

## OLIGARCHY OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN INDONESIAN DEMOCRACY

Yusuf<sup>1</sup>, Soetarno Joyoatmojo<sup>2</sup>, Asrowi<sup>3</sup>, Triyanto<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> Universitas Slamet Riyadi

[yusuf.unisri29@gmail.com](mailto:yusuf.unisri29@gmail.com)

---

### ABSTRAK

Oligarki adalah sistem politik di mana partai yang berkuasa terdiri dari sejumlah orang atau sekelompok kecil orang. Kelompok elit ini menjalankan pemerintahan dengan menggunakan segala cara agar rakyat dapat dikuasai dan dikendalikan. Sistem ini menjadikan pemerintahan atas nama negara dijadikan alat untuk mencapai tujuan kelompok elit, sehingga tujuan yang berkaitan dengan kesejahteraan rakyat, keadilan, dan kemandirian individu biasanya sulit diwujudkan. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan mengenai politik dan pemerintahan yang sekarang berjalan di negara Indonesia. Artikel ini menggunakan metode literature review dalam menganalisis masalah dan berupa mengemukakan upaya mengatasinya. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui penelusuran sejumlah literature baik buku, berita di media massa maupun hasil penelitian terkait. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa demokrasi di Indonesia berjalan secara oligarki dengan dikuasai oleh sekelompok kaum elit politik. Hal ini menyebabkan pandangan politik berubah dari perebutan ide dan kekuatan pikiran menjadi perebutan kekuatan material. Jika hal tersebut tidak dibenahi maka demokrasi yang berjalan sangat tergantung dari kemampuan finansial yang pada akhirnya inilah celah bagi masuknya kaum oligarki untuk mengatur jalannya pemerintahan di Indonesia.

**Kata kunci:**  
Oligarki, Demokrasi,  
Sistem Politik,  
Indonesia.

### ABSTRACT

*Oligarchy is a political system in which the ruling party consists of a number of people or a small group of people. This elite group runs the government using all means so that the people can be dominated and controlled. This system makes government in the name of the state a tool to achieve the goals of elite groups, so that goals related to people's welfare, justice and individual independence are usually difficult to realize. This article aims to describe the politics and government currently running in Indonesia. This article uses the literature review method to analyze problems and propose efforts to overcome them. Data collection was carried out through searching a number of literature, including books, news in the mass media and related research results. The research results show that democracy in Indonesia operates in an oligarchic manner controlled by a group of political elites. This causes political views to change from a struggle for ideas and thought power to a struggle for material power. If this is not addressed then democracy will depend greatly on financial capacity, which in the end is an opening for oligarchs to enter to regulate the running of government in Indonesia.*

**Keywords:**  
*Oligarchy, Democracy,  
Political System,  
Indonesia.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The form of government developed by Polybius, is in line with Aristotle's opinion. According to Polybius, state government generally begins with a monarchy, in which the king/queen rules as the sole ruler for the welfare of the people. The government of the kingdom, over time will become TYRANY when the king in question, no longer thinks about the public interest. In such a situation, a group of aristocrats would generally emerge which would then move to resist until they could finally take power. The government that was formed was called the Aristocracy. Because power tends to be abused, the good government of the nobility will eventually degenerate into the government of the aristocracy which will be self-serving until finally it is called an OLIGARCH government that oppresses the people. Finally the people rebelled and carried out a people's government which was called a DEMOCRACY government.

Oligarchy is a classic type of a form of power. The word oligarchy comes from the Greek, namely *oligoi* means "a few" or "a handful" and *archo* means "to rule". Oligarchy is a form of government that is led by a few people, but for the benefit of the few people. Almost in line with that, according to Aristotle, oligarchy is a form of government held by a group of intellectuals for the benefit of their group. Indonesia is currently controlled by an oligarchic government system because the current government only benefits and prioritizes elite groups or wealthy people compared to ordinary people.

The word oligarchy comes from the Greek word oligarchy. The word is formed from two words, namely *oligon* which means 'little' and *arkho* which means 'to rule'. So it can be interpreted that oligarchy is a form of government in which effectively the political power is held by a handful of elites in society, be it in terms of wealth, military or kinship. Whereas in the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), the word oligarchy means a form of government carried out by several people who have power from a handful of certain groups of people.

The oligarchic government system and the democratic government can go hand in hand. Even though there is a democratic constitution, it does not rule out the possibility that the government actually runs under the control of an oligarchy. The concept of this oligarchy has a key word, namely wealth. Groups of the rich try to rule through various sectors, whether from the political, social, legal, economic and other sectors, in order to maintain or increase their wealth. The wealth owned by the oligarchs through these democratic channels gets seats in strategic positions such as in the legislative, executive, judicial or bureaucratic sectors. This is what allows the oligarchs to control power for their own interests.

Viewed from a contemporary political perspective, Indonesia's current condition is an attempt to fight against oligarchy in the system of governance in Indonesia. If viewed from investigations related to the control of power in each government structure, it is known that the oligarchy has controlled material resources in Indonesia. At present, Indonesia's condition, in the political, social, economic and legal fields, has been accused of being the cause of an oligarchic government that prioritizes personal and group interests over society.

Many studies prove that since the beginning there has been a hijacking of the institutions and procedures of democracy, and this has given Indonesia's democratization a very elitist character. Robison & Hadiz (2004) conducted a study which underlined that the old predatory elite based on political parties dominated the political scene. They reorganized power following the logic of cartel politics. Cartel politics is described in a situation where political parties collectively ignore their ideological commitments and programs in order to survive in the circle of power by choosing to join the new government after the elections. In return for their support they share government posts. Cartel politics in turn forms an oligarchic government. Oligarchy is a mechanism for concentration of power

in a handful of ruling elites that emphasize the strength of material resources as a basis for maintaining power as well as wealth in the elites.

Meanwhile plutocracy is similar to oligarchy. However, plutocracy occurs when an extreme condition of resource inequality between "rich" and "poor" is created in a country. Plutocrats not only control economic and political resources, but also violent resources which form the basis for the emergence of oligarchy. Another study conducted by Hee-Yeon Cho (2008) says that Indonesia's "oligarchic democracy" has gradually turned into a "democratic oligarchy." This is a type of oligarchy that wants to maintain wealth-and seize power-through competition through elections that are elitist in nature. In this country, it is not democratic politics that takes place in Indonesia, but oligarchic politics. Meanwhile Winters (2014) emphasized a similar fact, that the important elements of the neo-New Order were the oligarchs who did not disappear with the fall of Suharto. The oligarchs that used to be under absolute control are now jockeying for positions at the pinnacle of power. The sultanistic oligarchs during the New Order era were centered in Cendana, while the reform era oligarchs spread to many poles of elite competition. The New Order's authoritarian methods made it possible for an oligarchy to be controlled by a dictator, while the "democratization" of the reform era made oligarchs compete through an electoral competition mechanism. Thus, Winters wants to emphasize that oligarchy and democracy ride on each other.

## **Method**

This article uses a literature review method in the form of theories and research results related to the theme of discussion. The literature review method is the first step in the data collection method which is directed at searching for data and information through documents, whether written documents, photographs, drawings or electronic documents that can support the writing process. Theme discussions are carried out descriptively and then produce inductive conclusions.

## **Result and Discussions**

Mahfud MD (Rol, 8/2/2014): states, From the oligarchy generates transactions. Transactions give birth to oligarchs. Oligarchy politics is a political system in which important decisions are made by a group of elite ruling political parties. The position of leader of a political party is a bone of contention for many parties. Many people are fighting to be able to occupy the leadership positions of political parties and not a few use money to get there.

Firman Noo, Head of the LIPI Political Research Center, there are several countries that adhere to a democratic government system that are trapped in oligarchs and become the roots for the creation of oligarchy, including in Indonesia. One of the institutions that play a role is political parties. The question that then often disturbs is how a democratic institution such as a party can be trapped in an oligarchic circle? In Indonesia, this situation is caused by several things, including:

First, the General Chair as the main figure who becomes the determinant. These "powerful men" appear as ideological or historical representations. In Indonesia today, in general, parties are not ideological in nature, so the figure in most parties is due to historical factors in the formation of parties or a "historical moment" that causes a figure to rise to the surface and gain wide support. The figures playing the historical role of the party cause respect, which in the end is often exaggerated so that its existence and the inner circle within it are very strong. Parties that are initiated, formed, and run by key figures, who usually later become party leaders, tend to have the potential to experience oligarchs. The existence of this figure, on the one hand is able to bring stability to the party. However, on the other hand, it also has great potential to present a centralized party management and management model.

Second, from a historical or ideological aspect, the presence of determining figures that gave birth to an oligarchy is also caused by the party's financial dependence on financial resources owned by figures. Colin Crouch (2004) uses the term "political firm" to describe the financial and pervasive dependence on the structure of the formation of parties which is ultimately how parties are managed. This situation is strengthened by the current condition of pragmatism which is getting thicker because money talks which cause financially strong figures to play a very big role. In the past, the late Cak Nur once alluded to this factor with the term nutrition ownership. This situation is especially felt in parties that are not ideologically oriented in their activities. material-financial strength.

Third, the institutionalization of the party is not yet perfect. In short, the institutionalization of the party itself is a condition when the system built by the party and all the rules of the game are respected and implemented consistently, apart from the development of patterns of attitude and culture within the party. However, what is happening now is that institutionalization is still stagnant and even experiencing a regression. Systems and rules are often interpreted and then adjusted for the benefit of the elite and their oligarchic networks. In certain moments, the implementation of deliberations becomes apparent. Party decisions are often taken unilaterally. Meanwhile, the punishment for those who are disobedient or deemed disloyal can be decided quickly, without having to go through the stages of examination. Derivatives of weak institutions is a regeneration process that is suspended. In the end it allows "foreign figures" to be directly in the power circle, most of whose actions tend to strengthen the oligarchy. The ambiguity of cadre formation also causes cadres to be more motivated to take refuge in certain patrons thereby smoothing the pattern of patron-client relationships, of course disrupting the development of a healthy internal party democracy.

Fourth, the party AD/ART also provides a basis for strengthening the role of the elite. Studies on party candidacy show that in many ways, including candidacy, party leadership figures become so powerful, and in some parties they become so absolute, because the internal rules of the game provide a loophole for that. This condition certainly encourages the expansion of engineering to create objective blind obedience.

Fifth, external factors also influence the rules of the game related to parties and elections which in general still provide loopholes for parties to build an oligarchy within themselves. At least until now the necessity of regeneration, party financial management that is able to neutralize the role of the oligarchy has not been regulated in a clear and comprehensive manner. In addition, the threshold requirements for the president and the nomination of regional heads which provide opportunities for party elites to maneuver with each other to build coalitions also contribute indirectly to the strengthening of elite power. In addition, what has contributed to the comfort of the oligarchs is the uncritical attitude of society or civil society towards the internal conditions of the parties. As a result, the party does not feel disturbed or even triggered to improve itself so that it can truly become a democratic institution capable of acting and behaving democratically.

Given the complexity of the causes of oligarchy above, a comprehensive approach is needed starting from reforming the internal party, forming reformer parties, supporting regulations and supporting civil society. Reforms that are partial and without comprehensive support will obviously not have a significant impact on efforts to reduce oligarchy in political parties. Then answer the second question, namely how did the oligarchy emerge in Indonesia? Jeffrey A. Winters in his book *Oligarchy* places oligarchy in two dimensions. The first dimension, oligarchy is built on the basis of unlimited capital power, so that it is able to control and dominate the nodes of power. The second dimension, oligarchy operates within a systemic framework of power. Winters emphasized that the oligarchic system first appeared in Indonesia in 1970 which was built by Suharto. To lead the oligarchic system he had formed, Suharto styled himself like a The Godfather who distributed

Indonesia's natural wealth among certain groups, such as groups of generals, ethnic Chinese businessmen and indigenous groups.

"After coming to power, Suharto's real threat was the TNI Generals. To overcome this, Suharto distributed wealth, for example by managing forests in Kalimantan and said the Generals were rich because of him. Suharto was an economic and political Godfather. Suharto's oligarchic system began to experience disturbance when Suharto's children grew up and started doing business. The downfall of Suharto in 1998, because the oligarchs under Suharto did not want to defend Suharto because the behavior of his children could not be controlled, for example when LB Moerdani complained about Suharto's children and finally he fired,"

Currently in Indonesia, the power of the oligarchs is controlled by the natives, because they have money and positions. But previously, during the New Order era, the oligarchs were controlled by ethnic Chinese businessmen, who had direct access to Suharto. In contrast to the Old Order and New Order eras, during this reform period the form of democracy has changed since the 1999 election. The presence of this oligarchy started from the sustainability of the chosen political system. In a policy where elections are preceded by legislative elections, political parties are an important element. Political parties have a strategic and vital role, namely to become parties that are given political trust by the people through the mechanism of representation in parliament. By looking at a linear flow, political parties are right in the middle between citizens as constituents and the state as the highest executor of government. Using the representation mechanism requires individuals to sit in parliamentary seats. Political parties are the only institutions authorized to recruit these representatives. This task also requires political parties to carry out political regeneration; recruiting the best representative individuals to sit in parliament seats.

If you look at the reality that is symptomatic within the political parties in Indonesia, it is clear that oligarchy, as in Winters' interpretation, is an acute disease. Almost all parties in Indonesia are actually controlled by a handful of elites who have capital. Pierre Bourdieu- said those who have strong capital and social capital.

The octopus of oligarchy in political parties reinforces the assumption that political parties fail in carrying out their function as democratization aggregators. The function of recruitment and regeneration is jammed and political parties prefer to roll out the red carpet for power seekers with billions of rupiah in capital. The political education presented in society is condensed into campaign materials that are loud and noisy, noisy by fake news, bringing down opponents with slander or hoaxes and not enlightening at all. Even at the worst point, political parties make the people their constituents and are considered a mere political object for five years, namely approaching the people when they need the people's voice in elections. get political education and have political knowledge. Without political knowledge, democracy will only work procedurally and forget its essence. But in reality, the ideal practice of political parties is more often not implemented. Internally, political parties often fail to practice democratic mechanisms and are trapped in an oligarchic culture. In the context of national politics, this can be seen clearly in the mechanism for selecting candidates for legislative members and regional heads by a number of parties. It seems clear that the selection of candidates for legislative and regional heads is carried out in ways that are far from democratic values. Networking systems tend to be closed, not transparent, and do not allow for monitoring by the public. Not to mention the phenomenon of political dowry which always accompanies the process of selecting candidates for regional leaders.

It is in the hands of the elites that all political party decisions are determined through a rigid hierarchical mechanism, alias from top to bottom. A party chairman and those in his closest circle

are superior figures who hold full authority in terms of decision making, including determining who will be promoted in the regional and regional elections.

It is not surprising that in proposing regional head candidates, political parties tend to favor figures who are considered to have capital capital. Often these figures are not party cadres and do not have a support base affiliated with a particular political party. The party's decision to nominate candidates for regional heads from non-cadre routes often creates polemics within the party's internal circles. Party cadres who have struggled from the bottom and have potential certainly feel their political careers are being twisted.

Political parties have such a strong role in the state that they deserve to be categorized as monopolistic. After more than two decades, it turns out that the rapid strengthening of the role without being based on adequate maturity has made the party vulnerable to the trap of the nature of power in the form of a tendency to expand and concentrate. For this reason, it is not surprising that today it is increasingly recognized the strengthening of the character of the oligarchic system of power and even aristocracy within political parties.

The oligarchic power system of political parties appears through the tendency of centralization of power, domination of party elites, opportunistic pragmatism and cronyism of the leadership of the board, which as a whole is wrapped in the sterilization of party institutionalization. Meanwhile, the symptoms of party aristocratization can be seen from the cronyization of the elite or party rulers who are starting to be displaced by nepotism and dynasty. In line with this shift in the power system, people's freedoms that are focused on mobilization, while they are being exploited by party leaders who rule in an oligarchic manner, are threatened with losing their freedom and are likely to be intensively exploited by party officials who revive an aristocratic power system. While the aristocratic system rose within the party, the fierce controversy with the democratic system of power gave freedom to supporters of oligarchic power to continue to act. This condition is understandable because the social and economic power of the aristocracy had not yet been developed.

At a time when the parliament which is being monopolistically controlled by political parties by denying the role of mass organizations and individuals through the laws and regulations it makes, its performance and function are questioned, because it has not succeeded in solving the problems of society and the nation and the state, let alone advancing its life, it is very reasonable to understand the role of the system of power oligarchs used by parties in carrying out parliamentary tasks in order to find a solution. Understanding efforts are meant to be urgent, when public trust in parliament is so bad as the researchers found, and when the people's representative institution is mired in abuse of power as indicated by the corruption of a number of its members. In this way, anyone will ask about the role of the oligarchic system of power practiced by party politicians when they exercise the powers of the DPR. The answer to this question is revealed through the performance of a number of main aspects of the life of the DPR, namely political representation, the power structure of the institution, the performance of the DPR, and its main product, under the influence of the oligarchic elements of the relevant party power system.

Party Conservatism and Political Representatives of the DPR, namely universal democratic principles teach that members of the DPR as representatives of the people, act on behalf of and for the people. In carrying out their duties and functions, in the first five years since the preparations for the 1999 election until the amendments to the 1945 Constitution were completed, the reformers attempted to strengthen the DPR and operate the people's political representation in an appropriate manner. The DPR is opened physically and functionally to represent the people.

In the 2004 election, conservatism began to shift, parties determined candidates and election wins using the candidate's serial number. The party elite reinstated the right to recall their members

who were considered disciplinary, moreover, the party politicians who controlled the DPR lost their sensitivity to the complaints and criticisms as well as the demands of the people. All of this illustrates the conservatism of politicians from the ruling parliamentary party, not only because it restores the character of the New Order parliament, but also weakens and blocks the democratic transition in parliament.

In fact, counter-reform of parliament like this strengthens the operation of a system of representative political representatives that distances it from the people and their interests, because it avoids the practice of a system of representative representatives (delegates). In this way, party politicians in parliament have reason to be unresponsive to the people, or to have the attitude of "let the dogs bark at the caravan go on" which impose their will by ignoring the aspirations and criticisms of society, while providing explanations for the origin of the sound "asbun".

Although the principle of representative democracy familiarizes equality between members of parliament due to the similarities in the procedures adopted to become members and the equality of positions as people's representatives, in practice all this equality is defeated by the domination of factions as the spearhead of parties in parliament. None of the structures and culture as well as parliamentary processes as institutions and systems of power in the state can be controlled by factions. The faction has become the center of power in parliament. Then the big faction or a combination of factions becomes the determinant in parliament. The approval of the faction determines the agenda and the performance process as well as the decisions of the parliament and its functional units. The faction controls and controls members of parliament for disciplinary reasons, on behalf of and with the approval of their party leadership.

The power of the faction as an extension of the party in parliament is increasingly concentrated, because cronyism underlies the structure of the faction as a group of members of parliament politically. This concentration of power is strengthened by the faction's authority to demand or cut the income of its members by 25 to 40 percent, which in turn is allocated by the faction to finance the performance of the faction and party officials.

The power of factions pervades the institutions and performance of parliament, through its complementary bodies, starting from commissions and ad-hoc committees to standing commissions [budgets and bureaucracy] and leaders. The faction determines the process and purpose (goals and objectives) of the performance of the apparatus intended, because the faction is responsible to the party, not to its constituents, the interests of the party and the faction and its members are used as a basis for the faction to process parliamentary performance. It is the struggle of interests in the name of the faction that is used as a channel for channeling the oligarchy from the party power system into the parliamentary power system/as a component of the state.

Indeed, the principle of representative democracy does not only treat parliament/DPR as state institutions acting on behalf of and at the same time for the people. The Executive and the Judiciary in their respective fields of duty have the same attitude, namely the representatives of the people. It's just that, the people's representatives in the legislature are tasked with establishing public policy as a framework for the state to tackle the problems of society and the nation and the state, while advancing it, because the executive implementing policies and the judiciary are the guardians of fraud, the performance of parliament is the basis for determining the success of the state in overcoming people's problems. and advance their lives.

There are at least three parliamentary performance nodes to produce public policy, namely initiatives and discussion of bills, lobbying and political decision-making. The effectiveness of this performance in terms of the accuracy of the process and results is very much determined by the degree of institutionalization of the parliament. Because parliament is dominated by political parties,

it is the level of party institutionalization that determines the real determinant of parliamentary institutionalization.

The amendments to the 1945 Constitution ensure that legislative power is in the hands of the DPR. It's just that this attitude is not supported by the *trias politica* principle, so that the UUD itself stipulates that laws are made by the DPR together with the president. The consequence is the DPR's uncertainty in producing the law on its initiative, and the DPR's cooperation with the President to discuss and decide on the bill to become law.

The failure of institutionalizing parliamentary legislative power is closely related to the barren institutionalization of parties and political systems within the framework of the Presidential Government System. So far, the direction and efforts to institutionalize parties and party systems have always been within the framework of a Parliamentary or Semi-Presidential Government System. Because the personification of the party and the party system continues to develop with the result of the infertility of the institutionalization of the party and the party system. When party leaders dominate parliament, the prominence of member figures paralyzes parliamentary institutions, because in real terms the appearance of faction figures from parties. Dominating the performance of the council, taking place outside of its mission to serve the people but within the framework of the interests of the members and factions and factions.

Because of that, it is not surprising that the various lobbies that take place between factions or between parliamentarians and the President, are not argumentative in nature, but are cow-trading in style and even political conspiracies based on narrow and short-term interests. It is not strange, if the lobby is a parliamentary political institution, which accommodates and raises and nourishes the birth of opportunist politicians and two-headed snakes. As a result, lobbying does not function to foster democracy, but strengthens oligarchy and aristocracy.

The infertility of parliamentary institutionalization as a product of the failure of parties to institutionalize themselves also has an impact on mechanisms or procedures for making political decisions. Voting as the main political decision-making technique in a democracy is removed to be replaced by deliberation for consensus. This shift is in line with the use of cattle trading techniques as a substitute for rational and factual arguments. All of this is rooted in prioritizing the interests of political figures in parliament, rather than accepting the rules of fair play as a guide to parliamentary performance.

It should be reminded that deliberation and consensus as a political decision-making technique is not compatible with democracy because it paralyzes competition and the individual responsibilities of members of parliament, deliberation and consensus is not only a common technique in the old and new authoritarian systems, but is also based on a collective state paradigm. , which has been proven to fail universally, the amendments to the 1945 Constitution should have taken the paradigm of a collective state (in the preamble) with the individual (in the human rights articles), but the amendments do not provide guidelines regarding the priority of choice between them and about resolving conflicts that are rooted in each each. The uncertainty of the paradigm provides an opportunity for conservatives to continue using deliberation techniques for consensus for political decision making.

Party and elitist party system behind public policy, in democracy parties are formed by the people to protect and fight for their interests in the life of the state. The populist ideology regarding the function of the party has changed to become elitist, where parties are used to protect and fight for interests where parties are used to protect and fight for their rulers, so that they speak to the oligarchic power system. As for the reversal of the party and also the populist party system to become elitist. Starting from the personification and centralization of the party's power, it is not based on the

leadership capability of the ruling party (elites), as a result of prioritizing popularity to win political competitions such as elections.

With regard to the function of the DPR as a public policy maker, the party's domination of Parliament allows the transformation of elitist parties and party systems into elitist public policies. The phenomenon of parpolization of public policy by parliamentary products can be observed in the priority of the choice of type and function of public policy. Regarding the four types of public policy, namely extractive (extracting and utilizing resources), regulative (regulating), and procedural (behavior conditioning), there is an elitist tendency because it prioritizes extractive and regulative types rather than distributional and procedural types, and the tendency of public policy priorities among fulfilling the interests of the elite (the party) rather than fulfilling the interests of the people (problem solutions and advancing), the proof can be shown by examining various laws and the state budget.

That the journey of reform for democracy is increasingly colored by the oligarchy of political parties, which because of its dominance over parliament has resulted in shifting the performance and products of parliament to serve the people, turning into serving party interests as represented by the interests of their elites.

There are three (3) main problems that condition the relationship between the Party and parliament as such, namely: First, the incapability of the leadership of most Parliaments, Second, the weakness of the party and the party system so that it fails to create majority political power as the basis for authority and government performance and Third, incoherence and asynergicity democratic institutions that are used as components of the government system.

Even though the previous two democratic elections, which are the upstream of these three problems, because it is based on the meaning of minimalist democracy, but the political law prepared to process and follow up on the 2009 election was grossly inadequate to improve the party and party system as well as relations with the DPR, therefore five years after the 2009 election it should be used to re-use the party and parliament through changes to the substance of the Political Law and further amendments to the Constitution. During the 2014 election, the oligarchic practice of placing party leaders as if they were party owners should be ended, because practices like this make leadership within the party continue to be seized and maintained, while those who lose in the struggle for power will move to other party like fleas. This is not healthy for the development of democracy.

The leadership of political parties in Indonesia has entered the level of oligarchic political symptoms. Most party leaders today are people who have large funds, not someone with organizing skills, those who lead parties who can afford to finance parties, such as Prabowo (Gerindra Party), Surya Paloh (Nasdem Party), Ailangga Hartarto (Golkar Party) and Hari Tanoesoedibjo (Perindo Party). They all lead the party because they have the power to finance the party," said social observer, Ignas Kleden.

Party oligarchy is increasing not only because regulations in the Presidential Election Law have denied the urgency of institutionalizing the presidential candidate selection process by political parties in an open and democratic manner, but also have closed access to public participation. It is not surprising then that a phenomenon emerges in which most of the positions of chairpersons or party leaders are "tickets" to become presidential candidates, even though it is not certain that the general chairperson or party leader has the leadership capacity as president.

Party oligarchy is also because of finances, more precisely the collection of finances for the next election. Because of these political costs, these parties build coalitions to focus more on ways for their groups/parties to obtain financial resources. Strengthening financial resources, for

example controlling the share of ministers for party groups is the most important of the main things, compared to the national interest.

The oligarchy in Indonesia is best described as an oligarchy of collective electoral rulers (oligarchy related to government) or in other words, accompanying the transition from dictatorship to democracy is another equally important transition from a sultanistic oligarchy with a group of very, very rich people personally domesticated by Suharto. toward an oligarchy of collective electoral power.

In the 2019 election, this political return of favor could be one of Jokowi's effective ways of smoothing out his power. Ben Bland, a researcher from the Lowy Institute, takes the example Jokowi's move to embrace Prabowo. For him, that effort is a betrayal of democracy. With Prabowo taken, the Gerindra Party will automatically support Jokowi's government; then who can be the opposition that "should exist in a democratic system?" Oligarchy politics must be avoided, because it can threaten Indonesian democracy. Parties that should be able to accommodate people's voices may in the end only be used by the interests of certain individuals or groups.

## CONCLUSION

That the core or root of oligarchic politics in Indonesia lies in material power or – we call it money – because it can be manifested in other forms of power. Historically, money is a tool created by humans to facilitate trade transactions, which can exchange goods and services. However, in its journey, money then transforms by expanding its capability to exchange something, because of its ability to represent desires or individuals, money then becomes an orientation that even goes beyond principles or normative values.

This is the answer to a question related to why many politicians or political parties pawn their ideals in order to get financial sponsorship from the oligarchs. This is because these ideals can be exchanged for money or have received a certain price. Politicians who at first only sought financial support from the oligarchs, later became shackled because these funds were not given without certain conditions.

Thus, the traditional political view that says politics is a fight over ideas or the power of the mind, seems to have been replaced by a fight over material forces. In the end, perhaps it can be understood, the strong influence of oligarchic politics in Indonesia is a consequence of the occurrence of high-cost politics, in which politicians who want to compete in elections need huge financial support from the oligarchs. Then, the ability of the oligarchs to influence the running of the political system is rooted in the capability of money which can be a medium of exchange for personal values.

## Reference

- Budiardjo, M. (2008). *Dasar-Dasar Ilmu Politik*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama
- Budiardjo, M. (1996). *Demokrasi Indonesia demokrasi parlemen dan demokrasi pancasila*, Jakarta, Gramedia.
- Budiardjo, M. (1983). *Dasar-dasar Ilmu politik*, Jakarta: PT Gramedia.
- Fukuoka, Y. (2013). Oligarchy and Democracy in Post Suharto Indonesia. *Jurnal Political Studies Review*, vol 11.
- Mahfud MD. (1999). *Hukum dan Pilar-Pilar Demokrasi*, Yogyakarta, Gama Media.
- Mahfud MD, (1993). *Dasar dan Struktur Ketatanegaraan Indonesia*. Yogyakarta, UII Press.

- Michael dan Thomas B Pepinsky. (2012). Melampaui Oligarki? Bahasan Kritis Kekuasaan. *Prisma Resources Center*, vol 27
- Robison, Richard and Vedi R Hadiz. (2014). Reorganizing Power in Indonesia: The Politics of Oligarchy in an Age of Market. *Prisma*. Vol. 33 No. 1.
- Suseno, Franz-Magnis. (2003). *Etika Politik Prinsip-Prinsip Moral Dasar Kenegaraan Modern*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama
- Winters, Jeffrey A. (2011). *Oligarki*. Jakarta: Gramedia.