Article

Decentralisation and Ethnic Politics: A Reflection of Two Decades of Indonesia's Decentralisation

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Abstract

This article aims to examine what Indonesia has achieved in the last decades of decentralisation. In other words, has decentralisation brought about what its prominent advocators yearned for? How do decentralisers-- supporters and prominent advocators of local autonomy - play their roles in re-actualising or reinventing their local identities? How has local identity emerged within the states territory? Empirically, most new splitting regions (pemekaran) (both province and district) are formed through mobilisation of etnhnic and religious sentiments. Specifically, ethnic politics continue to contribute to the development of the West Sulawesi. Decentralisation, at the changing political landscape, has been seen as a new opportunity and arena for local elites to compete against others to control the local governments.

Keywords

decentralisation; ethnic politics; identity; Sulawesi

INTRODUCTION

After more than three decades of highly centralised and authoritarian control by Suharto's New Order regime (1966-98), there were internal demand and external pressure on Indonesia to become both more democratic and more decentralised in the governmental arrangement. The pressure has brought Indonesia's central government and national representatives passed the Act XX/1999 legislation to decentralise policy and shift towards local autonomy. Under this legislation, it was intended to decentralise all ministries (with the exception of religious affairs, foreign affairs, defence, and monetary and fiscal matters). This legislation endorsement was becoming a turning point of remarkable change in Indonesia's contemporary political landscape (Aspinall & Fealy, 2003; Suradinata, 2006; Rasyid, 2005; Imawan, 2005 & 2006; Smith B, 2008; Haris, 2005; Green, 2005; World Bank, 2003; Kaiser et al., 2006; Pierkalla & Sacks, 2017).

Many have argued that decentralisation would bring positive impacts. Economically, it is intended to create efficiency and improve service delivery. Politically, it aims to improve accountability, political stability and national integration (Smith BC, 1985: 4). Arguably, there is more balance between the central and regional governments, which share responsibility for economic

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development. Local governments and local people have become more powerful before the state compared with previous regimes. Moreover, with decentralisation, the recent implementation of Undang-Undang Desa (Village Law No. XX, 2014) has brought direct impacts to the bottom layer of government, the village (see also Vel and Bedner, 2015). Thus, it makes sense to believe that structurally and procedurally democracy is deepening and becoming more widespread in Indonesia nowadays.

However, Indonesia's experience over decentralisation has not been without challenges. Accompanying, or following the euphoria of pemekaran as the core product of decentralisation, there has also been the alarming phenomenon of primordialism or the politicisation of local (particularly ethnic) identities. It is partly because, in a growing local democratisation, decentralisation has also gone hand-in-hand with the rise of new local elites who attempt to pursue power for the sake of empowering the local and ethnic identities. In this article, I use the term ethnic identity as proposed by King and Wider (2003: 197) who define it as "people of the same ethnic category claim that they share the same roots, and that their identity is a basic given". In addition, ethnic identity is treated "as a feature of social organisation, rather than a nebulous expression of culture" in which "its ethnic group membership is relying on ascription and self-ascription" where "individuals embrace it, are constrained by it, act on it, and experience it" (Barth, 1994: 12).

This study is to examine what Indonesia has achieved in the last decades of decentralisation by tracing the significance of ethnic and cultural politics in the country. In other words, has decentralisation brought about what its prominent advocators yearned for? How do "decentralisers"--supporters and prominent advocators of local autonomy - (to borrow a term suggested by Crook and Manor, 1998: 2), play their roles in re-actualising or reinventing their local identities? How has local identity emerged within the state's territory? In answering these questions, firstly, I re-visit at the discourse of decentralisation. Secondly, I assess how local identities have been re-actualised in the name of local autonomy. Thirdly, I address the shift of Sulawesi political landscape in the decentralisation constellation.

METHODS

In this study, I employed a variety of qualitative methods, such as in-depth and open-ended interviews and participants observations along with other tools of inquiry. I mainly adapted the ethnographic method suggested by eminent researchers, such Spradley (1979), Atkinson (1992), Madison (2012), LeCompte & Schensul (2010), Schensul & LeCompte (2013). For example, by employing ethnography, as suggested by Liamputtong (2013: 177), I was able to obtain a deep and rich understanding of 'the researched' people and communities because I spent a quite long time in the field-site, watching state apparatus arranging the administration, directly talking with people and participating in the community daily lives. The ethnographic method, according to Liamputtong (2013) is valuable in order to avoid a false interpretation of researched people, and equally important is that this method is able to lead me to further research because ethnography is useful for formulating sensible questions. Furthermore, in this ethnographic study, histories of key individuals are important because it will enable me to "take into consideration on history, the contextual present, culture, and ecologically and critically framed factors" (LeCompte and Shensul, 2010: 115) related to an ethnic group in the site.

This study has been researched through three approaches. First, review of secondary literature, including scholarly works, government articles and reports and the print media. Second, the study employed ethnographic enquiries such as participatory research by investigating government officials, communities and other stakeholders. Third, conducted field research had been done in 2014 for about nine months for my doctorate studies and intermittent visits un-

til 2017 at North Mamuju of West Sulawesi province.

Initially, this study is aimed to focus on the role of a Bugis community in opening a frontier, namely through the state-sponsored program, transmigration. A frontier settlement which is I then move my analysis on to classify the site as an intersection frontier: the frontier of settlement, the frontier of agriculture, the frontier of an economy, and recently a frontier of politics. That is a frontier of politics because the field site of this research, North Mamuju of West Sulawesi, has been emerging into a new district, due to decentralisation. That this former 'engineered community'-transmigration, has recently turned into a semi-urban area, that is, a resource site at Sulawesi peninsula. Importantly, the roles of the new settlers - whose are multi-ethnic communities, such as Baras, Balinese, Bugis, Javanese, Kaili, Timorese in the region – have transformed the settlement into a kabupaten. Equally important is that the role of these settlers' respective identities, particularly the Bugis, have remarkably contributed to the shape and dynamics of the local politics (Author, forthcoming 1 & 2).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Decentralisation in Indonesia: 1945-2017

Decentralisation, actually, is not a new in Indonesia. In fact, this country had recognised otonomi daerah just after the independence (that is, the Act I/1945 and the Act 22/1948). However, due to the limited space of this article, the focus on of this study is the turning point contemporary implementation of decentralisation, that is the Reformasi era. By implementing the Act no. XX/1999 about "The Arrangement of Regional Government" (Pengaturan Pemerintahan Daerah), the connection between the central and local (provincial and district) governmental arrangement had shifted significantly. The legislation was followed by the implementation of the Act XXV/1999 about "Financial Balance and Regional Government" (Perimbangan Keuangan Daerah). Again, the Reformasi law products amended by the Act XXII/2004 about "Regional Autonomy" (Otonomi Daerah). After ten years of implementation, the Act XXII/2004 adjusted and improved by the applying of the Act XXII/2014 about "Local Government" (Pemerintahan Daerah). Recently, Indonesia's decentralisation is arranged with the Act X/2015 that is the revision of the Act XXIII/2014 on "The Local Government" above (see also Mahardika, 2000; Smith B, 2008; Kuncoro, 2004: 4-6; Lay, 2001: 147).

Decentralisation in Indonesia is sometimes equated with '*pemekaran*' (literally, 'blossoming'), that is, administration splitting and local autonomy. In the range of its governmental type, Indonesia has changed remarkably (see also, Nordholt & van Klinken, 2007: 19; Kimura, 2006: 22; Dormeier-Freire and Maurer, 2002: 266-7; Lay, 2001:

Table 1. The levels of government in Indonesia, as of end-2017.

Type	Head of administration	Number of autonomous districts, municipalities & provinces in specific years		
		2000	2010	2015
Central	President (elected)	1	1	1
Province	Governor (elected)	26	33	34
District & Municipality	Regent & Mayor (elected)	268 & 73	398 & 93	416 & 98
Sub-district	Head of Sub-district (appointed)	4049	6699	7 160
Village	(elected for village, appointed for kelurahan)	69,050	77,548	83,184
Total		**73,467**	**84,772**	**90,893**

Source: BPS, 2015; Nasution, 2016: 4; OECD, 2016: 60; Harmantyo, 2011: 9-10.
Adapted by the author, 2018.

149-152; Kaiser et al., 2006: 166-172). As result, Indonesia significantly has experienced governmental 'blossoming' over the last two decades, as shown in Table 1.

As we can see in table 1 that, first, the number governmental composition and administration bodies are really blossoming due to the consequence of decentralisation. Furthermore, with exception of Jakarta's municipalities and all sub-districts across Indonesia, all these administration heads are directly elected by the people. This, in turn, signifies the process of democratisation. Subsequently, there is always a regular pilkada in Indonesia today (Tjenreng, 2016; Sarundajang, 2012; Kumolo, 2017). Therefore, politically the region and local have now become a battleground of power championship. Again, politically all these ponggawa/kepala positions have recently become the locus obsession for political actors and figures in routine Indonesia. It is important to note that thanks to decentralisation, Indonesia continues to split its regions in the years to come. Until very recently, there are about 314 new proposals for the formation of new autonomous regions (Kemendagri, 2017). A study reveals that it is projected that by 2025 Indonesia will consist of 44 provinces and 545 districts and municipalities (Harmantyo, 2011: 10).

Decentralisation: re-visited

In broad terms, decentralisation is defined as "the transfer of authority and responsibility from higher to lower levels of government" (Kristiensen and Pratikno, 2006: 519). Brian Smith put a similar definition forward: decentralisation is "the delegation of power to lower levels in a territorial hierarchy" (Smith BC, 1985: 1). Furthermore, Smith BC (1985) emphases that from the political perspective the extent to which power and authority in local autonomy, is equated with the so-called 'territorial distribution of power'. Similarly, Turner and Hulme (1997: 152) define decentralisation as "a transfer of authority to perform some service to the public from an individual or an agency in central government to some other individual or agency, which is closer to the public to be served".

Commonly, Rondinelli (1983: 188-195) categorises decentralisation into four main forms: first, deconcentration, i.e. "the transfer of administrative authority and responsibility to lower units within the central government". Second, delegation, "the transfer of decision-making and management authority for specifically defined functions to organisations to the outside or non-regular bureaucratic structure". Third, devolution, "the transfer of power from the central government to units of local government that stay outside the formal command of the central government". Finally, privatisation or deregulation, "the transfer of responsibility for public services and utilities from state or parastatal organisations to a variety of private, non-profit community and non-governmental organisations" (see also Rondinelli et al., 1983; Smith BC, 1985; Smith B, 2008; Turner and Hulme, 1997; Matsui, 2003; White and Smoke, 2005; Warman, 2016).

In line with the major forms of decentralisation mentioned above, Dormeier-Freire & Maurer (2002) show that Indonesia's decentralization is specifically interpreted in three ways: 1) as the delegation of specific tasks while the centre retains its overall responsibility; 2) deconcentration, which refers to a relocation of decision-making within a centralised state; 3) devolution, which concerns the actual transfer of power to lower levels of government. These three forms are the cornerstones of Indonesia's decentralisation (see also, Nordholt and van Klinken, 2007: 12; Nordholt, 2005: 36).

Broadly, Pierre and Peters (2000: 122-3) suggest that there are several reasons why many countries (mostly in developing world) have implemented decentralisation. First, fiscal pressures on the state triggered by a combination of an emerging public sector and public services, on the one hand; and economic structural problems on the other. Second, the central government tries to support the human resources of local government. Third, decentralisation becomes a response to public frustration with public bureaucratic services. Fourth, decentralization is chosen to support the objective of domestic institutional reform by looking

at other states to solve similar problems by applying similar solutions within their own jurisdiction.

Smith BC (1985: 186-8) classify the common goals of decentralisation: 1) to provide a more effective mechanism to fulfiling local needs; 2) to eradicate poverty; 3) to improve access to administrative bodies; 4) to tackle bureaucratic problems at the center through flexibility of decision-making; 5) to support people's participation in development; 6) to enhance national unity; 7) to mobilize support for plans and objectives of development.

In Indonesia, most of the debates, issues implementations of decentralisation identified by the scholars and analysts above are also faced by Indonesia's government. However, at the application term, there has been a missing link in terms of the fiscal balance between national and regional budgets due to the centralised economic development in this country. In fact, several vertical departmental agencies are still partly controlled by Jakarta. Consequently, the top-down approach in financial and budgetary arrangement remains a feature of decentralisation, particularly in service delivery. For example, when I conducted fieldwork, decision-makers in Mamuju Utara district were complaining about the delay of Dana Alokasi Umum (DAU) and Dana Alokasi Khusus (DAK) from the national government due to the complexity of budgetary arrangements. The delay subsequently affected the whole range of governmental acceleration and dynamics at the local level. Thus, this pattern is quite similar to what happened almost a decade of Indonesia's decentralisation which "central government still controls most of the financial resources", whereas the policy is genuinely aimed to support "the expense of direct accountability to the people" (Lele, 2012: 227). Similar cases can be seen in many districts and provincial levels in Indonesia. Many see this constraint as 'half-hearted' decentralisation.

Importantly, the top-down model in financial and budgetary arrangement ignored the development of human local resources that are the front-line services. As we can see in many disadvantaged regions, such as the province of West Sulawesi and particularly in new districts like Mamasa, Central Mamuju and North Mamuju, local governments have called for more assertive advocacy and for assistance to develop their human resources capacity. This constraint affects the development of basic infrastructures, such as school and health services. For example, many schools in North Mamuju are not accessible by all local people due to their remote locations (see also Hajar, 2015: 225). Sometimes there is only one junior school in a sub-district, or a senior high school can only be accessed in a town such as Pasangkayu. Nonetheless, the education sector in North Mamuju is improving, with the exception of top-down funding arrangement. To a certain extent, North Mamuju's educational condition is better than that in neighbouring districts, such as Central Mamuju of West Sulawesi and Donggala of Central Sulawesi.

Furthermore, many have argued that decentralisation policy is able to tackle overloaded responsibilities of the central government in many developing countries. For instance, White and Smoke (2005: 4) state that there are two factors which become driving forces of decentralisation in East Asian nations: structure and politics. Structurally, the central government has to cope with the growing pressure to provide services for its overwhelming and larger population. Therefore, to empower the government's capacity, its structure needs to be delegated through decentralisation. Politically, the dynamics of political development also influences the nature of decentralisation (Rondinelli, 1983).

In another frame, Gabriel Lele mentions (2012) two main pillars for decentralisation in Indonesia. First, "functional assignment between national, provincial and local government" and, second, "institutional arrangments on local election". Moreover, the recent development, that is, after the recent amendment of the law on "Local Government", namely, number 23/2014 and number 10/2015, Indonesia's central government pushed authority down to the lower

level, that is, municipality and district, levels to minimise conflicts with the provincial level. This step was important to reduce the potential for regional separatism in the fragile post-authoritarian regime (Author, 2012).

In Indonesia, decentralisation (particularly in terms of devolution) is mainly intended to support the development of democracy. Rasyid (2003: 64) maintains that the implementation of the policy was intended first, to give the provincial and district legislatures (DPRD I and II) the power to initiate and formulate statutes and regulations; to approve budgets; and to create new institutions. Second and more importantly, by giving more powers to regional units, in fields such as mining, forestry, industry, investment, land administration, public works, education, culture, public health, transportation, environment, cooperatives and labour affairs, local people will have more access to participate in decision-making and service delivery. Thus, theoretically speaking:

Ultimately, regional autonomy is not simply a matter of regulating the relationships between the various levels of government. It is also about regulating the relationship between the state and the people. Regional autonomy is essentially the responsibility of the local population because it is ultimately the people's right to administer their own system of government in a manner that will accommodate their own laws, ethics, and local traditions (Maskun, 1999 in Usman, 2001: 15-16).

There are many instances of the messiness of local administration. This is particularly visible in overlapping fields of administration (dinas), such as Population, Transmigration, and the Enterprise Bureau in the new splitting district. For example, staffs in the Transmigration Office in Pasangkayu of North Mamuju were not able to show me the exact number of former transmigrants in each kecamatan because they did not have the data. Thus, the staffs perceive that there was no particular source of population in the area, and had no way of knowing whether the newcomers were former transmigrants or spontaneous migrants. The problem was the former district held the data and staff in Mamuju had not forwarded the data to the split district. What I mean here is that the vision and mission and the practices of decentralisation are sometimes not in line at the local level. Perhaps, the main constraints are that local staff lack capacity to carry out their governmental duties and the database of administration was not transferred from the old to new districts that are pivotal in modern governmental administration.

Figure 1. A dinas office in Pasankayu. Photo by author, 2014.

Similarly, the condition of the health sector in North Mamuju is even worse. For instance, there has been lack of specialists and medical precisionists in the public hospital (Rumah Sakit Umum Daerah) of Pasangkayu. Most sub-ditricts have no puskesmas,-if there is one, the doctor is quite difficult to access. Certainly, there must be a bidan (trained-medical helper for mother-children) in each pustu (pukesmas pembantu, i.e. rural health care). However, due to location and accessibility, villagers are still heavily reliant on, or preferred to Pasangkayu or even to Palu of Central Sulawesi. This happens due to partly because of overlapping in funding the health sector between the central and new autotomized local governments. Also, perhaps, there has been lacking innovation among the leaders at the district level (Widiyahseno, 2015).

Apart from these constraints, however, many have convinced that decentralisation also goes hand in hand with the process of democratisation. Domestically, as Hans Antlov has noted that two driving forces contributed to the re-politicisation of Indonesian society. Firstly, the influence

of the democratisation process, that is, the freedom of expression and association and the influence of the civil society movement at the grassroots level is getting stronger. Secondly, the policy of decentralisation encouraged citizens to exercise their democratic authority over public discourse by giving local governments and people broader democratic powers (Antlov, 2003: 77). Thus, it is safe to say that decentralisation policy is not a single entity in Indonesia's changing political landscape.

Figure 2. 'smart' statue, a North Mamuju iconic as the region of palm oil producer. Photo, by the author, 2017.

Therefore, it can be said that Indonesia's experience with decentralisation is incredibly complex. This is partly because decentralisation involves "bargaining and coalition building among both state and society actors at the local level" (Hidayat, 2005:71). Therefore, in my point of view, the discourse and implementation of Indonesia's decentralisation and the growing of local democracy vary from optimism to pessimism and scepticism.

Those in the optimistic group believe that both decentralisation and democratisation have been part of the reformation agendas and good governance (World Bank, 2003; Rasyid, 2003; Pratikno, 2005; Rasyid, 2003; Hofman & Kai Kaiser, 2002 & 2006; White & Smoke, 2005: 9; Ahmad & Mansoor, 2002; Saad, 2001; Smith B, 2008: 213-4; Holzhacker et al., 2016: 7-8). They are represented by international and national organisations such as UNDP, World Bank, Asia Foundation, IMF, and the Smeru Institute By allowing the regions (especially the district level) to have more authority in running their own governance, it is expected that local people will benefit from local government policies. Accordingly, decentralisation becomes a key and essential step towards promotion of a prosperous and genuine local democratisation because it opens spaces for local grassroots participation through direct pilkada, for example.

However, those in the pessimistic groups argue that the policy of decentralisation has come with the widening and deepening of money politics and corruption into the regions. Rivalry and struggle to control these decentralised power and resources have occurred, leading sometimes to a compromise where local elites share a 'piece of the pie' together (Sulistiyanto & Erb, 2009: 3-4; Antlov, 2003; ICG, 2003 & 2005; Eindhoven, 2007; Colongon Jr, 2003; Tyson, 2010; OECD, 2016: 61). Moreover, decentralisation is also triggering the (re) emergence of local elites such as ethnic leaders in the local level (Nordholt, 2005: 39; Sidel, 2005; Antlov, 2003). Even, an analyst stated: "decentralisation experiment has fared Indonesia in term of local-level conflict dynamics" (Diprose, 2009: 100).

Finally, many ones are also sceptical in the process of decentralisation. Those sceptical groups see that decentralisation becomes a new opportunity and arena for local elites to compete against others to control the local government (Bubant, 2004: 24-5; Maurer & Dormeir-Freire, 2002: 284-5; Morrell, 2010 & 2005; Green, 2005; Hadiz, 2003, 2005 & 2010: 2-3; Aspinall, 2011; Kimura, 2010 & 2013; Carnegie, 2008: 525; Pierkalla & Sacks, 2017: 225). At this point, a new province or district is frequently established based on ethnicity. In other words, local elites use certain ethnic groups' rhetoric to gain power.

The re-emergence of local identities

Decentralisation, in many cases, has been along with the rise of ethnic chauvinism over the last two decades. West Kalimantan is a worthy example in this shifting political landscape. In the case of West Kalimantan, Jumadi and Yakoop (2013: 22) note: "Ethnic and religious identity politics became the determinant factor for local elites to gain

power", consequently, "competitions based on ethnicity and religions in local politics in West Kalimantan are no longer latent, but very open".

Most new splitting regions (*pemekaran*) (both province and district) through mobilisation of etnhnic and religious sentiments remains feature the Indonesia's decentralisation. Bubandt (2001: 24-5) had reminded us that "decentralisation as a dynamic phenomenon with complex cultural and a symbolic characteristic rather than merely a straightforward political or administrative process". In fact, the rule of ethnic and religious sentiment became a fundamental reason to decentralise the Moluccas Islands. In the case of North Moluccas, for example, Bubant (2001: 24-5) states:

> "... the political appeals to tradition were generated as much by expectations about decentralisation as by actual political changes due to decentralisation. Decentralisation is thus not just a de facto political phenomenon; it inevitably becomes the subject of regional and local interpretations as well."

In Central Sulawesi, the establishment of new districts, such as Parigi Moutong, Buol, Morowali and Banggai Islands at the province, mainly through mobilisation regional identity related to primordial identity, ethnicity and position (Alamsyah & Subekti, 2017: 120-1). Still in Central Sulawesi, decentralisers in Poso, Morowali, Tojo Una-Una continue to use their ethnic and religious identity politics to create the so-called "East Sulawesi" province (Aragon, 2007:40-66). Similar case is the wish to form a province of Luwu and Tana Toraja at South Sulawesi which is, according to an analyst, "not exclusively about political and economic power, but is also related to processes of ethno-religious identification" (Roth, 2007: 122).

The cases above, and specifically those take place in Sulawesi Islands, evidently points out that the daerah were and are becoming more echoing their *kedaerahan* (regionalism sentiment) identities (see also Arifin et al., 2015: 234-6). This trend had likely taken place due to the fact that both the Old and the New Order regimes had perceived the Outer Islands (particularly the East Indonesian Region) into an area of distraction and exploitation of its resources while both regimes neglected to cover the human resources within the regions (Author, 2012). In this changing landscape, Vedi Hadiz puts it succinctly:

> The rise of provincialism and of local power vis-à-vis the centre has resulted in situations where the policies of the latter are not always followed in the way intended at the lower levels of governance (Hadiz, 2010: 172-3).

Finally, it is Purwo Santoso (2001) who has suggested that in order to maintain the national cohesion, all stakeholders should take these requirements take into account. First, decentralisation shall be with autonomous society. Without the social autonomy, the decentralisation will likely to removing the state locus patronage from the central to regional governments (provinces and districts). Second, decentralisation must create the processes of policy-making comply on territorial segmentation. The territorial segmentation must be properly and wisely arranged, if not; decentralisation might lead to new local worse conflicts. And third, decentralisation must go hand in hand with democratisation processes. It is partly because decentralisation and democratisation complexity can also potentially trigger a crack of the national cohesion (Santoso, 2001: 279-280). For example, a recent study shows that local cultures and identities have remarkably influenced the pilkada in Lampung (Kurniawan, 2017: 82-83). Ultimately, Bubant (2004: 25) insist that the decentralisation must be considered not only about processes of political and governmental adminsitration change, but it is also cultural complexity and local dynamics. Thus, decentralisation is not a single entity.

Ethnicity in decentralised Sulawesi: West Sulawesi

West Sulawesi (SulBar) is the 33rd of Indonesia's province. It officially became an autonomous province on 5 October 2004,

based on the Act XXVI/2004 on "*Pembentukan Sulawesi Barat*". Before being separated from South Sulawesi, the region consisted of five districts: Polman, Mamasa, Majene, Mamuju and North Mamuju. The Mandar mostly inhabited this region, especially in the first four regencies. North Mamuju had been a mainly transmigration area since the 1980s and therefore was quite multi-cultural. Several ethnic groups around Indonesia were represented: the Bugis, Javanese, Balinese, Madurese, and few indigenous ethnic groups. The province is bordered by Central Sulawesi to the north, South Sulawesi to the south and east, and Straits of Makassar to the west (see also Maras, 2009).

I argue elsewhere that SulBar also shows that ethnic identity has become the prevailing component in the formation a new province (Author, 2012; Author *forthcoming2*). Mandar, the dominant ethnic group in the peninsula were marginalised for a long time by their counterparts (particularly the Bugis and the Makassarese) in the old province, South Sulawesi. To refresh our understanding on domination of the Bugis and Makassarese over the region since the 18th and 19th centuries, an historian elucidates:

> Mandar, which is divided between the Downriver Mandar states (***Pitu Babana Minanga***) and the Upriver states (***Pitu Ulunna Salo***. Downriver Mandar was historically drawn into the vortex of South Sulawesi politics because of its strategic location on the northwest coast of South Sulawesi. It offered alternative harbours to Makassar, the principal port of west coast of South Sulawesi, and became known as a transhipment centre of trading goods to and from the east coast of Kalimantan outside the official channels. In earlier centuries, therefore, it was often a target of invasion from the Bugis and Makassar kingdoms in the south. On these occasions, its sole defence was the rugged mountain interior, which served as a major deterrent to any invading force, and the good faith of the Upriver Mandar states. Because of the inaccessibility of Upriver Mandar in the mountain regions, it was almost completely outside the development occurring in the rest of South Sulawesi. Downriver Mandar was its sole window to the outside world and its principle-trading partner (Andaya, 1978: 61).

Thus, it is hard to deny that the rise of ethnic and cultural identity, along with the opening door of decentralisation and pemekaran, featured the establishment of the West Sulawesi province. In fact, local analysts contend for the Mandar, decentralisation is commonly seen as "political space, which is facilitated by the state", and therefore, it is "a golden opportunity that must be taken into account" Kambo (2009:56). Therefore, the decentralisation, to the Mandar (particularly and foremostly whose settle in Polman and Majene districts), is a gift to govern their own territory. In short, the West Sulawesi phenomenon confirms the argument that local sentiments (particularly ethnic and religious identities) remain pivotal in today's decentralisation.

I began this study with standing on sceptical observation of decentralisation in the Indonesian context. If the decentralisation is defined as devolution, that is, ideally to bring government closer to people; then, it seems that decentralisation is understood as localising of government. Although public participation is relatively high; for example, the people's participation at the regular-direct-and-free election through the pilkada or recently the so-called pilkada serentak (Tjenreng, 2016; Kumolo, 2017), the participation remains superficial, i.e. the procedural-structural mechanism only.

The main argument of this chapter is that over two decades of Indonesia's experience to decentralisation, particularly local autonomy (otonomi daerah), apparently has strengthened chauvinism (kedaerahan). The cases highlighted above prove that local identities (predominantly ethnic attachment and religious affiliation) become the cornerstone of Indonesia's decentralisation. Bitterly enough to say that over around two decades of experience on decentralisation, such sentiments continue to take place in Indonesia's local elections today.

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CONCLUSION

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For example:

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Undang-undang RI No. 22 Tahun 1948 tentang Penetapan Aturan-aturan Pokok mengenai Pemerintahan Sendiri di Daerah-daerah yang berhak Mengatur dan Mengurus Rumah Tangganya Sendiri

Undang-undang RI No. 1 1957 tentang Pokok-pokok Pemerintahan Daerah

Undang-undang RI No. 5 Tahun 1974 tentang Pokok-pokok Pemerintahan di Daerah

Undang-undang RI No. 22 Tahun 1999 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah

Undang-undang RI No. 25 Tahun 1999 tentang Perimbangan Keuangan antara Pemerintah Pusat dan Daerah

Undang-undang RI No. 32 Tahun 2004 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah

Undang-undang RI No. 23Tahun 2014 tentang Pemerintahan Daerah

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