



Elections and Politics in Indonesia

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ISEAS

INSTITUTE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES
Singapore

First published in Singapore in 2002 by
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace
Pasir Panjang
Singapore 119614

Internet e-mail: publish@iseas.edu.sg

World Wide Web: <http://www.iseas.edu.sg/pub.html>

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ISEAS Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Suryadinata, Leo, 1941-

Elections and politics in Indonesia.

1. Elections—Indonesia.
 2. Presidents—Indonesia—Election—1999.
 3. Political parties—Indonesia.
 4. Islam and politics—Indonesia.
 5. Chinese—Indonesia—Politics and government.
 6. Indonesia—Politics and government—1998-
- I. Title.

JQ778 S63

2002

sls2001007609

ISBN 981-230-121-6 (soft cover)

ISBN 981-230-127-5 (hard cover)

Printed in Singapore by Seng Lee Press Pte Ltd.

Elections and Politics in Indonesia

The **Institute of Southeast Asian Studies** (ISEAS) was established as an autonomous organization in 1968. It is a regional research centre for scholars and other specialists concerned with modern Southeast Asia, particularly the many-faceted problems of stability and security, economic development, and political and social change.

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Preface

The 1999 general election in Indonesia and the presidential election following it are significant events in the history of the country. Being the first free and democratic general election for over thirty years, it has a profound impact on the whole region.

Similar to the approach adopted in my two earlier books on Golkar and Soeharto's foreign policy — *Military Ascendancy and Political Culture: A Study of Indonesia's Golkar* and *Indonesia's Foreign Policy under Suharto: Aspiring to International Leadership* — this book has also employed the political culture approach. This approach has its weaknesses — it does not give sufficient attention to other important variables such as the economy. Nevertheless, I need a tool to interpret Indonesian elections and politics. This political culture approach helps me organize the information in a coherent manner to make it easy to understand. On the other hand, by doing this, I am running a risk of distortion and simplification.

Although this book focuses on the recent elections, there is the need to provide some framework and background. Major characteristics of Indonesian society and culture — ethnicity, regionalism, and religion — which affect electoral behaviour are highlighted. Also examined are the continuity and change in Islam as practised by Indonesians and their impact on the country's politics.

The chapters are organized along the lines of political parties and general elections. Several past elections are briefly discussed in order to throw light on the most recent one. The results of the June 1999 general election are also examined and compared with

those of the 1955 election. A section has been devoted to analyse the members of the DPR (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, or People's Representative Council) and the MPR (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, or People's Consultative Assembly) of 1999–2004. This is followed by the presidential election in October 1999, challenges faced by former President Abdurrahman Wahid, and the rise of President Megawati Sukarnoputri in July 2001. The book concludes with the prospects of the political system and future elections.

Unique to this monograph is the inclusion of a case study on the political participation of the ethnic Chinese in the 1999 election. I see the ethnic Chinese as an integral part of Indonesia and their importance has been recognized. In fact, the pattern of ethnic Chinese participation in the election is similar to that of the indigenous population in one aspect: they tend to vote for national parties rather than ethnic or strictly sectarian parties, although ethnic parties (in this case Chinese parties) do still exist. However, the inclusion of this chapter is partly due to my personal interest — I have conducted a study on this minority group. There is scope for a study on voting patterns among other ethnic groups.

In the process of writing this book, I have benefited tremendously from my discussions with many Indonesian specialists. I would like to thank Dr Mochtar Pabotinggi and Drs Sjamsuddin Haris of the Indonesian Academy of Sciences (LIPI), and Dr Vedi Hadiz of the National University of Singapore. I would also like to thank Professor Richard Leirissa of the University of Indonesia, Dr Mely Tan of the Atma Jaya University, Indonesia, Dr Yoon Hwan Shin of Sogang University, South Korea, and Mr Derwin Pereira of the *Straits Times* who read the initial draft of the manuscript and offered useful comments. Similar thanks go to two anonymous reviewers for their comments. Lastly, I am grateful to Mrs Triena Ong, Managing Editor at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, for her editorial assistance, which has definitely improved the manuscript. However, I am solely responsible for the contents of this book.

Selamat Membaca!

*Leo Suryadinata
November 2001*

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his appreciation to the following:

1. Cornell University for the permission to reproduce a figure from Herbet Feith and Lance Castle, eds., *Indonesian Political Thinking, 1945–1965* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1970), p. 14, as Figure 10.1 on p. 204.
2. *Kompas* for the permission to reproduce a figure from Tim Penelitian dan Pengembangan Kompas, ed., *Partai-Partai Politik Indonesia: Ideologi, Strategi dan Program* (Jakarta: Kompas, Edisi Pemilihan Umum, 1999), p. 36, as Figure 10.2 on p. 205.
3. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies for permission to use a revised version of my article entitled “A Year of Upheaval and Uncertainty: The Fall of Soeharto and Rise of Habibie”, in *Southeast Asian Affairs 1999* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1999), pp. 111–27, as “Exit Soeharto, Enter Habibie: Prelude to the 1999 Election” (Chapter 3).

About the Author

Leo Suryadinata, Ph.D., is Professor in the Department of Political Science at the National University of Singapore (NUS). Before joining the NUS, he was a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore. He has published extensively on Indonesian politics, foreign policy, and ethnic Chinese. His recent publications include *Indonesia's Foreign Policy under Suharto: Aspiring to International Leadership* (1996), *Chinese and Nation-Building in Southeast Asia* (1997, 1999), *Interpreting Indonesian Politics* (1998), and *Nationalism and Globalization: East and West* (as editor, 2000).

Glossary

<i>abangan</i>	nominal Muslim (opposite of <i>santri</i>)
ABRI	Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia); now the TNI
<i>aliran</i>	stream; refers to socio-religious division
Bakom	Badan Komunikasi (Communication Body); an official organization to replace the LPKB
Baperki	Badan Permusyawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia (Indonesian Citizenship Consultative Body); an ethnic Chinese association banned in 1965
Bappenas	Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional (National Planning Agency)
<i>Bhinneka Tunggal Ika</i>	Unity in Diversity (or, We Are Many but We Are One); the national motto
Bulog	Badan Urusan Logistik Nasional (National Logistics Board)
<i>bupati</i>	regent; head of a kabupaten (regency or district)
CIDES	Centre for Information and Development Studies; ICMI's think-tank in Jakarta
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies; a think-tank in Jakarta established by General Ali Murtopo
<i>cukong</i>	Chinese term for boss; in Indonesia it refers to Chinese businessmen who collaborate with power élite
DPR	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (People's Representatives Council); the Indonesian Parliament
DPRD	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (Regional People's Representative Council); Regional Parliament
Drs	Doctorandus, a Dutch Master's degree; an Arts and

	Social Science graduate; equivalent to the <i>Sarjana</i> degree.
<i>dwifungsi</i>	literally, “dual function”; the military’s doctrine stipulating a dual security and socio-political function
GAM	Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Aceh Independent Movement)
Gestapu	Gerakan Tigapuluh September (The 30 September Movement); the acronym used by the military to refer to the 1965 coup
Gestok	Gerakan Oktober; the term used by Sukarno to refer to the 1965 coup as it took place in the early morning of 1 October rather than 30 September
Golkar	Colongan Karya (Functional Groups); the ruling political organization in Soeharto’s Indonesia; also called Partai Golkar after Soeharto’s fall
<i>hajj</i>	pilgrimage to Mecca
IBRA	Indonesian Bank Restructuring Agency
ICMI	Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Se-Indonesia (Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association); formed in 1990
IGGI	Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia; the group which assisted Indonesia after the 1965 coup; disbanded in March 1992
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPKI	Ikatan Pendukung Kemerdekaan Indonesia (League of Supporters of Indonesian Independence)
KPU	Komisi Pemilihan Umum (General Election Commission)
<i>kebatinan</i>	Javanese mysticism
<i>kejawen</i>	another name for the <i>abangan</i> ’s religious beliefs
KKN	<i>korupsi, kolusi, dan nepotisme</i> ; an acronym for corruption, collusion, and nepotism
Kopassus	Komando Pasukan Khusus (Special Forces Command)
Kopkamtib	Komando Pemulihan Keamanan dan Ketertiban (Law and Order Restoration Command)
Korpri	Korps Pegawai Republik Indonesia (Indonesian Civil Servants Association)
Kostrad	Komando Cadangan Strategis Angkatan Darat (Army Strategic Reserve Command)

LIPI	Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia (Indonesian Academy of Sciences)
LPKB	Lembaga Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa (Institute of Promotion of National Unity); a rival of Baperki; <i>see also</i> Bakom
Masyumi	Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia (Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims); major modernist Islamic political party in the 1950s
MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly); Indonesia's supreme sovereign body which drafts the state outline, amends the Constitution, and elects the President.
Muhammadiyah	Indonesia's second largest Islamic modernist organization; <i>see also</i> NU
NU	Nahdlatul Ulama (Muslim Scholars/Teachers Association); Indonesia's largest traditionalist Islamic organization (mainly in Java); <i>see also</i> Muhammadiyah
OPM	Organisasi Papua Merdeka (Organization for a Free Papua)
Orde Baru	New Order; era of President Soeharto
Orde Lama	Old Order; era of President Sukarno
PAN	Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party)
Pancasila	five principles; Indonesian state ideology
Partai Golkar	<i>see</i> Golkar
PARTI	Partai Reformasi Tionghoa Indonesia (Indonesian Chinese Reform Party)
PBB	Partai Bulan Bintang (Crescent and Star Party)
PBI	Partai Bhinneka Tunggal Ika Indonesia (Indonesian Unity in Diversity Party)
PDI	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (Indonesian Democratic Party)
PDI-P	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle); established by Megawati after the fall of Soeharto
pemilu	pemilihan umum (general election)
Petisi-50	Petition of 50 Men
<i>peranakan</i>	local-born, Indonesian-speaking Chinese
Pertamina	Pertambangan Minyak dan Gas Bumi Nasional (Indonesian State Oil and Gas Company)
PK	Partai Keadilan (Justice Party)

PKB	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (National Awakening Party)
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party); banned in 1965
PNI	Partai Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Party); became part of the PDI after 1973
<i>poros tengah</i>	central axis (loose coalition of Islamic parties)
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party)
PRD	Partai Rakyat Demokratik (People's Democratic Party)
<i>pribumi</i>	indigenous (Indonesian)
<i>priyayi</i>	Javanese aristocrats or Javanese officials
PRRI	Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (Revolutionary Government of Republic of Indonesia)
PSI	Partai Sosialis Indonesia (Indonesian Socialist Party)
PSII	Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic Union Party)
<i>reformasi</i>	reformation; the post-Soeharto period; also a group of Islamic parties in the DPR (1999–2004)
Repelita	Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun (Five-Year Development Plan)
RI	Republik Indonesia (The Republic of Indonesia)
<i>santri</i>	pious Muslims (opposite of <i>abangan</i>)
<i>satgas</i>	<i>satuan tugas</i> (security forces)
<i>suku</i>	ethnic group
SH	Sarjana Hukum; Indonesian law degree
<i>syariat</i>	Islamic law
Timtim	Timor Timur (East Timor)
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Armed Forces); used during the 1945 revolution, readopted on 1 April 1999 to replace ABRI
<i>totok</i>	Chinese-speaking Indonesian Chinese, mainly China-born, but also the second generation who are still culturally Chinese.
WNA	Warga Negara Asing (foreign citizen), usually refers to the Chinese Indonesian who is non-citizen
WNI	Warga Negara Indonesia (Indonesian citizen), usually refers to Indonesian citizen of Chinese descent
<i>yayasan</i>	foundation

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1

Introduction

Ethnicity, Regionalism, and Religion

To understand Indonesian politics and the general election of 1999 in particular, one should be familiar with the basic characteristics of Indonesian society which account for Indonesian political behaviour. This chapter presents an introduction to Indonesian society, highlighting its salient features including multi-ethnicity, regionalism (Java versus the Outer Islands), and the existence of nominal (liberal) and pious (orthodox) Muslims.

A Multi-Ethnic Society

Indonesia is a multi-ethnic society consisting of about 300 ethnic groups (*suku bangsa*) and at least six major religions. However, the precise number of ethnic groups is debatable. One recent study put forward more than 600 ethnic groups (sometimes, including sub-ethnic groups) in Indonesia.¹ There has been no census since 1930 which gives the percentage breakdown of each ethnic group. The Indonesian Government considered ethnicity a potentially divisive and an extremely sensitive issue. As Indonesia is supposedly a "nation-state", the government appears thus not to

have focused on the ethnic origins of its citizens. In reality, Indonesians have always been conscious of ethnicity. Because of the fear of "national disintegration", the Indonesian Government in the last fifty years had never identified ethnic affiliation in its population census. Therefore, in order to examine Indonesian ethnic groups, the only "reliable" source is the 1930 census, gathered during the colonial era. To rely on the percentage derived seventy years ago may be misleading and even dangerous. However, I would argue that it is better than a wild guess without any data at all. According to the 1930 census, there were at least thirteen major "indigenous" ethnic groups in Indonesia, namely Javanese (47 per cent), Sundanese (14.5 per cent), Madurese (7.3 per cent), Minangkabau (3.3 per cent), Buginese (2.6 per cent), Bataks (2 per cent), Balinese (1.9 per cent), Batavian or Jakartan (1.7 per cent), Malay (1.6 per cent), Banjar (1.5 per cent), Acehnese (1.4 per cent) and Makassarese (1.1 per cent).² The Javanese constituted the largest group, numbering about 100 million. The non-indigenous minorities consisted of ethnic Chinese, Arabs, Indians, and Europeans, with the ethnic Chinese forming the largest group. According to the 1930 census, they constituted 2.3 per cent of the total population of Indonesia. The current percentage is estimated between 2.5 to 3 per cent.³ The increase was due to higher birth rates, lower mortality rates and new immigrants (both legal and illegal) among the Chinese.

These multiple ethnic groups do not share a common religion. Indonesia is a multi-religious state. There are six major religions. Muslims form the largest group (87.5 per cent), followed by Christians/Catholics (7.4 per cent), Hindu-Bali (2.0 per cent), Buddhists (0.9 per cent), and Confucians (0.8 per cent).⁴ This diverse population was put together by historical accident. Indonesia is the product of Dutch colonialism. Dutch rule provided various ethnic groups in Indonesia with a sense of "national" belonging or "peoplehood". Under Dutch rule (1619–1945), these ethnic groups received some Western/modern education, were ruled under the same economic and administrative system, and discovered that they had similar, if not identical, problems. Dutch colonial experience was a form of "social communication" (to borrow Karl Deutsch's concept),⁵ which eventually enabled these