



**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EIGHTH (2020) AND NINTH
(2021) EDITIONS OF THE MISS GRAND INTERNATIONAL
IN RECONSTRUCTING THE IMAGE THAILAND: A
QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENT BASED ON THE
PERCEPTION AND INTEREST OF INDONESIAN**

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

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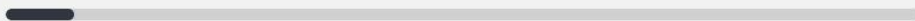
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ABSTRACT

I Gede Eka Praditya, International Relations 2019, President University

Thesis Title: *The Significance of the Eighth (2020) and Ninth (2021) Editions of the Miss Grand International in Reconstructing the Image of Thailand: A Quantitative Measurement based on the Perception and Interest of Indonesian*

The late 2019 and year 2020 were considered as one of the most historical periods for a country named Thailand. In those years, not only the country had to fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, but its government also had to face another level of struggle, namely to deal with significant turmoil due to the discontent of its people. As the news media said, public discontent in Thailand was reported to cause prolonged protests against the Thai government. At that hard time, many Thai people (especially the pro-democracy group) were seen taking to the streets to voice their demands while raising their 3 fingers. This sign was known to represent the three main demands that they had in mind which include the dismissal of Prayuth Chan-O-Cha as the prime minister of Thailand, the amendment of the country's constitution, and the reformation of the Thai monarchy. Even though all issues could still be managed in the end, unfortunately, they left a negative image for the country in the eyes of international audiences, one of which is Indonesian. For example, due to this prolonged event, the state was seen by foreigners as a conflictual and less safe country to visit. Entering a new stage when tensions were reported to have eased, Thailand was known to host two international events in 2021, namely beauty pageants. Under the Miss Grand International Organization (MGIO), Thailand began to improve its negative image through the eighth (2020) and ninth (2021) editions of the Miss Grand International (MGI) competition. Deriving from this, the two editions of the MGI can be considered as the approach used by Thailand in achieving its national interests. Based on these narratives, this thesis is aimed to discover the significance level of the used approach in achieving Thailand's national interest. In the writing of this thesis, the quantitative approach with a specific mathematical formula is used as the method of measurement. In this case, the author utilizes both primary and secondary data as the main source of analysis. In addition, the author also dissects three major concepts of diplomacy in this thesis namely public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and beauty diplomacy. However, to make this thesis more specific, only cultural diplomacy is used as the main approach to the analysis. To achieve the objective of this thesis, the author starts by explaining the conduct of the eighth (2020) and ninth (2021) editions of the MGI in Thailand and assesses its significance level based on 100 data of online questionnaire obtained from two sub-population of Indonesian. In measuring the significance level, the author relies on both the perception and interest of the

targeted population toward Thai culture, traditional costume, language, cuisine, tourism, people, quality of beauty pageant production, safety, infrastructure, and beauty products. In conclusion, this thesis discovered that the conduct of the two referred editions of the MGI has some positive implications for the reconstruction of the positive image of Thailand in the eyes of Indonesian with various significant levels in each aspect being asked and a medium level of significance in the overall ten aspects measured.

Keywords: MGI, Beauty Pageants, Cultural Diplomacy, Thailand, Country Image, Perception, Interest.

ABSTRAK

I Gede Eka Praditya, Hubungan Internasional 2019, Universitas Presiden

Judul Tesis: *Signifikansi Penyelenggaraan Edisi Kedelapan (2020) dan Kesembilan (2021) Miss Grand Internasional terhadap Rekonstruksi Citra Thailand: Pengukuran Kuantitatif Berdasarkan Persepsi dan Ketertarikan Masyarakat Indonesia.*

Akhir tahun 2019 dan tahun 2020 dianggap sebagai salah satu periode paling bersejarah bagi negara bernama Thailand. Pada tahun tersebut, tidak hanya negara ini harus berjuang melawan pandemi COVID-19, tetapi pemerintahnya juga harus menghadapi tingkat perjuangan lain yaitu menghadapi gejolak yang signifikan akibat ketidakpuasan rakyatnya. Seperti yang diungkap oleh media berita, ketidakpuasan publik di Thailand dilaporkan telah menyebabkan protes berkepanjangan melawan pemerintah Thailand itu sendiri. Di masa sulit tersebut, banyak rakyat Thailand (khususnya kelompok pro-demokrasi) terlihat turun ke jalan untuk menyuarakan tuntutan sambil mengacungkan 3 jari. Tanda ini diketahui mewakili tiga tuntutan yang disuarakan, yang meliputi pemecatan Prayuth Chan-O-Cha sebagai perdana menteri, amandemen konstitusi negara, dan reformasi monarki Thailand. Meski semua isu pada akhirnya dapat diatasi, sayangnya itu tetap meninggalkan citra negatif bagi negara di mata khalayak internasional, salah satunya di mata khalayak Indonesia. Misal saja, akibat kejadian berkepanjangan ini, negara tersebut (Thailand) dipandang oleh orang asing sebagai negara yang konflikual dan kurang aman untuk dikunjungi. Memasuki babak baru ketika ketegangan dilaporkan telah mereda, Thailand diketahui menjadi tuan rumah untuk dua acara internasional di tahun 2021, yakni acara kontes kecantikan. Dibawah organisasi Miss Grand Internasional (MGIO), Thailand mulai memperbaiki citra negatifnya melalui kompetisi edisi kedelapan (2020) dan kesembilan (2021) Miss Grand Internasional (MGI). Berangkat dari hal tersebut, kedua edisi MGI yang dimaksud dapat dianggap sebagai pendekatan yang digunakan Thailand dalam mencapai kepentingan nasionalnya. Berdasarkan narasi tersebut, tesis ini bertujuan untuk menemukan tingkat signifikansi dari pendekatan yang digunakan dalam mencapai kepentingan nasional Thailand. Dalam penulisan tesis ini, pendekatan kuantitatif dengan rumus matematika yang ditentukan khusus digunakan sebagai metode pengukuran. Dalam hal ini, penulis menggunakan baik data primer maupun sekunder sebagai sumber utama untuk analisis. Selain itu, penulis juga membedah tiga konsep diplomasi dalam tesis ini, yaitu diplomasi publik, diplomasi budaya, dan diplomasi kecantikan. Namun, untuk menjadikan tesis ini lebih spesifik, hanya diplomasi budaya yang digunakan sebagai pendekatan utama. Untuk mencapai tujuan tesis ini, penulis memulai dengan menjelaskan penyelenggaraan edisi kedelapan (2020) dan kesembilan

(2021) MGI di Thailand dan mengukur tingkat signifikansinya menggunakan 100 data kuesioner online yang diperoleh dari dua sub-populasi masyarakat Indonesia. Dalam mengukur tingkat signifikansi yang dimaksud, penulis mempertimbangkan persepsi dan ketertarikan masyarakat Indonesia terhadap budaya, pakaian tradisional, bahasa, masakan, pariwisata, masyarakat, kualitas produksi kontes kecantikan, keamanan, infrastruktur, dan produk kecantikan yang dimiliki oleh Thailand. Kesimpulannya, tesis ini menemukan bahwa penyelenggaraan dua edisi MGI yang dimaksud memiliki beberapa implikasi positif terhadap rekonstruksi citra positif Thailand di mata masyarakat Indonesia dengan tingkat signifikansi yang beragam di setiap aspeknya dan tingkat medium untuk keseluruhan aspek yang diukur.

Kata Kunci: MGI, Kontes Kecantikan, Diplomasi Budaya, Thailand, Citra Negara, Persepsi, Ketertarikan.

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