
DECENTRALIZATION IN INDONESIA: FROM REFORMATION TO THE LOCAL REGIME

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Abstract. *In post-democratic development, decentralization is considered as a way to realize both economic and social equality. This is stated in the Indonesian constitution and is the aim of ongoing reforms. In line with the many post-reformation divisions of the new autonomous regions, it transpired that there were many problems regarding the strengthening of local centralization, which identified local regimes in these new autonomous regions. This study focuses on how the segregation that occurs within regional autonomy leads to an arena of power for the local regime in producing local power, and has even been made the symbol of families and groups. This symbol of power has regenerated from the beginnings of the post-reform period until the simultaneous regional elections in 2020. This research uses a case study approach to assess three new autonomous regions after the reformation: the Riau Islands, South Sumatra, and Banten. A comparison of the power arena model is conducted in each region, and these findings explain how the strengthening of the local regime is regenerated through various forms of power. This research is also able to reveal that regional expansion is a contestation arena for the perpetuation of local regimes in several regions in Indonesia, and to explain this phenomenon.*

Keywords: *decentralization; new autonomous regions; arenas of power; local regime.*

Reikšminiai žodžiai: *decentralizavimas; nauji autonominiai regionai; valdžios stiprėjimas; vietos režimas.*

Introduction

Twenty-five years ago, on May 21, 1998, President Soeharto announced his resignation at the State Palace. This resignation paved the way for the democratization process in Indonesia because, previously, large demonstrations demanding a change in the fundamentals had occurred continuously since 1996. The change towards democracy in Indonesia is considered a positive development by non-profit research institutions, state officials, and even several scholars from both within and outside the country. Diamond (2008), for example, explained that Indonesia is one of the few countries that has democratized and developed a strong democratic regime even in the midst of a wave of significant problems and challenges: “Some new democracies are holding their own (like Mali) and even making progress (like Brazil and Indonesia) in the face of enormous accumulated problems and challenges.” Two years after the resignation of Soeharto, Freedom House (2010) published a report stating that Indonesia is the only country in Southeast Asia that is categorized as “free.”

The praise of the international community was well earned: from 1994 to 2010, Indonesia held three legislative elections (in 1999, 2004, and 2009) and two direct presidential and vice-presidential elections (in 2004 and 2009) that were considered democratic, along with holding hundreds of regional head elections since mid-2005 (Pilkada). Furthermore, the press is becoming more open, and it is becoming easier for the public to establish organizations or political parties, so the growth of citizens’ political participation is becoming autonomous.

However, after receiving praise from the international community, Indonesian democracy has unfortunately stagnated, and has even regressed (Aspinall and Berenschot 2019; Aspinall and van Klinken 2011; Aspinall et al. 2015; Liddle 2014; Power and Warburton 2021; Tomsa 2010). This reversion has most likely been caused by a combination of factors, including corruption, destructive political polarization, the cartelization of political parties, the marginalization of minority groups, intolerant behavior, and the strengthening of hate speech and hoaxes (Aspinall and Berenschot 2019; Aspinall et al. 2015; Power and Warburton 2021).

In addition, local elections and the implementation of decentralization have also experienced a regression that has led to new elites in local regimes (Berenschot et al. 2021). This occurs not only at the provincial and district/city levels; it is also surprisingly prevalent at the village level. At this level, local regimes and elites were born and developed in the decentralized time of the reformation era. Other things that emerged from post-reform decentralization in Indonesia include the strengthening of the fragmentation of local power,

producing social and economic gaps, inequality, political dynasties, violence and fear, all of which compete in an arena of power and the struggle for capital accumulation (Lucas 2016; Tadjoeddin et al. 2015; van Klinken 2007; Diprose et al. 2019).

Based on the process mentioned above, this article portrays the progress of decentralization in Indonesia in the post-new order democratic process. Without claiming to be fully comprehensive, this research will discuss how decentralization produced a clientalistic local power arena in which each region is part of a patron-client model based on a monopoly over resources. The article will also consider de-democratization in Indonesia, starting from the elite capture activities that occurred in various regions and discussing the construction of local regimes that rule over their territories through post-reformation decentralization (Berenschot 2018; Lucas 2016). This article will begin with a conceptual discussion of decentralization (which turns out to be two-faced). Research methods will then be presented, followed by a discussion on decentralization in the reformation era. The paper concludes with an analysis of decentralization and democratic regression at the local level. In this article, the authors also discuss the issue of Pilkada and the formation of new autonomous regions (*Daerah Otonomi Baru/DOB*), which are an integral part of the decentralization project in Indonesia.

1. Literature Review

Decentralization as a political practice is in great demand in a nation that has long been entangled in the frightening centralization of power, both authoritarian and dictatorial. Not only in the context of practice, but also conceptually, decentralization is seen as a way out for a geographically large country to increase governmental accountability and effectiveness in serving the public. Decentralization is also seen as an attempt to achieve “increased participation by ethnic minorities and social groups excluded under semi-democratic and authoritarian rule” (Willis et al. 1999, 7). Confirming the previous statement and citing the case of the East Asia Region, White and Smoke (2005) stated that decentralization has provided space for the majority of the development in this area: “Before 1990, most East Asian countries were highly centralized; today, subnational governments have emerged as the fulcrum for much of the region’s development (...) though East Asia’s decentralization has come later than in some other parts of the world, it is now here to stay.”

It can be concluded that decentralization has an effect on openness, accountability, wider participation, and development (on a large scale), which leads to democratization at the local level. As stated by Cheema and Rondinelli (2007, 1), decentralization is defined as “the transfer of authority, responsibility, and resources – through deconcentration, delegation, or devolution – from the center to lower levels of administration.” Cheema and Rondinelli’s perspective is echoed by Selee (2011, 13), who observed that decentralization is “the increase in subnational governments’ authority over functions, powers, and resources

and in their autonomy in decision making relative to the national government.”

Therefore, it is not surprising that since the beginning of the reformation the government of Indonesia has implemented a decentralization policy that is conceptually full of advantages. This implementation was even appreciated by USAID (2000, 17), who noted that “Indonesia is moving rapidly from years of tight central control to a far more decentralized and autonomous system of local government.” According to a USAID report, decentralization has created a basis for more democratic central and local government that is accountable, reliable, and effective. Indonesia’s decentralization is also viewed positively by the World Bank through its study agency, the Consultative Group on Indonesia (CGI) (in Hadiz 2010, 20), which stated that the implementation of decentralization is “crucial for Indonesia as a nation,” and represents an important step in the democratization process in the country.

The essence of the institutionalization of decentralization in Indonesia is oriented towards efforts to reduce the authoritarian concentration of power (as happened in the new order era) through the delegation of authority to regional power (governments) in order to create a democratic government. This step is also a response to the geographical context of Indonesia, which is composed of large islands, as well as an answer to the very diverse ethnolinguistic conditions in the country. Unfortunately, however, the dream of a more democratic future is slowly fading away. This is because decentralization actually encourages the rise of local traditions and customs, and fosters the emergence and consolidation of regional patronage networks that often increase rents and are very predatory (Hadiz 2010; Agustino 2010; Aspinall and Berenschot 2019; Nordholt and van Klinken 2007) – as is often the case in countries emerging from centralized authoritarianism (Arghiros 2001; Lacaba 1995; McCargo 2007). Put differently, decentralization in Indonesia has contributed to unforeseen problems or unthinkable consequences, many of which are discussed in this article.

The benefits of the openness of the decentralization era in Indonesia were unfortunately taken over by the local regime power model, as illustrated in Figure 1. The post-Soeharto era was originally intended to foster open access to freedom, with electoral democracy as a tool creating these ideals. In some cases in certain regions, as discussed by several studies (Lucas 2016; Dau 2022), there was in fact a kind of takeover of the idea of democracy at the regional level in Indonesia (Mas’oed and Savirani 2011; Muhtadi 2019; Tadjoeddin et al. 2015). The failure to re-consolidate the goals of democracy and strengthen the ideas of economic liberalization has had a direct impact on the activities of electoral democracy, which provides full autonomy to every region in Indonesia.

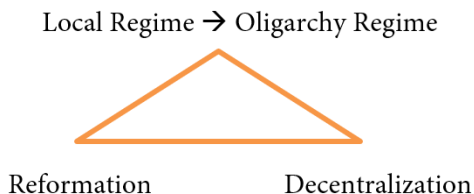


Figure 1. Decentralization Dialectic in Indonesia
(Source: compiled by the authors)

2. Materials and Methods

This research combines case studies with comparisons from several regions that held simultaneous regional elections in 2020. The methodology of this research tries to elaborate on the comparative politics approach of several subnational political studies in Indonesia. By referring to some of the results achieved when applying comparative politics to a national comparative model (Kitschelt 2000; Kitschelt et al. 2009; Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2006), this comparative model, in seeing how the local regime meets the arena of clientalism that occurred during the era of decentralization in Indonesia, allows researchers to dig deeper. This approach also reflects the idea that the emergence and formation of local regimes in the post-Reformation era cannot be separated from the regional expansion model, which was initially oriented towards autonomous regions (DOB) and the local regime that already existed.

The areas chosen for case studies were the Riau Islands, South Sumatra and Banten after the Reformation. The third pillar of this research involves seeking to obtain a detailed and in-depth picture related to the case being studied, and this process is occurring elsewhere in Indonesia as this paper is written. A collective case study involves examining more than one case related to the local regime in the three regions, each of which have their own characteristics, all of which have seen regeneration, and all of which still experience various forms of power imbalance. This case study illustrates that the reform era, by providing space for decentralization with efforts to realize social and economic justice in accordance with the constitution, actually opened up space for strengthening local centralization, which became the identity of the local regime in the newly developing region.

The comparison carried out by the researchers provides an overview of the existence of local regimes that were regenerated with the birth of reform, where the three selected regions provide an illustration of the strengthening of local regimes but display different forms along the way. Data collection was carried out using secondary data through literature, including journals, news media, and state documents such as regulations and reports

related to this research. The data that was obtained was then reduced to in order to select and focus attention on the research being carried out.

Therefore, several aspects of decentralization in the reformation era are explained, with decentralization viewed as a new arena of power in the formation of new autonomous regions (DOB). Furthermore, the notion of decentralization and democratic regression at the local level provides some data on the formation of local regimes with various patterns, including the presence of political dynasties, as shown in Table 1. Research on the emergence of local regimes in the decentralization era explains how decentralization and regional expansion are regenerating power arenas in local regimes. The conclusions of this study are presented alongside a final overview of the issue.

Table 1. *Comparison Each Region*

Positioning	Riau	South Sumatra	Banten
Title	Province	Province	Province
Wealth	Natural Resources	Natural Resources	Natural Resources
Number of Region	12	16	8
Ultimate Problems	Family Dynasty	Family Dynasties	Family Dynasties

(Sources: compiled by the authors)

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Decentralization in the Reformation Era

The administration of President B. J. Habibie formulated Law No. 22 of 1999 concerning Regional Government (UU Pemda) together with the Ministry of Home Affairs and parliament with the aim of achieving the substantial devolution of powers to bring government closer to the people and to promote greater transparency, in keeping with the World Bank's notion of good governance. Accordingly, governors, regents, and mayors are no longer appointed centrally, but are elected autonomously by regional parliaments.

Through this law, the role of the central government is that of an overseer or watchdog. The central government is only responsible for certain specific areas of authority: foreign policy, defense and security, the judiciary, monetary and fiscal policy, religion, national planning and the control of macro-national development, financial balance funds, the state administration system and state economic institutions, fostering and empowering human resources, the utilization of natural resources and strategic technology, conservation, and national standardization (Article 7(1)–(2)). The Regional Government has duties in relation to public works, education, culture, health, agriculture, transportation, industry, trade,

investment, environment, cooperatives, labor, and land (see Articles 10 and 11).

In addition to the Regional Government Law, Law No. 25 of 1999 concerning Fiscal Balance between the Central and Regional Governments was formulated by the Ministry of Finance, which has a (fixed) centralized nature that is different from the Regional Government Law. This shows that the central government is trying to maintain its control over the main sources of revenue in the regions. This can be seen from the 70%–85% of state revenues derived from natural resources (SDA) in the oil and natural gas mining sector, which is produced from areas controlled by the central government (Article 6(6)). In addition, control over income tax (PPH), value added tax (VAT), import levies and export taxes, as well as foreign aid, is still maintained centrally. In terms of accumulation, the central government still controls 75% of all state revenues. Only 25% of this income is distributed to the regions, namely the General Allocation Fund (DAU), of which 90% is channeled to autonomous regions at the district and city levels (formerly called Level II Regions), while the provinces (Level I Regions) receive only 10% (Article 7). The criteria for the distribution of these funds are determined by population size, poverty level, geographical conditions, and price indexes. Nonetheless, President Habibie laid the foundation for improvements to local government in Indonesia at the beginning of the reformation era.

During Megawati's leadership, Law No. 22 of 1999 and Law No. 25 of 1999 were changed to Law No. 32 of 2004 concerning Regional Government and Law No. 33 of 2004 concerning the Financial Balance between the Government and Regional Government. In general, the most recent law (Law No. 33 of 2014) did not change much: in contrast to the Local Government Law, the key point was to neutralize the heavy legislature, which is considered to have harmed democratization at the local level. This is because, after the new Regional Government Law, the DPRD can no longer replace regional heads (especially regents and mayors) arbitrarily. In addition, in mid-2015, regional heads were no longer elected by DPRD members because this law established that regional heads (both governors, regents, and mayors) were directly elected by the people. This is in line with the presidential and vice-presidential elections introduced in 2004, after which the president and vice-president are no longer elected by the MPR but are elected by voters directly. Thus, the direct election of regional heads completes the knitting together of the electoral system in Indonesian politics: namely, direct elections are not only carried out at the national level, but are tiered from the village level (village head elections or *Pilkades* that have taken place decades before) to the next level; from the local level (elections of governors, regents, and mayors and their representatives) to the national level (elections of the president and deputy).

The DOB system also shows that there are various practices of exploitation of natural resources, where these practices occur openly to the public (Agustino 2014). The openness of these exploitative practices occurs because of access to power, as part of the strengthening of local power due to the regeneration of power among families. In Sumatra and Kalimantan, for example, logging in the post-new order era has become increasingly rampant

(McCarthy 2006; 2007). Referring to McCarthy (2007), the delivery of logs from logging is carried out openly using water transportation on the Barito River, and not a single official takes action. This activity is carried out not only by the local elite, but also by the central elite (who collaborate with local elites and businesses). Their ability to log brutally is due to the access that they maintain from the positions they held after the formation of new autonomous regions.

3.2. Decentralization and Democratic Regression at the Local Level

It is undeniable that the implementation of the decentralization process at the beginning of the reformation era was highly commended by many foreign institutions. The World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), and the Ford Foundation, for example, all expressed their approval (Turner and Podger 2003). Moreover, Indonesia's decentralization deserves appreciation for producing very well-performing local officials. For example, Joko Widodo (former mayor of Solo and governor of DKI Jakarta, who currently serves as president of the Republic of Indonesia), Tri Rismaharini (former mayor of Surabaya, now minister of social affairs), Ridwan Kamil (former mayor of Bandung, now governor of West Java), Yoyok Riyo Sudibyo (former regent of Batang), Abdullah Azwar Anas (former regent of Banyuwangi), and several other individuals all distinguished themselves well in this field. Even so, the number of champions of democracy in the regions is minimal when compared to regional heads of a more nefarious character, which is one of the roots of democratic regression in the decentralized Reform era.

Referring to the argument above, although decentralization is the child of the democratization of the reformation era, in reality, democracy at the local level has not been adopted smoothly. This happened because democratization did not immediately eliminate authoritarian and predatory behavior, but instead succeeded in realigning these actors as reformist and democratic before they were elected by the public during regional head elections. It can therefore be concluded that decentralization has to some extent been captured by the interests of the local elite (who often work closely with the central elite). Agustino (2010) and Kenawa's (2013) studies on political dynasties; Aspinall's (2010) study on the persistence of primordial structures in the regions; studies by Warburton and Aspinall (2019) and Mietzner (2020) on populist mobilization, growing intolerance, and strengthening sectarianism; the study of Marta et al. (2019) on deteriorating civil liberties; and Hadiz's (2010) study of how executive power silences critics and suppresses the opposition in authoritarian ways – all show that the decentralization of the reformation era was carried out using old, undemocratic methods and logic. This condition once again signals that unthinkable consequences are a reality in the decentralization of the reformation era in Indonesia.

This condition explains at least five things. First, the strengthening of the consolidation of political dynasties in the regions so that candidates outside the dynasties do not dare to

come to the surface to compete in the Pilkada contestation. Second, there is the purchase of parties by regional political dynasties with the aim of preventing political parties from nominating names other than those proposed by political dynasties. Third, there is a lack of regeneration in political parties, as there are no potential candidates proposed by political parties to run in the election. If this is not seriously anticipated, then in the future it may weaken local democracy and strengthen political dynasties or family politics.

Table 2. *Names of Dynasties in Simultaneous Regional Elections in 2020*

No	Name (Position of Regional Head/ Deputy Regional Head)	Period	Family Relation
1	Marlin Agustina (deputy governor of Riau Island)	2021–2026	Wife of Batam's mayor (2016–2021 & 2021–2026); Muhammad Rudi
2	Rahmad Mas'ud (mayor of Balikpapan)	2021–2026	Relatives of Penajam's regent (2018–2023): Abdul Gafur Mas'ud
3	Saifullah Yusuf/ Gus Ipul (mayor of Pasuruan)	2021–2026	Siblings of Pasuruan's regent (2013–2018 & 2019–2024): Irsyad Yusuf
4	Aditya Mufti Ariffin (mayor of Banjarbaru)	2021–2026	Son of South Kalimantan's former governor (2005–2010 & 2010–2015): Rudy Ariffin
5	Kusnidar Untung Yuni Sukowati (regent of Sragen)	2016–2021 & 2021–2026	Daughter of Sragen's former regent (2001–2005 & 2006–2011): Untung Wiyono
6	Adnan Purichta Ichsan (regent of Gowa)	2016–2021 & 2021–2026	Son of Gowa's former regent (2005–2010 & 2010–2015): Ichsan Yasin Limpo
7	Irna Narulita (regent of Pandeglang)	2016–2021 & 2021–2026	Wife of Pandeglang's former regent (200–2005 & 2005–2009); Rd. Achmad Dimiyati Natakusumah
8	Ratu Tatu Chasanah (regent of Serang)	2016–2021 & 2021–2026	Siblings of Banten's former governor (2007–2011 & 2011–2015): Ratu Atut Chosiyah
9	Kustini Sri Purnomo (regent of Sleman)	2021–2026	Wife of Sleman's former regent (2010–2015 & 2016–2021): Sri Purnomo
10	Etik Suryani (regent of Sukoharjo)	2021–2026	Wife of Sukoharjo's former regent (2010–2015 & 2016–2021): Wardoyo Wijaya

11	Sri Hartini (regent of Klaten)	2017–2021 & 2021–2026	Wife of Klaten's former regent (2005–2010 & 2010–2015): Sunarna
12	Mukti Agung Wibowo (regent of Pemalang)	2021–2026	Siblings of Brebes' regent (2012–2017 & 2017–2022): Idza Priyanti
13	Ipuk Fiestiandani (regent of Banyuwangi)	2021–2026	Wife of Banyuwangi's former regent (2010–2015 & 2016–2021): Abdullah Azwar Anas
14	Sri Juniarsih Mas (regent of Berau)	2021–2026	Wife of Berau's former regent (2016–2021): Muharram
15	Asmin Laura Hafid (regent of Nunukan)	2021–2026	Daughter of Former Nunukan' (2001–2006 & 2006–2011): Abdul Hafid Achmad (Bapak)
			Daughter of chairman of Parliament of Nunukan (2019–2024): Rahma Leppa (Ibu)
16	Safitri Malik Soulisa (regent of South Buru)	2021–2026	Wife of South Sulu's former regent (2011–2016 & 2016–2021): Tagop Sudarsono Soulisa
17	Hasan Ali Bassam Kasuba (regent of South Halmahera)	2021–2026	Son of South Halmahera's former regent (2005–2010 & 2010–2015): Muhammad Kasuba
			Nephew of North Maluku's governor (2014–2019 & 2019–2024): Abdul Ghani Kasuba
18	Lanosin Hamzah (regent of Ogan East Komering Ulu)	2021–2026	Siblings of South Sumatera's Governor (2018–2023): Herman Deru
			Herman Deru is also East Ogan Komering Ulu's former regent (2005–2010 & 2010–2015)
19	Pilar Saga Ichsan (vice mayor of South Tangerang)	2021–2026	Son of Serang's regent (2016–2021 & 2021–2026): Ratu Tatu Chasanah
20	Herry Erfian (vice regent of Central Bangka)	2021–2026	Siblings of Bangka Belitung Island's governor (2017–2022): Erzaldi Rosman
			Erzaldi Rosman is also a former regent of Central Bangka (2010–2015 & 2015–2017)

Source: compiled from a range of sources by the authors

In line with political dynasties and single candidates, what makes decentralization regress is the emergence of a “shadow government” or “shadow state.” For example, in Banten

Province during the reign of Ratu Atut, the shadow government was far more powerful than the formal government itself (Masaaki and Hamid 2008; Agustino 2010). The determination of who is the head of the service, which companies receive tenders, which institutions “deserve” to receive grants or social assistance (Bansos), and so on, is largely down to the will of the shadow government. As a result, the political-economic cycle in the regions does not move far – it revolves around the dynasty itself or the elites who are considered loyal to it. This emerged as a form of guarding loyalty to bureaucrats or elites in the regions to keep them working for the benefit of the dynasty. The shadow government in Bengkulu Province works along these lines. Agusrin Maryono and H. M. Syamlan (governor and deputy governor, respectively, for the period of 2005–2010), as well as staff from each supporting party, create the shadow state there (Santoso et al. 2018). This team was later known by another name, the “Special Staff for the Governor,” whose roles were to: (i) discuss bureaucrats who deserved to be promoted or should be demoted (so that their role in the rotation and transfer of positions was much stronger than that of the Position Advisory Board); ii) disseminate APBD-initiated projects; and (iii) act as a liaison between the governor and mass organizations, political parties, and journalists (Hidayat 2006). A similar context also occurred in Kutai Kertanegara Regency when Rita Widayarsi led (2010–2017), where Team 11 became a significant shadow state (Santoso et al. 2018).

Fourth, the weakening of civil society. Whereas the civil society is notionally a very important defender of democracy in fighting against undemocratic regimes or elite competitors who are anti-democratic, in truth it can be said that civil society is a barrier for political reform towards democracy. In decentralized Indonesia, the weakening of civil society must be understood from two perspectives. The first perspective is the co-opting of political dynasties by civil society groups (who depend on them) so that civil society is devoid of a response to various government policies, which may be detrimental to citizens. These groups seem silent when a policy is a dynastic initiative, and will shout loudly if policies (produced by parliament) are not in line with the interests of the dynasty.

Fifth, the regression of decentralization in the reformation era was also caused by a number of poor public services. It is little wonder that some scholars state that democratization at the local level has created a wide area for political actors to show off on the campaign trail, claiming that they can solve most of the problems in the regions. These actors also offer various policies and solutions to citizens so that they are attracted to them and vote for them during the Pilkada. However, it would be naive if we were to immediately assume that these changes would be realized in the form of public services if the actor were elected. In reality, the public often receives illegal levies that continue to spread, or in the case of services that should be free, it is common to find additional costs for beneficiaries, and so on, causing public complaints (Rosser 2012). The question then becomes: Why did this happen? It must be understood that the emergence of policies with populist nuances is the result of the logic of electoral politics (Pilkada). This logic explains that the Pilkada has become an arena for the war of promises, where actors compete with each other to offer

various programs to win the hearts of voters without necessarily fulfilling these obligations. In short, pseudo-populism (as depicted above) has become a real issue in Indonesia's decentralization, and this has contributed to a reduction in democracy at the local level, thus weakening the decentralization process in Indonesia during the reformation era.

3.3. The Local Regime and Regeneration in Decentralization Era

In the clientalistic model of high-cost politics (Cruz 2019; Berenschot et al. 2002; Diprose et al. 2019; Muhtadi 2019; Stokke 2017), decentralization and the formation of new autonomous regions are an arena in which the local regime develops and maintains its power structure. What happened in several areas, such as in the provinces of Banten, Kalimantan, Sumatra, and Central Java, is a consequence of the electoral democracy model, which identifies the capital development model (Diprose et al. 2019). In all of the developments of the growing clientalistic model, the family is the main model that emerges in various regions, where local rulers grow and develop through new regional autonomy (Masaaki and Hamid 2008).

The regeneration of every family is inevitable, starting from the husband, wife, children, and colleagues (Angeles 1999), all of whom occupy or continue the tradition of power for the benefit of family groups. Local regimes emerge in much the same way through arena of power that grows through the symbols attached to the culture of each region. Thus each local regime has its own power structure and territory of power, and decentralization became an arena of power that produced many local rulers. This has become part of the democratization project in Indonesia, which is now controlled by a group of local rulers with an elite capture agenda (Mahpudin et al. 2021; Lucas 2016). This group monopolizes the public agenda into the agenda of group interests, seizing social and monetary capital in every region in Indonesia. This is in line with the argument of Winters (2011:6), who observed that "command and control of the resources [is] for personal rather than institutional gain."

Table 3. *Dynasty Regeneration During the Reformation Era*

No	Region	Name	Position	Modality
Riau Island Province				
1	Batam City	1 Muhammad Rudi (husband)	1. Regional Council of Batam 2009–2010 2. Vice mayor of Batam 2011–2016 3. Mayor of Batam 2016–2021	1. Head of DMI Batam City dan DMI Riau Island 2. Chairman of the Shura Council PW GPII Riau Island 3. Head of DPC (Region Representative) Nasdem Batam City 4. Head of DPW (Region Representative) Nasdem Riau Island
		2 Marlin Agustina (wife)	1. Deputy governor of Riau Island 2021–2024	1. Head of PKK Batam 2016–2021 2. Head of Pikori Batam 2019–present 3. Head of Bunda Paud 2016–2021
2	Tanjung Pinang City	1 Lis Darmansyah (husband)	1. Mayor of Tanjung Pinang 2013–2018 2. Regional Council of Riau Island Province 2019–2024	1. Hospitality business 2. Head of Banteng Muda Indonesia Kepri 3. Secretary of DPD PDIP Kepri
		2 Yuniarni Weni Pustoko (wife)	1. Regional Council of Riau Island Province 2014–2019 2. Regional Council of Tanjung Pinang City 2019–2024	1. Wife of Lis Darmansyah 2. Chairman of Jantung Sehat Riau Island Province

South Sumatera Province

1	East Ogan Komerling Ulu Regency	1	Herman Deru (elder siblings)	1. East Ogan Komerling Ulu regent 2005–2010 and 2010–2015 2. Governor of South Sumatera province 2018–2023	1. Wealth of 38 billion rupiah 2. Treasurer of Yayasan Trisna Negara 3. Board of Sponsors of STIE Trisna Negara 4. Head of DPW (Region Representative) Nasdem South Sumatera 5. Komerling Tribe
		2	Lanosin Hamzah (younger siblings)	Regent of East Ogan Komerling Ulu 2021–2024	1. Undergraduate association coordinator NU OKU Raya 2020-2021 2. Primary Honorary Citizen of “Persaudaraan Setia Hati” 3. Expert Council of Forum Koordinasi Pelopor Perdamaian 2020–2022 4. Banser Honorary Member 5. Chairman of the Expert Council of DPD Nasdem East Ogan Komerling Ulu
2	Ogan Ilir Regency	1	Mawardi Yahya (father)	1. Regent of Ogan Ilir 2005–2010 and 2010–2015 2. Deputy governor of South Sumatera 2018–2023	1. Chairman of Parliament Ogan Ilir (two periods since 1999–2005) 2. DPRD OI 2005
		2	Ahmad Wazir (son)	1. Regent of Ogan Ilir 2016–2017	1. Wealth of 20 billion rupiah 2. Son of Mawardi Yahya

		3	Panca Wijaya Akbar (son)	1. Regent of Ogan Ilir 2021–2024	1. Scout of South Sumatera province 2. Head of Legal Affairs KONI South Sumatera 3. President director of PT. Limbersa 2015–2020
3	Prabumulih City	1	Ridho Yahya	1. Vice mayor of Prabumulih 2008–2013 2. Mayor of Prabumulih 2013–2018 and 2018–2023	Younger brother of Mawardi Yahya (deputy governor of South Sumatera)
Banten Province					
1	South Tangerang City	1	Airin Rachmy Diany	1. Mayor of South Tangerang 2011–2021	1. Sister-in-law of Ratu Atut Choisyah 2. Advisory Board of KNPI South Tangerang 2010–2013 3. Scouting Board of South Tangerang 4. Relawan Banten Bersatu (RBB/ United Banten Volunteers) Tangerang Raya Area 5. Committee of Dewan Koperasi Indonesia (DEKOPIN) Wilayah Banten
		2	Pilar Saga Ichsan	1. Vice mayor of South Tangerang 2021–2026	1. Son of Ratu Tatu, regent of Serang Regency 2. Nephew of Ratu Atut Choisyah 3. Leader of AMPG Banten 2015–2020 4. Wealth of 28 billion rupiah
2	Serang City	1	Tubagus Haerul Jaman	1. Vice mayor of Serang 2008–2011 2. Mayor of Serang 2011–2018	1. Stepbrother of Ratu Atut Choisyah 2. President director of PT. ARDADELI, 1990–2008 4. Head of Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KADIN) Banten Province

3	Cilegon City	1	Tubagus Aat Syafaat	1. Mayor of Cilegon 2000–2005 and 2005–2010	1. Wealth of 21 billion rupiah 2. Head of Golkar Cilegon 3. Public figure in Cilegon
		2	Tubagus Iman Ariyadi	1. Mayor of Cilegon 2010–2015 and 2016–2017	1. Son of Tubagus Aat Syafaat 2. Head of DPD Golkar Cilegon
		3	Ratu Ati Marliati	1. Vice mayor of Cilegon 2019–2021	1. Daughter of Tubagus Aat Syafaat 2. Advisory Board of Forum Komunikasi Majelis Ta'lim, Cilegon City 2015–2020 3. Deputy chairman of DPD Golkar Cilegon, Women and Spirituality Division 2015–2020 4. Head of Dewan Pimpinan Daerah (DPD) Golkar, Cilegon City (24 December 2020–present)

Source: compiled from a range of sources by the authors

Table 3 provides an explanation of the regeneration of dynasties in several regions – especially in the new autonomous regions. For example, what happened in Banten, which became a province in 2000 after breaking away from West Java Province, shows how the Ratu Atut Chosiyah family (known as Atut) controlled Banten from the beginning (Agustino 2010; Masaaki and Hamid 2008) and have maintained power until the present day. Atut entered the political arena in 2001, when he was paired as deputy governor with Joko Munandar for the 2001–2006 period.

A critical question should be asked: Why do people not reject the emergence of a political dynasty in their respective areas? Referring to Hadiz (2010, 3), this is because they “have been able to usurp the agenda of good governance reforms, including that of decentralization.” Apart from Hadiz’s (2010) explanation, it can be argued that there is also a reluctance of the community to reject political dynasties because they still hope that the descendants of local rulers (who go to better schools, domestic or abroad) who become regional heads will change the way they lead to be more democratic, modern, and technocratic.

Conclusions

1. Decentralization is a result of reform. The authority to manage regions themselves, with their various potential resources, does not work in accordance with the

- objectives of decentralization. There are various impacts that are expected to come with decentralization, ranging from the formation of an effective and accountable government – a government that serves – to the formation of a democratic civil society. First, as stated by the World Bank, USAID, GTZ, and other non-profit organizations, the decentralization process in Indonesia deserves praise because of the drastic changes that have been observed. However, decentralization has not delivered the results promised by the majority of its supporters. The reason for this is that regime change in Jakarta was successfully exploited by local elites (who often collaborated with central elites) to take maximum advantage of the power that had been delegated to the regions through the Regional Government Law and the Financial Balance between Regional Governments and the Central and Regional Government. Local elites succeeded in reorganizing and consolidating their political dynasties in the region. If they failed to build their dynasties, then the formation of a new autonomous region became the target area in which to realize the political-economic desires of the local elite. As a result, decentralization actually gave rise to political dynasties, corrupt practices, the weakening of civil society, and the promotion of intolerant behavior. This condition is a consequence that was not previously foreseen, and will continue to occur in the future.
2. From an international perspective, the decentralization regime in Indonesia can be viewed as an asymmetric democratic regime. Each region now has the autonomy to decide how it will be developed. On the one hand, this can be privilege that allows the region to choose what it wants; on the other hand, this can lead to the delusion of democracy, with some groups hijacking the political system through elite capture and the implementation of an oligarchy.

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DECENTRALIZAVIMAS INDONEZIJOJE: NUO REFORMAVIMO PRIE VIETINĖS VALDŽIOS GALIŲ STIPRĖJIMO

Decentralizacija, kaip postdemokratinės plėtros pastangos, yra laikoma būdu įgyvendinti tiek ekonominį, tiek socialinį teisingumą. Decentralizacija nurodyta konstitucijoje ir yra reformos tikslas. Po reformavimo daugybėje Naujųjų autonominių regionų paaiškėjo, kad buvo daug problemų dėl centralizavimo stiprinimo vietos valdžios lygmeniu. Šiame tyrime daugiausia dėmesio skiriama tam, kaip regionų autonomijoje vykstantys procesai padeda stiprinti vietos valdžios galių įtraukiant atskiras įtakingas šeimas ir interesų grupes. Šiame tyrime buvo naudojamas trijų naujų autonominių regionų, t. y. Riau salų, Pietų Sumatros ir Banteno atvejo analizės metodas. Palyginus galių stiprinimą kiekviename regione, galima būtų teigti, kad vietinės regioninės valdžios stiprinimas realizuojamas per įvairias valdžios formas. Šis tyrimas bent iš dalies paaiškino ir atskleidė, kad regioninė plėtra yra problemiškas procesas, nes yra sukuriami nauji galių centrai lokaliai valdžios lygmeniu.

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