* culture–lost in Madura to the Prabowo Subianto-Sandiaga Uno ticket. This outcome marked a turning point and created a new chapter in the political history of the Madurese people, reflecting a departure from traditional influences toward more autonomous and pragmatic political behavior.

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