

Reading Political Intrigue in A Book “Pesan Dari 8 Negeri”

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Introduction

This book is a good introduction to reading for academics, as well as the general public who want to get to know politics. Because Muhtar Wahyudi's background is a political communication academic and an expert on political surveys and public opinion in Indonesia, this reference makes the data and facts contained in it quite factual and authoritative. References to political books in Indonesia, especially domestic ones, are quite diverse. Starting from culturally reflective thoughts such as Emha Ainun Nadjib, Sujiwo Tedjo, and Nurudin to several academic references. However, there are still not many references to political books that bring readers to study politics by putting forward historical aspects and contextualizing them into real aspects. The data shows that in Google Scholar as one of the references, the academic political references that are still widely cited are books from Prof. Miriam Budiardjo, published in 2003 entitled; *Fundamentals of Political Science*, as many as 7,673 citations were recorded in the reference. There is also a book by Prof. Hafied Cangara a year 2011 *Political Communication Concepts, Theories and Strategies* recorded on Google Scholar have been cited 1249 times as of August 2022. In addition, there are no references related to academic books that photograph socio-political realities in Indonesia and can be used as academic references.

The book entitled *Messages from 8 Countries (Intrigue, Strategy and Political Communication)* was written by Muhtar Wahyudi or better known in the world of publication as Mochtar W. Oetomo. He is a senior academic at Trunojoyo Madura University and the director of the Surabaya Survey Center (SSC) which he founded with several colleagues since 2007. This book is included in the category of political science and government science books. Generally, the books in that category are quite stiff and speak very practically. This book is divided into 8 chapters as the title of this book. Each chapter is a story from the political stories of various countries ranging from western countries to Mataram countries. Like the story about Brutus as a symbol of cunning, it becomes an interesting metaphor to be used as a narrative about how practical political succession takes place. Until the events of the Trunojoyo rebellion in the Islamic Mataram era. Besides that, the way of discussing this book is quite interesting from the aspect of writing. There are political reality data and facts such as the 2018 East Java Governor Election as facts which are then told by contextualizing stories from various countries. So that it is quite easy for readers to understand political realities such as reading historical stories of the past.

With a way of writing that flows and is like reading stories about ancient kingdoms or countries in the world, it makes the reader feel that this difficult issue is actually close to people's lives. It's like reading a fairy tale that has become a story passed down from generation to generation and is increasingly easily understood by people from all walks of life.

Review Points

The narration that emerges from each chapter in *Messages From 8 Negeri* books makes it easy for readers from various backgrounds to study political constellations in a simple way. In the tradition of communication science, especially communication science from the sociopsychological tradition, it shows that everyone will have two ways to process information. The first way is through the central route and the second way is the peripheral route, this concept is known as Elaboration Likelihood Models (Kitchen et al., 2014; Petty & Briñol, 2011; Sofyan, 2020).

This concept assumes that the central route is characterized by persuasion that is likely to occur due to individual careful consideration of the credibility of information to support interpretation, while the processing of the peripheral route is characterized by persuasion that is likely to occur due to simple cues in persuasion (Kitchen et al., 2014; Petty & Briñol, 2011). This book has an elaboration process that occurs on a peripheral route allowing readers to get to know politics more easily. Usually the authors of political books present a lot of data and facts that emphasize the central route aspect. However, the reality is that not all readers are able to read or

process information via a central route. Readers easily receive information via the peripheral route with simple gestures and a variety of approaches available to make it easier for readers to understand

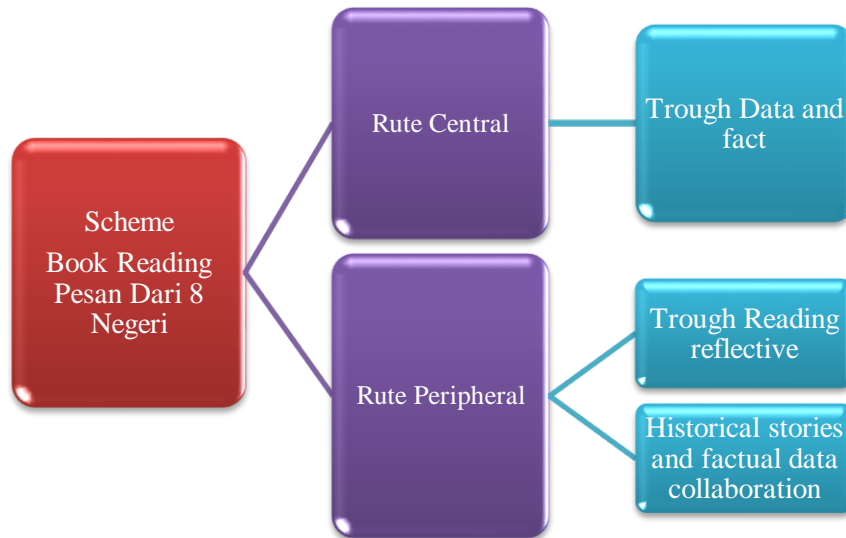


Figure 1. Schematic of Reader's Elaboration in Message Books from 8 Countries (Researcher, 2022)

This scheme is strengthened by the use of the phrase Negeri in the title of this book. The difference between country and country in usage as a literacy has a very different meaning. When the phrase Negara is used, the approach is a formal approach such as constitutionalism or other things. Meanwhile, the state is more casual and more fluid, meaning that it chooses a non-exclusive position as a reference.

Dynamic Politics Learns from the Past in the Country West

In the book Messages From 8 Lands, readers will immediately be amazed starting with the introduction to the story, namely the article entitled Brutus-Brutus in the Year of Politics. In that article, Muhtar seemed to give a kind of welcome to anyone who wants to understand politics that nothing is permanent in politics. The conflict between Brutus and Julius Caesar is told sequentially and contextualized with the political events of the homeland. Like Ridwan Kamil, one of the strong candidates in the 2018 West Java Pilgub, Golkar suddenly left at the last minute. Even the phenomenon of PAN and PKS defecting to Gerindra to carry Sudrajat-Ahmad Saikhu also seems to represent a brutal story that stabbed Julis Caesar's heart.

Apart from that, there is also a story about how the Azwar Anas scandal, a candidate for Governor of East Java, suddenly failed to run due to an extramarital affair, Muhtar told interestingly in his article entitled; Even Dawud Had That. This narrative shows that in politics the

aspects of morality and reputation are important commodities that cannot be underestimated. But that's not the only reason to judge a figure because the Prophet Dawud was like that too.

Muhtar, who is known as an academic of Communication Science, Thought Expert, Jurgen Habermas, also inserts Habermas's thoughts in this book. Criticism in the article entitled Sumbul Aga Ngopi with Khopipah gives an interesting reflection on the story in the Ottoman Empire, a palace official who experienced a political stalemate then managed to build a community through a coffee shop. By Habermas this reality is known as Public Sphere (Fairclough, 2013; Shelton, 2006; Susen, 2018). This is also reflective when the perspective of society becomes very materialistic. This is what Habermas calls deconstruction criticism, aimed by Habermas to improve or even abandon the system or order that develops in society (Supraja, 2018; Susen, 2018; Tricana, 2013).

Another discussion about dynamic politics is presented in an article entitled; Gus Ipul and Tragika Ibrahim Pasha. This article tells the story of Ibrahim Pasha and Sulaiman, who became friends in the Ottoman government, but became very opposite parties. In fact, this shows how close Gus Ipul and Pakdhe Karwo are in running the administration of the Governor of East Java. Since 2008, being a political opponent this year has become very commonplace and easy to understand through this chapter. According to Researcher Muhtar, he presents a story as well as facts so that he represents a phenomenon in the depiction of figures from western countries. This is interesting because it makes it easier for readers to facilitate dynamic political discussions.

Political intrigue and strategy from the past

Talking about a political narrative certainly cannot be separated from historical aspects or existing political culture and certain political situations or conditions (Aji, 2020; Saleh & Munif, 2015). The political history of the country is also inseparable from political intrigue from various stories from the past. In the tragedy of the Brawijaya Pamungkas or the final Brawijaya, there is Brutus in the person of Raden Patah, the son of Brawijaya himself. In the pralaya Sekar Seda Lepen there is the great Brutus Sunan Prawoto. At the end of Hadiwijaya's rule in Pajang there was Brutus Sutawijaya who later became Mataram Islam, so did his descendant Amangkurat I, there was Brutus Amangkurat II. In tragedy 65 there are countless Brutuses. In the history of Suharto's fall, there is Brutus Harmoko. During the Islamic Mataram era there was also Trunojoyo who became brutal in order to penetrate the solid coalition between the VOC and Mataram at that time (Wahyudi, 2022).

All of these stories can be interesting reflections brutus syndrome can be mapped and become an important narrative for all audiences. Because in fact all aspects of life are determined by politics. All things cannot be separated from politics, both from cultural, economic, social aspects, to security and defense. This is justified by Aristotle's statement where he states that humans are zoon politicon. So according to the researchers through this book there is an intellectual effort to bring political narratives closer through peripheral elaboration to the general public. This path is important because so far political references have not been widely enjoyed by the general public.

Conclusion

The superiority of this book is an interesting reflection in the midst of the rigid and interlocking world of politics. That politics in the historical aspect can be displayed in a flowing and effective language style that sticks in the reader's mind. In the perspective of communication science this means the process of elaboration that occurs in a peripheral allows readers to get to know politics more closely through this book. However, the case studies in this book are lacking because the majority are based on cases that have occurred at the political level in East Java, so those who do not read or participate in political activities in East Java tend not to be able to follow the concrete discussions in this book properly. However, the advantage is that factual and authoritative issues, through the background of a senior researcher as the author of this book, certainly cannot be found in other books on other governmental socio-political fields.

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