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Elections and Politics in Indonesia

Leo Suryadinata

INSTITUTE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES
Singapore
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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 Pareira 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.

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Leo Suryadinata
November 2001
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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).
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>abangan</td>
<td>nominal Muslim (opposite of santri)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABRI</td>
<td>Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia); now the TNI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aliran</td>
<td>stream; refers to socio-religious division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakom</td>
<td>Badan Komunikasi (Communication Body); an official organization to replace the LPKB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baperki</td>
<td>Badan Permusyawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia (Indonesian Citizenship Consultative Body); an ethnic Chinese association banned in 1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bappenas</td>
<td>Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional (National Planning Agency)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhinneka Tunggal Ika</td>
<td>Unity in Diversity (or, We Are Many but We Are One); the national motto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulog</td>
<td>Badan Urusan Logistik Nasional (National Logistics Board)</td>
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<tr>
<td>bupati</td>
<td>regent; head of a kabupaten (regency or district)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDES</td>
<td>Centre for Information and Development Studies; ICMI’s think-tank in Jakarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSIS</td>
<td>Centre for Strategic and International Studies; a think-tank in Jakarta established by General Ali Murtopo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cukong</td>
<td>Chinese term for boss; in Indonesia it refers to Chinese businessmen who collaborate with power elite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPR</td>
<td>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (People’s Representatives Council); the Indonesian Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPRD</td>
<td>Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah (Regional People’s Representative Council); Regional Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drs</td>
<td>Doctorandus, a Dutch Master’s degree; an Arts and</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Social Science graduate; equivalent to the *Sarjana* degree.

dwifungsi 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 Golongan Karya (Functional Groups); the ruling political organization in Soeharto’s Indonesia; also called Partai Golkar after Soeharto’s fall

*hajj* 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)

kebatinan Javanese mysticism

kejawen another name for the *abangan*’s religious beliefs

KKN *korupsi, kolusi, dan nepotisme*; 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)

Konstrad 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; see also 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; see also NU
NU Nahdlatul Ulama (Muslim Scholars/Teachers Association); Indonesia’s largest traditionalist Islamic organization (mainly in Java); see also Muhammadiyah
OPM Organisasi Papua Merdeka (Organization for a Free Papua)
Orde Baru New Order; era of President Soeharto
Orde Lama Old Orde; era of President Sukarno
PAN Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party)
Pancasila five principles; Indonesian state ideology
Partai Golkar see 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
peranakan 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 Kommunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party); banned in 1965
PNI Partai Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Party); became part of the PDI after 1973
*poros tengah* central axis (loose coalition of Islamic parties)
PPP Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party)
PRD Partai Rakyat Demokratik (People’s Democratic Party)
*pribumi* indigenous (Indonesian)
*priyayi* 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)
*reformasi* 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)
*santri* pious Muslims (opposite of *abangan*)
*satgas* satuan tugas (security forces)
*suku* ethnic group
SH Sarjana Hukum; Indonesian law degree
*syariat* 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
*totok* 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
*yayasan* foundation