# SOCIO-POLITICAL DYNAMICS TAKING PLACE AT KUTA TRADITIONAL VILLAGE, BALI:

# FROM DESA ADAT (TRADITIONAL VILLAGE) TO DESA PEKRAMAN (ANOTHER TYPE OF TRADITIONAL VILLAGE) IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF CULTURAL STUDIES

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#### ABSTRACT

This research explores the socio-political dynamics taking place at Kuta Traditional Village, Bali: from *desa adat* (traditional village) to *desa pekraman* (another type of traditional village) in the perspective of cultural studies. There are three problems formulated in this research. The first problem is how the socio-political dynamics from *desa adat* (traditional village) to *desa pekraman* (another type of traditional village) took place at Kuta? The next problem is how the traditional village interacted with the administrative village at Kuta? And the last problem, which is the third, is what were the impacts and meanings of the change from *desa adat* to *desa pekraman*? In this study qualitative method was employed. And the data needed was obtained by employing the technique of in-depth interview, the technique of participatory observation, and documentation study. To give responses to the problems mentioned above, the theory of hegemony, the theory of deconstruction, the theory of conflict, the theory of power and knowledge and the theory of eclectically symbolic interaction were applied.

The findings show that the socio-political dynamics taking place Kuta Traditional Village resulted in turbulence among the villagers. This is indicated by the Local Rules and Regulations (*Perda*) issued by Desa *Pekraman* of Number 3 of Year 2001. This could be responsible for the factors of pro's and con's in various aspects. Clause (6) of Article 3 of the *Perda* of Number 3 of Year 2001 was reversed by the leaders of Kuta Traditional Village. They did not agree that non-Hindu people were included as the traditional village members.

As far as the interaction between the traditional village and the administrative village is concerned, the governmental hegemony took place. The government applied hegemony to the traditional village through the administrative village in the form of rules and regulations. The local rules and regulations issued by the *desa pekraman*, as a legal product in Bali, are left crystallized sociologically, philosophically, and juridically.

However, the dynamism of the traditional villagers in Bali will "justify" to what extent such rules and regulations are justified and to what extent they are protective. The change of the Perda issued by the desa adat into that issued by the desa pekraman was not followed by Kuta Traditional Village by replacing the awig-awig (rules and regulations) issued by the desa adat or making loose agreements to adapt to the higher rules and regulations in addition to anticipating the migrants through the change in rules and regulations applicable at Kuta Traditional Village. Basically, the socio-political dynamics taking place at Kuta Traditional Village as a consequence of the change made from desa adat to desa pekraman resulted in no important things. However, from the "substance" point of view, the change can be seen in the formation of Majelis Desa Pekraman (the Assembly of Desa Pekraman) (Article 14), which is formed from below, and in the appearance of *pecalang* (traditional security) which is responsible for the security and orderliness of the village area especially when traditional and religious activities are performed. Actually, pecalang is an "old product" which is newly packaged with "new enthusiasm" and is included in the Perda of Number 3 of Year 2001 issued by the Desa Pekraman . The meanings created by the change made from Desa Adat to Desa Pekraman are transformational, dialogic and dynamic. The desa pekraman is in the ongoing process (which will never come to an end) of being integrated into the administrative village.

The findings show that there were multiple interpretations given by the leaders of Kuta Traditional Village, as far as the articles in the *Perda* issued by the *Desa Pekraman* are concerned, governmental hegemony which was in the form of Rules and Regulations as the social transformation of the State by which villages are organized.

**Key words**: socio-political dynamics, traditional village, administrative village, and *awig-awig* (locally -made rules and regulations) of the *desa adat*.

## **Background**

This dissertation, which investigates the relationship among the elements in the village government, is entitled "the Socio-Political Dynamics Taking Place at Kuta Traditional Village, Bali: from *Desa Adat* (Traditional Village) to *Desa Pekraman* (another type of traditional village): in the Perspective of Cultural Studies. The term "*Desa Adat*" has been in existence since the Dutch Colonial Era. It refers to a traditional community system which is traditionally organized with traditional or local leaders. The term "Desa Dinas" (Administrative Village) has also been in existence since the Dutch Colonial Era. It refers to an administrative village formally established by the government.

Then, these two governmental systems were equally applied until the Indonesian government was obtained and led to no problems. In the New Order Period, when the Rules and Regulations of Number 5 of Year 1979 concerning Village Government was issued, the administrative village established by the government seemed to dominate the traditional village government. Various matters which should have been handled by the traditional village were taken over by the administrative village, although they were not its responsibilities. The traditional village felt marginalized and had no authorities, being dominated by the administrative village.

To overcome the conflicts possibly arising during the New Order Era, the government of Bali Province issued the Rules and Regulations of Number 06 of Year 1986 which were supposed to link the traditional village and the administrative village. This served as the reference which placed the traditional system and the administrative system in an equal position to jointly develop the village. These rules and regulations allowed the village government in Bali could be harmoniously run by paying attention to the two elements which played important roles in developing the village. This seemed to be in accordance with the 1945 Constitution (Article 18B, clause 2). This article supports and acknowledges the existence of the traditional system. It acknowledges and respects the units under the traditional village with their traditional rights as long as they are still applicable and are in accordance with the societal development and the principles of the Republic of Indonesia.

The Reformation Era, during which the governmental system changed dynamically, slightly changed the village government in Bali. There was turbulence between the administrative village and traditional village. The reason was that the former considered the latter had marginalized its authorities and system. A reaction appeared that the existence of the administrative village should be evaluated. Then the Balinese politicians, especially those who were elected the legislative assembly members at the provincial level, agreed that a *Perda* (locally-made rules and regulations) should be made which could support the strength of the traditional village and marginalize the administrative village. As a result, *Perda* of Number 3 of Year 2001 was issued. Then, since it was applicable, the term "*Desa Adat*" was changed into "*Desa Pekraman*" to which the village government in Bali has referred to.

Its applicability was responsible for the pro's and con's resulting from how the system of the *Desa Pekraman* was implemented in Bali in general and in Kuta in particular. The term is *Desa Pekraman* but what has been carried out by the Kuta community still refers to what was included in the system carried out by the *Desa Adat*. This has been one of the problems created by the Reformation Era.

Based on what has been described above, a study on Kuta traditional community in the context of its current power, law and dynamism is essentially conducted. The area of Kuta Traditional Village is very strategic with its tourism activities. In addition to being a traditional village with its traditional and cultural activities, it is also an administrative and international (global) village. It is this which has provided it with the opportunity either to adapt to and/or to resist against the political policies included in a legal product. It is very clear that the reformation taking place at Kuta Traditional Village shows local dynamism in which the local rules and regulations (*awig-awig*) are employed for organizing the traditional village members (*krama adat*), and the state's legal system and traditional agreements in the form of "social movements" are used for organizing the migrants. How the area (*palemahan*) and those occupying the area belonging to the traditional village (*pawongan*) are organized follows the development of tourism.

The socio political turbulence, as the dynamic aspect of the community, cannot be separated from the hegemony applied by the "government" to organize the community with its various activities. Its social, political and economic activities are relevant for

exploration in the perspective of cultural studies. The reason is that historically Kuta Traditional Village has contributed a lot with its socio-political dynamics to the development of tourism in Bali. The change in political product from the *Perda* issued for *Desa Adat* to that issued for *Desa Pekraman* has affected the local community (traditional community of Kuta).

Based the background above, this research is focused on the following three problems: 1) what socio-political dynamics took place when the term *desa adat* was changed into the term *desa pekraman* at Kuta?; 2) what interaction took place between the Traditional Village and the Administrative Village?; 3) what were the effects and meanings of the change from *desa adat* into *desa pekraman*? Qualitative method was employed in this study with interdisciplinary approach (social, political, legal, economic and anthropological) characterizing a study of cultural studies. To reveal the socio-political dynamics taking place at Kuta Traditional Village, the theory of hegemony, the theory of deconstruction, the theory of relationship between power and knowledge, the theory of conflict and the theory of symbolic interaction were employed. They were all used to reveal the socio-legal and socio-political dynamics eelectically.

#### The Results

It was found that Kuta Traditional Village was made to be marginalized by the Rules and Regulations of Number 5 of Year 1979 issued by the New Order. The uniformity created, which was against the *Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Diversity in Unity)was responsible for this. However, the Governor of Bali (as the executive) and the Bali Legislative Assembly) responded to this problem by issuing *Perda* of Number 06 of Year 1986. It, as cultural and legal politics, functioned to protect and to save the traditional villagers of Bali (*krama desa*). With reference to it, the traditional village rules and regulations, termed as *awig-awig*, were produced and one of its consequences was the establishment of the Village Credit Union (*Lembaga Perkreditan Rakyat* abbreviated as LPD).

Kuta Traditional Village, as the State's ideological apparatus, has indigenous autonomy which cannot be interfered with by the State. During the New Order area, the hegemony of the government was performed by issuing the Perda of *Desa Adat* of

Number 06 of Year 1986, as far as Article 12, Clause (1), Clause (1) and Clause (3) and Article 12, Clause (1) are concerned, in which it was stated that the traditional village was supervised by the Governor of Bali. In addition, in Article 12, Clause (1), it was stated that the Governor of Bali, when performing this responsibility, was assisted by *Majelis Pembina Lembaga Adat* (Traditional Institutions Supervising Committee) and *Badan Pelaksana Pembina Lembaga Adat* (Traditional Institutions Organizing Committee). In Article 12, Clause (3) and Clause (2) it was stated that the Structures and Organizations of the *Majelis* and *Pelaksana Lembaga Adat* were determined by the Governor. This illustrates the hegemony applied by the government as their formations were determined from above.

The New Order came to an end and the Reformation Era appeared. The *Perda of Desa Adat* mentioned above was replaced by the Bali Province Legislative Assembly) with the *Perda* of *Desa Pekraman* of Number 3 of Year 2001. It is this which led to pro's and con's in various aspects. The Kuta Traditional Village leaders did not accept the *Perda* of *Desa Pekraman*, especially Article 3 Clause (6), which included non-Hindu people as the traditional village members (*krama desa*).

In the interaction between the traditional village and administrative village, the hegemony applied by the government took place. The government applied hegemony to the traditional village through the administrative village in the form of rules and regulations. The rules and regulations, as a legal product in Bali, were left crystallized sociologically, philosophically and juridically without any problem. However, the traditional villagers (*krama Bali*) will "justify" to what extent they can be justified and to what extent they side with them. The change from the *Perda* of *Desa Adat* to the *Perda* of *Desa Pekraman* applied at Kuta Traditional Village was not followed by replacing the rules and regulations (*awig-awig*) issued by the traditional village by creating loose agreements to adapt to the higher rules and regulations, in addition to anticipating the migrants through the change of *awig-awig* applied at Kuta traditional village.

Basically, the effects of the socio-political dynamics taking place at Kuta traditional village resulting from the change of *Desa Adat* into *Desa Pekraman* were nothing, except the change with regard to name from *Desa Adat* into *Desa Pekraman*. However, from the "substance" point of view, the change can be seen from the

appearance of some institutions such as *Majelis Desa Pekraman* (an Assembly), as included in Article 14, which is formed from "below" and *pecalang* (traditional security), which is responsible for the security and orderliness all over the village, especially when religious and traditional activities are performed. It is an "old product" but is "newly packaged" in the *Perda* of *Desa Pekraman* of Number 3 of Yeaer 2001. The meanings of the change from *desa adat* into *desa pekraman* are transformational, dialogic and dynamic. *Desa Pekraman* is still in the process, which will never come to an end, of being integrated into the administrative village.

### **Findings**

The findings are as follows; the articles included in the *Perda* of *Desa Pekraman* were multiply interpreted by the traditional village leaders, as far as what is included in its articles; the hegemony applied by the government was in the form of rules and regulations as a social transformation; the socio-political dynamics taking place at Kuta Traditional Village was influenced by the state's legal system, the indigenous autonomy was based on *desa mawacara* (place, time and condition), Hinduism, the existing traditions or the agreements made; and the concept of *palemahan* (residence) was badly organized resulting from the mobility of population and tourism. Sociologically, Kuta traditional village still refers to the term "*desa adat*" instead of the term "*desa pekraman*".

Furthermore, the establishment of *Majelis Alit Desa Pekraman* (a Minor Assembly) all over Kuta Sub District was not procedural for the reason that it should have been formed from "below" instead of from "above", which was not in accordance with the *Perda* of *Desa Pekraman*. In addition, the *Majelis Alit Desa Pekraman* should have recruited 25% of those who were familiar to Customary Law, Religion and Balinese culture and as its members. Its current members turned out to be dominated by the heads of the traditional villages (*bendesa adat*) and their staff (*prajuru adat*). However, when election for the *bendesa adat* was carried out at Kuta traditional village in 2008, innovation was already made. What is meant is that the model of election adopted referred to the model when election for the regent or governor was conducted and that the candidate should not have been any political leader of any level. Moreover, the *Pecalang* 

(Traditional Security) of Kuta traditional village, which was included in the *Perda* of *Desa Pekraman* and had been previously included in the local rules and regulations (*awig-awig*) of Kuta traditional village was "juridically" formed in 1984.

#### **Conclusions**

The interaction between the traditional village and the administrative village, as included in Article 3, Clause (6) of the Perda of Desa Pekraman of Number 3 of Year 2001, was assumed as the "suicide" article for the Kuta traditional community if not properly implemented in the social reality. Unlike this article, which was so extreme, the provisions concerning the residence (palemahan) and the traditional village autonomy were not. The area of Kuta traditional village is next to Tuban traditional village, Legian traditional village and to Pemogan traditional village. The residence of the Kuta traditional villagers was not well organized, based on the residing principle and proposals made by those who would like to stay there, as stated in the Perda of Desa Pekraman of Number 3 of Year 2001, Article 3, Clause (2) that those would like to be the village members (krama desa) are those who have fulfilled the terms and conditions arranged in the village rules and regulations (awig-awig). This means that those who are the village members (krama desa) are not only based on where they reside but also on the proposals made for that (by those who are already married). In other words, those who are the village members do not have to reside in that area, but they can also reside outside the area and vice versa. The provisions concerning the autonomy of a traditional village should be in accordance with Desa mawacara and desa, kala, patra (place, time and condition) and the enthusiasm of human rights and nationality within the Republic of Indonesia.

As a Tourist Village, Kuta traditional village has a long history with Chinese migrants. There has been a positive interaction between them which can be seen from mutual understanding and multiculturalism in the forms of religious and traditional rituals and cross marriages between them.

The socio-legal aspects of the application of the *Perda* of *Desa Pekraman* of Number 3 of Year 2001 were that Kuta traditional village and Tuban traditional village "claimed each other over the borderline" and that there was a concept of "badly

organized residence" (saling seluk). The commercial effect, as far as Kuta traditional village is concerned, is that it is a promising business area; therefore, a legal product should be created in such a way that the government does not only side with the bigscale entrepreneurs or "investors" (tebang pilih) but the local ones as well. The management of the beach, the local credit union (Lembaga Perkreditan Rakyat abbreviated as LPD) and the arts market, which have contributed a lot to the development carried out all over Kuta traditional village, should be provided to the local entrepreneurs. When election was performed for the Kuta traditional village head in 2008, the committee was inspired by the legal product which is in the form of Rules and Regulations of Number 34 of Year 2004 concerning the village government. As a consequence, the election was directly made by creating one voting place (Tempat Pemungutan Surata abbreviated as TPS) in every banjar (the smallest neighborhood under the village) all over Kuta traditional village as reflection of direct democracy at Kuta traditional village.

The socio-political effect, as far as the traditional village autonomy is concerned, is that the traditional village has indigenous autonomy instead of the "autonomy provided by the State " and this is referred to as the *ideological apparatus of the State* by Althusser. What is meant by the indigenous autonomy is that the village has its rights and authorities to organize itself without being interfered with by the government, which is in accordance with *Desa Mawacara* (place, time and condition) and agreements made at the village. From leadership point of view, as far as Kuta traditional village is concerned, those appointed leaders are not necessarily the elders (*tetua*). They should fulfill some terms and conditions. In the last election for the village head, a new value appeared in that the candidates should not have been members of any political parties in any level. A committee was also formally formed and several requirements were decided.

As far as the change from *desa adat* into *desa pekraman* is concerned, pro's and con's took place. The reason is that there was an assumption that the "*desa pekraman*" would be integrated into the "administrative village". However, Kuta traditional village still keeps the idea that a traditional village is different from an administrative village and that they cannot be integrated (the traditional village cannot be changed into the administrative village).

With regard to the socio-political dynamics taking place at Kuta traditional village, it has given dialogic meaning in that attempts were made to make the village dynamic in accordance with the local rules and regulations (*awig-awig*) and agreements made provided that the applicable rules and regulations were not broken.

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