

The background features a globe with a city skyline silhouette inside a glass dome. The globe is partially obscured by the dome's structure. The city skyline is rendered in dark grey and black, with some buildings highlighted in white. The dome is made of clear glass with a gold-colored rim. The overall color palette is warm, with yellows, oranges, and reds, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The text is overlaid on the globe and dome.

DOES DEMOCRACY HAVE A FUTURE?

SELECTED CASES FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA

Edited by
Linda A. Lumayag
Arnold Puyok
Ahmad Nizar Ya'akub
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UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

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Preface

The book is a compilation of selected papers presented at the Third International Conference on Elections and Democracy (E & D) on April 19-20, 2017, in Kuching, Sarawak which carried the theme “Does Democracy Have a Future?” This meeting of academics, policy makers, and political thinkers in Southeast Asia is one of the flagship conferences under the auspices of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS).

Given the dichotomy between the “ideal” and “reality” of democracy and the debates surrounding the practice of democracy across the world, the then Department of Politics and International Relations hosted the E & D hoping that academics, politicians, political parties, bureaucrats, researchers, the media and general public would be able to deepen their understanding of democracy and to debate on the future of democracy.

The aims of the conference were as follows: (1) to provide a platform for academics, analysts, politicians, media practitioners, students and the public to discuss pertinent issues in elections, democracy and good governance, (2) to provide opportunity for scholars to collaborate in research and publication, (3) to promote the culture of

scholarly and intellectual engagement among the faculty's academic members and scholars from various institutions, (4) to produce academic monographs and other publications focusing on electoral issues and democracy, and (5) to put UNIMAS on the map as a national institution for research and dissemination of knowledge on elections, democracy and good governance.

The seven papers selected in this book merit a closer look. They were written by academics and political observers based in Indonesia, Philippines and Malaysia. This conference was made possible through the support of UNIMAS, Sarawak Convention Bureau, Better Nation Institute and Society Empowerment and Economic Development of Sabah (SEEDS).

To close, the editors would like to extend their appreciation to all contributors who painstakingly waited long for their papers to be produced in this form. It is no joke to be waiting for five years just so this book will come to fruition. Terima Kasih.

The Editors

Introduction

This book is a collective effort of several academic authors to produce a material that interrogates the idea and practice of democracy in Southeast Asia.

Looking back, the idea of democracy can be traced to the ancient Greek civilisation. It has gained popularity across the globe as shown by the increase in the number of “free” countries in the Freedom House Annual Survey. In 1986, the number of “free” and “partly free” countries stood at 34% compared to “not free” (32%). The number of free countries jumped to 41% and 47% in 1996 and 2006, respectively. The “free”, “partly free” and “not free” status given by Freedom House to countries in its annual survey is based on their political rights and civil liberties scores.

Democracy can be generally summarised as follows: a meaningful and extensive competition among individuals and organised groups for all effective positions of government power; a highly inclusive level of political participation in the selection of leaders and policies, at least through regular free and fair elections; and a high level of civil and political liberties: freedom of expression, freedom of press, and freedom to form and join organisations.

Practically, most countries in the world today claim to be “democratic”, considering they “support” formal electoral institutions and processes. Some countries even attempt to portray themselves as democratic even though they limit popular participation and install anti-democratic laws and policies. Democracy has gained currency as reflected by the people’s wishes the world over to participate more actively in governance and to voice their views on issues that matter to them. People yearn to speak openly, give comments on public affairs, and criticise their government. However, how far have thinkers, practitioners, and even supporters of democracy succeeded in promoting and putting into practice democratic principles? Has democracy thrived or declined? Despite the attempts by governments in the west to promote and institutionalise democracy, some governments in Asia and in the African continent, for instance, regard democracy as exclusively “western concept”. Some also argue that the western-led democracy is incompatible with the cultures of “non-western” people.

Democracy is also facing with teething challenges of the 21st century. The rise of China has tilted the balance of power in the Asia Pacific and has posed a significant challenge to democratisation in the region. In Russia, the continuing crackdown on civil society and independent media is a direct challenge to democratic principles. In the Middle East, the rise of radical Islam has posed a threat to democracy. In Africa and Latin America, problems of corruption and violence continue to fester to an unimaginable degree. Or in the United States of America under the leadership of President Donald Trump where the once progressive ideas have subverted back to conservatism amidst the promotion of neoliberal economic values embellished in Trump’s range of policies.

In Southeast Asia, the military junta in Thailand, which seized power in 2014, introduced a series of Draconian laws to silent critics and to maintain its grip on power. In the Philippines, the hugely popular president Rodrigo Duterte ignored the calls of international community and local activists to stop his policy of extrajudicial killings

of suspected drug dealers and addicts. The assault on democracy continued in Malaysia through the crackdowns on demonstrators and critics reacting to the alleged misuse of public funds by public officials.

Do the events above signal democracy's gradual decline in Southeast Asia and the rise of populism and authoritarianism in the region?

To follow through this nagging question on whether democracy as *idea/ideal* and *practice/reality* is indeed a defining centerstage in our everyday life in this part of the world. We reckon that democracy is a contested concept embedded in a particular socio, political, economic and historical specificities of each nation-state. We are of the view that Southeast Asia, though organisationally seen as belonging to one collective bloc, in reality, nation-states within it behave differently. This political behavioural difference is anchored on varied structures and processes media control, ethnic relations, religion, ethnic minorities, governance and government, political financing to say the least. Southeast Asia is one of the most diverse groupings of societies and cultures in the global world that it would be sheer arrogance to view it otherwise. It is in this context that this book is situated.

The selected cases in this book describe a society in Southeast Asia confronting with a range of issues that shape, influence and impact the kind of society we envision to establish. This book carries out everyday experiences of how democracy is practised from the macro to the micro level of governance across state-inspired institutions. In a lot of ways, the different expositions of these everyday experiences may make or un-make people's quest for greater political voice, to become empowered citizens or it could just be heavily relying on the whims of the kind of political leadership people popularly support.

Gayathry S. Venkiteswaran investigates the media politics of Myanmar, Thailand, and Indonesia in Chapter One. Since the democratisation revolutions in the 1980s to 1990s, Southeast Asia has undergone enormous upheaval, including in Thailand and Indonesia.

Political changes affected the media, which had been under strict control and censorship. At the same time, media were central to the political changes in those countries. In recent years, a shift towards political openness began in Myanmar after decades of military rule. While the changes in Myanmar are at a nascent stage, Thailand and Indonesia have seen remarkable developments in the area of media development and freedoms. Yet all three countries are struggling in different ways, among them the commercialisation of media and political divisions in society, resulting in serious rollbacks on freedom of expression and press freedom. The paper analyses the goals of the reforms among the different stakeholders in Thailand, Indonesia and Myanmar through a comparative study to identify potential similarities and differences in how different societies respond to, and shape media reforms.

In Chapter Two, Linda A. Lumayag, Ivie C. Esteban and Francisco P. Dumanig examine the meteoric rise to power of President Rodrigo Duterte by defying conventions in the most highly-charged Philippine presidential elections ever in May 2016. This chapter explores the role of online media in shaping Duterte's political persona and the perceived impact on the type of government Duterte wants to pursue. How do social media shape the Duterte leadership in terms of users' reactions and feedback through postings and comments? This paper departs from the traditional notion of ethnographic study of immersing in the community by attempting to utilise virtual ethnography as a method of data collection. Analysis is based on texts from three online mainstream newspapers published during the first 100 days of Duterte's assumption of power and two online social media sites accessed by various users. The unfettered control of the social media and the unprecedented participation of the masses may help to understand the populist strategy of Duterte in his attempt to gain the support of the people. At the time this paper was written, it was argued that media political influence may no longer be controlled by the state apparatus. Mass access to social media and other forms of media channels could change the landscape of political control in the Philippines.

Chapter Three, by Fang Yi Xue, Sarjit S. Gill and Ahmad Tarmizi Talib, presents some contemporary issues affecting three main ethnic minority communities in Malacca, namely the Baba Nyonya, Portuguese, and Chitty. This chapter also anticipates their political support towards the ruling government in Malacca. These ethnic minority communities have been consistently marginalised in various development phase specifically socio-economic and political development which has raised some concerns in Malaysia. Many of the unresolved issues arising infer to influence their political support in the 14th General Election. Despite their small numbers, these ethnic minority communities play a significant role in some electoral areas where they are densely populated. In such area, they are the “king maker” when there is a narrow contest between two competing parties.

In Chapter Four, Ahmad Nizar Yaakub begins by recalling the influence of constructivist theories of Alexander Wendt and Stephen Walt that religion is an ideational construct which is often left out from the discussions by leading theories as a factor in explaining developments in politics and international relations. The author stresses that religion has a role to play in a state domestic politics and that sometimes extends influence in foreign policy and how a state reacts to the global issues. Indonesia which has the largest Muslim population in the world cannot avoid the factor of religion in discussing its domestic politics, foreign policy and its reaction to the plight of the Muslim world and other global affairs. This paper argued that Islam did not feature prominently during Sukarno’s presidency and as well as in the first two decades of the Suharto’s New Order. However, Islam began to emerge as a growing force to a varying degree on the Indonesian political scene and somewhat influenced its foreign policy in the last decade of the Suharto’s New Order regime and the Reformasi (Reformation) era. The concern on Islamic identity among Indonesians, an increasing number of formal and informal Islamic political parties, the elevation of Islamic leaders like Abdurrahman Wahid as President and later Hamzah Haz as Vice President and the introduction of a Syariah law in Aceh showed

the growing importance of Islam in Indonesian politics. Subsequent Indonesian leaders later on consolidate their political powers by attracting support from the formal and informal Islamic parties. At the same time, Indonesia's involvement in D8 and Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC), its concern on Bosnia, Palestine and the fight against domestic and global terrorism to some extent showed that Islam began to frame the issues and approaches in Indonesia's foreign policy.

Yasmin Abdurahim-Tagorda, in Chapter Five, describes a local situation in Mindanao where the practice of democracy remains a product of perception and attitude. This study determines the status of citizen involvement in barangay governance of Amai Manabilang, Lanao del Sur, a municipality inhabited by settlers of different origins. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches, the survey illustrates that knowledge and awareness of the respondents on the nature of barangay and the provision on citizen participation and their perception and attitude were deemed significant in decision of respondents to participate or not. The degree of participation of the citizens in various avenues, except for purok meetings is between moderate and low. Moreover, barangay assemblies, meetings, consultations, discussions between the officials and the respondents are done infrequently, thus providing no opportunity for the residents to voice their demands. In the scheme of things, the kind of participation is merely supportive, not active decision-making, the symbol of a truly meaningful participatory democracy.

Chapter Six by Mada Sukmajati assesses the patterns of financing politics in democratising Indonesia at both the national and local level. In doing so, it explores practices of money politics in three areas, namely political parties, elections, and parliaments. Money politics in political parties works in selecting leaders and candidates for the legislative and executive branches. This paper shows that party financing in Indonesia is based on the elite party model. Money politics in elections has to do with candidates' efforts to mobilise voters. Vote buying is the most popular electoral strategy in

legislative elections as well as in direct regional elections. Meanwhile, money politics in parliament refers to the behaviour of members of parliament and of governors, mayors, and regents when they try to gain access to state resources, and the consequences of their behaviour. Mada Sukmajati argues that money politics in these three areas is interrelated. Money politics in one area generates money politics in other areas. Consequently, the way politicians manage their political financing has influenced democracy in post-Suharto Indonesia.

The last chapter (Chapter Seven) by Joy Aceron examines the role of political financing in the Philippines by arguing that accountability and transparency must be central in the discussion on the financing of political activities at all levels in electoral politics. Joy Aceron further teases out the ethical question of civil society movements that receive funding from the State and whether they would still be able to carry the ideals of independence in their thinking and judgment.

In summary, all seven papers examine various issues ranging from media reform, use of popular media to promote popular politics, Islam and its role in domestic politics, foreign policy, money politics and political financing, to participation in local politics, demonstrating the peculiarity in the practice of democracy by each of the Southeast Asian nation-state examined in this book.



**Chapter
Four**

Islam in Indonesian Politics and Foreign Policy

Ahmad Nizar Yaakub

Introduction

Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world with 219.744 million people in 2015. The state did not become an Islamic state but adopted Pancasila as its main ideology with “Belief in the absoluteness of God” as its first principle. It also adopted an “independent and active” foreign policy. While analysing Indonesian politics, foreign policy, and its response to international issues, it is hard to ignore the influence of religion (Islam).

This chapter argued that Islam began to be a recognised force in Indonesian politics and foreign policy in the last decade of the Suharto regime and the Reformasi era. This had been assisted further when Indonesia moved towards a transition to democracy from authoritarianism in 1998 which saw the making of electoral laws that allow for the formation of many new political parties. At the same time, the Indonesian government also started to take steps in increasing its international profile by pursuing a more active foreign policy especially on issues concerning the Islamic World. This paper began by discussing on the influence of religion in politics, foreign policy and global contexts from the constructivist

perspective. It then followed by identifying the role of Islam in Indonesian politics before and after independence especially under the Sukarno government. Then, this paper showed the growing influence of Islam in Indonesian politics and foreign policy in the last decade of Suharto's New Order regime especially when he wanted to seek the political support from the Indonesian Muslims, the Islamic organisations and groups as well as to project a higher international profile for Indonesia. The paper also examined how Islam, after the fall of Suharto's regime, began to be a growing force and gaining more influence in Indonesian politics through the establishment of formal and informal Islamic political parties. Likewise, it looked into the reactions of the Muslim communities towards global affairs which concern the Muslim World and their influence in Indonesia's foreign policy.

Constructivism: The influence of religion in politics, foreign policy, and global affairs

In the post-colonial era, countries with a sizable or majority Muslim population often adopted either a secular or theocratic state identity. Secular Muslim states adopted an institutional separation between state and Islam. Meanwhile, Islamic states departed from the belief that there is no separation between the state (*al dawlah*) and religion (*ad din*). Islam is considered to be holistic teaching which can be applied in all aspects of life including politics and foreign policy (Azra 2006). According to Dawisha (1983, 5) in a theocratic political state identity (Islamic state), Islam would have a more direct influence on the formulation of state foreign policy, acting "as a motivator, legitimator or simply a justifier". Meanwhile, in a secular state identity, Islam has a limited influence on the state domestic and foreign policies. However, this simple categorisation did not capture the real dynamics of domestic political and foreign policies' operations in many Muslim-majority countries where a conjunction of various Islam-related national and global affairs, institutions and events has increasingly come to shape the formally secular state's foreign policies.

In the post-Cold War era, Huntington (1993) stated that religion has become an important source of conflict in politics and international relations. He considered much of the tensions and conflicts in religion to arise from Muslim and non-Muslim societies. These religious conflicts wrapped up into parts of what he called the 'Clash of Civilizations'. Constructivist theories like Alexander Wendt and Stephen Walt strongly believe that religion is an ideational construct which often been left out from discussions by other leading theories such as realism and liberalism as an important factor in explaining developments in politics and international relations (Yaakub 2013). Basically, constructivists subscribe to the theoretical proposition that state's behaviour is formed by the "non-material factors" like "identities, elite beliefs and social norms" (Mingst 2003, 76). Meanwhile, Harris (2006) argued that in the Post-Cold War era, an increasing number of people started to identify themselves with a particular religion and that religion is conditioning national identity and influencing state foreign policy. In a similar view, Davidson (2004) stated that constructivists accepted that a society's religion, culture, ideology and nationalism are important in determining the foreign policy responses. Thus, religion has an important role to play in shaping state domestic politics, foreign policies and state reactions to global issues.

Islam, nationalism and the birth of the Indonesian Republic

Islam has arrived on the Indonesian shore as early as 14th century through the Persian and Indian traders. Like in many parts of the Indonesian Archipelago, Islam and the traditional culture (*adat*) amalgamated well which appealed to the local people but to a varying degree to different ethnics. As such, Islamic expression and commitment are different across the many islands in the archipelago. Moreover, there were also differences in Islamic practices between Muslims from the Youth Group (*Kaum Muda*) and Elders Group (*Kaum Tua*) which saw armed clashes between them. In West Sumatra, the Elders Group even sought the Dutch forces to defeat the Youth Group under Imam Bonjol in the Padri Wars (1821-1837) (Machmudi 2008).

In Java, the Javanese *abangan* followed a loose form of Islamic practices known to them as *Agami Jawi*. Meanwhile, the Javanese *santri* followed *Agami Islam santri*, a stricter Islamic practice (Carnegie 2008).

During the Dutch colonial rule of the Indonesian archipelago, there were two most influential Muslim organisations, namely: Muhammadiyah which was formed in 1912 and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) in 1926. The Muhammadiyah group followed the modernist approach and sought to reform the Indonesian Muslims whom they considered as being too backward and traditional. The Nahdlatul Ulama, in contrast, was more traditional in outlook and tried to protect and maintain the position and power of the religious leader (*kiyai*) (Yaakub 2013). As a result of the division between the two groups, there was no united Islamic force to challenge the Dutch colonial rule.

The Japanese occupation of Indonesia in the Second World War saw the Japanese colonial authority established the Council of Muslim Organisations called Masjumi in 1943. The Japanese saw Islam can be a medium for them to propagate their ideology and propaganda. Ironically, through Masjumi, the Muhammadiyah group led by Ki Bagus Hadikusomo and Nahdlatul Ulama group by Abdul Wahid Hasjim were able to work together to seek independence for Indonesia and the creation of an Islamic state (Yaakub 2013). Nevertheless, the nationalists who were seeking independence for Indonesia demanded the separation of state and religion. In order to solve the differences between the Islamists and the nationalists, a ‘Committee of Nine’ was established which later agreed to accept Pancasila with a provision that after the first principle of “Belief in God” there will be an inclusion of Syariah law or Islamic law for the Muslims and a decree stating that only a Muslim is eligible to be elected as President (Hosen 2007; Elson 2009). The “Committee of Nine” consists of Abdul Kahar Muzakkir, Abdul Wahid Hasjim, Abikoeso Tjokrosedjoso, Agus Salim, Ahmad Soebardjo, Hatta, Maramis, Muhammad Yamin and Sukarno. The

settlement fell short of declaring Indonesia as an Islamic state. The settlement was known as the Jakarta Charter.

After the proclamation of independence by President Sukarno in 1945, the Vice President, Hatta, made an announcement that for the sake of unity and the protest from the Protestant and Catholic leaders, the inclusion of Syariah law for the Muslims and a decree stating that only a Muslim is eligible to be elected as President would be removed from the Constitution (Hosen 2007; Sukma 2003). No doubt, the announcement was an act of betrayal at the highest order to the Masjumi leaders especially from the Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama by the nationalists led by Sukarno and Hatta.

As a counter reaction, the apolitical Masjumi was later established as a political party in 1945. However, the Masjumi leaders postponed their protests against the Republican government under Sukarno as the latter were still in armed conflict with the returning Dutch colonial forces. A pocket of Islamic militant movements especially the Abode of Islam (Darul Islam) in Aceh, West Java, and South Sulawesi revolted against the Republican Government as a protest of the betrayal and their aspiration to create an Islamic state (Azra 2004; Yaakub 2013). These Islamic militant movements were later crushed by the Republican forces.

Independence was fully achieved in 1949 after the defeat of the Dutch colonial forces. In the same year, the Republican Government under Sukarno dropped the Jakarta Charter from the Indonesian Constitution (Carnegie 2008). The action was considered by the Muslim leaders as a second betrayal by the Republican Government. It was also perceived that the government and the Constitution wanted to marginalise Islam and reinforced the domination of Java especially the Javanese ethnic group over others.

In 1952, the NU group left Masjumi Party as their leaders felt their roles were being marginalised (Fealy, Hooker & White 2006). The in-fighting in Masjumi and the withdrawal of NU had considerable

impact on their votes in the first Indonesian General Elections in 1955 as many Indonesian Muslims preferred to choose the leftist and nationalist parties rather than the Islamic parties. The Masjumi Party only managed to garner 20.9 per cent and the newly established Nahdlatul Ulama Party obtained 18.4 per cent (Yaakub 2013, 203). In the subsequent years, the Sukarno government quashed the armed rebellions by militant movements especially the Permesta which was unofficially supported by Nahdlatul Ulama Party.

Meanwhile, the alternative government known as the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia (PPRI) was set up in West Sumatra to oppose the Central Government under Sukarno. It was unofficially supported by Masjumi Party and the lesser Partai Serikat Islam (The Indonesian Islamic League Party). Three of Masjumi Party top leaders including Mohammed Natsir had joined the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia in West Sumatra. As a result of their leaders' involvement, the Masjumi Party was banned by the Sukarno government (Samson 1968; Carnegie 2008; Yaakub 2013). Sukarno later introduced a new political system known as "Guided Democracy" in 1959. The "Guided Democracy" was to depict the rural Javanese village which focuses on the idea of "discussion and consensus". Through the new political system, a doctrine of Nationalism, Religion and Communism (NASAKOM) was established in order to appease the competing groups (Yaakub 2013). However, Sukarno later leaned towards the nationalist and communist groups to consolidate his power and arrested many leaders from the Islamic parties in the following years for opposing him.

Thus, it can be concluded that before and after independence, the nationalists and Sukarno government had betrayed the Islamic groups (Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama) and distrust the Islamic political parties especially the Masjumi Party, Nahdlatul Ulama Party and Partai Serikat Islam. The distrust on Islamic groups and Islamic political parties by the Sukarno government was reflected in its foreign policy.

Indonesian foreign policy began when Sukarno proclaimed the independence of Indonesia in August 1945 and the main focus was primarily to secure international recognition of its independence. In September 1948, Vice President, Mohammad Hatta introduced Indonesian foreign policy doctrine of “independent and active” in his speech “Rowing Between Two Coral Reefs” (Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung 1973). This doctrine envisioned that Indonesia would not side with any superpower especially in the Cold War period and would work for the preservation of peace globally. As such, Indonesia took an initiative to organise the first Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung in 1955 for non-aligned nations. However, in the later years, contrary to the doctrine, Sukarno’s government put greater emphasis on relations with the Western countries and later, alliance with the Communist countries especially the former Soviet Union and China. The Guided Democracy period and Sukarno’s philosophy of “living dangerously” had swung Indonesia further toward the Communist bloc (Baker 1999). Sukarno’s government gave little attention to Indonesia’s relations with the Muslims and Arab World. Sukarno’s declaration of “Confrontation” with Malaysia in 1963 also reflected his little consideration for the shared religion and ethnicity in both countries.

Coup, Islam, politics and foreign policy during Suharto’s New Order period

The failed coup on 30 September 1965 saw the Indonesian Army gained the upper hand in Indonesian politics. The Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) was accused by the Army as mastermind in the failed coup by some disgruntled middle ranking military officers. As a result, the Army and some Islamic political parties collaborated to crush the Communist Party of Indonesia. The Army under Suharto with the assistance from the Nahdlatul Ulama youth wing “Ansor” conducted what was called as mass killings of thousands of PKI leaders and members in retaliation to the murder of five senior army generals at Lubang Buaya (Bourchier & Hadiz 2003).

When Suharto took office as President, he showed a good gesture to the Islamic parties by releasing many of the leaders of Masjumi Party and other Islamic parties that were imprisoned by the Sukarno government. No doubt, this gesture was in return for the collaboration that the Islamic parties had given to the Army in eliminating PKI and the communist groups. Many of the Islamic parties and groups were hoping that the Suharto government would allow them to play greater role in the Indonesian politics. This was not happening as the Suharto government was just like the Sukarno government that distrusts the leaders of the Islamic parties and groups especially on their involvement in several earlier rebellions. At the same time, Suharto wanted the Army to be the dominant force in the Indonesian politics. The Suharto government even refused to allow the establishment of new Islamic political parties or lift the ban on Masjumi Party (Bourchier & Hadiz 2003).

In the subsequent years, the Suharto government forced the four Islamic political parties, namely: the Muslim Party of Indonesia (PMI), the Islamic Association Party of Indonesia (PSII), the Islamic Educational Movement, and Nahdlatul Ulama Party to merge into a single party known as the United Development Party (PPP). The party fundamental ideology was set to be Pancasila and not Islam. As a result of dissatisfaction, majority members from the former Nahdlatul Ulama Party withdrew from United Development Party and Indonesian politics to focus on educational, social and religious activities.

In the Cold War era under the Suharto government, Islamic political parties and groups did not fare better than the Sukarno period as Suharto distrusted them due to their involvement in the previous rebellions. Suharto even forced the Islamic parties to merge into one single party and to take up the state ideology Pancasila as the party ideology instead of Islam. As such, in foreign policy, Indonesia had minimal contact with the Muslim World.

Islam, politics and foreign policy in the led up to the fall of Suharto's New Order

In the last decade of his New Order regime, Suharto felt that his grip on the government and military was declining as a result of increasing challenge from the retired and senior military officers. According to Sofjian (2006), Suharto began to seek support from the Muslim masses. In 1990, he went to Mecca to perform “hajj” with his family, some friends and cabinet ministers. The event was televised nationally. After that, in many Golkar Party’s publication the usage of the title “Hadji” and the adoption of an Islamic name “Muhammad” was used for Suharto. To a large extent, Suryadinata (1997) argued that the new Islamic credentials were used by Suharto for political strategy in order to win the votes from the Indonesian Muslims before the 1990 Indonesian General Elections.

Suharto had also encouraged his Vice President, Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie (Habibie) to establish the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI) in 1990. The Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals was used by Suharto to recruit civilians into his cabinet and Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (DPR) (People’s Representative Assembly) (Porter 2002). This basically gave the Muslim intellectuals an opportunity to be involved directly in Indonesian politics. At the same time, many of the Muslim organisations were able to lobby the Suharto government for the following gains: to accept the “Islamic values” such as lifting the prohibition of women wearing hijab; to ban the national sports lottery; to establish Islamic insurance and banking; to introduce halal logo on food products; and to regulate Islamic marriages (Banyu Perwita 2007).

In foreign policy, the Suharto government started to uplift Indonesia’s standing and profile in the international politics through a more active participation particularly in the Islamic World. In 1990, the Suharto government sought and gained full membership in the OIC. Indonesia was elected Chairman of OIC in the 1993 Summit. With this new status, Indonesia began to forge closer relations with the Muslim countries through Suharto’s official visit

to Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan, Iran and Turkey. Indonesia even joined D8 (Developing 8 Muslim Countries) in order to develop closer economic collaboration. Earlier, in 1991, the Suharto government donated 100 million rupiah and 100 tonnes of rice to the Palestine Liberation Organisation in support of the Palestinian cause (Sukma 2003, 72). This was done due to the strong demand by the Indonesian Muslim organisations for the Suharto government to do more for the Palestinian people. The following year, Suharto in his capacity as the Chairman of Non-Aligned Movement, invited the PLO leader Yasser Arafat to the Summit meeting in Indonesia. Again in 1993, Yasser Arafat and his wife Suha visited Indonesia where Suharto made a statement that “Indonesia is ready to offer real support to the struggle of the Palestinian people” (Azra 2006, 103).

Indonesia also took an interest in the Bosnian conflict when it recognised the independence of Bosnia-Herzegovina on 20th May 1992. As the Bosnian conflicts accelerated into “total war”, the United Development Party and other Indonesian Muslim organisations especially the Committee for Solidarity of the Islamic World (KISDI) and the Indonesian Council of Ulama or Islamic Scholars (MUI) demanded the Suharto government to further support the Bosnian Muslims. As a result, Indonesia sent 200 medical officers to Bosnia-Herzegovina under the UN peacekeeping force. At the same time Suharto made a secret visit to Bosnia-Herzegovina on March 1995 when the conflict was still in full swing. No doubt his action was done in order to gain more political support among the Indonesian Muslims.

Thus, it can be summed up that in the last decade of the Suharto regime, Islam became more influential as a force. This was manifested when Suharto courted the Muslim masses and organisations through greater political participation and adopted Islamic values to gain their support in the general elections. Suharto also brought in several Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals and United Development Party leaders into the cabinet.

At the same time, the Suharto government became more active in championing the Muslim issues and plights globally largely due to the pressure from the Muslim masses and the intention to raise the image of Indonesia at the international level.

The financial and economic crises in 1998 and the massive civilian and student demonstrations dubbed as the Reformasi (Reformation) period finally led to the downfall of the Suharto government. According to Porter (2002), despite the media hype on the role of students' demonstrations from the secular elite universities, most of the student demonstrations were from the Muslim University Students Action Front (KAMMI) which had affiliation in 63 public and private universities. The Islamic organisations especially the Muhammadiyah which initially supported Suharto also began to distance themselves from him as they were dissatisfied with the rampant corruption, collusion and nepotism (KKN) in his government. When the demonstrations and riots became out of hand, Suharto called on the Islamic organisations for support but they shunned him and instead, asked for his resignation and more political freedom.

Islam in Indonesian politics and foreign policy in the Reformasi era

The Reformasi era ushered in the process of democratisation in Indonesia and paved the way for the competitive legislative election in 1999, the establishment of new political parties and the devolution of power to regions under decentralisation and regional autonomy. In politics, the resignation of Suharto and the elevation of Habibie as the new president saw the transition from an authoritarian to a more democratic government. Habibie did not receive strong support from his own Golkar Party and the military. As such he relied on the support of the Indonesian Committee for Solidarity with the Islamic World (KISDI) and the Indonesian Council for Islamic Missionary Activity (DDII). Like his predecessor, Habibie also appointed many members of the Muslim leaders in the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals to the cabinet

posts such as Adi Sasono, A.M. Saefuddin, Fahmi Idris, Marzuki Usman, Soleh Solahuddin and Tuty Alawiyah. During the reformasi period, one of Habibie’s contributions was reforming the electoral process that allowed the establishment of 141 new political parties of which 42 were considered Islamic political parties (Sukma 2003, 85). This encouraged greater participation of political parties in the 1999 General Election. However, only twenty (20) of the so-called formal and informal Islamic parties met the requirements to participate in the 1999 General Election. No doubt, Islam became an emerging force and gained greater foot-hold in the Indonesian politics.

Table 4.1: Indonesia’s Parliamentary Election Results (1999 and 2004)

1999	Votes	Seats	2004	Votes	Seats
PDI-P	33.74	153	PDI-P	18.53	109
Golkar	22.44	120	Golkar	21.58	128
PKB**	12.61	51	PKB**	10.57	52
PPP*	10.71	58	PPP*	8.51	58
PAN**	7.12	34	PD	7.45	55
PBB*	1.94	13	PKS*	7.34	45
PK*	1.36	7	PAN**	6.44	53
PKP	1.01	4	PBB*	2.62	11
PNU*	0.64	5	PBR*	2.44	14
PDI	0.62	2	PDS	2.13	13
Other Parties	7.81	15	Other Parties	12.39	12
Total	100.00	462	Total	100.00	550

Source: Abuza 2007: 25.

*formal Islamic political parties

**informal Islamic political parties

Based on Table 4.1, the formal and informal Islamic political parties managed to capture 70 and 85 seats, respectively, in 1999. According to Abuza (2007, 22) the formal and informal Islamic political parties managed to capture about 33 per cent (155 seats) in the DPR in 1999. The formal Islamic parties are the ones that openly declared Islam as their political ideology and the informal Islamic political parties “... declare(d) their identity as ‘open’ political parties and

adopt pluralism in their platform but remain dependent upon key segment in the Islamic community for support” (Sukma 2003, 95). The alliance of Islamic political parties known as the “Central Axis” succeeded in lifting Abdurrahman Wahid (Gus Dur) from PKB and the voice of NU as the new President in 1999. At the same time, PAN and Muhammadiyah leader, Amien Rais was elected as the Chairman of the MPR. The results indicated that if Islamic political parties are “united”, they can be a pertinent force in Indonesian politics.

Gus Dur’s government was short-lived as Gus Dur was impeached by the MPR in 2001. He was replaced as President by Megawati Sukarnoputeri from PDI-P. Basically, Gus Dur’s erratic behaviour had provoked the following: first, the alliance of the Central Axis by sacking Hamzah Haz from his cabinet, a chairman from United Development Party; second, having serious economic mismanagement; and finally, trying to open trade relations with Israel even when it was opposed by the majority of Indonesian Muslims. In order to appease the Muslim supporters and maintain new support from the “Central Axis”, Megawati appointed Hamzah Haz from United Development Party as her Vice-President. According to Banyu Perwita (2007), Megawati viewed the Muslim supporters as an essential part of her political legitimacy.

Based on Table 4.1, in the 2004 General Election, the Islamic formal and informal political parties increased their seats to 233 (42 per cent) in the Indonesian People’s Representative Council (DPR) from 155 seats (33 per cent) in 1999. Despite the Islamic political parties’ strong presence in the Indonesian People’s Representative Council, they were not really “united”. As a result, Susilo Bambang Yudhyono (SBY), a chairman of the Democrat Party, finally won the presidential election. Later, SBY appointed 10 cabinet ministers from the Islamic political parties in appreciation of their support in the election. SBY made every effort to show his government respect for and understood the aspiration of the Muslim masses. The Aceh Conflict ended when SBY government granted partial autonomy and allowed the implementation of the Syariah law in

the Aceh Province (Hosen 2007). The special concession to Aceh was perceived to bring more demands from other provinces that were under the Islamic political parties for the implementation of the Syariah law. A survey of 16 provinces conducted by the Centre for the Study of Islam and Society at the Syarif Hidayatullah Islamic Institute in Jakarta found that 61.4 per cent of respondents wanted the government to enforce Syariah law for Muslims (Crouch 2005, 36). SBY won again in the 2009 general elections but because of the new Constitution, he was not allowed to run for the post of President for the third time.

In the April 2014 general elections, the five Islamic parties, namely: the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), the National Awakening Party (PKB), the United Development Party (PPP), the Crescent Star Party (PBB) and the National Mandate Party (PAN) collectively won 32 per cent of the votes compared to 26 per cent in the 2009 general elections (Paramewaran 2017, 3). In the 2014 presidential election, Joko Widodo (Jokowi) won against former General Prabowo Subianto. The political parties in the government coalition under Jokowi managed to muster more than 65 per cent of the seats in the Indonesian People's Representative Council of which 24 per cent came from the three big Islamic parties namely PKB, PPP and PAN (Parlina & Ramadhani 2016). Despite being in the government coalition, PKB, PPP and PAN did not support Jokowi's PDI-P candidate under "Ahok" (Basuki Tjahaja Purnama) in the February 2017 Jakarta gubernatorial election. Ahok had earlier angered the Indonesian Muslims for insulting the Quran, al-Maidah verse 51, which warned Muslims against taking Jews and Christians as allies. The Islamic parties pushed for his persecution for blasphemy charges. PKB, PPP and PAN later joined forces with the rival Democratic Party to endorse Agus Harimurti, the son of Yudhoyono as candidate for governor. Several huge demonstrations (one demonstration involved half a million Indonesian Muslims, for example, in December 2016) were held in Jakarta to demand action against Ahok. Ironically, President Jokowi also attended the demonstrations on 4th November and 2nd December 2016

in an attempt to calm the tensions and appease the hard-line Islamists for the sake of political stability. The Ahok controversy showed that the Islamic card was used in the Indonesian politics to mobilise the Muslim populace.

In the meantime, the end of the Suharto's New Order saw a rise of Islam's influence in Indonesian foreign policy but waned due to the tension faced by successive governments. The Habibie's government during the Reformasi period accommodated the demands of the Muslim organisations to a large extent and even allowed the Muslims to carry out demonstrations in front of the US and other European countries' embassies but refused to condemn the US and its European allies' air strikes in Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan. The main reason was that they were the financial lenders to Indonesia through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) after the 1997 economic and financial crisis. During Gus Dur's government, the Islamic factor was more evident in his foreign policy. He built strong relations with the Middle East countries and gained substantial investments and financial assistances from Qatar and Kuwait (Sukma 2003). When he tried to open trade relations with Israel, it provoked angry reaction from the Indonesian Muslims. Gus Dur argued that during the Prophet Muhammad's time, the Muslims did trade with the Jewish people. Nevertheless, the Indonesian Muslims could not stomach the Israeli government as it continued killing and suppressing the Palestinian Muslims. Due to his government's contradictory foreign policy and incompetence, the Islamic political parties that pushed him to power became the ones that pulled him down.

The Megawati government came to power with strong support from the formal and informal Islamic political parties that saw Hamzah Haz from United Development Party became the Vice President. In terms of foreign policy, Megawati focused on building relations with the US, Japan and European countries for economic reasons but neglected the relations with the Muslims and the Middle East countries. A week after the 9/11 terrorists attack on US soil, Megawati visited the US to extend condolences and to support

President Bush' "War on Terror". As a quid pro quo, President Bush granted US\$657.7 million financial aid to Indonesia and resumed military cooperation that was suspended after the Dili Massacre in 1991 (Sukma 2003, 132). The US and its European allies' invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan received strong condemnation from the Indonesian Muslims. MUI and the radical Muslim groups especially the Islamic Defenders Front and Laskar Jihad called on Indonesians for jihad against US and its European allies (Azra 2006). However, Megawati's lackluster response to the Islamic cause in foreign policy angered the extremist Muslim groups such as the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) which can be associated with several terrorist attacks on Bali and Jakarta.

During SBY period, his Democrat Party government's reliance on the support of the Islamic political forces had led to the growing influence of Islam as a factor in shaping Indonesian foreign policy. To show his government's solidarity with the struggle of the Palestinians, SBY went to Cairo in November 2004 with several prominent Muslim leaders such as Hidayat Nurwahid from the Islamic Party (PKS) who was also the Speaker of MPR, Din Syamsuddin from MUI, Hasyim Muzadi from NU and Amin Abdullah from Muhammadiyah to extend condolences on the death of the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat (Al-Anshori 2016, 183). During his visit to the US, he shared the need to combat terrorism with President George W. Bush, but he also raised the issue of the Palestinian people and the need for an independent Palestinian state as well as requested Bush to restart the Middle East peace process (Yaakub 2013). In May 2006, Indonesia hosted the D8 summit in Bali to enhance economic cooperation among the eight Muslim countries.

Meanwhile at the Third World Islamic Economic Forum in 2007, SBY requested that Muslim countries should increase the flow of trade and investment among them by relaxing trade barriers (Yaakub 2013). He also stressed that Islamic countries should use their energy resources and commodities to get a better deal and

fair exchange of knowledge and technology from the Western countries.

In foreign policy, the Jokowi government has been accommodative to the call by Muslim populace and Islamic parties to the plight of Muslims around the world. On May 2016, Jokowi allowed the Rohingya Muslim boat people from Myanmar to land on Indonesian soil after the Indonesian Islamic parties demanded him to help them on humanitarian grounds as the Rohingya Muslims are facing persecution from their government. Moreover, on February 2017, King Salman Abdulaziz Al Saud made a 12-day visit to Indonesia which heralded a new start for Indonesia's cordial bilateral relations with Saudi Arabia as the guardian of the two holiest places for Muslims and Indonesia as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. Indonesia also tried to amplify the message of interfaith tolerance in the country. Religious Affairs Minister Lukman Hakim Syaifuddin commented that the dialogue of King Salman with Indonesia's interfaith figures was done to convey a message of peace to the Indonesians and the world that "... religions should not be used as a tool to achieve political goals that could lead to extremism, radicalism and terrorism" (Koswaraputra 2017, 7). The visit by King Salman may have propped up Jokowi's public standing among Indonesian Muslims and strengthened his Islamic credentials which was often questioned by the conservative Muslim groups and political opponents. According to Bayuni (2017), this will have many repercussions in the national political landscape, where Islam has become an important if not decisive factor.

Conclusion

Religion, which constructivist considered as an ideational construct, continues to be a salient factor in the domestic politics and influence to some extent the foreign policy of many non-Western countries including Indonesia as it has the largest number of Muslim population in the world. The Indonesian religious leaders and groups often played a role in the domestic politics since

independence. The religious affiliation of political candidates, for example, in the presidential election is often scrutinized by the Indonesian Muslims. The oscillating influence of Islam in Indonesian domestic politics over the years due to the pressure from the Indonesian populace, political parties and pressure groups has bearing on foreign policy.

After the fall of Suharto's New Order and the swift process of democratisation, which allowed the establishment of new political parties including formal and informal Islamic political parties, Islam started to grow again as a significant force in Indonesian politics. Abdurrahman Wahid and Hamzah Haz were political leaders who managed to ascend to political power during the Reformasi era which reflected the importance of "unity" among the formal and informal Islamic political parties. On the whole, the Indonesian governments over the years tended to court the Muslim masses when they were weak but as they grew stronger, greater control was imposed on the Muslim masses. In the field of foreign policy, Indonesian leaders often listened to the demand of the formal and informal Islamic political parties and groups to take action or show support on matters concerning the plight of the Muslims all over the world especially in Bosnia, Palestine and Myanmar. At the same time, Indonesia slowly began to strengthen its relations with the Islamic countries and organisations such as Saudi Arabia, D8 and OIC. The Indonesian government wanted to be seen as respecting the aspirations of the Muslim masses and sensitive to the issue of the plights of Muslims around the world.

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DOES DEMOCRACY HAVE A FUTURE?

SELECTED CASES FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA

Democracy has gained currency as reflected by the people's wishes the world over to participate more actively in governance and to voice their views on issues that matter to them. People yearn to speak openly, give comments on public affairs, and criticise their government. However, how far have thinkers, practitioners, and even supporters of democracy succeeded in promoting and putting democratic principles into practice? Has democracy thrived or declined?

The book is a compilation of selected papers presented at the Third International Conference on Elections and Democracy (E & D) on April 19-20, 2017, in Kuching, Sarawak with the theme "Does Democracy Have a Future?" organised by the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, UNIMAS. The seven papers selected in this book merit a closer look. They were written by academics and political observers based in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia.

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