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The return to constitutional democracy in Indonesia

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Indonesia's political and cultural transformation

Thomas Reuter

Since the fall of the authoritarian regime of President Suharto in 1998, in what is known as *reformasi*, or 'the reform period', Indonesia's political system has experienced tremendous democratic change. From a formal perspective, the political system has been transformed almost beyond recognition. In this volume, a group of international experts on Indonesian politics and culture retrace some of the main steps on this journey to democracy, highlighting the dramatic improvements achieved to date by the four administrations since Suharto's regime, but also drawing attention to continuities and a number of serious obstacles that remain in place and may yet derail or undermine democracy, equality and political freedom in Indonesia. Indonesians had lived under a condition of such deeply entrenched political oppression, where all authority rested with the President, his military support base and the monolithic state-party apparatus of Suharto's Golkar party and where open opposition was violently suppressed, that the events of 1998 came as a surprise even to seasoned Indonesia watchers. The speed with which the so-called New Order regime lost its stranglehold on the will of a population made compliant for an entire generation was astonishing, even against an historical backdrop of declining living standards in the wake of the Asian economic crisis of 1997 which was often credited as having triggered its demise. It was indeed easy to find reasons to be sceptical of the capacity of politically inexperienced reformers in the pro-democracy alliance to rebuild an authoritarian state in the image of democracy. But widespread fears that the reform movement would fall victim to political fragmentation, violent civil unrest and renewed military intervention were unfounded. While the reform movement did encounter a range of serious challenges, some predicted and others, such as the transformation of world political discourses after 11 September 2001, unforeseeable, it also gained unexpected support from within the establishment, most notably from Suharto's former Vice-President Habibie during his brief interregnum, and thus managed to press ahead with its agenda for democracy. The national, provincial and district legislative elections in 1999 and 2004 were generally fair, free and peaceful, as were the first presidential elections in 2004 and the parliamentary

and presidential elections of 2009. With new decentralisation laws enacted in 1999, public service delivery and budget planning have been devolved to 450 municipalities and districts. The country held its first direct elections for provincial governors and district chief executives in 2005. Indonesians also have gained unprecedented freedom of expression, association and other civil liberties, as well as greater local political self-determination in the wake of comprehensive legislative and executive reforms, new human rights protection laws and the creation of a Constitutional Court. In election procedural and formal institutional terms, Indonesia has thus become a well-established democracy and it is now, indeed, the third largest democracy in the world. How well this democracy is functioning on the ground is quite another matter.

As Andrew Ellis (2005:1), head of Electoral Process in IDEA, pointed out,

day to day governance, economic development, fighting corruption and building the rule of law is much less glamorous than building a new institutional framework after years of authoritarian government, but it remains the test of whether Indonesia will make democracy work.

Putting democracy into practice does not depend solely on the level of commitment to good governance and other aspects of democracy-building among politicians within the present and future administrations. Indeed, Ikrar Bhakti (2004:202–3), reflecting on this matter, concludes that such values were lacking among politicians:

Many of the political elites state that they are committed to supporting democracy and reform, but in reality they practice the kinds of politics that demonstrate their lack of political ethics—ethics that are essential for the development of democracy.

Indonesia's political future may thus depend on the rise of a democratic culture at a more popular level, so that the public, civil society organisations and opposition parties will work together to hold any incumbent government accountable for poor governance and to press for further reform of institutions where change has been slow or partial, or where corruption remains endemic.

The failure to prosecute Suharto and his cronies, and, more recently, the acquittal of Muchdi Purwopranjono, former commander of Indonesia's special forces (Kopassus) and deputy head of the state intelligence agency, who allegedly ordered the murder by poisoning of human rights campaigner Munir Said Thalib on a Garuda Indonesia flight in September 2004, suggests that the judiciary has been and continues to be one institution where such cultural pressure for democratic reform needs to be applied. In the Munir murder case, amidst continuous media attention and public protests by human rights groups, the prosecution has appealed the decision with the Supreme Court. This case may be indicative of rising democratic pressures on all kinds of public institutions,

rather than an exception. According to a recent report, cultural commitment to democracy in general appears to be quite strong and resilient in Indonesia now, at least within civil society:

With the exception of fringe religious groups, all significant political actors and social groups appear to agree on the importance of democracy. Although there is some nostalgia for the levels of economic growth and stability achieved during Suharto's authoritarian New Order, no significant group argues for a government dominated by the military or the benefits of authoritarian rule. Moreover, Indonesians understand democracy to involve such basic ideas as open competition, protection of civil liberties, the rule of law, and respect for pluralism and minority rights. As part of this consensus on democracy, Indonesian actors agree on the importance of genuinely democratic elections and accept the premise that elections are the only legitimate way to change governments (Bjornlund, Liddle & Blair King 2005:4).

Indonesian's popular enthusiasm for democracy and general lack of nostalgia for authoritarian rule, rather ironically, is not shared by all international commentators, and the enemies of democracy may be found among those who most loudly claim to promote it. In 2005, for example, the *New York Times* published an opinion piece by Scott Atran, who wrote that 'the entrenchment of democracy has weakened Indonesia's willingness to fight terrorism... Such lack of resolve augurs ill for American efforts to promote democracy as an antidote to terrorism elsewhere in the Muslim world' (Atran 2005). Lex Rieffel (2008), via the Brookings Institution, even claims that 'in some countries, electoral democracy can be a recipe for political chaos', describing Suharto as a good friend of the United States who rescued Indonesia from the chaos of its first, post-independence democratic period in 1965. As for the new democracy under the current President, he notes that 'SBY [Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono] knows what needs to be done but cannot do it because he does not have the power to rule that Suharto had. In effect, right now, it can be said that Indonesia is suffering from an excess of democracy.'

Other commentators do acknowledge and welcome the advances Indonesia has made toward establishing democratic institutions, but they lament that, in practice, it is not the kind of democracy that serves the interests of ordinary citizens. Hadiz (2008), for example, argues:

the problems that characterise Indonesian politics and society today—such as money politics, corruption, and thuggery—do not suggest any transitional stage to an idealised, liberal form of democracy. They indicate instead the essential dynamics of a way of exercising power that by now has become more or less established, and is likely to remain entrenched into the foreseeable future.

Although this pessimistic assessment of Indonesia's capacity to establish and maintain democracy may well be justifiable, these are hardly unfamiliar problems and we must exercise caution by interpreting observations about

'Indonesian problems' within a context of international comparison. Indonesia's problems are quite reminiscent, for example, of John Pilger's description of the underbelly of democracy and international diplomacy in nations like Australia and the United States.

Wherever we may choose to position ourselves in relation to these divergent opinions and perspectives, it is obviously unfair to compare the formal properties of Western democracies with the lived reality of non-Western democracies. And while a comparison between the formal institutional frameworks of different political systems may already be rather complex and difficult, it is even more difficult to obtain and interpret the information required for an objective comparison of the informal workings of democracy in different nations. On a formal level Indonesia has made enormous advances and would compare favourably on some counts to Australia, for example, by virtue of its human rights laws, because Australia does not have a bill of rights. But what about democratic practice? Hadiz, for example, in the article cited above, rightly criticises the continuing and sometimes violent oppression of trade-union activism in Indonesia. Even if we agree on the evidence, it can be difficult to draw a fair comparison. How, for example, do we interpret the deafening silence in the decline of organised labour protests following the dismantling of unions in Australia under former Prime Minister John Howard's neoliberal labour relations reform program? In order to put ideological commitments aside, one would have to ask what the real consequences of these policies were in terms of workers' wages and conditions. Vigilance and critical objectivity, it seems, are democracy's best friends in all parts of the world, and their work is never done.

Because of the dangers of looking at Indonesia's fledgling democracy through the distorting lenses of vested political interests and ideological positions, or from the diplomatic perspective of a particular geopolitical positioning, it is crucially important to provide accurate accounts of the realities of political change in Indonesia that are based on independent primary research. Such research, in my opinion, should be based on a balanced attitude of critical objectivity and empathy for the all-too-familiar human struggle for freedom from political domination as it unfolds among our neighbours. In my opinion, there are three important and closely interrelated tasks that lie ahead for those who wish to see democracy flourish in Indonesia. Political sector reform is the first, if not the foremost, of these tasks. Good governance, especially at the level of local government—now charged with providing many important services to the public—will indeed be essential for improving the credibility of the government and the proper functioning of daily life in Indonesia's local communities and in the business community. Resistance to practical democracy from local political

elites is a major obstacle to achieving good governance; but there is also elite resistance at the national level. Perhaps the most significant challenge for democracy in the national political arena is the lack of transparency and public participation in the secretive inner life of the major political parties. The depth of the chasm between party elites and the public is reflected in survey results which show that political parties fail to reflect the aspirations of the absolute majority (65%) of citizens (see LSI 2007). The character of the parties is changing in a democratic climate, however, as they begin to depend more on media exposure than personal or identity networks (*aliran*) for gaining support (LSI 2008). This may provide opportunities for increased transparency, but could also encourage media manipulation by wealthy and influential candidates.

The second important task for Indonesian democrats is to strengthen the supremacy of the law, especially over politicians, public servants and business elites who would abuse their power, but also over cultural elites, including those who would impose their religious beliefs on others. The failure of the justice system to effectively curb corruption and abuses of public office has been particularly damaging to the credibility of all four post-Suharto administrations, though there have been moderate improvements under President Yudhoyono. The impunity with which civil society, religious organisations, such as the Front of Islamic Defenders, can violate the legal rights and the religious freedoms of other citizens is no different. The actions of the Front of Islamic Defenders, and also of combatants in Indonesia's numerous local conflicts, reflect the same disregard for a toothless and corrupt legal system and an associated culture wherein violence and criminal behaviour are considered normal.

Finally, the third task in the pursuit of democracy is a process of human capacity building and equitable economic development, driven by public education and health services. An independent public education system is essential if the next generation of Indonesians is to acquire the skills needed for effective democratic citizenship and for increased economic productivity. Human capacity building is the engine of equitable and sustainable economic development and will encourage the growth of the Indonesian middle class, thus providing hope and prosperity for many poorer Indonesians, for whom the measure of a government's success is still the price of kerosene, rice and cooking oil relative to their earning capacity, rather than the degree of their political freedom. Strong democracy thus requires and simultaneously encourages increased material prosperity and increased knowledge among citizens, as is reflected in the fact that the history of democracy in general is closely linked with the rise of the middle class and mass education. This interplay between democratic freedom, prosperity and knowledge is also central to the thought of leading contemporary economic theorist Amartya Sen, who sees economic and

infrastructure development in terms of human entitlements and capabilities, and hence as a product of freedom and education (Sen 1999).

Outline

In this volume a group of internationally recognised Indonesia experts explore the terms of the five presidents of the *reformasi* period in historical sequence, the specific challenges they faced, their accomplishments, and their links to the legacy of the pre-Reformasi presidents Sukarno and Suharto. The final chapters look at two major themes within the Indonesian political scene during the entire *reformasi* period—the rising influence of political Islam and the ongoing struggle to establish a functioning system of political parties against a background of ethno-religious *aliran* politics.

In his chapter on the tumultuous early phase of democratisation, Irman Lanti explores some of the achievements of the Habibie administration in realising the aspirations of the Reformasi movement which had toppled Suharto after 32 years of authoritarian rule. Habibie's momentous decisions reflect an enthusiasm for political change that would seem surprising in view of the fact that Habibie had been Vice-President under Suharto and had come to power by default when the latter stepped down, rather than by riding the tide of the popular democracy movement. Dr Lanti sees Habibie's actions not as those of an opportunist, dedicated solely to his own political survival, but those of a modernist Muslim and representative of an outer islands (*seberang*) political culture that inherently favours a democratic political system.

Greg Barton, in his paper on the Wahid administration, argues that Abdurrahman Wahid or 'Gus Dur'—not unlike Habibie before him—was an unconventional choice for a political leader. Wahid was not a professional politician with a calculating and self-preserving attitude. Wahid took bold risks in his decision-making, rather than working to secure his own future as a career politician might have. Professor Barton suggests this may have been advantageous for Indonesia's still fragile democracy. Habibie and Wahid's risk-taking, idiosyncratic styles of leadership created a radical break with remnants of the power structure of the New Order and did not establish a new structure in its place. A new political monopoly or dynasticism was effectively prevented from establishing itself in the earliest and potentially most vulnerable days of Indonesian democratic reform.

Angus McIntyre reflects on the administration headed by Megawati Sukarnoputri, daughter of Indonesia's founding president Sukarno and leader of the most significant opposition party during the Suharto era. Dr McIntyre shows that, despite her timidity in public and apparent reliance on the charismatic

memory of her father, Megawati knowingly departed from her father's legacy, most notably by supporting a separation of powers and a market economy. In opposition to her father's hostility to regional autonomy, she argued that such autonomy could be reconciled with Article 1 of the 1945 Constitution, thus providing Indonesia's emerging presidential democracy, and the amended 1945 Constitution that underpinned it, with a nationalist pedigree reaching back to the nation's founding father. Relating to the grievances of the Papuans, however, Megawati proved unwilling to compromise her father's conception of the Indonesian nation state, repudiating special autonomy and using a combination of force and divide-and-rule tactics in order to curb disaffection.

Ariel Heryanto then discusses the current government of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, a nationalist, former general of the armed forces and head of the Indonesian Democratic Party. In contrast to the generally pessimistic view among Indonesians and their observers alike, Dr Heryanto proposes Indonesia is now more liberated and democratic than has been generally acknowledged, but that an uncritical valorisation of 'liberal democracy' in academic and non-academic analyses can lead to the unwarranted conclusion that where there is democracy all is well. 'Democracy' has become the latest catchphrase in a discourse that has been keen to define what is lacking in Indonesia and reluctant to recognise that many of Indonesia's political problems are similar to those in the Western countries of the participants of the discourse. In studying today's post-*reformasi* Indonesia, although it must be acknowledged that such problems do persist, it has become more difficult to maintain this conceptual distance.

Looking at events since 1998 with a longer historical perspective, Robert Cribb examines the controversial legacy of Suharto and of the nationalist ideology Pancasila which was largely discredited by the way it was employed by his New Order regime. Strong economic growth and relative prosperity may be remembered favourably by many Indonesians and foreign commentators alike, but Suharto's regime will be remembered more for its political brutality, corruption, the accumulation of crippling levels of national debt, and the stifling of free speech and discussion in Indonesia through censorship and intimidation. Given that his manipulation of the parliamentary and election systems and of the Pancasila concept was essentially hypocritical (being simultaneously a formal tribute to and an actual abuse of the values of democracy and national identity), Suharto's ideological legacy lacks any real substance. Cribb argues this is reflected in the events that surrounded Suharto's death in 2008. The absence of riots, disturbances and dogmatic reassertions of the values of the New Order suggests that his memory is quickly fading from the everyday reality of Indonesian public life.

In my own contribution, I discuss the role of political Islam, especially of Islamic radicalism, in Indonesia. I analyse Indonesian responses to the American 'War on Terror' and to a succession of terrorist attacks by Islamic extremists, from the 11 September 2001 World Trade Center attacks to the 12 October 2002 Bali bombing, and beyond, in order to determine the extent to which terrorist and anti-terrorist actions influenced popular ideas about the merit of political Islam as an alternative model to democracy during the early *reformasi* period, and into the future. Similar to Rizal Sukma (2008), I argue that mainstream Muslims have been strongly supportive of democracy and would predict that domestic terrorism, if it continues and if the government responds firmly without overreacting, will soon defeat itself by alienating the Indonesian public. At the same time, however, if the 'War on Terror' were to continue in a spirit of American unilateralism and neo-imperialism, then, for the foreseeable future, terrorists and sympathisers will be produced in Indonesia and elsewhere faster than they can be found and arrested. The latter scenario would appear less likely now, in view of the different foreign policy of the United States administration under President Barack Obama, who also happens to enjoy considerable personal sympathy in Indonesia. More broadly, the paper suggests that we need to examine more closely what it is that troubles Western observers about the rise of political Islam and whether that has anything to do with Islam's compatibility with democracy, for, as Jamie Mackie (2007:xii) has pointed out, 'if a democratically elected national government or regional authority enacts provisions of Islamic law that we dislike or deplore, we must remember that is something we [as democrats] just have to accept'.

Dirk Tomsa, in the final chapter, argues that political parties, even though they have, so far, contributed little to Indonesia's democratisation process, are nonetheless indispensable for the country's political future. While he agrees with many of the criticisms of Indonesian party politics, Tomsa concedes that the major parties deserve some credit for their contribution to Indonesian democratisation. The larger parties have not triggered so much popular discontent that a radical party could be established and they have collaborated and co-operated in parliament to produce democratic laws that make it difficult for potentially dangerous parties to be formed. Tomsa makes a number of recommendations on how Indonesian parties could improve their performance, both for their own sake and in the service of democracy.

Overall, this volume is designed to provide the reader with a balanced and multidimensional image of where Indonesia finds itself today in its struggle for a just and democratic society—a struggle which we all have reason to sympathise with.

chapter two

Explaining Habibie's interregnum

Irman G Lanti

In the final years of the 20th century Indonesia underwent another period of change in its political system. Similar to the changes of political structure in 1945 and 1965, this period was marked by bloody conflicts, confusion and uncertainty. Many observers were baffled by the speed and extent of change that swept the country. Suharto's power appeared to be so deeply entrenched in the Indonesian polity that only 'an act of God' (mortality) could remove him from power. Yet Suharto stepped down from power, and the political structure he had built over three decades crumbled.

From the perspective of Javanese political culture, Suharto's downfall was due to *pamrih*.¹ This *pamrih* took the form of corruption and cronyism that had become endemic, especially in the final years of his rule with the increasingly predatory business practices of his relatives. The practice of *pamrih* by rulers usually results in the loss of *wahyu*;² this was the case with both Suharto and Sukarno (Magnis-Suseno 1999).

This chapter will discuss, from a political culture perspective, *Reformasi* and the Habibie interregnum that defined the political set-up in Indonesia after the fall of Suharto. It attempts to explain why Habibie, regarded by many as Suharto's protégé, adopted a sharply different policy direction to that of his predecessor. While conventional wisdom had it that Habibie did what he did in order to survive the political transition process and keep himself in power, this chapter argues that Habibie's actions were informed by the politico-cultural environment that he hailed from, being a person from an outer-island tradition in Indonesia.

Habibie's politico-cultural background

In the Indonesian setting, important political segments are known as *aliran*. The definition of *aliran* is usually divided into two: the first definition is used more often in anthropological and cultural studies of Indonesia, since the concept was first coined in an anthropological study by Clifford Geertz in the 1950s.

The incredible shrinking Pancasila: nationalist propaganda and the missing ideological legacy of Suharto

Robert Cribb

The old man died. They buried him.

On the morning of Monday 28 January 2008, a military plane took off from Jakarta's Halim Air Force Base with the body of Suharto, President of Indonesia for 32 years, former commander of the Indonesian Army's Strategic Reserve, former commander of the Central Java Diponegoro Division, former revolutionary military officer, former sergeant in the Dutch colonial army, former village boy.

The plane landed in Solo and a military convoy took the body on a narrow asphalt road leading eastwards and uphill, past the village of Matesih, to a place called Astana Giribangun, (Palace of the Risen Mountain). There, at 12.25 pm, the remains of the former president were consigned to the Suharto family mausoleum, a low building with wide eaves and a high central spire in traditional Javanese style.

The building had waited a long time to receive its distinguished occupant. Construction began in 1974, the year that President Suharto had faced his first serious political challenge in the form of the Malari riots. Ostensibly directed against the visiting Japanese Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei, the riots were widely seen as an outpouring of discontent with Suharto's economic policies. Following the displacement of President Sukarno in 1966–67, Suharto had implemented policies of accelerated economic development that involved fiscal stabilisation and massive investment in infrastructure, funded by foreign aid and by revenues from the sale of oil and timber. Suharto's policies pulled Indonesia out of the economic misery of the final years of Sukarno's rule, but they left victims—families evicted from squatter settlements for construction projects, workers given no opportunity to pursue higher wages in the absence of free trade unions. And they had beneficiaries. Those who agreed to work with

the New Order, especially in its upper echelons, found opportunity, sometimes abundant opportunity, to acquire wealth through corruption. It would be another three years before the pop group Bimbo satirised the new rich of the New Order in the song 'Tante Sun', but in 1974 the signs were there of a new gap between rich and poor, even if the poor were much less poor than they had been (Mortimer 1974).

In 1974, the year he began to build Astana Giribangun, Suharto saw off his last credible challenger from within the Indonesian military elite. The now-forgotten General Sumitro, a corpulent, moustachioed caricature of a Third World general, had begun to map out a populist alliance with student groups, seemingly as a prelude to telling Suharto at some point that his time was up. Sumitro was head of KOPKAMTIB, the New Order's military command for security and order, and he seemed ready to replicate the pattern of Third World military politics in which each former military president is displaced by his successor in the army. But Suharto had outmanoeuvred him and he spent his days after 1974 playing golf and writing political commentary (Jenkins 1984).

Also in 1974, Suharto abandoned the dour no-politics conceit of the early New Order and gave Indonesia a state ideology. As the basis for this ideology he chose the Pancasila, five broad principles that had been incorporated into the preamble of the first constitution of newly-independent Indonesia in 1945. Formulated by Indonesia's first president, Sukarno, the Pancasila was a declaration of programmatic nationalism. One of the five principles—the unity of Indonesia—spoke directly to land and soil, those traditional exemplars of national identity, but the others—belief in God, humanity, democracy, and social justice—had no specific link to the people of the archipelago. They contained no hint of ethnicity, or even history. Rather, they were noble universal principles that Sukarno presented as the basis for a national identity transcending simple hostility to colonialism.

But incorporating the Pancasila into the Constitution's preamble was not just an assertion of nobility; it was also an act of exclusion. Inserting belief in God—whether the God of Christians or the God of Muslims—into the Constitution meant that Indonesia could not be an Islamic state, despite the fact that around 90% of its population were Muslims. Blocking that road, in turn, meant that the Indonesian state would be alien to those of its Muslim subjects who believed that Muslims could only dwell in the place of peace, a *Darussalam*, if they lived under Islamic law. An Islamic state in Indonesia would have alienated still more Indonesians, not just believers in other religions but also Muslims whose Islam did not require Islamic law; nonetheless the Pancasila took its second incarnation as a device to exclude fundamental Islam from the idiom of

national politics. During the 1950s, the Pancasila took on a third identity, this time against communism. As the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) grew in popularity, belief in God became a bulwark against the supposed atheism of the communists. They could not, it was asserted, be true Indonesians without believing in God.

In 1965–66, Suharto crushed the PKI and pasted the Pancasila label in front of democracy to characterise his undemocratic order, but mass killing and mass detention turned out to be a far more effective way of excluding communism from the national idiom. A heavily-orchestrated electoral and parliamentary system excluded fundamentalist Islam nearly as effectively, and the Pancasila was hardly more than a distant flag for the early years of Suharto's rule (Nishimura 1995). Even government officials, asked to list the five principles, would struggle to recall more than three or four. In 1974, however, the Pancasila entered its fourth incarnation as a corporatist ideology for the Suharto regime.

The mausoleum that Suharto constructed in 1974 was an architectural hybrid. The form of the mausoleum resembled the palace (*kraton*) of the minor Mangkunegaran royal family with which Suharto's wife was loosely connected, but the high peak of its roof recalled some of the traditional architecture of eastern Indonesia (Pemberton 2000). The Pancasila of 1974, the year of the mausoleum, of the Malari riots, and of the fall of Sumitro, was also a hybrid. Sukarno's universalist formulation was recast as essentialist Indonesian culture, dug out of the Indonesian earth with no input or inspiration from outside (Antlöv 2005:46–47). A committee chaired by former vice-president and nationalist leader Mohammad Hatta began to shape what became known as P4, the *Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila* (Guide for the Realisation and Implementation of Pancasila), which was formally adopted by parliament in 1978. Rather than working as a device to exclude specific sections of Indonesian society from full acceptance as Indonesians, this new Pancasila was devised as a guide to behaviour. The P4 identified 36 behavioural norms (*butir*, literally 'nuggets') said to be derived from the Pancasila:

Belief in God (four nuggets)

- Belief in and devotion to God, according to each person's respective religion and beliefs on the basis of a just and civilised humanity
- Respect and co-operation between believers and followers of different religions and beliefs for the sake of social harmony
- Mutual respect for the freedom to worship according to respective religions and beliefs
- Not forcing one religion or belief on others

Humanity (eight nuggets)

- Recognise the equal status, equal rights and equal duties of all human beings
- Love each other as human beings
- Develop respectful attitudes
- Don't behave cruelly to others
- Give the highest respect to human values
- Be fond of undertaking humanitarian acts
- Have the courage to defend truth and justice
- The Indonesian people are a part of humankind as a whole and therefore should develop attitudes of respect and co-operation towards other peoples

Unity of Indonesia (five nuggets)

- Place the unity, one-ness, interests and welfare of the people and the state above personal or group interests
- Be willing to sacrifice oneself for the interests of the people and the state
- Love one's country and people
- Be proud of being Indonesian and be one with the country
- Promote social interaction for the sake of the unity and one-ness of the people, based on the principle *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in diversity)

Democracy (seven nuggets)

- Give priority to the interests of state and society
- Don't force your will on other people
- Give priority to consultation and discussion (*musyawarah*) when taking decisions in the common interest.
- Consultation and discussion so as to achieve consensus based on family spirit
- With good faith and a sense of responsibility accept and implement the decisions of the community
- Consultation and discussion are carried out with sound reasoning and according to a glorious inner heart
- Decisions must be morally consistent with the will of God, and must exalt the status of human beings and the values of truth and justice

Social justice (12 nuggets)

- Develop glorious actions that reflect the attitude and atmosphere of family and mutual self-help
- Have a just attitude
- Ensure a balance between rights and duties
- Respect the rights of others
- Help other people
- Reject the use of force against others
- Don't be wasteful
- Don't live extravagantly
- Don't do things that harm the public interest
- Work hard
- Appreciate the work of others
- Strive together to achieve progress that is equitable and socially just.¹

In 1978, courses to instruct government officials in these fine points of the Pancasila were introduced, followed not long after by an extensive program of Pancasila Moral Education (Pendidikan Moral Pancasila, PMP) in all educational institutions. In 1985, Suharto had the Pancasila declared the *azas tunggal* (sole basic principle) for all social organisations, other than businesses, in Indonesia. This law required even religious organisations to place the Pancasila ahead of their basic beliefs, at least in a formal sense, and it aroused great antagonism, especially from Muslim circles (Bourchier & Hadiz 2003:14, 82–96).

The ideological heart of Suharto's Pancasila was a conception of Indonesia as an organic society. The consequence of this organicism was that there were no natural conflicts in Indonesian society; conflicts arose out of the intrusion of alien values (communism, liberalism and the like) and out of egoism, the selfish placing of individual interests ahead of those of society. In making this contrast between the constructive collective interest of society and the destructiveness of competitive individualism, the Pancasila placed itself both in the tradition of President Sukarno's condemnation of 'free-fight' liberalism and in the vanguard of the so-called 'Asian values debate' (Barr 2004). PMP emphasised, therefore, subordinating individual interest to the common good, and avoiding conflict and maintaining social harmony as absolute social goods (Parker 1992:95–116; Kammen 1995:147–54).

Indonesia's sixth president, retired General Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, delivered a brief speech at Suharto's funeral on 28 January 2008:

Honoured guests and the whole of the Indonesian people, wherever they may be, *inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi roji'un* [lo, we belong to Allah, and to Allah we return], with the deepest sorrow, we the whole Indonesian people are gathered here today to mark the passing of Retired General HM Suharto, second President of the Republic of Indonesia.

The deceased [*almarhum*] returned peacefully to the mercy of Allah on Sunday 27 January 2008 at 13.10, Western Indonesian Time, in the Central Pertamina Hospital, Jakarta.

We have lost one of our best sons, a faithful fighter, a true soldier and an honoured statesman.

We have come here to the family tomb of Astana Giribangun at Karanganyar to pay our final respects at this state ceremony.

We carry out this ceremony as a sign of honour and appreciation from the state and the government for the selfless service and conscientious achievements of the deceased to the state and the people during his life.

As we all know, the deceased, born in Yogyakarta on 8 June 1921, devoted his whole life to the people and the state.

He had a long career in the military, politics and government.

History records that during the National Revolution of 1945–1949 the deceased struggled unyieldingly to expel the colonialists to realise and defend the sovereignty of the people and of the young state.

History also notes a most monumental act of struggle: when the deceased and other fighters launched the General Attack of 1 March 1949 and occupied the city of Yogyakarta.

This important event was a weighty and powerful contribution to the negotiations that ended in recognition of the sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia.

Following the National Revolution, in 1962, when this country was struggling to liberate West Irian, the deceased returned to fulfil the call of his state by carrying out glorious duty as head of the Mandala Command.

History has already recognised this event as a successful fusion between diplomacy and armed force.

In 1965, when our nation was tested once again by the G30S PKI affair, once again took up his duty to save the integrity of the state, the integrity of the nation and to restore security and order.

During his time in government, that is, after being appointed President of the Republic of Indonesia on 27 March 1968, the deceased unyieldingly led the national development program that rested on the Developmental Trilogy [*Trilogi Pembangunan*], that is, Stability, Growth and Equality.

The many outcomes and successes that were achieved by the government which the deceased led brought about the fact that the Indonesian people, step, by step, became increasingly advanced [*maju*] and increasingly prosperous.

Honoured guests:

It is appropriate that, with honesty and with pure hearts, we acknowledge the deceased's many services to the people and to the state.

Nonetheless, we are conscious that as an ordinary human being and as a leader he could not be without mistakes and shortcomings.

None of us slaves of Allah is perfect in this world.

So let us, as a great-hearted people express our sincere thanks and offer our respect and great appreciation for the achievements and services which the deceased has rendered to people and state.

On this important occasion, I would also like to invite all Indonesians to pray for the deceased so that he will cross safely to the side of Allah the All Powerful, reflecting his struggle, his sacrifice and spiritual devotion.

We pray that Allah will grant fortitude and patience to the family of the deceased and that they will accept his departure with sincerity and acquiescence.

Finally, praying to Allah, let us release the deceased so that he can meet the Creator with serenity.

And let us pray to Allah that He will accept the deceased's devotion and forgive his sins.

Travel safely [*selamat jalan*], Father of Development [*Bapak Pembangunan*]. We pray that you are peacefully at the side of Allah.

Thank you.²

It was a speech remarkable for its faint praise of the man who had ruled Indonesia for 32 years. The President was careful to share recognition for Suharto's achievements with other fighters, with diplomats, with the government that he had led. His account of the economic progress under the New Order—Suharto's supreme claim to greatness—is restrained at best. Suharto's devotion to his state and people is emphasised almost as much as the results of that devotion. The speech reads as an act of formal duty, not a heartfelt tribute to the President's former commander-in-chief. The reference to Suharto's shortcomings and mistakes, too, may have been a routine expression of religious submissiveness, but Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono offered no hint of justification for the mistakes and everyone listening to the speech would have thought of the corruption case against the former president that was still unresolved at the time of his death. Perhaps they also thought of the half million communists, the tens of thousands of Timorese and Papuans, the thousands of Acehnese and the other dissidents who had perished under Suharto's auspices.

The most remarkable feature of the funeral, however, was the absence of the Pancasila. The ideology that had marked the New Order for 20 years was neither mentioned nor alluded to in the presidential speech. Nor were the narrow

roads to Astana Giribangun lined with Suhartoists asserting that their leader's ideology would live on as inspiration after his death. The very term 'Suhartoism' remains an alien one in Indonesian politics.³ The Pancasila lives on, but it has returned to its second incarnation as code for the rejection of an Islamic state in Indonesia. In the 1999 and 2004 elections, parties which did not choose Islam (or codes for Islam) as their formal basis tended to choose the Pancasila as a sign of what they were not (Pompe 1999).

Over the course of 20 years, Indonesians spent millions of hours studying the Pancasila. Students were not permitted to progress to the next grade, officials were not promoted unless they passed the compulsory training in the state ideology. Millions of pages were printed and tens of thousands of broadcast hours were used to disseminate the Pancasila message to every corner of the archipelago. And yet the Pancasila has disappeared as an ideological force.

The disappearance is all the more remarkable given the resilience of other aspects of New Order indoctrination, especially hostility to communism. The vehemence of hostility to communism in contemporary Indonesia is remarkable, given the global retreat of communism as an intellectual and political force and the shameful circumstances of the murder of half a million members of the PKI in 1965–6 (Heryanto 1999:147–177). In 2000, there was widespread public outrage when President Abdurrahman Wahid proposed abolishing Resolution No. 25/1966 which had been passed by Provisional People's Consultative Assembly (MPRS) on 5 July 1966, outlawing the PKI and banning the teaching of Marxist-Leninist ideology.⁴ Although it is not difficult to find reasons why the New Order wished to sustain the anti-communist paranoia of its early years, the puzzle is why it was not able to sustain the Pancasila to the same effect.

The explanation lies in the special character of Pancasila propaganda. We think of propaganda as having the purpose of persuading people into a view that they would not otherwise have had—a generally political purpose. We know that Suharto made deft use of anti-communist propaganda in the weeks after the so-called 30th September Movement coup in Jakarta on 1 October 1965. Though we cannot now examine the actual workings of this propaganda, it seems that the carefully manufactured stories of the torture and sexual mutilation of anti-communist generals, together with manufactured rumours that communists in general were planning to slaughter their neighbours contributed significantly to the willingness of ordinary Indonesians to take part in the mass killings that followed (Drakeley 2000). The propaganda of 1965 was plausible in an atmosphere of profound political uncertainty and antagonism.

What, then, is one to make of the Pancasila propaganda that enjoined Indonesians to reject the use of force against others, to avoid waste and not to

live extravagantly? Around them they could see these injunctions flouted daily by the very people who were communicating them. Even though Indonesian elites have traditionally despised the masses for their 'stupidity' (*kebodohan*), the Pancasila propaganda format seems egregiously unconvincing.

It is likely, however, that it was never meant to convince, or at least never meant to convince comprehensively in the way that, for instance, communists in China demanded thoroughgoing belief in party doctrine. Rather, apart from the odd useful effect it might have on the unusually receptive, the Pancasila functioned as 'white noise'. It was quasi-ideological chatter intended to fill the space in Indonesian public life that might otherwise be occupied by serious, ideologically informed discussion.

Throughout its history, Pancasila has confused observers of Indonesia. How could such a bland set of principles take so central a place in national political discourse? The answer is that it was never truly an ideology. Even in its most elaborated form under the New Order, it was a device to mark who would be included in and excluded from the Indonesian project. Its decline after 1998 partly reflected the discrediting of the New Order, but its disappearance has much more to do with a transformation in the politics of exclusion that has taken place over the last ten years.

There are two elements in this transformation. First is the introduction of democracy which has the great benefit of giving value to every voter. Authoritarian systems based on patronage, as the New Order was, rely on informal devices to ensure that people know their place, that they know who is in and who is out. The New Order's Pancasila was designed to impart this understanding to Indonesian society in general. Democracy has led by contrast to a more inclusive national discourse. One of the most encouraging developments in this respect has been the removal of formal discrimination against Indonesians of Chinese descent and the fact that the removal of this discrimination has provoked no hostile reaction, either from the elite or from the masses. Second, the introduction of far-reaching regional autonomy has created new contours of exclusion within Indonesia. As more and more important decisions are taken at a local level, the overwhelming importance of creating exclusionary devices at the centre has simply eroded. The importance of being *putra daerah* (a child of the local region) has intruded dramatically into local politics, and the inclusiveness of the national sphere can be valued as an alternative. These two elements in the transformation of Indonesian politics are enormously important in establishing generally-accepted conventions for accepting democratic procedures. Even if we can still sense the excitement and nobility of Sukarno's original idea of Pancasila, expressed in 1945 on the eve of Indonesian independence, we can recognise that the departure of the Pancasila is a good thing for Indonesian politics.

Implications for the future

Whenever a powerful, long-lasting ruler dies, we feel an urgent need for some kind of summary judgement. So it was when Suharto died in January 2008. When the destiny of a country has appeared to have been so tightly woven into the life of an individual man, we want to know what difference he really made and what his legacy to the future will be.

For the most part, the verdicts on Suharto sought to establish the balance between his achievements and his shortcomings. His achievements? Above all, Indonesia's spectacular economic growth since 1966, its transformation from one of the poorest countries of the world to a land where the vast majority of people experience a low to middling standard of living. Despite the crisis in the Indonesian economy in 1997 and after, the country is still in a far stronger economic position than at any time before Suharto came to power.

Alongside economic growth, public order. Only a shrinking minority of Indonesians recall the political atmosphere of late Guided Democracy, when shrill political confrontations dominated the news and violent clashes racked the countryside, when the Islamic revolution of the Darul Islam, far more destructive in terms of life and property than any of today's Islamist terror, had only just been brutally suppressed in rural West Java and South Sulawesi.

Alongside public order, a foreign policy in Southeast Asia which spearheaded the creation of ASEAN and Southeast Asia's remarkable long peace since the mid 1970s. The triviality and civility of the recent border dispute, for instance, with Malaysia over Sipadan and Ligitan is a striking contrast with the martial confrontations and the failed attempts at co-operation that dominated Southeast Asia before the creation of ASEAN.

Despite a faltering immediately after Suharto's fall from power in 1998, each of these achievements has proven to be durable. The succession crisis led some commentators to suggest that all the achievements of the Suharto era had suddenly crumbled to dust, but the reality is that Indonesia, even at the depths of the Asian financial crisis, was a far better run, more prosperous and civilised place than it had been when Suharto came to power. If we look only at Suharto's achievements we can see why his successor, Habibie, once enthusiastically described him as 'SGS' (Super Genius Suharto) (Emmerson 1999:315).

Yet against these achievements we can set massive shortcomings. Corruption, for one thing. By most measures Indonesia under Suharto was one of the most corrupt countries in the world, and the corruption went all the way to the top, in the form of the wealth that was creamed off to *yayasan* (supposedly charitable foundations) under Suharto's control. Suharto's personal lack of ostentation

took an edge off this corruption—unlike other dictators he did not accumulate fast luxury cars or palaces—but he was the means by which funds that might otherwise have gone to the state for the benefit of the Indonesian people were devoted instead to his personal interests. And, of course, there were the Suharto children, predatory and hypocritical. Although he had a knack of choosing capable subordinates, he also tended to surround himself with an unsavoury collection of carpetbaggers, sycophants and opportunists who slurped up Indonesia's wealth for their own benefit.

Brutality for another thing. The killing of half a million Leftists in 1965–6, the intense violence against separatists and alleged separatists in East Timor, to which Indonesia had no reasonable title in international law, Aceh and Papua and the substantial violence at critical moments—in the *petrus* killings of the early 1980s and in Tanjung Priok in 1984. There have been many exaggerated claims of the number of victims in each of these conflicts and affairs, but even a conservative estimate gives us a figure of hundreds of thousands of people killed under the auspices of the New Order. Although it involved far fewer deaths, we have to consider also the New Order's vast protection racket run at the expense of Chinese Indonesians—the systematic extortion of protection money under threat of violence by Indonesian masses who were supposed to be viscerally anti-Chinese. Still more extensive than brutality was Suharto's crippling of public life in Indonesia, the suppression of free discussion by means of censorship and intimidation, the compromising of the parliamentary and election systems with a vast array of regulations that hypocritically preserved the form of democracy while draining that form of all meaning. When we look at the underside of the Suharto era like this, then we see sense in the summary judgement of *The Economist* (31 Jan. 2008), which called Suharto 'a crook and a tyrant'.

The contradiction between these two judgements was aptly reflected in the fact that Suharto's state funeral—the official recognition of his contributions to the nation—took place while the corruption case against him, a case which would have marked him definitively as a thief, was still pending. So how do we come to a verdict?

The most common approach is a kind of crude cost-benefit calculation. Suharto achieved economic growth and political stability at the cost of loss of life and political corruption. Depending on how we value the material welfare of the current generation and how we value the lives of previous generations, we come to a conclusion—a high price but worth paying, or too high a price. It is a calculation that tends to devalue past brutality in relation to current prosperity. Effectively we ask the living, how much of your prosperity would you surrender, if you could, to give life back to the dead, especially to dead communists?

I want to suggest that actually we don't need to do this at all. Physicists need to treat matter as both waves and particles. The two conceptions are not reconcilable, but we need each of them to work with matter in a theoretical way. Similarly, it should be possible to acknowledge both Suharto's achievements and his deep flaws without taking that final step of totting up a balance sheet. He was both a national hero and a devil.

The disappearance of a man like Suharto from the political order leaves huge uncertainty. Because his reach into the political system was so far-reaching, his absence created instability. But I think that we can actually feel enormously encouraged by the events that surrounded his death—no riots, no disturbances, almost no dogmatic reassertions of the values of the New Order. The money that he stole, the lives that he took, the lies that he told—all these things still matter, of course, but the big thing is that Suharto no longer hovers like a ghost over Indonesian politics. Indonesian society can move on and let the past become another country. And that is something to be deeply thankful for.

Notes

- 1 Author's translation of 'Ketetapan Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Republik Indonesia Nomor II/MPR/1978 tentang Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila (Ekaprasetya Pancakarsa)', www.mpr.go.id/pdf/ketetapan/ketetapan_mpr_thn_78.pdf. The 36 nuggets were later expanded to 45.
- 2 Author's translation of 'Sambutan Pemakaman Almarhum Jenderal Besar TNI (Purn) Haji Muhammad Soeharto, Karanganyar, Jawa Tengah, Senin, 28 Januari 2008', www.presidensby.info/index.php/pidato/2008/01/28/853.html.
- 3 On 1 March 2008, the Indonesian language term 'Suhartoisme' scored a mere 406 hits on Google while its English equivalent, 'Suhartoism', scored 207.
- 4 On the issue of rehabilitating the former communists, see Birks (2006).

chapter seven

Winning hearts and minds?

Religion and politics in post-Suharto Indonesia

Thomas Reuter

In this chapter I discuss how Indonesians have responded to the American War on Terror and to a succession of terrorist attacks by Islamic extremists, from the 11 September 2001 World Trade Center attacks to the 12 October 2002 Bali nightclub bombing and beyond, and how this response has shaped the politics of religion and the general political climate in Indonesia during the *reformasi* period.

The data for this chapter are derived mainly from my own ethnographic research on religious movements in Java from 1998 until the present.¹ In the course of this research I have been to many places in Java, where I have conversed with a wide range of people, from peasants to members of parliament, about issues relating to people's aspirations for the future of their nation. I was in Java to observe first-hand how different groups in Java reacted to 11 September 2001, the US-led attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq, and to further terrorist attacks abroad and at home.

My aim is to examine the extent to which the War on Terror and terrorist actions have influenced popular ideas about the usefulness of Islam as an alternative political model in the face of what many perceive as a loss of credibility for Indonesian nationalism, firstly because nationalism had been abused to legitimise authoritarianism under former president Suharto, and secondly, because the new nationalist leaders of the *reformasi* period appeared to be unable to establish political and economic stability. My thesis is that the combined effect of terrorism and the War on Terror has been a see-sawing of public opinion. The direction of these public opinion swings shows that most Indonesians in the newly democratic *reformasi* period have tended to oppose consistently those they perceive to be the party responsible for the dominant pattern of political violence and injustice at the time, whether the source of this violence be terrorism, the state, or the so-called 'world order' (Reuter 2003).