

Conflict and Harmony Between *Desa Adat* and the Bali Provincial Government Following the Enactment of the Regional Regulation on Customary Village 2019

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Abstract: The Bali Provincial Government collaborates with *desa adat* (customary village) to enhance their strength and resilience, particularly through the enactment of the Bali Provincial Regulation No. 4/2019. However, excessive regulatory impact may diverge from this goal. This study explores the ideological framework shaping interactions between *desa adat* and the government post-regulation. Utilizing a qualitative approach, data were gathered through a literature review, observations, and comprehensive interviews. The findings are informed by theories of hegemony, ideology, discourse, and the power of knowledge. These interactions are shaped by underlying ideologies related to power, capital, and religion. The regulation's uniform framework on diverse *desa adat* leads to resistance and inefficiency, reflecting hegemonic control and the use of ideology and knowledge to legitimize power. This article contributes to developing legislation that empowers *desa adat* while maintaining their unique characteristics.

Keywords: ideology; *desa adat*; Bali Provincial Government; regional regulation No. 4/2019

1. Introduction

The relationship between *desa adat* and the Bali Provincial government has entered a new stage since the enactment of Regional Regulation 4/2019 on *Desa Adat* (customary villages) in Bali. This regulation denotes a prompt response by the Bali Provincial Government to the Law No. 6/2014 on Villages (Village Law), which sought to empower *desa adat*. The law allows the state government to return to or recreate a village model based on customs, which is potentially more closely aligned with local social conditions than the Java-

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centered model imposed uniformly throughout Indonesia by the New Order's Village Law of 1979 (Vel & Bedner, 2015).

The issuance of Regulation 4/2019 not long after the enactment of Village Law at the national level has been evident the serious concern of Bali Provincial Government to empower *desa adat*. Notably, *adat* is part of the Provincial Government's priority program sector, which includes among other things, customs, religion, traditions, arts, and culture. The state government, as well as the Bali Provincial government, places high value on the development of *desa adat*. The *desa adat* has the responsibility to safeguard the community against negative influences and threats and has become the front line for guarding Balinese religion and culture (Putra & Creese, 2016). With the enactment of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019, *desa adat* and its society have reestablished optimism that Balinese traditions would be better preserved and contribute significantly to *adat* community development (Zaenudin & Ardana, 2020)

The community has welcomed several positive aspects of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019, such as financial assistance and institutional development (Suyadnya, 2021). This regulation has facilitated and addressed key aspects of *desa adat* life: *parhyangan* (humans and the divine), *pawongan* (humans and their communities), and *palemahan* (humans and nature). However, several provisions of the regulation have introduced complex and intricate changes, leading to underlying community anxiety. While the regulation's comprehensive coverage of governance structures, institutional frameworks, and financial management seeks to empower *desa adat*, it also risks imposing excessive regulation. This could potentially threaten the diversity and autonomy of these indigenous communities, creating a tension between the government's intentions and the regulation's impact on *desa adat* autonomy (Hadi, 2018; Noak, 2016).

Desa adat have long held genuine autonomy, having the power to manage and control their own community affairs independently of external regulation. This autonomy existed long before the establishment of the Indonesian state, rather than being granted by the government after independence (Atmaja & Dewi, 2021). However, since the implementation of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019, some of these autonomies have been curtailed, a change that the community, especially its leaders, finds difficult to accept (Suyadnya, 2021). This creates a paradox, highlighting the tension between the Bali Provincial Government's intention to strengthen and empower *desa adat* and the actual impact on their autonomy.

Desa adat society may be unaware of the government's motivations for regulating them uniformly and rigidly. The government instills its ideology in *desa adat* society by promoting discourse as truth to achieve certain objectives. Thus, in light of these circumstances, this study examines the underlying

philosophy or ideology that is carried out by the Bali Provincial government post the enactment of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019. It examines the conflict between the government's efforts to support and empower *desa adat* and the inherent difficulty of doing so without compromising the autonomy that is fundamental to these communities.

In other words, the article discusses the positive and negative impacts of the implementation of the Bali Provincial regulation of 4/2019 against the background of social and political interest of the government and *desa adat*. The explanation highlights the provisions and practices of this Regional Regulation that strengthen the existence of *desa adat* in Bali, as well as those that are perceived to weaken the existence and unique characteristics of *desa adat* in Bali.

2. Literature Review

In positive law, the government recognizes the dual structure of villages in Bali, which includes *desa adat* and *desa dinas* (administrative villages). *Desa adat* focus on customs and cultural practices, while *desa dinas* handle governmental affairs. *Desa adat* or also known as *desa pakraman* refers to indigenous communities with strong cultural ties, centered around the life and practices associated with the three main temples in Bali (*Khayangan Tiga*) (Ernawati, 2019). Although the relationship between traditional and administrative villages has generally been harmonious, the dual nature of this village system can potentially lead to conflicts in social and cultural development. This potential for conflict arises because traditional and administrative villages are often located in the same geographic area.

Desa Adat has been the subject of previous research as well as numerous additional studies, publications, and articles. However, they come to different facets of *desa adat*. The process of establishing *desa adat* territorial boundaries was examined by Sumarthana (2011). Comparably, Sama (2021) investigated how the government handled border disputes between *desa adat*, focusing on *Desa Adat* Batubulan and *Desa Adat* Lembeng in Gianyar Regency. The subject of government law was examined in Djelantik's (2013) dissertation, "*Desa Pakraman* Autonomy in the Implementation of Village Government in Bali Province," with a focus on the role of *desa adat* autonomy in the creation of *desa adat* regulations. The significance of community involvement in developing regional legislation concerning the function of *desa pakraman* was emphasised by Dewi (2019). However, these studies were carried out prior to the implementation of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019.

3. Methods and Theories

3.1 Methods

This study adopts a qualitative methodology as it delves into issues concerning social realities. Through a cultural studies perspective, the research aims to investigate and comprehend the ideological interest carried out by Bali Provincial Government in interacting with *desa adat* subsequent to the enactment of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019. Data collection was conducted across several *desa adat*, selected based on *desa adat* typology (Pitana, 1994) (Ardhana, 2020). Specifically, research was conducted in *Desa Adat Julah*, Tejakula District, Buleleng Regency, representing *Desa Adat Bali Mula/Bali Aga*. *Desa Adat Julah* illustrates the indigenous people of Bali, predating the Majapahit kingdom's influence from Java, with 'aga' meaning 'original' or 'mountain.' They are distinct from the 'modern Balinese,' or 'wong (people) Majapahit,' who migrated from Java and predominantly live in the southern plains (Sari & Putra, 2020).

Desa Adat Kapal, Mengwi District, Badung Regency, represents *Desa Adat Apanage*. After the Majapahit arrived, the village embraced many of their teachings and influences, resulting in rich traditional and cultural values and unique characteristics (Suadnyana, 2020). This is evident in the *Khayangan Jagat* Temple, the *Puru Sada Kapal* Temple which symbolizes the strong influence of Shiva Buddhist teachings, the current *desa adat* Kapal governance, and the *Khayangan Tiga* Temple (Interview with *Bandesa Adat Kapal*, I Ketut Sudarsana, 10 June 2023).

As to demonstrate *Desa Adat Bali Anyar*, research conducted in *Desa Adat Ekasari*, Melaya District, Jembrana Regency, West Bali. *Desa Adat Bali Anyar* emerged relatively recently as a result of residents relocating in search of work, subsequently settling in the area and established new *desa adat* (Suadnyana, 2020). The village is home to a diverse population from various villages both within and outside Bali, who relocated locally. As a result, the residents of *Desa Adat Ekasari* have varied religious and belief backgrounds (Interview with *Bandesa Adat Ekasari*, I Ketut Mulyana, 8 January 2023).

Data collection involved a literature review, observations, and interviews. During the observations, the author directly examined research subjects related to various aspects of *desa adat*, both from the perspective of the government and the *desa adat* communities, starting from November 2022. Interviews were conducted with a range of sources and informants, including *bandesa adat* (traditional village heads), former government officials, and *desa adat* administrators.

3.2 Theories

The ideology built by the Bali Provincial government in preserving and strengthening *desa adat* is aimed both at the interests of the Balinese people and at

the subjective interests of the authorities themselves. These ideological practices can be traced from the dynamic forms of interaction between the government and *desa adat*. Ideology is a notion employed to conceal social reality and legitimize class dominance by making it appear natural and historical (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Furthermore, Althusser argues that ideology is actually a mechanism by which elite groups impose their interests and beliefs on the masses in a society (Althusser, 2014). In line with this, Simon stated that a class that wants to move forward to become hegemony needs to build an ideological system that can act as a foundation that can elevate and unite various social power groups (Simon, 2004).

4. Results and Discussion

In line with Althusser and Simon, if it is related to several policies of Governor Wayan Koster, especially after the implementation of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019, the beliefs that are instilled in the community in a persuasive way are carried out by linking religious teachings, sacred places, as well as culture, with the Government's vision, which is actually a hidden ideology in order to maintain power. The teaching of *Sat Kerthi* is one of the values that is always instilled in society as a truth. *Sat Kerthi* is a pursuit aimed at cleansing the soul (*atma kerthi*), preserving forests (*wana kerthi*) and lakes (*danu kerthi*) for clean water sources, safeguarding the sea and beaches (*segara kerthi*), fostering social harmony and vitality (*jagat kerthi*), and enhancing human resource quality (Arjaya, 2022) This truth is then employed as a basis for organizing society with one command arrangement, which is an imposition of the ruler's interests to build the ruler's ideology so that the ruler can hegemonize and bind society to continuously legitimize his power. According to this discussion, the ideology underlying the interaction between the government and *desa adat* can be divided into three categories: power, capital, and religion.

4.1 Ideology of Power

Ideology of power is a person's or group's ability to influence the behavior of another person or group so that it is consistent with the desires and goals of the party in power. Ideology is employed to acquire power, and it is fully developed once power is obtained. The successful development of ideology will result in the retention of power. Since the enactment of Regulation of the Province of Bali No. 4/2019 on *Desa Adat* in Bali, doctrines have emerged that aim to explain while also providing the basis for justification, which is carried out by the authorities persuasively and, in some cases, with power, so that every member of society accepts it to the greatest extent as possible, and it becomes established in *desa adat*.

The established pattern requires *desa adat*. to be administered in one management, pattern, island, and command. The authorities view prioritizing such ideology will be very successful in preserving their control while also influencing every aspect of *desa adat* life. Furthermore, according to the Explanation of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019, it is envisioned that with a one-command governance design, *desa adat* would not be divided sporadically into complete independence per *desa adat* or per district/city. This implies that the authorities are purposely reconstructing *desa adat*. that were previously independent to ensure that they are no longer independent and must be administered by the provincial government under one command. The current pattern is strengthened by the publication of governor regulations, circulars, and appeals, as well as rigidly and uniformly controlled reporting and administrative procedures. In substance, Regional Regulation No. 4/2019, when examined closely, leads to uniformity in many of its articles.

Regional Regulation No. 4/2019 adheres to the principle of *Bali Mawacara* (Bali unity). This principle is new in *desa adat* settings. The principle of *Desa Mawacara*, which is typical in *desa adat*, did not appear and was substituted with *Aneka Tua/Sarwada* (diversity), which was explained as recognition and respect for the shared value system in national and state life. However, in reality, the pattern of uniformity is much stronger than diversity.

In addition, Law No. 6/2014, states unequivocally that communities, including *desa adat*, are located inside the district. This is contrary to Regional Regulation No. 4/2019, which states that *desa adat* are under provincial administration. This indication of mutual attraction of authority has given rise to various interpretations in the community, as stated by *bandesa adat* of Blahkiuh Village, Gusti Agung Sudaratmaja, that there are indications that the regional regulation is a planned and systematic effort to instill the power of the provincial government in *desa adat* while at the same time overriding the role of the district/city government, so that the district/ city government only focuses on managing the *desa dinas*. which positions them under provincial control. This creates confusion and differing interpretations within the community, as local leaders perceive an encroachment on their autonomy. The interview shows that one management regulatory ideology is intimately tied to power, as an attempt to establish a worldview supporting authorities (Barker, 2004).

Another policy adopted in instilling the ideology of power is the Governor's Regulation No. 4/2020 on Implementing Regulations of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019, which, among other things, regulates the Procedures for Writing and Registration of *Awig-Awig* (written and unwritten customary law), Procedures for Writing and Registration of *Pararem* (implementing regulation of *awig-awig*) and the preparation of other Customary Regulations. Based on

the Regulation, *awig-awig* and *pararem*, as well as other regulations in *desa adat*, must be written and registered in accordance with the Governor Regulation, with recommendations from the *Desa Adat* Council.

In practice, several problems arise throughout the implementation of this procedure. Several *desa adat* in Badung Regency, for example, have not been able to fully implement the preparation of *awig-awig* in accordance with the guidelines, because there are substantive differences regarding the organs of *desa adat*. In *Desa Adat Mengwi*, for instance, the terms *sabha desa* (decision making institution in *desa adat*) and *Kertha Desa* (judicial institutions in *desa adat*) are unknown. What is known is *mancagra* that carried out both functions, as decision making and judicial institution (*Awig-awig Desa Adat Mengwi*).

Another reason is that each *desa adat* already has *awig-awig* that has been consecrated (*pasupati*) and installed in the village temple, which if changed in accordance with the requirements would incur significant costs and is therefore regarded unnecessary. *Awig-awig*, as written customary law, emerges from community demands for order and peace, tailored to the distinct characteristics of each village, with regulations varying based on natural conditions (Yulianingsih et al., 2021). A similar situation is encountered when writing and registering *Pararem*. However, there are times when *desa adat* adapt to the regional regulation guidance by adjusting their *awig-awig* structure while remaining essentially the same with minor alterations, as carried out by *Desa Adat Kapal* (Interview with *Bandesa Adat Kapal*, I Ketut Sudarsana, 10 June 2023).

According to the regulation, the Bali Provincial government constructs an ideology to manage society through *desa adat*. The discourse of strengthening *desa adat* through regulatory patterns can be interpreted as an ideology that is deliberately developed and socialised meticulously so that efforts to perpetuate power do not appear to be visible, thus it is hoped that it will receive maximum support to maintain the existence of the ruler, who is regarded as having contributed fully to *desa adat*. As affirmed by Thompson that ideology serves as a cohesive force within society, uniting its members through the enforcement of beliefs grounded in mutually accepted norms and regulations (Thompson, 2015). The development of ideology by the authorities towards society can be fostered through many things, such as through myths, customs, religion and culture (Larrain, 1996).

Policies aimed at strengthening *desa adat* have sparked great debate. As a communal group, particularly those who were not directly involved in *desa adat* issues, reacted positively to the idea of empowering *desa adat*. However, those involved in *desa adat* activities, such as *prajuru adat* (*desa adat* officials) and institutions within *desa adat*, tend to react negatively to government initiatives.

The strengthening policy was not completely implemented because it was deemed to have crossed into *desa adat* local autonomy boundaries. *Desa adat* that were appreciative of their autonomy feel interfered with in different ways, such as: in establishing *awig-awig*, institutions in *desa adat*, financial management.

The Government's overall programs could potentially be recognized as an endeavor to gain legitimacy through the construction of identity and traditional symbols for the purposes of hegemony and power maintenance. This is consistent with Gramsci's interpretation of the concepts of domino and hegemony. According to (Gramsci, 2001), rulers are not only individuals who carry out "dominos," namely by mobilizing structural instruments that sometimes exploit violence, but also through the practice of hegemony, which involves cultural subjugation and the utilization of symbolic, ethical, and ideological exchanges for their own interests. In line with this Althusser stated that the ruling elite can employ practices such as domino and hegemony, alongside utilizing State Apparatus Ideology (ISA), particularly through religious and cultural institutions, as means to garner support and validate their authority in wielding power (Althusser, 2014). Thus, the practices of using strategies subtly or even hidden in various forms of policy are actually discourses to maintain power, hegemony, and the status quo carried out by the government.

On one hand, the government promotes a specific ideology to justify its regulatory approach, suggesting that centralized control will preserve and strengthen *desa adat*. This ideology is disseminated through Regulation No. 4/2019 and other related policies that emphasize uniformity over diversity, despite the principle of *desa mawacara* (diversity). Regulation No. 4/2019 imposes a centralized and uniform governance structure that requires *desa adat* to align with provincial regulations. This includes the mandatory registration and standardization of *awig-awig* and practices, which were previously independently managed by each *desa adat*. Through the regulations, the government claims to empower *desa adat*, preserve Balinese culture, promote unity, and ensure effective governance within these traditional communities. The government regulation is presented as beneficial for *desa adat*.

On the other hand, disparity occurs between the desired outcomes and the actual impact. In reality, the government's intention to empower *desa adat* increase control and reduce the customary autonomy of these communities. As stated above, those within the *desa adat* structures often feel that their autonomy, which is deeply rooted in their history and cultural practices, is being undermined. They see the regulations as an overreach that disrupts their established traditions and governance practices.

4.2 Ideology of Capital

Capital refers to diverse forms of capital (power) in a specific field, which is defined as a particular social universe or stake in which social actors compete with one another (Wacquant, 1989). Capital has two dimensions: the stake of participants in the field who are always competing, and the resources mobilized by the same participants in their efforts to attain goals. The goal is to collect capital and then utilize it to acquire additional wealth and a dominant position in that area. Regarding capital ideology, Kumbara (2021) pointed out:

Capital may appear in a variety of forms, including “economic capital” in the form of property ownership and memories. However, it can also take the shape of “cultural capital” such as language abilities, cultural awareness, and skills acquired through academic knowledge, particularly educational classification. Another form is “symbolic capital,” which is represented in rituals of acknowledgment, particularly the accumulation of prestige.

Economic and cultural capital may be used in battles to obtain and sustain differentiation and dominance. Symbolic capital enables dominating actors to sustain social hierarchies by employing symbolic power. In the government’s interaction with *desa adat*, the ideology of capital arises from the power relations between the government and *desa adat* where the authorities can play a role in controlling *desa adat* with economic, socio-cultural and symbolic capital. With this capital ideology strategy, the government enters *desa adat* so that it can make the authorities stronger. Capital ideology is utilized to regulate how *desa adat* think and act, allowing rulers to always maintain control over them.

Desa adat responded positively to the government’s capital-based hegemony since the capital collected was able to solve a variety of obstacles. The government has implemented several programs to instill the ideology of capital. In Governor’s Regulation Number 34/2019 on Financial Management of *Desa Adat* in Bali, as amended several times, most recently with Bali Governor’s Regulation Number 2/2023 on the Second Amendment to Governor’s Regulation Number 34/2019 on Financial Management of *Desa Adat* in Bali, the government regulates various matters regarding procedures for *desa adat* financial management including *Desa Adat* Income, *Desa Adat* Expenditures, *Desa Adat* Financing, *Desa Adat* Financial Management, as well as Guidance and Supervision. The Regulation governs *desa adat* income from various sources, including *desa adat* original income, *padruwen* (wealth or assets belong to *desa adat*) management results, the Provincial Government Revenue and Expenditure Budget (APBD) allocation, regency/city government financial assistance, central government financial assistance, non-binding third-party grants and donations (*punia* funds), and other legitimate sources.

Furthermore, the legislation states that *desa adat* revenue is derived from the allocation of APBD. Regarding this article, the Bali Provincial government consistently provides funding directly to *desa adat* each year, with a relative value that increases from year to year. The government continually seeks to organize approaches to ensure the income granted to *desa adat* increases each year, demonstrating that the Bali Provincial government is genuinely invested in *desa adat*.

This ideology of capital is subtly instilled as if it has nothing to do with power, in order to gain support from *desa adat* society. The community's support is based on their trust in the Bali Provincial government's policies, which have proven to be beneficial to traditional communities by providing alternative forms of income. The Bali Provincial government, through Law No. 15/2023 on Bali Province, has succeeded in introducing new options for traditional communities to enhance their income through central government funds. The law regulates that the Central Government can provide funding support in order to strengthen the cultural advancement of *desa adat* and *subak* (irrigation system of the Balinese people) through the Bali Provincial government. This clause indicates that the Bali Provincial government's commitment and attention to improve *desa adat* income has received more attention significantly.

In addition to this strategy, funds are generously supplied to *desa adat* through Government Social Assistant system, which are either provided directly or based on proposals. Government Social Assistant is a tool that operates outside of the Regional Development Planning framework. As a result, there are times when the allocation of social assistance to the community intended as development funds is duplicated or overlaps with the development planning mechanism based on Law No. 25 of 2004 concerning the National Development Planning System (hereinafter referred to as Law No. 25/2004). The method of providing fund through the social assistance system makes the ideology of capital, particularly economic capital, more prevalent in society.

Most *desa adat* society are still pragmatic in nature, therefore anyone who offers financial aid is viewed as something or someone who needs to be supported. With this attitude and philosophy, the authorities will be able to exercise greater control over *desa adat*. According to an interview with *bandesa adat* Pagan village Dr. I Wayan Subawa, S.H., M.H.:

“Providing financial assistance not only empowers *desa adat* and revitalises cultural values, but also fights for the rights of indigenous peoples in local and national contexts. However, in practice, authorities, including members of the DPRD, frequently use financial support to gain and/or preserve power” (Interview, 10 October 2023).

Based on this interview, it can be argued that the Governor of Bali acknowledges that the ongoing existence of rulers in the future is heavily reliant

on the survival of Balinese cultural traditions. Therefore, the ideology of capital is considered a strategy that must be constantly reinforced.

In connection with cultural capital, the Bali Provincial government has undertaken efforts to revitalize social organisations that are viewed as having a high potential for building solidarity with *desa adat* society and their customs. One potential way is to form *Paiketan Krama Istri (PAKIS)*, a traditional women organization (Photo 1). Organizationally, this institution expanded from *desa adat* to the provincial level, with membership primarily composed of female figures from *desa adat*, alongside some representatives from official circles. In response to the founding of the organization, *Bandesha Adat Blahkiuh* village, Gusti Agung Sudaratmaja, stated that

“In various cases, traditional and cultural symbols are often promoted and manipulated in such a way by the rulers to fulfill their traditional ambitions and power interests. Usually, discourse about the role and existence of organizations such as PAKIS will appear in the public arena widely, ahead of regional head and/or legislative election event. Once the election is over, the discourse and activities surrounding customs and culture also disappear” (Interview, 15 November 2023).



Photo 1. The PAKIS' anniversary celebration took place with great enthusiasm, inviting all PAKIS members from across Bali in September 2023 (Photo: Sridana)

As previously stated, in addition to PAKIS, *desa adat* are required to establish many other traditional institutions (Article 43 of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019). All of these institutions are funded by *desa adat* budget, which comes from, among other things, the Bali Provincial Government through APBD. This type of cultural capital ideology is aimed to empower *desa adat* so that it appears to be unrelated to hegemony of power. The government employs symbolic capital, such as cultural festivals and the creation of traditional organizations, to garner legitimacy and support from *desa adat*. These symbols of cultural preservation are intertwined with political power, making the people more likely to support the government, believing it respects and enhances their traditions.

This type of cultural development strategy, which is associated with cultural tourism (Putra, 2014), is a strategy and policy aimed at establishing the notion of cultural capital in the hopes of receiving positive support, particularly from artists and tourism activists. The ideology of cultural capital can be presented in such a way that it raises cultural knowledge and pride, despite the fact that it is intended to preserve and carry out hegemony. The strategy is then strengthened and integrated into the regulatory framework.

In relation to the ideology of capital, the paradox lies in the fact that, despite appearing to empower *desa adat* through economic, cultural, and symbolic support, it actually functions to entrench government control, diminish traditional autonomy, and perpetuate the government's power. This creates a situation where *desa adat* appear empowered but are, in reality, more tightly regulated and dependent on the provincial government. The ideology of capital in this context serves as a tool for hegemony. While *desa adat* receives resources and support, they become increasingly dependent on the government for these capitals. This dependence reduces their autonomy and traditional self-reliance.

By distributing economic, cultural, and symbolic capital, the government not only gains the trust and support of *desa adat* but also subtly imposes a uniform administrative and cultural framework that aligns with its interests. *Desa Adat* first appear to benefit from the injection of funds and attention, becoming more capable and well-supported. But this apparent empowerment conceals the fact that these capital sources are actually being employed by the government to gain more authority over *desa adat*. Regulating financial management, cultural activities, and symbolic behaviours allows the government to centralise power, shifting it from the villages to the provincial authorities.

4.3 Ideology of Religion

The Bali Provincial government under the leadership of Governor Wayan Koster recognizes that local religion and culture, along with their numerous symbols, are a strategic and highly effective political resource for gaining and

keeping power. As a result, the provincial government frequently employs dominance and hegemony, as well as ideology, particularly in relation to *desa adat*, to obtain support and legitimacy in exercising power.

The presence of *desa adat* in Bali represents the origin and development of Balinese culture based on Hindu teachings. Since the administration Wayan Koster, the government has been heavily involved in religious ritual activities associated with *desa adat*. The Government's involvement in regulating *desa adat* rituals stems from the enactment of Regional Regulation No. 4/2019, which incorporates the concept of *Padma Bhuwana*, signifying that the existence of *desa adat* in Bali is interconnected and cannot be viewed in isolation. They are linked in one cohesive vision of *Padma Bhuwana* (sacred universe). Besakih Temple as *Lingga* (*Purusa/male element*) and Ulun Danu Batur Temple and Beratan Temple as *Pradana* (*female element*) are historic settlements in Bali that are unified by the notion of "Ulu". This notion establishes credibility and obedience in the guise of religion for an ideology.

The *Padma Bhuwana* concept always serves as the foundation for the provincial government's control over religious ritual implementation. This strengthens Nordholt's view, that the relationship between ritual and power cannot be separated because public rituals are completely political and at the same time, power is what is visualized most dramatically in rituals, so that through rituals the existence of the group becomes clear (Nordholt, 2006). Several strategic policies implemented by the Bali Provincial government resulted in the employment of religious symbols, which were transformed into numerous huge ritual ceremonies held in many temples across Bali's districts since 2019.

The execution of these series of rituals also engages communities within *desa adat*, requiring them to conduct particular ceremonies at both household and village levels, funded by their own budgets. The introduction of these ceremonies has provoked both favorable and critical reactions within the community. While some support the inclusion of these rites as prayers for the well-being of humanity and the world, others question and criticize the need for such complex rituals. The Bali Province *Desa Adat* Council's administrator, Mr. I Gusti Made Ngurah, suggested:

"The religious ritual initiated by the Governor is a ceremony to ask for the salvation of the world with all its contents, but it would be better if it started by coordinating with the Indonesian Hindu Dharma Society (PHDI) and *Sabha Pandita* (communication forum among high priest in Bali) so that the background and basics of the religious literature that is the reference for the ceremony is clear. We coordinate the meeting from various clans whose members are senior priests. However, the ceremonies carried out were lack of coordination" (Interview, 9 November 2023)

Moreover, aside from the rites described above, there are specific rituals organized to celebrate *Tumpek*, which is a Hindu religious ceremonial day that occurs every 35 days according to the Balinese calendar. The actual celebration of the *Tumpek* for *desa adat* society in Bali has been a tradition from ancient times, with many forms of religious rites based on Hindu teachings as well as the traditions and customs of each *desa adat*. Aside from *Tumpek*, Bali has several ceremonial days based on *pawukon* or *sasih* (months according to the Balinese calendar), such as *Galungan*, *Kuningan*, *Pagerwesi*, *Saraswati*, *Nyepi*, and *Siwaratri*. The ceremonial day celebrations that have been specifically regulated by the Bali Provincial Government are limited to *Tumpek*. The Bali Provincial government has specifically controlled ceremonial days limited to only *Tumpek*. Meanwhile, other ceremonial days have yet to be prescribed. *Tumpek* arrangements are meticulously detailed in terms of the type of ritual, the location of implementation, and the parties required to attend the event. The application of this ceremony elicits strong reactions from the community, particularly in *desa adat*.

In regard with rituals in *desa adat*, aside from the favourable and encouraging responses, there is also resistance in society. Important figures in *desa adat* expressed resistance, as stated by *bandesa adat* Kapal Village, I Ketut Sudarsana:

“Currently, the Governor’s Circular stipulates the implementation of religious ceremonies for all *Tumpek* days, while other ceremonial occasions are unannounced. The question arises as to whether these additional events will be similarly regulated as *Tumpek*. If they follow the same pattern as *Tumpek* in the Governor’s order, every ceremony within *desa adat* may have a similar outcome: uniformity in ceremonies and locations. Additionally, there’s a possibility of disrupting the traditional ceremonial order that has been passed down through generations” (Interview, 15 Mei 2023).

On the other hand, the provincial government communicated a distinct message through Regional Regulation Number 4/2023 on Bali’s Future Development Direction for the 100 Years of the New Bali Era 2025-2125. It was stated that Balinese, particularly younger generation, seemed very enthusiastic about participating in the *Tumpek* celebration in each region (Photo 2). In fact, each *desa adat* continues to perform *Tumpek* day ceremonial rites as they have for generations, in accordance with their customs and traditions.

During Covid-19 epidemic in Bali, the provincial government issued numerous directives and instructions on ceremonies that must be performed in order to defeat the pandemic (Wirantari, 2024). One of these directives involved instructing *desa adat* to enact a regulation, known as *Pararem Gering*

Agung (implementing regulations for *awig-awig* in handling Covid-19) (Sari et al., 2022). Some of these directions and instructions were issued in collaboration with PHDI or the *Desa Adat* Council, while others were not. The government attends indigenous community religious ceremony to impose a religious ideology based on what they consider to be truthful values and beliefs. However, people are unaware that they have adopted it in every action, implying that the ideology offered by the government in this ritual incorporates knowledge of the truth. According to Foucault, truth refers to a prevailing regime of truth; truth is the product of the dynamics of power function (Takwin, 2009). However, he also stated that every speech is not absolute truth, but rather a human reaction to what happens to him, or a human reaction to the power that restrains him (Foucault, 1981).



Photo 2. *Tumpek* rituals are carried out based on *desa adat* tradition (Photo: Sridana).

The Government has established a religious ideology emphasizing the truth contained in its teachings, particularly emphasizing the *Padma Bhuvana* concept, which is considered a religious directive. Through policies like regional regulations, governor regulations, and circulars, the government aims to enforce uniformity while discouraging diversity. This approach aligns with Jean Francois Lyotard's observation that knowledge, including rules and regulations, is imposed on diverse parties to suppress variation (Takwin, 2009). In the context of interactions between *desa adat* and the Bali Provincial Government, *desa adat* were unable to fully comply with these instructions because they have their own traditions, but they did not openly reject the government's pressure to maintain peaceful relations.

Religious ideology, paradoxically, both encourages and standardizes religious practices within *desa adat* as a way to preserve and strengthen cultural identity. On the surface, the government's participation in religious rituals is perceived as a positive initiative to uphold cultural heritage and religious commitment. The government's directives are framed as truthful and necessary for cultural preservation. However, the underlying agenda is to use these religious activities to establish and maintain political dominance. In fact, this centralization of control serves to suppress the inherent diversity of traditional practices. Through the imposition of uniform rituals, the government hides its political motives, resulting in a situation where *desa adat* appear supported and empowered but are actually subjected to greater control.

5. Conclusion

The study highlights the tension between the government's intentions to support and strengthen *desa adat* and the reality of how these efforts impact the villages' autonomy. The interaction between the Bali Provincial Government and *desa adat* is influenced by hidden ideologies, namely ideology of power, capital, and religion. The ideology of power involves centralised and uniform government regulations that are disguised to preserve Balinese culture and promote unity but are actually attempts to maintain control and influence over *desa adat*. The regulation's comprehensive nature risks excessive regulation that could threaten the diversity and autonomy of *desa adat*. Ideology of capital refers to the different forms of capital (economic, cultural, symbolic) that the government and *desa adat* leverage in their interactions. This affects how resources are distributed and how cultural practices are maintained or altered to sustain and entrench government political power. Ideology of religion in which the government employs religious and cultural values to legitimize its regulations and maintain authority over *desa adat*. The imposition of a uniform

framework on diverse *desa adat* has led to resistance and inefficiency, reflecting hegemonic control.

Empirical findings suggest that regulatory uniformity undermines the autonomy of traditional villages, placing them as subordinate to the Bali Provincial government, while also disregarding traditional leaders, practitioners, and community aspirations, indicating a political dimension aimed at preserving the status quo despite the purported objective of strengthening *desa adat*. Theoretical findings demonstrate that Regional Regulation Number 4/2019 in Bali enforces a standardized framework for *desa adat* based on the *Bali mawacara* concept, despite their intrinsic variability. Such uniformity frequently results in opposition, contradictions, and inefficiencies, demonstrating the use of hegemony to streamline regulation, establish control, and assert domination. This is consistent with theories of power dynamics, discourse/knowledge, and hegemony, which hold that the legitimacy of authority stems from imposing universal governance patterns on *desa adat*, promoted by ideology, power, and knowledge.

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