

The 1977 Election and Consolidation of the New Order Government in West Sumatra

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Abstract: This study aims to reveal the process and results of the 1977 Election in West Sumatra. Unlike at the national level taking place under intense competition, the second election during the New Order regime in West Sumatra seemed relatively “quiet.” Golkar comes out as the superior champion. The vote acquisition surpassed the Golkar votes nationally and passed the “Beringin” achievement in the 1971 Election. This study uses a structural history approach. The results show its specific dynamics in West Sumatra, which differed from the national elections. This study uses the historical method of heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. In the heuristic stage, data were obtained through library research, documentation and archives, field observations, and interviews with selected resource persons based on source criticism. The study results reveal that the 1977 Election in West Sumatra not only resulted in an increase in Golkar’s votes and the defeat of the “opposition party,” especially the PPP, but also signaled the continued consolidation of the New Order regime in Minangkabau.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap proses dan hasil Pemilu 1977 di Sumatera Barat. Berbeda dengan di tingkat nasional yang berlangsung dalam persaingan yang ketat, pemilu kedua pada masa Orde Baru di Sumatera Barat tampak relatif “tenang”. Golkar keluar sebagai juara unggul. Perolehan suara tersebut melampaui perolehan suara Golkar secara nasional dan melewati prestasi “Beringin” pada Pemilu 1971. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan sejarah struktural. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan dinamika spesifik di Sumatera Barat yang berbeda dengan pemilu nasional. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode historis heuristik, kritik, interpretasi, dan historiografi. Pada tahap heuristik, data diperoleh melalui studi pustaka, dokumentasi dan arsip, observasi lapangan, dan wawancara dengan nara sumber terpilih berdasarkan kritik sumber. Hasil kajian mengungkapkan bahwa Pemilu 1977 di Sumatera Barat tidak hanya menghasilkan peningkatan perolehan suara Golkar dan kekalahan “partai oposisi” khususnya PPP, tetapi juga menandakan berlanjutnya konsolidasi rezim Orde Baru di Minangkabau.

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INTRODUCTION

The 1977 General Election was the second general election during the New Order government. The implementation of this election nationally was quite “fierce” compared to the 1971 election, especially the competition between Golongan Karya Party (Golkar) and the United Development Party (PPP). The competition between the two parties seemed to represent a competition between nationalist and Islamic forces, like in the 1950s. In Jakarta, which has become a barometer of national politics, the battle between Golkar and PPP was even more intense (Liddle, 1978).

However, in West Sumatra, the competition among election contestants was less pronounced, as reflected in the local media coverage. There was no excessive enthusiasm from the community to welcome and face the “democratic party.” This



tendency (within a specific limit) was not only a result of the “floating mass” policies that keep people away from parties and their leaders and ideological consciousness but also related to the residual trauma of the community against past politics, which makes local people seem apathetic with political frenzy. The post-rebellion of the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PRRI) in the late 1950s left a deep “political burden” for the people of West Sumatra until the New Order era (Zed et al., 1997).

Another reason, during the campaign season, PPP and PDI (Indonesian Democratic Party), as two “opposition” parties, often received discriminatory treatment from state officials. Through the rules formulated by the government and especially the practice of those rules, the two parties were not free to attract support from the public. Even the PPP, for example, did not present Minangkabau ethnic figures as its campaigners in West Sumatra, especially in several Golkar “base” areas, such as Sijunjung, Pasaman, Solok, and Pesisir Selatan (Manjas, personal communication, 2021). They seemed worried that the political statements of the Minangkabau campaigners could disrupt the good relations between this regional government and the military rulers in the central government that had existed since the beginning of the New Order (Amal, 1985).

Local media support for “Beringin” was not just a reflection of a “pragmatic” and “realistic” political attitude from media owners or journalists. However, the Golkar campaign also looked more lively, especially in some districts, because they had more extensive resources to mobilize popular support and full support from the state apparatus from the provincial to the village level. The local media themselves, in general, also tended to side with Golkar as a representation of their attitude and support for the New Order government.

So far, Golkar’s dominance in the New Order elections has been seen more as the result of a pseudo-democracy whose content was the practice of an “authoritarian, bureaucratic regime” supported by the military in power (King, 1982). Political forces outside the bureaucracy or state, such as political parties, parliaments, mass media, or interest groups, would be feeble in controlling the bureaucracy. They even have to obey and adapt to the character of power. In this context, Golkar was the face of “partisan politics” of the state bureaucracy. Once every five years, all officials, including the elected village head (*kepala desa*), were mobilized to direct the community to vote for “Beringin.” Mean-

while, on the other hand, political parties (outside Golkar) were tightly controlled, made independent, and even cut off from their (former) followers (Liddle, 2001).

Regarding the 1977 election, there have been several previous studies relevant to this study. These studies discuss the dynamics of the 1977 elections, including Kratz (Kratz, 1977), Liddle (Liddle, 1978), and Utrecht (Utrecht, 1980). Kratz, in his study entitled “The General Elections in Indonesia — Election 1977”, which was published before the official announcement of the Indonesian government, highlighted the results of the second election of the New Order era in terms of the number of votes among the three contestants. Nothing was exciting about Kratz’s short study because the study only outlines the provisional results of the 1977 general election – such as the 1971 election – in which Golkar (again) emerged dominant, except in Aceh and Jakarta. Two other parties, PPP and PDI, gave fierce resistance in several cities and regions; nationally, they were only the underdogs (Kratz, 1977).

A more comprehensive study of the 1977 elections was conducted by William Liddle, a political scientist from Ohio State University, USA. The article was entitled “Indonesia 1977: The New Order’s Second Parliamentary Election” (Liddle, 1978). It was said that, although the 1977 elections were a continuation of the process of concentrating power around Suharto, which was fully supported by the military and bureaucracy, Liddle also saw fierce competition between the government (Golkar) and the Islamists (PPP). Liddle even saw the 1977 election as a “civil war,” where the leading contestant in the election was Golkar, backed by Suharto and the military, versus the Islamist PPP.

He also highlighted the background of PPP’s emergence as a fierce competitor to Golkar. In the 1977 election campaign, PPP had three initial advantages over its competitors. First, even though the government has done its best in pre-campaigns, PPP can still be identified as an Islamic party, which (as a religion and way of life) has not lost its firm grip on its tens of millions of followers. Second, PPP retains most of the cadre structure of Nahdatul Ulama (NU), the most prominent Islamic party in the previous election, and has a solid mass base in Java. Third, the unification of the various old parties (PPP) turned out to be a blessing in disguise because it was much easier to unite all Muslims behind the party and its Kaaba symbol than in the 1971 election when there were four Islamic parties (NU, Parmusi, PSII, and Perti) which are often in conflict (Liddle, 1978).

A study by Utrecht highlighted the connection between the 1977 elections and the military. There was nothing new in studying the relationship between elections and the armed forces in Indonesia. Since successfully crushing the communist movement on 30 September 1965, the military, led by Suharto, has come to the forefront of Indonesian politics. Through several moments and even political “engineering,” the military, especially the army, became the political determinant of the New Order. The implementation of elections in 1971 and continued in 1977 was designed to place the military in a dominant position, starting in the legislature, executive to other state institutions, from the Central to the regions (Utrecht, 1980).

Studies by Kratz, Liddle, and Utrecht on the 1977 elections were national. They are like watching the election from the “deck of the ship.” No studies highlight the dynamics of elections at the local level, especially in West Sumatra. This study looks specifically at the dynamics of the 1977 general election at the regional level, which was previously known as the political base of the Masjumi party. However, the political competition between the government-supporting party (Golkar) and PPP was less intense because it was influenced by the historical background of the local people’s rebellion against the central government in the late decade of the 1950s. In West Sumatra, the majority of Golkar’s votes did not come from the abangan group, as in Java and other regions (Liddle, 1978), but from the santri group, who made up the most significant part of Minangkabau society.

METHOD

The method used in this research is the historical method which consists of four stages, namely heuristics (extracting sources), criticism, interpretation, and writing of history (historiography) (Syamsuddin, 2007). In tracking and extracting sources, the authors prioritize documentary materials as primary sources and further support secondary sources. Documentary materials were traced as news on the 1977 General Election in local newspapers, especially *Singgalang*, published in Padang. This newspaper tends to be a “Minangkabau newspaper” because the media does not only use local language and idioms but also because its issues are related to problems in the Minangkabau ethnic community. Meanwhile, the secondary resource is in the form of books and journal articles that briefly discuss the elections for the New Order era in West Sumatra. After the material is found, it is followed by source criticism. Source criticism includes inter-

nal criticism and external criticism. External criticism begins by sorting to distinguish good sources from sources with less validity. Internal criticism includes reviewing existing sources. Interpretation includes interpretive activities and analysis, in a sense, looking for a logical connection between the research question and the available data. The last stage is historiography, which is writing the full research results (Syamsuddin, 2007).

ELECTIONS AND THE POLITICS OF THE NEW ORDER REGIME

Before the 1977 Election, various political preconditions had taken place, which led to the strengthening of Golkar’s hegemony as the political vehicle for rulers by carrying out efforts to cast out old political forces, both Islamic and nationalist. The results of these political efforts demonstrated the military regime’s ability to strengthen its power over all political forces of parties and society (Crouch, 1999).

The efforts of the authorities to castrate non-Golkar political power have been carried out since before the 1971 Election as the first election for the New Order. The parties were not only restricted and demolished, but some parties were prohibited from being rehabilitated, such as the Masyumi Party, the most prominent Islamic party in the 1955 Election. To accommodate the aspirations of Masyumi followers, the government allowed the establishment of the Indonesian Muslim Party (Parmusi) in 1968. However, it prohibited the involvement of former Masjumi leaders, such as Mohammad Natsir, Mohammad Roem, and Sjafruddin Prawiranegara. Parmusi was considered “weak” because it was led by “moderate” and “compromising” Islamic leaders with government policies (Crouch, 1999).

The results were surprising: Golkar won 62,8 %, followed by the NU Party (Nahdlatul Ulama) in second place with 18,7%. NU’s votes are slightly above their votes in the 1955 General Election. Other parties received votes below 10%, including the PNI (6,9 %), which in the 1955 election emerged as the top vote winner. Parmusi, a new party that is an indirect descendant of Masyumi, only got 5,4% of the votes (Hindley, 1972). It means that the votes obtained by the non-Golkar parties (including NU) are far below the “Beringin” Party. The election results were then used as the basis for the legitimacy of the New Order regime, especially in the eyes of the international community.

After the 1971 Elections, efforts to block non-governmental parties continued. In 1973, the government fused political parties outside Golkar.

The old nationalist and Christian political forces, namely the Indonesia National Party (PNI), Deliberation of the People at Large (Murba) Party, The Association of Supporters of Indonesian Independence (IPKI) Party, Indonesia Christian Party (Parkindo), and the Catholic Party were merged into a new political organization, namely the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI). The four Islamic parties, NU, Parmusi, PSII, and Perti, were later merged into PPP. Even though the reason for simplifying the party system was in line with the “demands of the times” and also the spirit of “Pancasila Democracy,” it is clear that the main objective behind it was control of political parties outside Golkar (Liddle, 1978). The reason was that in determining the party structure from the center to the regions, the government very much intervenes to place figures considered “moderate.”

In West Sumatra, the fusion of political parties in 1973 went relatively smoothly. In the beginning, there was also a small number of dynamics, but then it “did down” when an agreement was reached in determining the structure and management of the party. The West Sumatran PPP board, initially formed in 1973, was based on the balance of the Islamic parties’ votes in the 1971 general election. The head of the PPP area was Anas from (element of) Parmusi, and the secretary was Yunus Said from Perti. Two other elements, NU and PSII, got the position of Deputy Chair. For the PPP structure at the Padang city level, the chairman was Jailani Yakub from Parmusi, the secretary was Jammai Rifti from Perti, and the deputy chairman was Zamhar Baheram from NU. The smooth process of fusion of Islamic parties was also made possible because of the good “acceptance” of the people of West Sumatra to the central government’s “instructions” delivered through Minang figures themselves, including Governor Harun Zain (Zamhar Baheram, personal communication, 2021).

Another effort that continued ahead of the 1977 Election was to prohibit civil servants from being active and choosing political parties, but not Golkar, because the government still recognized Beringin as not an ideological and partisan political party but a functional and work for organization. In addition, the government also requires all political parties to make Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution (UUD 1945) the basis for party ideology, a particular handicap to the Islamic PPP. Another provision detrimental to PPP and PDI, two parties with grassroots bases, was the prohibition of opening the branching of parties under districts and cities

(Liddle, 1978). Not surprisingly, rural areas, including in West Sumatra, were controlled by Golkar (Zed et al., 1997).

Nationally, especially in the capital city of Jakarta, the atmosphere for the 1977 Election campaign was quite hot. Golkar tries to raise its vote by attracting as many voters as possible, including among the Muslim community. One of Golkar’s efforts was to improve its image among Islamic voters. If Golkar was previously considered anti-Islamic, in the run-up to the 1977 Election, they tried to improve that image by attracting Islamic teachers to join the “Beringin” party. However, in several other areas, especially outside Java, Golkar often used a power approach, using the hands of the military and bureaucracy (Liddle, 1978).

As a result, nationally, Golkar won again, even though, in general, its votes decreased slightly compared to the 1971 election. Golkar won 62,11%, down about 0,7%, and PPP won 29,29%, up about 2,2 % from elections six years earlier. The PDI vote, as many previously thought, experienced a significant decline. The party bearing the symbol of the bull lost many votes in its main base areas, such as Java, Bali, and eastern Indonesia. Examined from the perspective of political culture, Golkar’s victory at the national level was due to the large support from the abangan groups. Many santri groups, both modernist and traditionalist, still chose PPP (Suryadinata, 1992). The fusion of Islamic parties in 1973 became a “hidden blessing” for PPP. In the 1977 elections, Islamic forces (modernists and traditionalists) became more compact than in the previous elections (Liddle, 1978), although some of them had “migrated” to Golkar.

PRE-ELECTION SITUATION IN WEST SUMATRA

However, the heated condition of national politics never seemed to affect the political situation in West Sumatra. In the run-up to the General Election, the political situation in this area seems to be running in an orderly and quiet manner. No conditions led to fierce competition and political conflict between election contestants. Approaching the campaign season, the people did not even have excessive enthusiasm for the election.

Taking into account the coverage in the regional media, the political discourse produced by the authorities was indeed very dominant. There was almost no alternative discourse. The ruler here did mean not only the regional heads but also the military rulers and, of course, the Golkar elite itself. On various occasions, they always persuaded the

public to support the New Order government, which intensively carried out development. They reminded the people not to repeat the experiences of previous times when parties and society tended to be trapped in the vortex of political and ideological conflicts that neglected economic development.

Unsurprisingly, no other party could match Golkar in offering alternative discourses to the public before the election. Likewise, for non-parliamentary powers. The critical voices of scholars, students, and culturalists were barely heard. Some of them, like many academics from Andalas University, IKIP Padang, and IAIN Imam Bonjol, have even entered the power system. As a result, there are no counterbalancing ideas for power-produced discourse. The situation in West Sumatra at that time was not only influenced by the tendency of political apathy that continued in the Minang community but also because what was conveyed by the New Order government, in general, was considered by the people to be in line with reality and what the community expected: recovery of destroyed economic facilities, as a “legacy” of past political upheaval. Since this province was led by Governor Harun Zain, appointed in 1966, there have been quite some development projects carried out by the New Order in West Sumatra, such as roads, bridges, irrigation, electricity, educational institutions, and markets that have made a positive impression among the local people (Yusra, 1997).

It was not surprising that there was almost no news in the West Sumatra media about protests against the political behavior of local officials, military rulers, or Golkar, both from political parties and the community, including lecturers and students. Almost all local media follow the political “style” of the rulers. The news in the local media was like the diaries of regional officials, both civilian and military. The situation in this area was different from that in Java, especially in Jakarta, where there were still mass media that criticized Golkar and the political behavior of the rulers, including, of course, media that do have “affiliations” with non-Golkar political parties, such as *Pelita* (PPP) and *Merdeka* (PDI). Even when non-parliamentary movements emerged, starting in the early 1970s, such as the campaign not to vote, or “*golput*” (*golongan putih* or white class), as an expression of protest against the manipulative electoral process, many national media raised it as important news.

Indeed, after the G30S, the situation in West Sumatra was relatively “conducive” to the process of regional integration into the New Order state. Apart from successful political control efforts, in-

cluding elements of *ninik mamak* (traditional leaders) and ulama, within the Minang elites themselves, there was also a kind of “consensus” to “rebuild the area” with the main focus on restoring damaged physical facilities and the mentality of the community. Considering that the regions did not have sufficient funds, requesting funds from the central government, which has enormous financial resources, was the most logical and realistic step, even though the regions must “comply” with the demands of the new ruler (Amal, 1985).

Therefore, when there was a political event, such as an election, which would become the basis for the legitimacy of the New Order regime, especially in the eyes of the international community, West Sumatra had to comply or adapt well. Local elites must not only win Golkar absolutely and castrate political parties until they become irrelevant to people’s lives (Kahin, 2005) but also be able to control critical voices from the regions, including elements of the mass media.

THE 1977 ELECTION AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE NEW ORDER REGIME

Indeed, to a certain extent, the implementation of the elections in West Sumatra was still lively due to diverse crowds during the campaign season between 24 February and 24 April 1977. However, it was more due to mass mobilization, especially by Golkar, which involved state officials and the support of *ninik mamak*, who, since the beginning, it has been “co-opted” by the government through the formation of LKAAM (Lembaga Kerapatan Adat dan Alam Minangkabau). The crowd was also possible because of the musical entertainment that brought in artists from outside the region, so campaign activities seemed to turn into a stage for people’s entertainment, including the presence of teenagers who did not understand politics and did not have the right to vote. At that time, it can be said that almost all of Minang’s top artists, such as Elly Kasim, Zalmon, and others, supported the Golkar campaign (Singgalang, 1977a)

The running of the campaign clearly shows the disparities among election participants. Golkar’s campaign material was always related to the claims of the success of the New Order development. Meanwhile, the PPP and PDI focused more on their difficulties in campaigning. The PDI even complained about their difficulty distributing campaign props to the public. “Now it is installed, tomorrow it is gone,” said Taharuddin Taat from the PDI in a hearing of election contestants with elements of the Muspida city of Padang (Singgalang, 1977a).

Several PPP campaigns were also lively, especially in Padang, Bukittinggi Agam, and Padangpanjang. It can be said that in urban areas, PPP presented tough competition for Golkar because urban areas were indeed the bases of Islamic (modernist) politics which are still quite strong in West Sumatra. In Padang Panjang and Bukittinggi, in particular, there were still many Islamic educational institutions led by modernist clerical figures who were quite rooted and independent from government influence. However, in general, since the beginning, the power of political Islam has indeed been “deflated” in West Sumatra, thus benefiting Golkar as a supporting force for the government. Elements of Perti, former Masyumi activists, and some Muhammadiyah activists (previously members of Masyumi and Parmusi) have “moved” to Golkar. This condition continued ahead of the 1977 General Election. Another factor that caused the voices of Islamic parties to decrease compared to the 1955 and 1971 elections was due to the “neutral” attitude of senior ulama figures such as the Chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) West Sumatra, HRB Datuk Palimo Kayo (Bagindo M. Letter, personal communication, 2021). Even the attitude of the former Masyumi Chairman Mohammad Natsir did not seem straightforward in supporting PPP in the 1977 General Election (Masoed Abidin, personal communication, 2021).

For Golkar, other government activities also smelled of “campaigning” for the “Banyan Party” apart from their official campaign. The presence of state officials in formalizing development projects during the Election season has become a kind of “covert” campaign for Golkar. Likewise, several other official government activities, such as an exhibition commemorating “Supersemar” (*Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret*, Eleven March Order Letters) Day held by the Padang City Information Department. At the event, regional officials did not forget to “campaign” for the success of the New Order development. There was even a statement by the Mayor of Padang, who was very political and partial. “Mayor Hasan Basri Durin said in his remarks that it was inappropriate for certain parties to say only the negative side of campaign materials. The mayor confidently stated that the results of the New Order development were material and spiritual,” said the *Singgalang* newspaper about the “Deppen” program (Singgalang, 1977b).

Officials from the central and local governments also frequently abuse their positions in the interests of Golkar. Minister of Transportation Emil

Salim, for example, when he visited West Sumatra in March 1977, was officially on leave for his ministerial post because he campaigned for Golkar in this area. However, during the campaign at several points, Emil also handed over President Soeharto’s assistance, including for the Yarsi Bukittinggi Hospital, a hospital founded by ex-Masyumi. Of course, the provision of state assistance at the election moment will be seen as assistance from the ruling party. Especially at that moment, as in Pasaman, Governor Harun Zain, who should have been “neutral,” also thanked the President for his assistance (Singgalang, 1977d). During the campaign for Golkar, Governor Harun Zain himself even demonstrated the “symbol” of Andalas University. Incidentally, the largest university in West Sumatra has a banyan tree symbol, the same as the Golkar symbol (Zamhar Baheram, personal communication, 2021).

In the campaign process in West Sumatra, according to Amal (1985), the PPP did not want to “attack” Golkar, but on the contrary, as reported by *Singgalang*, it was the government that accused the Kaaba party of spreading negative issues. Home Minister Amir Machmud, for example, “appointed” the PPP behind the issue of Golkar as an “infidel party” (*partai kafir*), and those who did not vote for the Kaaba Party would also become an infidel. He said that upholding Islam was not only a monopoly of the PPP. “I will also fight fisabilillah for the glory of Islam,” said Amir Machmud during a rally at the Nurul Iman Mosque courtyard in Padang, the largest mosque in West Sumatra he inaugurated at that time (Singgalang, 1977c).

The campaigns of the Islamist parties often encounter obstacles from the state apparatus. In practice, political attacks against PPP were more intense, such as in Agam, Bukittinggi, Limapuluh Kota, and Padang Panjang. Youth who supported PPP were often arrested and chased by the police and the army. “Youths who support PPP are seen as enemies by the authorities. Party supporters were threatened that their children would not be allowed to register as civil servants,” said Manjas (96), a former chairman of the Agam PPP in the 1970s (Manjas, personal communication, 2021).

PPP and PDI finally appeared “moderate” in their campaigns in West Sumatra. PDI itself, like the PNI in the past, the “nationalist plus” party did not exist in Minangkabau. The two parties, especially the PPP, did not want to attack Golkar, the military, or the government, even though they were often mistreated. In Agam, for example, PPP conducted campaigns in an orderly manner. They fill

the campaign only with speeches from party figures (Manjas, personal communication, 2021). In general, PPP took a “soft” stance toward regional interests. They did not want Islam in this area, once again, to be labeled as “trouble makers.” If that happens, it will change the overall perception of the military leadership in the central government towards Minangkabau. For this reason, the West Sumatra PPP leadership invited “hardline” figures from Jakarta but who were not Minangkabau, such as Kasman Singodimedjo (Java) and Djamaluddin Tarigan (Batak), to campaign in this area. According to them, if the campaign content of the PPP campaigner caused tensions with Golkar and the military, it would not be the Minangkabau people who would be blamed (Amal, 1985).

Thus, in general, the political atmosphere in West Sumatra during the campaign was not as hot as in Java and other regions. There were no protests from political parties or the public against the election implementation process, including the unequal campaign among the contestants. At least, that was reflected in the mass media coverage and testimonies of many figures (Manjas, personal communication, 2021). Even if there were critical voices, the political authorities would cover and control them quickly. It happened, for example, during a dialogue between West Sumatra student elements with Emil Salim, the Minister of Transportation who was also a Golkar campaigner. “Many other questions cannot be broadcast, even regarding elections.” The newspaper Singgalang seemed to close the “sensitive” part of the dialogue between the student leaders of Andalas University, IKIP, and IAIN Padang and Emil Salim. He was accompanied by Governor Harun Zain and Januar Muin (Singgalang, 1977e).

The election vote took place on Monday, 2 May 1977. Sometime later, the results were known nationally and in West Sumatra. As previously predicted, Golkar emerged as the absolute winner in West Sumatra with 66.5 percent of the votes, followed by PPP with 32,4% and PDI with 1 %. Golkar excelled in 12 districts and cities, while PPP only won in two cities, namely Bukittinggi and Padangpanjang. In the city of Padang, the provincial capital, the votes of Golkar and PPP were relatively balanced, namely 49.4 percent versus 48.8 percent (Singgalang, 1997).

Following the prevailing political law, the election results were not fully reflected in the legislative body. The total number of seats in the legislature, not only as a result of political parties in the election but also added by the members of the legis-

lature appointed from the military. For West Sumatra DPRD seats for the 1977-1982 period, a total of 40 seats, Golkar got 21 seats, PPP 11 seats, and military (Karya ABRI) 8 seats. While the PDI, which was the result of the fusion of many parties, failed to get a seat in the Provincial DPRD (Singgalang, 1977f).

Although Golkar’s victory and PPP’s defeat in West Sumatra in the 1977 General Election had been predicted, the context of the superiority of “Beringin” in the region was one of the most substantial former Islamic bases outside Java remains surprising. The decline in the votes of Islamic parties, in this case, PPP, in Minang land seems to be contrary to their achievements in other Islamist political base areas, particularly DKI Jakarta and Aceh. In these two regions, the Kaaba party defeated Golkar (Liddle, 1978).

Indeed, in urban areas, Golkar still faces fierce competition from PPP. Even in Bukittinggi and Padangpanjang, PPP has succeeded in surpassing the Beringin. Meanwhile, there was a balance of votes between the two parties in the city of Padang, with a difference of only about 490 votes. Likewise, in the cities of Payakumbuh and Agam, the difference between Golkar and PPP votes was not too far away. However, on the whole, the “Beringin” excelled in the West Sumatra region, whose percentage now surpasses even Golkar’s national achievements, as well as their achievements in the 1971 Election in this area.

Traces of political trauma due to the upheaval of the PRRI, the military occupation, and the domination of the PKI during the Guided Democracy, especially in rural areas, still left an impact on the changes in the political choices of the Minang people. Choosing the ruling party was ultimately a pragmatic choice for the people, despite that it was a direction from the elite groups at various levels, including *ninik mamak* and ulama. They no longer wanted to oppose the authorities at the center, and their practical choice was to support Golkar in the elections. It was because if they continued to vote for an Islamic party, as in the past, there would be many difficulties, both individually and in community groups. “*Kalau ka naik kapa juo, eloklah naik kapa gadang*” (If you are going to board a ship too, then it is better to take a big boat),” that was the form of the Minang people’s pragmatic political expression as justification for supporting Golkar and the New Order (Zed et al., 1997).

Indeed, from the beginning, Golkar and the New Order regime tended to approach traditional groups. The *ninik mamak* and religious elements co

-opted through LKAAM and BKPUI mostly came from traditional Muslim circles. Political steps like this were relatively more manageable because this group generally also did not have the psychological burden related to past political "sins" as rebels against the central government. As in the Pariaman district, an influential Tuanku (ulama) among the Syattariyah congregation named A Razak Tuanku Mudo finally stated his support for Golkar, although the reasons were not only political but also economical because it was the ruling party that most often helped this traditional Islamic group educational institution (Chaniago, 2018).

However, if we look at the overall political trend in West Sumatra, the superiority of Golkar, which was "non-religious," was not only due to the government's bulldozing practice and the fact that the government has a significant source of funds that have been used for election purposes, but also because Islamic parties have lost their enemies. Which was used as campaign material after the PKI and communism were dissolved. Christians were often also an important common enemy, but there was a widespread perception that such problems could be combated using social and educational or preaching and not utilizing politics (Amal, 1985).

Another factor was related to the ethnic self-perception that the acceptance of the Minang people towards the New Order was also part of regional interests. Their loyalty to the central government has manifested itself in the election results in West Sumatra, which they see as an appropriate response to the central government, which has poured out funds in the form of development projects. They saw that Golkar in West Sumatra was oriented towards regional development. "West Sumatra's Golkar is different from the Golkar of other regions," said Masoed Abidin. Thus there was broad support for the idea that West Sumatra's regional interests would be best served through "practical" politics, namely that opposition to a strong government would be futile and detrimental and that it was understandable to do as the central government wanted it to be as far as practical gain keep flowing to the region (Amal, 1985).

However, Golkar's great victory in the 1977 General Election in West Sumatra impacted the expansion of the New Order's style of power in this area. The power of political Islam was increasingly marginalized, while the strength of the Minangkabau-style Golkar was getting stronger. Although in the next election, Golkar experienced a slight decline in votes, allegedly due to the lack of accommodation of several traditional clerics in the

nomination of Golkar legislators for the West Sumatra Legislature Body (DPRD) (Zed et al., 1997) and the lack of sensitivity of a handful of Golkar elites in giving statements about Islamic values, however On a macro level, the New Order's power was increasingly intertwined with regional interests (Bahar, 2018). The number of Minang elites who support Golkar -- for practical, pragmatic, and realistic reasons -- was increasing. They later cemented significant changes in - to borrow Abdullah's term (Abdullah, 1996) - the "political-cultural orientation" of the people of West Sumatra and the Minangkabau elite for the following periods.

CONCLUSION

The 1977 election in West Sumatra was not only a continuation of the new political attitude of the people of West Sumatra after The Old Order but also a sign of the continued consolidation of the New Order in this region. Golkar superiority could not only be said to be the result of the bulldozing politics of the New Order regime, which involved the state apparatus but also due to other factors, such as the loss of the PKI from the Indonesian political stage, which was previously used as a common enemy of Islamic parties, as a party favored by the majority of the Minangkabau people.

Also, Golkar's electoral victory was due to the increasing number of *ninik mamak* and religious leaders in the regions joining Golkar. They influenced the behavior of the Minang people in politics, though their authority as *ninik mamak* and ulama has been different from previous times. They marked the corporatism of the New Order state at the regional level. Though the PPP still enjoyed trust in particular parts of West Sumatra, especially in urban areas and former bases of the old Islamic movement such as Agam, it could be seen as a remnant of the triumphant political Islam in Tanah Minang, the most robust base for Islamic parties outside Java in the 1950s.

However, West Sumatra's "unique" reason for Golkar's electoral victory in the 1977 general election was the continuation of the Minangkabau elites' stance on fighting for regional interests. After being physically and mentally battered by the suppression of the PRRI rebellion and the previous occupation of the central army in West Sumatra, the Minang people had no other choice but to fully support the New Order state in exchange for a significant flow of funds for various regional recovery and development projects. This political attitude, however, would also lead to many socio-cultural impacts that may not have been predicted.

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