

## The Resurgence of Regional Identity: Consideration of Populism in Bali, Indonesia

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### Abstract

Megawati Soekarno Putri, a leader of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P: Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan), has enjoyed immense popularity in Bali. While her father, Soekarno, was the first president and his mother being Balinese are contributing factors, we should not underestimate the rise of regionalism revealed by *Ajeg Bali* that spread across Bali after the collapse of the Soeharto regime (1966–98), in addition to her also being represented as a “Princess of Populism.” How was the high level of support for her and the PDI-P formed? How does it relate with the growing regionalism in the era of democracy? How have they influenced the local society? This paper attempts to explore these questions. Based on my extensive fieldwork, I analyze populism by linking current social problems in Bali. In sum, my paper argues that while most social issues have been attributed to outsiders such as migrants, the central government, and foreign investors, the increasing problems are actually ascribable to local Balinese, especially after democratization, whose conditions are made invisible by both populism and *Ajeg Bali*. This situation will certainly cause further negative impacts on the society.

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**Key words** : Bali, Indonesia, Populism, Ajeg Bali, Megawati

## Introduction

While the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P: Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan) is one of the country's most popular political parties, its popularity has been overwhelming in Bali, above all other areas. Despite the vital factors that the party head, Megawati Soekarno Putri, is the daughter of the Founding Father of Indonesia, Soekarno (1945–66), and that his mother was Balinese, we should not overlook the rise of regionalism shown by Ajeg Bali, which has penetrated Bali's entreaty after democratization. How was the support for Megawati and the PDI-P formed and have they influenced the local society? How does it relate with the growing regionalism? To explore these questions, first, it is important to consider and define the notion of populism. Second, we identify the feature of tourism development in Bali under the Soeharto regime (1966–98) to understand Megawati's popularity. Third, we examine local conditions by focusing on Ajeg Bali, accompanied by the liberalization of the press. Finally, we explore the impacts of the PDI-P and the growing Ajeg Bali on local politics and the society in the era of democracy.

### 1. Megawati, a “Princess of Populism”

Megawati and her party, the PDI-P, have enjoyed overwhelming popularity in Bali. While she is famous for collecting a wide audience throughout many Indonesian cities, the Balinese loyalty to her was demonstrated even in the riots, especially when she was criticized by other politicians. In addition, we should not overlook the fact that her appeal to people gave her the name

“Princess of Populism.” Then, what is populism? Why does this term still hold a negative image while it seems to be based on a popular sovereignty secured by nations and public akin to democracy? In the following, we discover what populism is, and the history of tourism development in Bali to deepen the understanding of her popularity there.

### **1.1. What is Populism?**

Populism is the term derived from the Latin term “populus,” meaning people. It holds a rather passive manner, being used in the sense of mobocracy and accommodating the wish of the public in which specific politicians, political methods of parties, their styles, and their inconsistent policies often become a focus of criticism. However, populism also assigns great values to people in the same way that democracy is composed of “demos” (people) and “kratein” (rule). If a policy proposed by a government based on a popular sovereignty is endorsed by nations and public opinion, it would be neither necessarily bad nor antidemocracy; however, the term populism still represents negative connotations. Then, what is populism?

In the international conference held at the London School of Economics in 1967, it was attempted to observe populism in a wide sphere regardless of developmental status or political regimes globally, to understand populism as a universal political phenomenon, and draw out a more general theory. Ionescu and Gellner, the editor of *Populism* (1969), which was published after the conference, raised six issues to identify populism as a unified phenomenon in the world.

First, one controversial issue was whether populism was primarily an ideology (ideologies), a movement (movements), or both. Second, populism was a sort of recurring mentality appearing in different historical and

geographic contexts as the result of a special social situation, one example being the situation of change faced by a society in which the middle social factors were either missing or too weak. Third, populism could be defined in terms of political psychology, with the element of political persecution mania being more acute in its political psychology. Fourth, its basic attitude was one of apprehension toward unknown outside forces, including colonial oppression and people with foreign roots, leading to a peculiar negativism like anticapitalistic, antiurban, xenophobic, and so on. Conversely, fifth, populism worshiped people. This “people,” however, differed from “demos” and “Herrenvolk” with great pride, but rather those who were meek and miserable in their countries. Finally, this recurring mentality disappeared usually by absorption into stronger ideologies or movements, such as socialism, nationalism, and peasantism (Ionescu & Gellner 1969: 1–4; Berlin et al. 1968: 168–169).

Above all, the concept of “people” is worthy of note as they do not exist in actuality; however, the phantasm of a “people” is invented (Eco 2007: 129–130). The members and their bounds change flexibly according to political, economic, and social conditions. They might be of certain ethnicities, local residents, or oppressed social classes. In other words, the definition of the people is given only after confirming a target for attacks. Consequently, the term populism is used to refer to a wide range of ideologies, movements, and leaders. Taggart phrases this incomplete and flexible populism as “chameleonic” (Taggart 2000: 5).

Based on the above discussion, in this paper, I define populism as an ideology (ideologies), a movement (movements), and sometimes both, which attempt to break an existing governance structure, confront assumed enemies to take back people’s original rights, worshiping those in a subordinate and

miserable capacity, and forming and emphasizing the dichotomy relations, which eventually disappear by absorption into stronger ideologies because of the inconsistent nature and the characteristics that require a common enemy.

This populism embodying “the public willingness” gains energy from the political psychology by appealing to the people’s sentiment, which leads to movements to recapture rights that originally belonged to them, regarding highly direct dialog and ties to nations. Then, populists have a tendency to value media that enables this. Concerning this matter, Eco appeals for the dangers of “mass media populism.” This means appealing to people directly through the media, as a politician who can master the media can shape political affairs outside the parliament and even eliminate the mediation of the parliament. Additionally, discussions on policy backed up by experts can be eroded, with the parliament becoming a rubber stamp for the agreement formed out of the parliament (The New York Times Magazine November 25, 2007; Eco op. cit.: 148).

### ***1.2. The Rise of Megawati and Balinese Culture***

The 1997 Asian economic crisis reached Indonesia, leading the Soeharto authoritarian regime that lasted for 32 years, collapsing in May 1998. Subsequently, the Indonesian government promoted reformasi (reformation) under the process of democratization, implementing anticorruption, refusing military intervention in political and administrative affairs, free elections, and freedom of expression. As a part of the policies, decentralization was also carried out, whose framework encompassed transferring the most competent and financial resources from the central government to regional ones, strengthening regional councils on the appointment and dismissal of the local leaders, and shifting the vertical relations between the center and the regions

to a more horizontal relations. This decentralization allowed local governments and residents to expand the freedom of decision-making at the local level, leading to revivals of social order based on indigenous culture (Davidson & Henley 2007).

In Bali, local regulations to strengthen the autonomy were also established. Above all, the decree of Bali Province Local Regulation No. 3, 2001 on Desa Pakraman (customary village) (Peraturan Daerah Propinsi Bali No. 3 Tahun 2001 tentang Desa Pakraman) led the authority of customary villages to be enhanced, with their regional characteristics being reinforced with *desa adat*, which has an Arabic origin and was installed in the Dutch colonial era, being renamed *desa pakraman*, a word of Sanskrit origin, which contributed to reinforcing Balinese culture and identities.

Conversely, Bali remains in a weak political and economic position in Indonesia. Even after the regime shift, it is evident that the majority voice insists that the Balinese have not fully enjoyed the benefits of tourism. Concerning Indonesian society, Megawati has appealed that only a limited number of people enjoy the benefits, while most have been excluded. While she criticized liberal democracy as it would not affect social justice, she emphasized the commitment to *wong cilik* (little people) and the importance of communities, referring to “Marhaenisme,” a term coined by Soekarno (Aspinall 2010). As political corruption has been critical even in the era of democracy, she has gained overwhelming support.

Although Megawati was elected as a member of parliament for the first time in the 1987 election, she soon made an important contribution to the general election in 1992 through the development of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), the predecessor of the PDI-P as well as the lineal descendant of the old Nationalist Party (PNI) that had maintained strong support in Bali. In addition,

she mobilized hundreds of thousands of people in regional cities such as Jogjakarta, Medan, and Surabaya in the general elections in 1987 and 1992, drawing an audience of a million in Jakarta. In 1993, she was elected as the president of the PDI, despite repeated obstruction tactics from the Soeharto authoritarian regime.

The overwhelming popularity of Megawati among the Balinese can also be seen in the general election in 1999. While the rate of votes obtained by the PDI-P in the other provinces represented less than 45%, it reached about 80% in Bali (Ananta et al. 2004: 252, 263). Moreover, as the increasing expectation in Bali was that Megawati would become the president after Soeharto, her failure in the presidential election led to social conflicts, with the city function in Denpasar being paralyzed, main roads blocked with fallen trees, and public properties including a police station suffering damage by arson<sup>1</sup>. Despite the rate of votes being less than that in 1999, the PDI-P still gained a higher rate of votes than any other political party, recording 51% and 35% in the general elections in 2004 and 2009, respectively (Bali Post April 11, 2011).

Then, what has caused Megawati's great popularity in Bali? First, the facts that her father, Soekarno, was the first president in Indonesia, and that his mother was Balinese are contributing factors. As noted previously, "Marhaenism" is the idea of Soekarno, formed after meeting with a poor farmer, Marhaen, when he was 20 years old. However, poor wong cilik, including farmers, workers, traders, and sailormen, who constitute the major part of the Indonesian society, worked hard and quietly; this was considered a model of socialism found under the long-lasting colonial rule (Hasegawa 2009: 1135). Megawati tried to evoke feelings for Soekarno in the people's minds by referring to Marhaenism, her dedication appealing to the people (Ziv 2001: 75). Her tragedy, starting from the downfall of Soekarno after the September

30 Movement, lasted until the July 27, 1996 incident<sup>2)</sup>. In the process, words such as “endurance” and “resistance” were often used to represent Megawati herself, which consolidated her position as a populist based on the antiSoeharto regime (ibid: 76).

In addition, it can be noted that Balinese society has a shared crisis consciousness historically, as religion or Bali Hinduism is a minority across the nation at large. In Indonesia, with Muslims accounting for about 90% of the population, the position of a Bali Hindu has possessed a lower status; in fact, it had not been recognized officially as a religion by the government since the beginning of the 1950s. The depth of the issue is demonstrated by the following incidents: Balinese religious reform in the 1950s; large recurring disputes concerning Besakih nomination as a world heritage site in the 1990s (Hitchcock & Darma Putra 2007: 95–106); and the 1998 riots followed by the statement of A.M. Saefuddin, a former Minister of Food and Horticulture, that Megawati was unsuitable as a presidential candidate because she worshiped publicly at a Hindu temple (Tempo October 26, 1998).

Finally, it should not be ignored that Megawati played an important role in widening as well as formulating the role and activity of *pecalang* (or *pacalang*)<sup>3)</sup>, a traditional police force at the local level. In the founding congress of the PDI-P in Sanur, October 1998, the PDI-P appointed *pecalang* dressed in traditional clothes as its own security guard, concerned that the existing armed forces were capable of causing riots. After this event came to a safe end, *pecalang*, with the original role of keeping security in religious events and farmland, began participating in the larger society. In 2001, it was recognized legally as a security force in the local area by Bali Province Local Regulation No. 3, 2001 on *Desa Pakraman* (Merta 2013: 66).

### ***1.3. Plight and Hope of Megawati and Bali***

As seen above, the ideology and policy of populists tend to change flexibly depending on the context. Then, we need to focus on the historical background of each area to understand the policy, suggestions, and characteristics of populists. The following presents the relationship between the central government and Bali concerning the tourism development during the Soeharto era to deepen the understanding of the Megawati's popularity.

Assuming presidency, Soeharto transitioned from a socialist economy system, which had been promoted and failed under the Soekarno regime, to capitalism, emphasizing that the new national challenge was economic development. In the five-year plan in 1969 launched by the Indonesian Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS: Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional), tourism development was designated as a key industry, being expected to boost employment and welcome foreign currency. As Bali had enjoyed popularity among foreign tourists from the Dutch colonial era, it was appointed as an international tourism development area. As the background, we can raise the fact that the Indonesian government needed to break away from an oil-dependent economy after the sharp falls in oil prices in 1982 and 1986, leading the government to accelerate international tourism as an alternative to obtain foreign currency. Then, in addition to the exemption of tourist visas, various measures were implemented to boost tourism, encompassing the easing of regulations on investing abroad and trading, and network expansion and installation of the latest airplane model of Garuda Indonesian airlines (Picard 1996: 54, 55).

Moreover, in the 1980s, the government permitted easier access to private companies in the banking sector, while other state monopolies including telecommunications, TV broadcasting, power generation, road building, and

public works were also removed. However, this acceleration of liberalization was extremely limited. Under the Soeharto authoritarian regime, the government, with all permits in hand, propped up particular companies and implemented an economic policy that favored them. In this process, the political and economic oligarchy—represented by the Soeharto family business, Chinese conglomerates, and crony businesses—built enormous private assets and formed economic power to exert political influence (Hadiz & Robison 2010: 220–225)<sup>4</sup>.

Then, what was the actual condition in Bali? Although Bali has become the most popular international tourism site in Indonesia, it is often asserted that Bali has faced more harmful effects than benefits from development. One key reason was that it was not Balinese but the central government and its cronies that promoted the developmental projects, forming the structure under which most benefits flow out to Jakarta, which is shown by the critic Aditjondro “Bali, Jakarta’s colony” (Aditjondro 1995). While the master plan for tourism development was formed by SCETO, the French consulting company, with the recommendation of the World Bank and the financial support of the United Nations Development Programme in 1971, little consideration for locals was shown<sup>5</sup>. This is evident from the fact that only a few advisors from Bali were involved in the plan-making process, and neither socialists nor anthropologists attended (Picard 1996: 46).

The development project at Nusa Dua based on the master plan was promoted under the Bali Tourism Development Centre, buying up lots at Nusa Dua, leading as much as hundreds of billions of rupiah flowing to the central government, leaving only a certain percent of revenue in Bali, which was mainly hotel and restaurant tax paid to the regency of Badung (Bali Post July 8, 2000). Moreover, it was the four Soeharto children who enjoyed a virtual

monopoly on the major tourism industry, holding Lombok Ferry, Bali International Convention Centre, Bali Golf Country Club, and most foreign luxury hotels. The Soeharto family is estimated to have accumulated \$2.2 billion through the hotel and tourism business over 30 years (Time Asia May 24, 1999).

Not only the Soeharto family but talented investors from Jakarta also benefited from tourism in Bali. In the 1990s, under the former governor, Ida Bagus Oka (1988–98), 15 areas were designated as new tourism development zones. As shown by the mock Mr. OK, he worked diligently to attract investments from Jakarta, leading to the rising voice of concern on haphazard exploitation and detrimental influence on local culture and nature. For example, the development project of Garuda Wisnu Kencana Cultural Park in Jimbaran was criticized as a symbol of overdevelopment, with its opening being postponed several times because of financial difficulties. In Tabanan, the Bali Nirwana Resort development, launched with the finance of the Bakrie Group, generated strong protests in terms of religious ethics. Under the authoritarian regime, however, the negative voices were drowned out and settled by the central government with the military (Picard 1996: 190–195; Shulte Nordholt *op. cit.*: 8, 9). Moreover, in Denpasar, the Bali Turtle Island development also aroused criticism as it destroyed biodiversity, including vast areas of mangrove forest and coral reefs, due to the reclamation, which even sacrificed fishermen's lives, destroying their living environment (Lewis & Lewis 2009: 43).

According to the Bali Post, while more than 1,200 hotels, 90 restaurants, and 371 travel agents were run in 2003, with these assets being estimated at Rp. 150 trillion, about 85% was owned by investors external to Bali (Bali Post June 2, 2004). Because of this developmental process, local people have

suffered from a sense of crisis and built up frustration against the central government, migrants, and nonBalinese investors.

## 2. Indonesian Democratization and Liberalization of the Media

After the Soeharto regime collapsed in 1998, democratization was promoted very rapidly in Indonesia. In Bali, frustration and a sense of crisis against the central government, investors, migrants, and even international tourists—which had been rising during the authoritarian era—increased along with the rising regionalism. Simultaneously, the political involvement of local communities and civil societies that emphasized Balinese tradition, culture, and identity was expanded. The Bali Post Group clearly played a key role in such a movement. Now, we focus on the Bali Post and its campaign, *Ajeg Bali*, to ascertain how the Balinese identity was strengthened and revived through the media liberalization in the era of democracy.

### 2.1. *Ajeg Bali Launched by the Bali Post*

In June 1998, the censorship practiced by the Ministry of Information vanished, enabling citizens to criticize the government and other developments promoted under the authoritarian regime more openly. The abolishment of information control allowed Balinese media companies to conduct surveys of international tourists in Bali as well as discuss the topic freely<sup>6)</sup>, which enabled the Bali Post Group to develop its influence on the island. Satria Naradha, a son of Ketut Nadha who founded the Bali Post, succeeded in financially building the business group, expanding the media business throughout Bali, and entering electron, mobile phone, and educational promotions for minor businesses (Ida 2011: 19–21).

Naradha launched Ajeg Bali in May 2002. Ajeg means “strong” and “upright”; Ajeg Bali is the movement to restore and strengthen Balinese identity or Balineseness (Kebalian), which is the basis of Balinese traditions and values. The Bali Post Group actively reports on the uniqueness and significance of Balinese culture. At the beginning of the movement, concerns existed that the influx of Muslims and mass consumerism associated with globalization might cause negative influences on the local society, which historically highly values communality, as well as the fear that migrants and tourists would make the local identity more fragile. Thus, Ajeg Bali started with criticizing and doing away with the negative effects of tourism by regarding it as evil. According to Macrae and Darma Putra, however, like populism, Ajeg Bali itself does not have a clear definition, while penetrating deeply into the society (Macrae & Darma Putra op. cit.: 177). This is shown by the fact that the subjects of criticism from Ajeg Bali vary widely from the central government to investors from outside Bali, foreign tourists, migrants, and globalization, depending on the context.

Moreover, we should not forget that this identity as Balinese was formed in the Dutch colonial era through interactions with westerners and others from the island. In fact, it was not until the 1910s when the Dutch cultural policy of Baliseering (Balinization) was promoted, as well as the 1920s when deep friendships between local elites and western artists were made, that local people started to form an identity as Balinese, with a consciousness of their unique ethnicity by rediscovering their original customs, values, and uniqueness. In the process of entrenching and institutionalization of the caste system under colonial rule, ideas such as religion, custom, culture, and art that had not existed in the Balinese were introduced, and became part of their fundamental identity by borrowing from foreign terms like Sanskrit, Arabic,

and Dutch (Picard 2009: 114–117). This Balineseness, the core of its identity, had been preserved and re-established from the Dutch colonial era to the Soeharto era through tourism, which has been re-enhanced in the era of local autonomy.

## ***2.2. Rising Ajeg Bali and Its Contradiction***

On October 12, 2002, the Bali bombings occurred in Denpasar and Kuta, increasing the pressure from the local community to migrants. While the blast near the US Consulate General in Denpasar was relatively small, the blasts at the Sari Club and Paddy's Pub in Kuta recorded 202 victims. Subsequently, the number of tourists dropped sharply from 5,000–6,000 to 600 per day. In Nusa Dua, the room occupancy rate decreased dramatically from 80% to less than 10% (Bali Travel News December 13–26, 2002; January 10–23, 2003; November 15–28, 2002). In addition, a wide variety of professionals, including taxi drivers, industrial artists of painting, sculpture, and silver accessories, and gift shop clerks, were affected because most tourist sites dismissed staff, and switched to short-term contracts. More than 30,000 people were estimated to have lost their jobs in Bali at the time (International Crisis Group (ICG) 2003: 9).

The incidents were far away from areas with Balinese properties such as Hindu temples. Moreover, as there were no local victims, with most being foreigners from Australia and the UK, it was clear that the Balinese were not the target. Then, no severe retribution attacks were carried out, but rather the Balinese actively and openly held ritual ceremonies for peace. The pressure on migrant workers, however, increased. While they used to be criticized for security concerns, environmental deterioration, and overpopulation, now they needed to face another pressure: employment problems. After the 2002

bombings, the provincial government ordered *pecalang* to check the ID cards of migrants<sup>7)</sup>. In addition to the exclusion order, it imposed fines from Rp. 50,000 to Rp. 100,000 against the violators. Though the amount was as much as a few days' pay, street vendors, most of whom were migrants, needed to pay not to lose their customers in villages (ibid: 8). Not only *pecalang* but Forum Peduli Denpasar, a gang based in Denpasar, was also involved actively in security enforcement. Consequently, about 8,000 migrants returned to their homes in Java in early November 2002 (Kompas December 4, 2002). While other issues such as the Iraq War and severe acute respiratory syndrome also affected the tourism sector, the Bali Post emphasized *Ajeg Bali*. In its 55th anniversary seminar in 2003 "Strategi Menuju Ajeg Bali (Strategy toward a strong and everlasting Bali)," it emphasized the cultural renaissance, declaring that Balinese also had a responsibility of leading these issues as they pursued too much consumerism, commercialism, and commodification in globalization, with less care for religion, tradition, and culture (Picard 2009: 112, 113).

The tourism sector in Bali showed signs of revival from 2006, which caused migrants to influx into Bali again. According to the 2008 survey, although the total population in Bali was about 3.6 million, it was estimated to have grown to about 4 million in 2010 mainly due to an increase in migrants (Kompas May 30, 2012). Especially in Badung and Denpasar, the center of tourist facilities like restaurants and hotels, about 75% of population growth is estimated to be due this influx (Bali Post April, 2011). Though arguments have been made for the need to build a system to control migrants by counting the number and assessing their current living conditions, Bali has depended strongly on the workforce and capital of migrants not only for tourism but also for various other sectors concerning the basis of its livelihood.

### 3. Consolidation and Disassociation through the Enhancement of Identity

Populism and Ajeg Bali are similar in showing exclusive attitudes valuing specific but ambiguous categories of people as ethnic. After the bombings, Ajeg Bali was emphasized throughout the island for tourism, environment, and cultural preservation. Above all, political activity including election campaigns has become one of the best places to appeal it. How has the increasing regionalism displayed by Ajeg Bali and the high expectation of Megawati affected local politics in Bali? Has it enabled the reinforcement of Balinese rights? What impacts have been made to the local society? We explore these questions in the following section.

#### *3.1. Reinforcement of the Local Identity and Empowered Preman*

As seen already, Bali had not achieved a position to take control of tourism development even after democratization. In 2004, the Megawati regime (2001–04) established new laws on decentralization (Law of 2004 No. 32 and No. 33), replacing two former laws in 1999 to deepen democracy, whose feature is the introduction of direct election. Subsequently, in Bali, political candidates can no longer depreciate the drawing power of traditional organizations like banjar (the Balinese smallest hamlet), temple, and subak (irrigation association). Concurrently, Ajeg Bali became a keyword in any field in economy, culture, and politics, with the extension of local power being ensured by law.

Then, it is natural that politicians value the Bali Post Group because it is not only the biggest local media company but also an advocator of Ajeg Bali. Major political candidates never miss their visits to Bali TV—a Bali Post Group-owned station—and are welcomed by Naradha, whose scenes are broadcasted

widely throughout Bali<sup>8)</sup> (Macrae & Darma Putra 2007: 175). While every local political candidate supports Ajeg Bali, having relatives from Bali gives Megawati a huge advantage in attracting great support. In addition, her image as a symbol of anti-Soeharto overlaps with tourism development in Bali that has not sufficiently experienced the benefit, despite the enormous hard work to preserve culture and to implement ritual ceremonies to attract tourists, but has rather suffered more from the negative effects. These facts are the main reasons why the PDI-P gained a considerably higher share of the vote in Bali than any other province while achieving a crushing victory in the 1999 general election.

Following this election, the PDI-P became the party in power. It should not be overlooked that its administrative structure was based on the network of the Golkar Party built in the Soeharto era, as the PDI-P with poor administrative experience struggled to utilize the administrative agencies. Then, preman (local gangs) helped with running the administration, which led to building close relationships between the political party and preman. For example, in Tabanan or the PDI-P stronghold, since Adi Wiryatama was elected as the district head, the PDI-P sought to consolidate its position by working with preman. In 2004, although an incident occurred in which preman attacked Golkar members, the criminal suspect was released following the intervention of the district head. In addition, in the 2009 congressional election, it was the only country in which a political candidate from the PDI-P was elected with gaining a vote of 100%, while there were about 25% invalid votes in any other country in Tabanan, which was based on the merit of the local preman groups that was closely related to the head of the country. In return for the work, members of preman group such as Tabanan Communication Forum (Forum Komunikasi Tabanan) gained financial backing

to be elected as village chiefs who could control the budget allocation (Wilson 2010: 206). Thus, the rise of the PDI-P led to an increase and expansion of the local preman's power.

### ***3.2. 2003 Gubernatorial Election and the Bali Post***

While both the PDI-P and Ajeg Bali expanded their power after democratization, serious concerns about the relationships between politicians and the Bali Post were revealed in the 2003 election in which Cokorda Ratmadi and Dewa Made Beratha were placed as candidates from the PDI-P and Golkar, respectively. Saliently, the PDI-P headquarters hoped that Made Beratha would be re-elected, whereas the branch of Bali backed Cokorda Ratmadi. As Made Beratha has a successful track record in contributing to the party convention in 1998, the party increased the expectation that he affirmed loyalty to Megawati. In addition, it was necessary for Megawati to secure the support of Golkar by pushing for Made Beratha because she needed to broaden the constituency for the upcoming presidential election in 2004. The rumor that the headquarters would not recommend Cokorda Ratmadi spread in Bali in May, causing the local political group to panic. Though they reached an agreement to support both Made Beratha and Cokorda Ratmadi for the interim, the party headquarters urged to vote for Made Beratha, and Megawati led Cokorda Ratmadi to express his intention to step down. Though riots occurred in Bali against a series of pressure, Cokorda Ratmadi withdrew his candidacy at the end of July (Bali Post July 30, 2003; Shulte Nordholt op. cit.: 62, 63).

Notably, the Bali Post played a key role in reconciling to solve this issue. It did not emphasize his resignation, but rather stated that Cokorda Ratmadi was the "Hero of Ajeg Bali (Sang Phalawan Ajeg Bali)," meaning that Cokorda

Ratmadi gave preference to higher public goals over private benefit. Moreover, Naradha held a ceremony on August 2, in which an amicable relationship between Satria and Made Beratha was highlighted as well as confirming that every political party supported Ajeg Bali. This event was broadcasted by Bali TV and made the front page of the Bali Post on the following day (Bali Post August 3, 2003). Though some local supporters protested against Made Beratha, no huge riots occurred. Consequently, he was re-elected as the provincial governor, which the Bali Post broadcasted as “the victory of Ajeg Bali.”

While other media companies broadcasted bribery allegations of PDI-P members on the election, provincial assembly members denied the bribery (Bali Post June 20, 2003). When two PDI-P members admitted that they received Rp. 50 million from the headquarters in addition to another Rp. 100 million, which was to be remitted after the election, Bali Corruption Watch and Pemuda Hindu Bali emphasized the importance of further research. The Bali Post Group, however, did not mention anything and the court declined the appeal. The inaugural ceremony of Made Beratha was held on August 28, 2003 safely, with the tight security of the police, the army, and the security group of the PDI-P (Shulte Nordholt 2007: 63, 64).

Why did the Bali Post Group broadcast this event almost in favor of Made Beratha? According to Shulte Nordholt, as Bali TV had opened before 2002 when a new law on broadcasting was passed, it needed to prevent being closed because of its illegality (ibid: 63). Not only the Bali Post Group, but other media companies in Indonesia also maintain close relationships with particular political parties and entrepreneurs; then, readers must have critical views when reading issues, especially concerning local conflicts.

## Conclusion

Tourism development based on predatory practice with the “national consensus” in the Soeharto era was expected to be replaced by a sustainable practice reflecting local will in the era of democracy. However, Bali has not been able to control its tourism sector, rather depending more deeply on investors and workers from outside. The fact that Megawati’s root is Bali and that Bali was in a weak position during the Soeharto era overlaps the Balinese plight. Moreover, the Ajeg Bali–advocated media company has boosted this momentum. The view based on dichotomy and exclusive characteristics is common to populism and Ajeg Bali, which grew in the local society, and has played a key role in increasing anxiety against outsiders and changing Bali.

Clearly, however, tourism in Bali can no longer exist or hold space for economic growth without actors such as migrant workers and investors. Saliently, increasing cases can be observed in which the Balinese themselves contribute to social unrest by expanding destabilization, and increasing corruption after democratization. Though migrant workers have been criticized in Bali as they can contribute to the social issues over a prolonged period, security issues have become increasingly grave following democratization when the local authorities have been secured. Clearly, both populism and Ajeg Bali have a functional role in making the actual conditions invisible by seeking targets of criticism outside, which prevent fundamental problems from being solved. How much can they achieve their promised ideals by pursuing the subject of criticism from outside? Can the Balinese meet the objectives without self-critical attitudes but by valuing their “traditional culture”? An increase of populism and Ajeg Bali will cause further risks and aggravate social issues by obscuring the underlying causes of problems. While

more than 20 years have passed since democratization, Bali is in a phase to demonstrate the real value of democracy.

### The Notes

- 1) In the elections in June 1999, while the PDI-P's share of the vote rose from 3.5% to 79.5%, Golkar fell from 93.5% to 10.5% in Bali. In addition, the strong support toward Megawati led to riots when Abdurrahman Wahid, instead of Megawati, was elected as the President of Indonesia. Especially in Singaraja and Denpasar, many government facilities were set on fire, while the residences of the Golkar districts heads were also attacked. These insurgencies ended as soon as Megawati was chosen as the vice-president on October 21 (Schulte Nordholt op. cit.: 14–17).
- 2) The military and police burst into the headquarters of the PDI and forced the supporters of Megawati, a symbol of antiSoeharto. In this event, five died, 149 sustained minor and serious injuries, and 23 were missing, with the material losses amounting to more than Rp. 100 billion (Kompas.com July 27, 2019).
- 3) Pecalang can be found not only in Bali but also in other areas in Indonesia, such as West Java, Central Java, and Mataram in West Nusa Tenggara. The original pecalang in Bali is thought to have appeared around the 9th to 10th century; however, as the existing credible data are very limited, it is difficult to demonstrate the history of pecalang (Merta op. cit.: 28, 45, 51–65).
- 4) David Harvey, one of the most famous analyzers of neoliberalism, raised the Salim group when discussing neoliberalism and class formation. According to Harvey, neoliberalism is a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedom and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. There has ubiquitously been an emphatic turn towards neoliberalism in political-economic practices and thinking since the 1970s, with the governments promoting deregulation, privatization, and withdrawal of the state (Harvey 2005: 2, 3, 34). In Indonesia, however, it was not until the country accepted IMF demands after the Asian economy crisis that the neoliberal reform proceeded. In the Soeharto era, powerful business conglomerates, such as the Salim group, succeeded in accumulating tremendous wealth because the authoritarian rule intervened and supported them (Hadiz & Robison op. cit.: 221).
- 5) The master plan drawn by SCETO provides a description of the ill effects caused by tourists on Balinese culture (SCETO 1971: 17). This was not because it was concerned

- about the impact of development on local societies in terms of local life and economy, but rather an effort to protect the Balinese image of exotic traditional culture in response to increasing other international tourist sites.
- 6) Interview with a former editor of Bali Travel News, a Bali Post Group company (March 30, 2010).
  - 7) The 2003 Memorandum of Understanding No. 153 among the Governor and District Heads in Bali on Implementing Orderly Population Administration (Kesepakatan Bersama Gubernur Bali dengan Bupati/Walikota Se-Bali Nomor 153 Tahun 2003 tentang Pelaksanaan Tertib Administrasi Kependudukan di Propinsi Bali) provides for a payment of Rp. 50,000 to obtain KIPEM (the temporary residency card) and postponing it every 6 months since the issuance and extension fee used to vary from place to place. In addition, even some Balinese who were originally from other villages were obliged to pay the fee. In customary villages, the prerequisite for being an official member is not to live in the area, but to carry out ritual ceremonies, such as ancestral ritual and funerary rites, having a father as a village member. This difference is also shown by these words, “Krama Ngarep” (local residents) and “Krama Tamiu” (nonlocal) (Nagano 2009: 153, 154). As this situation led to an increasing need to establish a common rule on KIPEM for Balinese, it was determined to charge Rp. 5,000 from them, with an obligation to extend it every half year (ICG op. cit.: 10).
  - 8) For example, in the 2004 presidential election, while Megawati and her supporters emphasized local society based on Ajeg Bali with appealing that her root is Bali, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Jusuf Kalla, the presidential and vice-presidential candidates, also adopted Ajeg Bali for the election campaign.

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