

***Civil-military Relations in Indonesia: The Politics of Military Operations Other Than War.* By Muhamad Haripin. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2020. Hardcover: 174pp.**

In 1998, after three decades of playing a pervasive social, political and economic role in the country, the Indonesian military (TNI) suddenly found itself out of a job—that is, the job of running the country. In the wake of the crippling 1997–98 Asian Financial Crisis, President Soeharto stepped down, paving the way for democratization and reforms. During this *reformasi* era, the TNI adopted a doctrine known as the “New Paradigm”, intended to transition the armed forces away from internal security and politics towards greater professionalization in areas such as external security and peacekeeping. This “refunctionalization” of the military was supposed to play a key role in resetting the armed forces’ culture and behaviour. However, this period of internal changes and new laws from 1998 to 2007 pales in comparison to three decades of power and influence, and a mindset of being the “guardian of the nation” cultivated since the 1940s. Despite the appearances of democratic civilian control, particularly during President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono’s tenure (2004–14), the question remains: Has the Indonesian military *really* reformed?

Muhamad Haripin’s book, *Civil-military Relations in Indonesia: The Politics of Military Operations Other Than War*, is a fresh take on military reform in the post-Soeharto era. It is a welcome addition to a rich canon of writing on civil-military relations in Indonesia by scholars such as Harold Crouch, Ulf Sundhaussen, Bilveer Singh, Salim Said, Jun Honna, Marcus Mietzner, Evan Laksmana and Lieutenant General (rtd) Agus Widjojo. While his argument is not ground-breaking—that is, despite the onset of democracy, the military has not entirely depoliticized—his approach is novel. Rather than investigate the ways in which the military has crept back into politics or business, Haripin looks at how the TNI has leveraged Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) as a means of maintaining its influence and tempering greater democratic civilian control.

In his view, one of the sources of the military’s ongoing influence is the territorial command system—a relic from the Cold War era of greater domestic instability—that allows the military a presence from headquarters to the regional, district, subdistrict and even village levels. This system has not only facilitated intelligence gathering and close contact with the people, but also rent-seeking

opportunities in remote areas, away from the gaze of the capital. Once discussed as an area of reform after 1998, the system has remained firmly intact, and, according to Haripin, has enabled the military to entrench its institutional interests.

Based on his doctoral research, supplemented later with written sources and interviews, Haripin explores three areas of MOOTW purported to be examples of the military's increased post-*reformasi* professionalism: United Nations peacekeeping operations (UNPKO); humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR); and counterterrorism missions (CT). In each case he provides a detailed history of the activity and how it relates to the territorial command system. For example, in the case of peacekeeping, a push for an increased international profile under President Yudhoyono meant greater resources for the Indonesian military. Pointing to its successes as part of UN contingents in places like Lebanon, the TNI argued that community engagement skills gained during time spent in territorial commands directly supported missions abroad, in turn justifying the continued existence of its sprawling domestic presence.

The book's central theme is the Indonesian military's ability to capitalize on its new roles, and how it has successfully rebranded itself—from a repressive, authoritarian New Order force to domestic heroes and international ambassadors in the roles of relief workers and peacekeepers, respectively.

Haripin's enquiry into military professionalism is timely given Indonesia's democratic regression and because the military has become ever more prominent in civilian affairs. Freedom House's 2020 democracy index rated Indonesia as "Partly Free", a concerning assessment given that the country's overall ranking has dropped over the past four years under Jokowi from 65 in 2017 to 61 in 2020. Jokowi's reliance on retired army officers as ministers and advisers generates concerning parallels with that of strongmen figures in increasingly illiberal democracies such as the Philippines' Rodrigo Duterte and Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro. In fact, Jokowi has installed a number of influential retired generals such as Wiranto, his former rival Prabowo Subianto, Luhut Binsar Panjaitan and A.M. Hendropriyono, New Order figures who bring their mindset and habits from an earlier iteration of the military into the public realm. The appointment of Lieutenant General Doni Monardo, an active-duty officer, first as head of the Natural Disaster Mitigation Agency then as chief of the COVID-19 recovery task force, not only demonstrates Jokowi's confidence in uniformed personnel but catapults officers like him into the public eye.

While the book's focus on MOOTW is clear, the conceptual framing is slightly muddled. At different points in Chapter One, Haripin highlights key concepts including civilian control, professionalism and depoliticization. While these are all related areas, clear definitions would have been helpful. A minor point: given Routledge's strong reputation in academic publishing, it was surprising to find infrequent yet jarring lapses in grammar and spelling. They did not detract from the depth of research, but a more thorough edit would have served the author better.

Overall, the book's greatest contribution is its scrutiny of the military's political behaviour in a new, albeit indirect, way, while at the same time informing the reader about three important areas of the armed forces' activities during the Yudhoyono era. The thorough treatment of these areas opens the door for future research to compare how the military might have capitalized on shifting priorities in the Jokowi era and their related impact on MOOTW. Thus, for its accessibility and data, the book is highly recommended for students and scholars of civil-military relations, Southeast Asian politics and military affairs more generally. As alluded to earlier, the TNI's presence in Indonesian political and social life did not fade with the onset of democratization in 1998, nor is it set to end any time soon. Pandemic or not, given Indonesia's increasingly complex geopolitical environment and the mounting pressures its democracy is facing, space has opened for the armed forces to assume a more prominent role in the country's affairs. Understanding the multiple sources of the TNI's power will therefore be essential in assessing the future trajectory of Indonesia's civil-military relations at a time of great flux.

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