

# LOCAL POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN THE GENERAL ELECTION DIRECTLY CONDUCTED TO VOTE FOR DISTRICT HEADS (*PILKADA*) IN BADUNG REGENCY IN 2005

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## ABSTRACT

The general election directly conducted to vote for the regent and vice regent (*Pemilihan Kepala Daerah*, abbreviated to *Pilkada*) by the people in Badung Regency in 2005 was the first one. The people's direct involvement in the local political life moved highly dynamically. The struggle for power by various strengths affected various dimensions of the people's lives; therefore, it is interesting to investigate the local political dynamics in the *Pilkada* directly conducted in Badung Regency in 2005 in the perspective of cultural studies. There are three problems formulated in this study. They are (1) what was the dynamics of the *Pilkada* directly conducted in Badung Regency in 2005 like?; (2) how the relation of strengths affected the local political dynamics in the *Pilkada* directly conducted in Badung Regency in 2005?; (3) what were the implications and meanings of the local political dynamics of the *Pilkada* directly conducted in Badung Regency in 2005?

The results of the study show that fluctuative changes took place continuously with regard to the form and functions of societal structure. Culturally, the people's ideology changed from being mono centric into being multi centric. The relation of strengths became segmented into three main strengths forming a new formation of strength referred to as *trisula*. This led to an institutional configuration, differentiation of power and locality sedimentation, and provided meanings to competition and tolerance, emancipatory, political comodification, adaptive leadership and local democratic cultural strengthening.

Keywords: dynamics, local politics, and direct *pilkada* in Badung Regency

## INTRODUCTION

Geopolitically, economically and socio-culturally, Badung Regency is one of the strategic regencies in Bali. Badung Regency, which is located in the center of Bali Island, is the center of human activities and distribution of products and services. In addition, it is also the center of tourism which contributes to the State's revenues. Socio-culturally, its people are segmented into two main sectors; they are the traditional sector developing in North Badung and the modern sector developing in South Badung.

On 24<sup>th</sup> June 2005, the people in Badung Regency conducted the direct *Pilkada* for the first time, which deconstructed the indirect *Pilkada*, which, according to Harahap (2005: 5) had been responsible for various forms of deviation and distortion, money politics and disqualified leadership, and had reduced the people's sovereignty. According to Erawan the democratic meaning was reduced in such a way that the democratic system should be changed into one which could make the people's opinions, voice and perspective appear again (in Sahdan, 2008: 3) by allowing the people to govern (Sorensen, 2003: 1). The objective is to make humans live better (Rousseau in Philipus, 2004: 116).

By conducting direct general election, according to Prihatmoko (2005: 71), every citizen who fulfills the requirements determined has the same right to a political position. Surbakti (1992: 140-141) refers to this as a form of political participation, in which every citizen has the right to determine all the decisions related to and influencing their lives. In addition, every citizen may provide authority or legitimacy to their leaders (Weber in Habermas, 2004: 270). The on-going discourse of power has encouraged the dynamics of the local political life in Badung Regency. The word *dynamics* in this case refers to changes (Sztomka, 2005: 7), changeable things and sustainability (Ardika, 2005: 18), continuity and discontinuity (Agung, 2006: 2).

The political dynamics taking place cannot be only viewed from one perspective and monolithically investigated, but should be viewed as a cultural penetration, the involvement of the local political actors as the cultural agents, and the other people's strengths (Piliang, 2005: 3). Based on the background described above, three problems are analyzed in this study. They are (a) what was the dynamics of the direct *Pilkada* conducted in Badung Regency in 2005 like; (b) how the relation of strengths affected the

local political dynamics in the direct *Pilkada* conducted in Badung Regency in 2005?; (c) what were the implications and meanings of the local political dynamics in the direct *Pilkada* conducted in Badung Regency in 2005?

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

As a research in cultural studies, qualitative method is adopted in this study. The data used is qualitative data supported by quantitative data. The primary data was obtained from the primary data sources through interview, observation and documentation. And the secondary data was obtained through documentation. The data was analyzed using the technique of qualitative analysis and the theory of communicative act, the theory of discourse and knowledge, the theory of hegemony, the theory of three societal strengths which were eclectically used. The results of the study are informally presented with analytic-inductive description and formally as well.

## **RESULTS OF THE STUDY**

The results of the study are as follows. *First*, the dynamics of the direct *Pilkada* conducted in Badung Regency in 2005 resulted in fluctuative and continued changes in societal structure and culture. *Second*, the relation of strengths affecting the local political dynamics was segmented into three main strengths. They are political society with its political capital strength, economic society with its economic capital strength and civil society with its socio-cultural capital strength. They operated dynamically, mutually, cross-interactionally, reciprocally and traspolitically affected. *Third*, the local political dynamics in the direct *Pilkada* conducted in Badung Regency in 2005 implicated a institutional configuration, a strength differentiation and a locality sedimentation. Its meanings were competition and tolerance, emancipatory, adaptive leadership and local democratic cultural strengthening.

## **DISCUSSION**

The fluctuative and continued changes taking place in the dynamics of the direct *Pilkada* refer to the opinion by Ardika (2005: 18). Structurally, the changes took place in forms, functions, and in the governmental institutions which can be illustrated by the

establishment of the Local General Election Committee (*Komite Pemilihan Kepala Daerah*, abbreviated to KPUD) and the reduced roles of the dominant political parties resulting from the establishment of the coalition of political parties and the appearance of economic society and civil society as the strengths balancing the political hegemony. Structurally, the orientation of politics and power which used to be logo-centric shifted to being multi-centric. This is in line with Van Loon's opinion that any change taking place was related to the matters pertaining to power and politics and the need for marginalized social groups for representation as the characteristic of cultural studies (in Mudana, 2005).

The local political dynamics taking place, in addition to involving electoral dimension, also took non electoral dimensions such as civil freedom into account. Gramsci (in Cullar, 2006: 49-51) considered civil society a supra structure (politics and culture) in which the hegemonic position was struggled for. This took place through political and ideological leadership (Gramsci, in Simon, 2004: 19). The relation of strengths affecting the local political dynamics in the direct *Pilkada* conducted in Badung Regency in 2005 was segmented into three main strengths; they are political strength, economic strength and civil strength; each was supported by political capital, economic capital and social capital (Bourdieu in Jankins, 2004: 126). The relation of strengths took place dynamically, interactionally, reciprocally and traspolitically. The existence of economic strength with its economic capital made the candidates fulfill the political costs needed. Social and symbolic capitals of the *palace* (as a place where the values of power operates), the *temple* (as a means of interacting between the leaders and their people equally framed with ethic values, morality and religiosity), *pakraman* (referring to the people as the owner and supporter of power so that it can operate), and *purana* (the rule, guidance and agreement as the form of collective willingness) which functioned as the strength of civil society enabled the local values to appear again.

The local political dynamics in the direct *Pilkada* conducted in Badung Regency in 2005 implicated an institutional configuration, a differentiation of power and locality sedimentation. What is meant is that the local communal and associational solidarity was becoming stronger. The collective awareness as a form of the Badung people's emancipatory movement was created through communicative act, that is, local genius

values-based residency. Then, the acculturation of modern democratic values characterized by freedom, appreciation of being different, equality as suggested by the local genius values such as *tatwamasi*, *paras paros sarpanaya*, *menyambraya*, *sesana manut linggih manut sesana* took place. The meanings of the local political dynamics in the direct *Pilkada* in Badung Regency in 2005 were competition and tolerance, emancipatory, political commodification, adaptive leadership and local democratic culture strengthening. What is meant is that the local genius values appeared again, which was referred to by Derrida as deconstruction created by constructing the native meanings (Sim, 2002: 26-27), Ratna, 2005: 250-251).

## **FINDINGS**

Based on what has been discussed above, the findings of this study are as follows. (1) Fluctuative and continued changes took place in structure, form, function and institution. In the governmental level the local general election committee was established, in the level of political parties coalition of political parties was established and in the community level economic society and civil society appeared to struggle for power. (2) The orientation of politics and power changed as well from being logo-centric into being multi-centric. (3) Subjective rationality was growing up in the form of collective awareness as communicative act to resist political hegemony. (4) Alternative strength appeared, that is, economic society and civil society as the strengths significantly causing the political map in the direct *Pilkada* to change. (5) The influential strengths worked together to form a new strength referred to as *trisula* society united within a strength and operating within the context of *desa* (the place), *kala* (the time) and *patra* (the situation). (6) Communal solidarity and locality sedimentation was getting stronger. (7) Political commodification took place in the local political dynamics. (8) Adaptive leadership was also found out. (9) The traditional strengths and local genius values appeared again making the local democratic culture stronger.

## **CLOSING**

It can be concluded that the dynamics of the direct Pilkada conducted in Badung Regency in 2005 resulted in fluctuating and continued changes in the community structure and culture. The relation of strengths were segmented into three main strengths such as the strength of political society, the strength of economic society and the strength of civil society which took place interactionally, reciprocally and transpolitically. The local political dynamics implicated an institutional configuration, a differentiation of strengths and locality sedimentation. And its meanings include competition and tolerance, emancipatory, political commodification, adaptive leadership and local democratic culture strengthening.

Based on the findings mentioned above, theoretically, the results of this study can be taken into account in the attempts made to develop cultural studies directed to the local political studies. To the next researchers, the matters pertaining to the local political dynamics especially such as conflict, cultural and structural coercion and the role of the local institutions in obstructing or supporting the local political strengthening are recommended. Practically, it is suggested that the decision makers, the KPUD, the political parties and the community should enhance their political knowledge and understanding and discover the relevant local genius values for constructing the local politics so that the local genius values-based democratic understanding can be enhanced.

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