

## The Political Dynamic In Yogyakarta During the Liberal Democracy Period

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**Abstract:** The political dynamic in Yogyakarta during the Liberal Democracy period was marked by the occurrence of three general elections, that was in 1951, 1955, and 1957. The 1951 General Election which led Masyumi as the triumph of the local election, became the successful experiment of democracy among people in Yogyakarta. The 1955 General Election was a national-scale election which was placed PKI in the first position. The position went on to that of 1957 local election. Fascinatingly, in the middle of the 1951 democratic festivity Yogyakarta was recognized as city of education and city of bike, which was triggered by the presence of Gadjah Mada University which attracted students from different regions of Indonesia to continue their study.

**Key words:** Yogyakarta, political dynamic, general election, liberal democracy

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### I. INTRODUCTION

During the Indonesian Liberal Democracy period (1950-1958), the political dynamics of Yogyakarta was heavily influenced by the previous political circumstances namely by the what so-called the Physical Revolution (1945-1949). It was connected with the significance of Yogyakarta as the Indonesian capital which simultaneously as the capital of struggle since 4 January 1946, in facing the Dutch who desired to recolonize Indonesia. (Soekanto, 2009: 18-19).

There were several important events occurred in the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) during the Revolution. Among others, the formation of the People's Security Army (TKR) in which the momentous event was the inauguration of General Soedirman as the Commander of the Indonesian Armed Forces by President Soekarno on 18 December 1945. Soedirman was accompanied by Generap Urip Sumohardjo as the Chief of Staff. Both of them represented symbols of tranquility of mind, harmony, and unity in developing the Indonesian Armed Forces (Lubis, 1950: 7). The subsequent events were the Dutch Military Aggression II on 19 December 1948 which resulted the fell of Yogyakarta on to the Dutch for about six months (Soemardjan, 1986: 87). The arrestation of President Soekarno and Vice-President Mohammad Hatta by the Dutch, and the formation of the Emergence Government of Republic of Indonesia (PDRI) (Rasjid, 1982: 10 – 21, ;Salim, 1995: 39 – 45). Another remarkable event was the general attack of 1 March 1949 led by and tossed the name of Lieutenant-colonel Soeharto (Anonim, 1950: 61), and the Return of Yogyakarta on 29 June 1949 after the Dutch troops left the city as it was proclaimed by the Coordinator of Security, Hamengku Buwono IX, the day after (Soekanto, 2009: 80 - 83).

After the transfer of sovereignty from the Dutch to the Indonesian on 27 December 1949, the Indonesian formed a Republic of the United States of Indonesia (RUSI) where Jakarta was the capital. The appointed president and vice-president of RUSI, Ir. Soekarno and Drs. Mohammad Hatta, had to move to Jakarta and left Yogyakarta which remained as the Indonesian capital under Mr. Asaat who had been appointed as the Functionary President. Nevertheless, RUSI only survived for 8 months, for on 15 of August 1950 the Parliament and Senate of RUSI agreed to reorganize the Indonesian state system back to the Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) of which the charter was read by President Soekarno. On 16 August 1950, the President and Vice-President of RUSI were inaugurated as the President and Vice-President of the new republic

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in Yogyakarta, and concurrently received the transfer of authority from the Functionary President Mr. Asaat. Since then the Indonesian capital was relocated to Jakarta (Baskoro and SudomoSunaryo, 2011: 142 – 143). The inauguration of the Indonesian leadership and transfer of authority proved Yogyakarta as the pillar for the re-establishment of NKRI. The role of Yogyakarta as the Indonesian capital between 4 January 1946 and 15 August 1950 led the common commemoration that Yogyakarta the capital of struggle, while Jakarta was the capital of proclamation (Soekamto, 2009: 99 - 100).

The relocation of the Indonesian capital from Yogyakarta to Jakarta decreased the role and position of Yogyakarta. The city became a province among other provinces in the NKRI. However, Yogyakarta was distinguished from other provinces, for it inherited the specialty, that is the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY) (Soewarno, 1994: 282).

This article discloses the political dynamics of Yogyakarta during the Liberal Democracy period which primarily focused on the three general elections, namely on 1951, 1955, and 1957. The explanation also includes political constellations occurred during the general elections. Throughout the period, Yogyakarta was also called as the city of education and city of bike.

## **II. THREE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES**

During the Liberal Democracy period, the Special Region of Yogyakarta held three general elections. The general elections included two local general elections, namely the 1951 and 1957, and one the national one. The first general election, 1951, was conceived to be an experiment of democracy, for it was the firstly experienced by Yogyakarta. The three general elections indicated a clear agenda of the local government of Yogyakarta in the process of democratization, that is developing democracy through statecraft (government) and societal participation. The government of Yogyakarta was extremely aware of developing democracy and modern government. General election did not only produce people's representatives in the local legislative, but also affected to the emergence of executive officers who became people's representatives at the Local Governmental Council (DPD).

### **A. The 1951 General Election: Experiment of Democracy**

The 1951 General Election was the first election held both in Indonesia and particularly in Yogyakarta, so that it was called an experiment of democracy. M. Nazir Salim, who did a significant study to sketch the 1951 General Election as a fundamental part of developing process of democratization in Yogyakarta which was immensely feudalistic circumstance, calls the 1951 General Election as an "experimental rabbit" (*kelinci percobaan*) for Yogyakarta. Unfortunately, he does not make clear what is the meaning of the "experimental rabbit". (Salim, 2014: 112 - 195). Perhaps, the term meaning that the 1951 General Election became a great speculation for the people of Yogyakarta, in particular to Sultan Hamengku Buwono IX who were wellknown for his democratic attitude, in applying and developing system of democracy in Yogyakarta. The challenging situation faced by the election was feudalism, which was regarded unsupportive to democracy, and the low of political understanding and consciousness among people in Yogyakarta which worriedly affected to the low political participation of the people (Salim, 2014: 112).

Political contestation during the 1951 Election was, among others, marked by the "War of pamphlets" throughout the campaigning phase. Masyumi became the most active Islamic party, as it accommodated the muslim interest particularly of Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), which repulsed black campaign especially those of the Peasant Unitary Action Committee (PKABT). The committee was actually a union of several political organizations, such as the Conscious Indonesian Women Movement (GERWIS), the Union of Labour Organization of the entire Indonesia (SOBSI), Indonesian Peasant Front (BTI), Pemuda Rakyat, Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), Indonesian Muslims Youth (PMI), and Indonesian Islamic Union Party (PSII). Among other pamphlets issued by Masyumi were: "Parliament hold by muslim, wayang performance, being on stage play, will not be prohibited!" ("*DPR neng tangan Islam, wajangan, njadiwara, ora bakal dilarang!*"), and "If parliament is held by the Muslim, does everybody had to pray? No!" ("*Jen DPR ditjekel wong Ilam, apa saben wong kudu salat? Ora!*") (Anonim, 1951: 24 – 25).

The official announcement of the 1951 General Election resulted that the elected parliament members of the Special Region of Yogyakarta were as follows:

1. Masyumi gained 2753 votes or 18 seats
2. PPDI gained 1115 votes or 7 seats
3. PKABT gained 878 votes or 5 seats
4. PNI gained 659 votes or 4 seats
5. Partai Katholik gained 354 votes or 2 seats
6. SSPP gained 314 votes or 2 seats
7. PIR gained 311 votes or 2 seats (Anonim, 1951: 69)

The House of Regional Parliament of the Special Province of Yogyakarta was established on 24 December 1951. The Act of 1950 no. 7 explains that local government consisted of local parliament (DPRD) and the Local Government Council (DPD). While DPRD was the legislative institution which functioned as tool for developing process of democratization in local level, as executive institution the DPD functioned to be mutual management (*collegial bestuur*) (Probosuprodjo, 1952: 21). The presence of DPRD and DPD indicated the process of democratization occurred in the Special Region of Yogyakarta which, in fact, a feudalistic area as represented by the existence of Sultan's court. DPRD became the representative mechanism and people's participation, meanwhile the presence of DPD implied the government was mutually run as it based on deliberations.

At that moment, the number of the Regional Parliament of Yogyakarta was 40, and led by was Wiwoho Purbohadidjojo from Masyumi. Purbohadidjojo was assisted by Karkono from PNI as Deputy I, and Notosudarmo from PPD as Deputy II. The DPD, which was led by Sri Sultan Hamengku Buwono IX and Sri Paku Alam VIII as the Chief and Vice-Chief respectively, consisted of five members. The DPD members were Sugijopranto (section I), Mh. Mawardi (section II), Susanto (section III), Mr. Kasmat (section IV), and dr. Sahir (section V) (Probosuprodjo, 1952: 49 - 50).

Conflict of interest occurred in the formation of DPD, so that DPRD held 12 meetings conducted from January to March 1952. The problem triggered the conflict was the desire of Masyumi, which dominated the parliament, as uttered by the chairperson of the faction, Achid Masduki, to obtain 3 seats of DPD. The other factions disapproved this desire, for instance, the chairperson of PIR, BPD Poerobojo suggested that Masyumi should hold 2 seats of DPD considering that the existence of DPD was suppose to reflect representativeness of parties in DPRD. Karkono, a parliament member who also act as the chairman of PNI Yogyakarta argued that had Masyumi obtained 3 seats, PNI would release from DPD. The most offensive rejection derived from Soedarsono of PKI faction, who condemned Masyumi was "perverting the law of democracy", or in other words "betraying democracy". Regarding to Soedarsono's statement, the chairperson of PKABT faction in which PKI was included, Soesanto ask for forgiveness to Masyumi (Yuniyanto, 2010: 52 - 53).

In fact, the municipal parliament of Yogyakarta (DPRD Kotapraja Yogyakarta) had already established a month earlier of that of the provincial parliament, that was on 29 November 1950. Soedarisman Poerwokoesoemo, the mayor of Yogyakarta (July 1947 - January 1966), the longest mayor of Yogyakarta ever, explained that the municipal parliament of Yogyakarta was formed by restoring the initial municipal parliament. The parliament continued that of the parliament of *haminte* Yogyakarta which had already existed since the Clash I (July 1947) up until the Clash II (December 1948), and originally was from the Kabupaten Kota Yogyakarta parliament formed since June 1946 up until the Clash I (July 1947) (Anonim, 1953: 8 - 17).

The members of municipal parliament members consisted of 50 persons. The chairman of the parliament held by Soedarisman Poerwokoesoemo who sustained on holding his position as the mayor. Meanwhile, between 1951 and 1953, Poerwokoesoemo also held the chairperson of the municipal DPD which supported by 5 members. Those were H. Wazir Nurie (Masyumi), R.P. Prodjoandoko and Moh. Djoemali (PNI), R.C.O. Tjiptoemarto (Partai Katholik), and Moh. Dalhar Maksam (GPII) (Anonim, 1953: 39 - 41).

## **B. The 1955 General Election: the fair democratic festivity**

The 1955 General Election was a nationally scope election. Herbert Feith demonstrates that parties participated in the 1955 election categorized into four groups. First, the big parties which consisted of PNI, Masyumi, NU, and PKI. Second, the middle range parties which comprised from PSII, Parkindo, Partai Katholik, PSI, Perti, IPKI. Third, small-scale parties which had national scope, consisted of PRN, Partai Buruh, GPPS, PRI, PPPRI, Partai Murba, Baperki, PIR Wongsonogoro, Permai, PIR Hazairin, PPTI, and Acoma. Four, small-scale parties which had regional scope, comprised from 12 parties or groups, although there was one and only in DIY, Gerinda (Feith, 1999: 89 - 90).

Gerinda, according to Selo Soemardjan, was a local political party which had considerable followers in Yogyakarta. It resurrected and such a transformation from the PKN, a social organization developed before the World War II under Prince Suryadiningrat (TimPenyusun, 1979 - 1980: 46). Even though, the party which was reestablished in 1951 did not have a certain platform, it attracted followers from peasant circle who felt like being able to directly and personally communicate with the Prince (Soemardjan, 1986: 144).

The result of the 1955 General Election in Yogyakarta did not reflect national outcome. PNI was nationally gained majority voters, followed by Masyumi, NU, PKI, and PSI, whereas in regional scale of Yogyakarta the big five political parties were PKI (22%), PNI (17%), Gerinda (12%), and NU (9%) (Soetarto, 2009: 136). The 1955 General Election both in national and regional scope (in DIY) was fair and clean, or in the current term was *jujur dan adil*, clean and fair). This was evidently showed from the campaign phase to the day of election in which contestation took place, but there was no violence at all.

The result of the 1955 General Election in Yogyakarta shows the decline of votes obtained by Masyumi as compared to the previous election (1951) of Masyumi was gained the greatest votes. The decline of

Masyumi was particularly affected by the abandoning of NU from this Islamic party, so that leaving Muhammadiyah as the backbone of the party. In addition, Masyumi suffered from the election system which was not applied the gradual election, rather the “one man one vote” system.

Both national and regional (Yogyakarta) vote contest towards the 1951 General Election did not only competition between the *abangan* and *santri*, but also among the *abangan* and the *santri* themselves. PKI highly competed with PNI to grab votes of *abangan*. PKI excessively campaigned as the represented party of the lay people (*wong cilik*) which absolutely derive from *abangan*. The PKI’s popular slogan was “PNI is *priyayi*’s party, Masyumi and NU are of *santri*, but PKI was the folk’s party” (Feith, 1999: 22).

The triumph of PKI in the 1955 General Election, although the party did not directly participate in the earlier election (1951), affected particularly by the optimal works of its political machine. A former member of DPRD Gunung Kidul testified that PKI was a prominent and superior party in different aspects, such as in work method, spirit, confidence, and efficient organization (Soetarto.....). The triumph of PKI in Yogyakarta carried on the subsequent election, the 1957 General Election. It seemed that PKI had been develop as cadre-based modern party, for the party cadres were renowned as militant and insightful. Without doubt that during 1950s, the party often competed and disputed with other political parties. Among other political contests, both nationally and locally in Yogyakarta, was the competition and conflict between PKI and Masyumi (Soetarto, 2009: 137).

In the national stage of the 1955 campaign phase, the Masyumi leaders often confronted inhospitably and put emphasis on anti-PKI expression. For instance, K.H. Isa Anshary, a leader of Masyumi chapter West Java repeatedly attacked the leaders of non-Muslim parties as “hypocrit”, or even “infidel” (Baskara in Majalah Basis, 2004: 10).

Liddle’s study on Galur, a sub-district of Kulonprogo which became the basis of Muhammadiyah since 1920s, shows that the support of Muhammadiyah to Masyumi. The consequence of political affiliation of Muhammadiyah to Masyumi affected to the construction of significant social capital and networks in order to accomplish their political, religious, social, and educational purposes. The major supporters of Muhammadiyah in Galur included devout *santri*, rich farmer, wealthy merchants, and some local nobility as well as village administrators. In the 1955 General Election, the Muhammadiyah supporters of this sub-district contributed 40% votes for Masyumi (Liddle, 1992: 6 = 7).

The presence of Muhammadiyah in Galur awakened traditional Muslim whose central figures were conservative *kyai* who did not accept the Islamic renewal idea of Muhammadiyah, for it was considered to discontinue the Islamic practices which actually a combination of Islamic faiths and practices with Javanese traditions. As a consequence, most of the *kyai* along with their patrons made use NU as the political vehicle so that NU in Galur gained 21% votes (Liddle, 1992: 7).

### **C. The 1957 General Election: Democratic Festivity showing PKI’s Hegemony**

The 1957 General Election was the second election undertaken in DIY, following that of 1951. Unlike the 1951 General Election which was conducted gradually, the 1957 General Election conducted directly. Every voters might vote, as it was applied in the national General Election of 1955.

The 1957 General Election was conducted on 7 November 1957. In this election, PKI was once again gained its triumph, following that of 1955. The result confirmed that PKI was a hegemonic party in the DIY. The detail outcome of this election was as follows: PKI gained the greatest votes (298,257 votes or 14 seats) leaving behind its rivals, in particular, PNI (164,568 votes or 8 seats), Gerinda (138,773 votes or 6 seats), Masyumi (118,965 votes or 6 seats), and NU (94,012 votes or 4 seats) (Soetarto, 2009: 139).

In their analysis, the local newspaper in Yogyakarta, Kedaulatan Rakyat (KR, 30 October 1965) argues that the achievement of PKI in Yogyakarta indicated that PKI succeeded to grab a big support from the people, particularly among peasant and labour. The socio-economic life of those circle was terrible and suffer from poverty. Meanwhile, the PKI programme was very hopeful to improve their life. The convergence between bad socio-economic condition and good promises led the peasant and labour circles became easily under the influence of PKI.

Towards the 1957 General Election, there was an effort to unify the political power of the Muslim. On 2 July 1957, the Masyumi of DIY held got-together in order to facilitate the transfer of leadership from R. Sunajo Mangunpuspito to Prof. A.K. Muzakkir. The gathering which was held at the meeting hall of the Great Mosque of Yogyakarta was led by Deputy III Ahmad Basuni. There were three keynote speakers in this meeting, namely Prof. A.K. Muzakkir as the new chariman of Masyumi DIY, Mr. H. Kasmat as the the member of Constituent Assembly, and Achid Masduki as the chairperson of the Masyumi faction in the parliament DIY (SuratKabarAbadi, 3 July 1957).

The decline of gaining votes of Masyumi in Yogyakarta, as shown in the 1955 General Election, revealed the drop of Masyumi’s political position and the rise of PKI nationally and locally in Yogyakarta. The

influence of PKI became prominent between the late 1950 and the beginning of 1960s. In Yogyakarta, the influence of PKI became apparent predominantly following the triumph of PKI in the 1955 General Election, and the dismissal of Masyumi in 1960 (Nakamura, 1983: 126 – 129).

The dismissing and the prohibition of this Islamic party in the national political arena affected to the removal of Masyumi members in diverse legislative and executive positions in all levels, from village, sub-district, district, residency, until national level. A case study conducted in Kotagede by Nakamura, demonstrates that a few of Masyumi members survived from the removal since they had switched their memberships to NU. Two village heads in Kotagede remained in their positions for the same reasons (Nakamura, 1983: 129).

### **III. YOGYAKARTA AS A CITY OF EDUCATION AND CITY OF BIKE**

Beyond the political festivity aroused by three democratic parties during the Liberal Democracy period, particularly the 1951 General Election, two fascinating phenomena emerged in Yogyakarta. First, the development of Yogyakarta as city of education (*kota pendidikan*). The then term was “college city” (*kota perguruan*). The relocation of the Indonesian capital from Yogyakarta to Jakarta which mobilised approximately 3,000 families of civil servants was conceived to make more spacious room in Yogyakarta, and would not be densely populated. In fact, Yogyakarta attracted students from Java and the outer islands to continue their study in the university level, particularly to Universitas Gadjah Mada (UGM) / GadjahMada University of which the origin was founded in 1946, and Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII) / Islamic Indonesia University was founded in 1945.

Approximately, the number of students who were studying in Yogyakarta was 80,000. The problems faced by the municipal of Yogyakarta since being the capital of struggle, hence, did not decrease, but increased instead. The problem emerged particularly with regard to the lack of housing, lighting, water, students dormitory, and so forth (Anonim, 1956: 35 – 36).

The second phenomenon was the consequence of the first phenomenon, Yogyakarta as a “college city”, which led the recognition of Yogyakarta as a “city of bike”. The students who extremely mobile to perform their role as students, namely to go to campus, library, and other places preferably made use bikes for their cheap and practical transportation tool (Anonim, 1956: 36).

In 1953, the number of bikes in Yogyakarta was roughly speaking 35,000. The density of traffic of Yogyakarta was even heavier by flood of bikes which enlarge to be 60,000 bikes from outside Yogyakarta. The additional number of bikes in Yogyakarta was actually the consequences of mostly small merchants who trade in markets of Yogyakarta, including those of female and women (Anonim, 1956: 36).

Yogyakarta's phenomenon as a "bike city" seems to be trying to be revived by the Mayor municipal of Yogyakarta, HerryZudianto, both during the first term (2001 - 2006) and the second (2006-2011). Even the mayor has set an example by riding a bicycle every time he goes to the office. But the effort was not getting a good response from the public.

### **IV. EPILOGUE**

The period of Liberal Democracy in Indonesia and particularly in Yogyakarta gave spacious political freedom to the people. The freedom was demonstrated in their supports and votes to the preferable political parties. Yogyakarta also witnessed the freedom in this period.

The political dynamic of Yogyakarta was also influenced by three general elections conducted in Yogyakarta, namely that of 1951, 1955, and 1957. The 1951 General Election became the first election conducted in DIY. This election was gradually conducted, and led an Islamic party, Masyumi, to gain its triumph. The political constellation in the provincial parliament held by the Masyumi ran democratically.

The 1955 General Election was a national-scale election which was also undertaken in DIY. It was a fair and clean election. PKI grabbed the majority of votes in this election, following by PNI, Gerinda, Masyumi, and NU. PKI was in their triumphant because the party became the most organized party supported by militant cadres. PNI could not catch up the activities of PKI. Gerinda was considered a phenomenal local party, for it was able to beat Masyumi and NU. Masyumi became experienced a decline party since it gained drastically drop votes.

The triumphant of PKI in the 1955 General Election remained until the 1957 local general election in DIY. This approved the political hegemony of PKI in DIY. This party was mostly elected by common people, in particular those of peasant and labour. Interestingly, the composition of the big five parties in the 1957 General Election endured from the previous general election, namely PKI, PNI, Gerinda, Masyumi, and NU.

In the middle of democratic festivities, especially that of 1951, Yogyakarta was developed as a fascinating city by the recognition of two phenomena. This city started to be well-known as city of education, and city of bike. This phenomena was deeply interrelated with the emergence of UGM, and other academic institutions, such as UII, which became points of attraction of students from different parts of the archipelago to study in Yogyakarta.

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