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Indonesia, a Nation-State in Search of Identity and Structure

After almost fifty-six years of independence, Indonesian society seems more divided than ever.* The word 'seems' is appropriate here since, although the separatist movements at the end of the nineteen fifties and the dreadful massacres of political opponents in the mid-sixties were larger in scale and cut deeper than the present social crisis – notwithstanding the present violence – this crisis is experienced as a *kristal*, or total crisis. One can say that perhaps the memory of those two awful periods in the past even acts as a restraint on the actions of the elite today.¹

Adam Schwartz's seminal work on Suharto's New Order, first published in 1994 and updated in 1999 in a third edition covering the shift in power of May 1998, bore the interesting, optimistic title *A Nation in Waiting*. In 2001, KITLV Press published a voluminous work by Kees van Dijk in which the developments of the past three years are discussed under the title *A Country in Despair*. It would be logical to complete the sequence in the same vein by

* This article is a translation of the slightly revised text of an address given at the annual members' meeting of the Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology in Leiden on 19 May 2001. The developments after May 19th, as far as relevant, will be described in the footnotes on the basis of a working visit to Indonesia in June and July 2001. I will very briefly address the question of the significance of the change of president in Indonesia at the end of July 2001 and of President Megawati's new cabinet in relation to the theme of this address – the search for identity and structure – in the epilogue, written on 17 August 2001.

¹ Apart from some terrorist bomb attacks in Jakarta in July, the shift in power was the first one to take place unattended by violence. This is partly because former President Wahid had publicly announced his intention of issuing a decree proclaiming a state of emergency long before, as a result of which his political opponents were prepared for anything. Furthermore, Wahid had repeatedly given explicit orders for the mass of his NU supporters to remain in East Java and refrain from acts of violence of any kind. During the weekend of July 21-22 only a few thousand *kiayi* gathered in Tangerang (near Jakarta) as a sign of spiritual support for their president, Wahid.

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giving the present speech the title *A State in Decay*. I am not as pessimistic as that, however. Hence the more neutral (and, I admit, slightly duller) title *Indonesia, a Nation-State in Search of Identity and Structure*.

The immense problems facing Indonesia today – such as the presence of nearly a million refugees in the archipelago – are well known. Nevertheless, I feel that in the present situation the crisis may also be regarded as a kind of catharsis – an agonizing situation that Indonesian society has to come to terms with before, finally strengthened, it will be able to progress as a nation-state. However, I am not suggesting that this is what will in fact happen.

With this observation I am not alluding solely to the – understandable, though not altogether convincing – recent reassuring remark by Abdurrahman Wahid, or Gus Dur, that the tensions surrounding his position were only to be viewed as 'inevitable bumps in the road to a sound democracy'. On the contrary, in using the word 'catharsis' I am thinking also of the remarks by the late Romo Y.B. Mangunwijaya, who shortly before his death in 1999 spoke of an *era kegelisahan*, a period of chaos, from which a new national conscience might grow (Mangunwijaya 1998; see also Schulte Nordholt 1999). The actual words Mangunwijaya used were '*may grow again*', as he was making a comparison with the beginning of the Indonesian struggle for independence. With reference to this, Sutan Sjahrir, whom he much admired, in October 1945 also spoke of an *era kegelisahan* in his famous political brochure *Perdjoeangan Kita*, which has been so important in the creation of a national identity in Indonesia. Amid the general euphoria over the end of Suharto's New Order, Romo Mangunwijaya wrote about the long way that Indonesian society still had to go before democracy would become firmly rooted. He argued that the end of that road would not be reached until about 2045 – a time span of at least two generations.

I would not have mentioned Mangunwijaya's hopeful, albeit very distant, vision of a democratic Indonesia if I had not also come across many 'signs of hope' in my own contacts with Indonesians over the last three years. So the present situation, in my view, is not so much a matter of 'despair' as of confusion. The present struggle for power in Jakarta concerns some fundamental issues. It looks, especially to observers on the sidelines, as if these issues are being deliberately debated in an extremely confusing way, using whatever means are deemed necessary. That is why it seems to me appropriate to speak of immense confusion, *kegelisahan*, rather than despair.²

² Looking back on President Wahid's rather erratic decisions and actions in the twenty-one months of his presidency, the comparison with a kung fu film comes to mind. I remember Gus Dur, when he was still able to watch films, enthusiastically talking about these famous Hong Kong action films, which all include a scene in which the hero finally emerges from a seemingly hopeless situation as the winner, spinning around like a top and blinding his opponents with a whirlwind of dust.

I admit that the 'signs of hope' are very local in nature, and therefore limited in scale and range, but they are occurring over large, widely scattered parts of this immense archipelago. Of course I realize that anyone speaking about present-day Indonesia is strongly influenced by the time perspective from which they are speaking: that of the short-term focus on the current period with all its confusion, or the long-term view of the steady march of democracy. One is influenced also by the level of the analysis: whether it is local, regional, national, or even international. Another important factor is the disciplinary angle chosen, and especially the perspective from which one argues: that of a western analyst who cannot avoid the limitations of his or her own particular frame of reference with its seemingly clear-cut concepts of 'good' and 'bad', for instance, or that of someone with, for example, a Javanese frame of reference with respect to power, in which the mythical Durga-Umayi symbolizes both good and bad in one person (Mangunwijaya 1991). Within this latter frame of reference it is also possible to speak of the Janus character of the armed forces and of the Janus character of ethnicity and nationalism, which at present in the form of ethno-nationalism and ethno-religious loyalty is posing a real threat to the Indonesian nation-state.

Here I will focus especially on two, to my mind fundamental, themes or issues with which Indonesian society is now grappling: those of identity and of structure. I will describe the 'political arena' at the national level, but will also view some phenomena from a local or regional perspective in order to fill in the picture of the struggle for power at the national level. I realize that in so doing I run the risk of appearing to proceed randomly.

The two fundamental themes or questions running through my talk like a common thread are:

1. If Indonesia wants to continue as a nation-state, then it will be of the essence to reach a new consensus on the national identity, on what 'to be Indonesian' means. This brings us to the core of the politico-ideological debate that started as early as 1928³ but had not reached its culmination in 1945. As a result, the political elite in Jakarta and the different ethnic and religious groups in numerous regions in the current national power vacuum are fighting over the issue of what being Indonesian means at daggers drawn. This very question of identity, however, also focuses on the relationship between the 'state' and the different ethnic and regional groups.⁴

³ In that year a few hundred young Indonesian intellectuals swore the Sumpah Pemuda, or Youth Oath, calling for one people, one language, and one state. In the collective Indonesian memory this oath marks the start of the communal struggle for independence.

⁴ I agree with Nederveen Pieterse (1993) that the entire debate about ethnic identity formation changed fundamentally after the end of the Cold War in 1989, and in Indonesia more especially after the beginning of the Asian economic crises in 1997. See also Snyder 2000.

For Indonesia after the repressive, centralist Suharto regime the question is especially one of justice (*keadilan*)⁵ – justice for the individual citizen and for the different regions.

2. From this follows the necessity to develop new structures. This means, from an administrative and economic point of view, that greater consideration must be shown for regional feelings of self-respect and justice. The question here revolves not only around the opposition between '*persatuan*' (voluntary unity) and '*kesatuan*' (imposed unity) with regard to the form of government – hence (con)federation versus a unitary state – but also, and more especially, around the way in which the implementation of the recent decentralization laws in practice is viewed. To put it succinctly, the central question is that concerning the degree of regional autonomy. The need to develop new structures also encompasses the constitutional choice between a presidential and a parliamentary system.⁶ And it touches, more especially, the position of the Chinese minority, not only economically (the question of

⁵ On 26 July 2001, before his departure for the USA for a medical check-up, Gus Dur in a short speech to his loyal supporters from a platform in front of the national monument (Monas) in Jakarta emphasized the idea of justice being at the heart of democracy. He also again stressed, as so many times in the final weeks of his presidency, that the struggle for democracy may only be carried on in a non-violent way, completely in line with Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy.

⁶ In fact, the formal conflict between President Wahid and the DPR (Parliament) and MPR (People's Assembly) revolved around the interpretation of the constitution of 1945 on this point. President Wahid favoured a presidential system, in which he was wholeheartedly supported by the constitutional scholar Professor Harun Alrasid. For this reason he considered both motions of censure in the DPR illegal and felt that the MPR had no authority to decide about impeachment. He expressed this especially strongly with the words '*adu kuat*' (trial of strength) in his television address at 7 p.m. on Sunday, 22nd July. By this he meant that if the MPR could bend the rules, so could he. Hence a few hours later, at 1.10 a.m. on July 23rd, he issued a decree suspending the DPR as well as the MPR. Because the leaders of the armed forces totally ignored this decree, Wahid, by issuing it, only hastened the special session of the MPR on Monday, 23 July, which was then held at 8 a.m. instead of the planned 10.00 a.m.

Parliament argued, on the other hand, that it was authorized on the basis of the actual political relations to bring these motions. Since it was not satisfied with Wahid's defence of 30 April, it decided to call for a special session (*Sidang Istimewa*) of the MPR on August 1st. Such a special session does have the authority to start an impeachment procedure. When Wahid decided on Friday, 20 July, to promote his loyal supporter, Lieutenant General of Police Chaeruddin Ismail, to a four-star general and simultaneously appoint him as acting chief of police, in the hope of thus strengthening his grip on this particular instrument of power, the MPR presidium immediately decided to bring this session forward to Saturday, 21 July. At this meeting, the TNI/Polri (armed forces and police) Members of Parliament voted in favour of a special session on Monday, 23 July. This sealed Wahid's fate. Formally, on legal grounds, he was right in challenging the validity of this decision. But in view of the actual political power relations, the issuing of a decree forbidding the MPR to take a decision in the matter was illusory. According to his former Minister of Defence, M. Mahfud (*Kompas*, 9 August, 2001), Wahid believed till the bitter end that he had sufficient support in the army – despite the stance of the TNI/Polri Members of Parliament in the MPR, despite the clear signal given by the presence of a hundred tanks and armed vehicles in front of his palace in Merdeka Square that Sunday afternoon, July 22nd, and despite all denials by the army command over the weekend that he could count on enough sup-

non-pri conglomerates) but also socially, on the basis of the notion that this ethnic minority deserves a fairer deal and a more equal place in Indonesian society as a whole.

The question of 'structures' also has politico-ideological implications, in the sense that an end must eventually be put to the dual function of the armed forces *if* Indonesia is to survive as a nation-state in the long run. For only the transparent, legitimate use of the instruments of power – the police and the army – under the democratic and hence civil-political supervision of the state can lead to a situation in which people feel protected.

It is my conviction that the present battle is being fought with these fundamental questions in mind. It is a battle, most importantly, between the forces of the New Order and those of the *reformasi*. The confusing factor is that the political language in Indonesia has become so perverted that the word *reformasi* can no longer be used with reference to actual democratic forces. Moreover, the contenders are keeping much of their agendas hidden and their true intentions obscure. Besides, they may for strategic or purely opportunistic reasons enter into temporary monstrous alliances with opponents, with events developing a dynamic of their own, which in turn determines the political agendas of the players in the various political arenas.

The complexity is increased further by the interaction between local/regional and national developments. This gives rise to a situation which, to all appearances, can only be partially controlled by the players in the field.⁷

Restricting ourselves to Indonesian society, when speaking of the interaction between the national and local/regional levels, the Indonesian metaphor about 'fighting elephants trampling the grass' springs to mind. It graphically illustrates what devastating effects the battle being fought in Jakarta may have for the common people, as the tragedy in the Moluccas has shown for more than two years (Aditjondro 2000). This interaction also works in the

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port from the army. Furthermore, as a confidential informer very close to the president assured me, Lieutenant General Johnny Lumintang, whom Wahid believed to be his main supporter in the army, that Sunday evening, July 22nd, visited him and told him that he was not prepared to play a similar role to that of Lieutenant General Chaeruddin Ismail in the police force for Wahid in the army. However, while at the presidential palace that same Sunday night, I had seen a printed invitation to the ceremonial swearing-in of an acting army commander at the palace at 8 a.m. on Monday, July 23rd. The object of this swearing-in, the same informant assured me, was Lieutenant General Lumintang, who then would first have been promoted to a four-star general.

⁷ Also of importance is the interaction with international developments, both in the (South-east) Asian region and worldwide. These include the coming to power of President Bush, with his obsession with the idea of the great Chinese dragon, in which connection he sees a role for Indonesia in the containment of China, which suits the hardliners in the armed forces. For reasons of space I will pass this international dimension, important for Indonesia though it is, over in silence, however.

opposite direction, however. The recent mobilization of NU members in East Java, who came to Jakarta with the intention of fighting to the death in the streets of the capital, if necessary, is an example of how the regions may support the battle at the national level. Three weeks ago this mobilization appeared to be controllable, contrary to the numerous rumours spread by commentators speaking in apocalyptic terms of the Great Reckoning.⁸

In general, a little caution in the use of such hyperboles seems advisable. Fears of disintegration and fratricide are aroused especially by 'hardliners' or their spokesmen. So there is considerable talk of a 'psy-war', or war of nerves, which is being waged especially through the media, using the latest technologies such as Internet and special web sites.⁹

It does seem realistic, however, to speak of a struggle in which *reformasi* in the sense of genuine democracy has suffered defeat for the moment, and possibly even for the next five to ten years. Just over three years ago, on 21 May 1998, the Indonesian people and nearly everyone else in the world, including myself, were excited and surprised to see President Suharto step down. In the euphoria of that moment it was believed, and hoped, that *reformasi* had won. Three years later I observe that the *reformasi* has stagnated and the New Order been restored – albeit without the Suharto family, and fortunately with free access to information, which, however, is not always reliable.

Also on 21 May 1998 two events took place which should have tempered the euphoria of the day. In the first place Amien Rais, at that moment by far the best-known and most talked-about opponent of Suharto, viewed by many, especially in the West, as the champion of the *reformasi*¹⁰, declared his support for the newly inaugurated President Habibie within half an hour of Suharto's announcing that he had passed the baton to his two aides-de-camp, Habibie and Wiranto. Habibie happened to be the man who over a year earlier on Suharto's orders had had Rais removed from his position at the top of

⁸ To avoid any risk of mob violence, only a few thousand *kiayi* came to Jakarta on Friday, 20 July, to lend spiritual support to their president. By comparison, the manoeuvre by the armed forces in positioning a hundred tanks in front of the presidential palace was an overreaction. It resembles the incident of 17 October 1952, when tanks were stationed in front of Sukarno's palace to put him under pressure not to act on an earlier decision. Abdurrahman Wahid had publicly referred to this earlier event a few times when he stated: 'At that time Bung Karno was threatened, but he did not leave the palace. Do you think that I'm not as brave as he was?'

⁹ In the fighting in the Moluccas, both sides used web sites for such purposes. The Laskar Jihad (see <http://www.laskarjihad.or.id/>), for instance, warned Christians well before the end of the year 2000 that Christmas 2000 would be the last time church bells would ring in the Moluccas, arousing so much fear that the radical organization Maluku War Child launched a campaign in the Netherlands to force the Dutch government to help Moluccan Christians by sending troops to the area.

¹⁰ Amien Rais today still regards himself as the political leader of the Fraksi Reformasi, a conglomerate of some smaller Islamic parties.

the ICMI (All-Indonesia League of Muslim Intellectuals). As a result of Amien Rais' direct support for Habibie, the student movement almost that same day fell apart, strangling the call for Reformasi Total. The second event, which took place seventeen hours after Habibie and Wiranto stepped forward, was also instigated by Rais when he gave an ultimatum demanding that the Christian general Johnny Lumintang should not be made commander of KOSTRAD, the politically vital strategic forces which constitute the real power within the Indonesian armed forces and which are still of critical military and political importance. Both events show that Suharto's 'stepping aside' (not his downfall, since he was in complete control of the developments of that day¹¹) paved the way for further confusion of the fundamental question of the identity of the Indonesian nation-state.

At the national level the concept of *politik islam* – the view that in a predominantly Muslim country politics should come under the aegis of Islam – figured prominently. After thirty-two years of the Suharto regime, the *pancasila* state ideology had become so abused and eroded as to have become ineffective (Dharmaputra 1988¹²).

People in Indonesia under Suharto frequently used the metaphor of the old *waringin* (banyan) tree – which might stand proudly while it was utterly rotten at the core and liable to be blown down by the first strong wind – in connection with this state ideology. In the same way the *pancasila* before May 1998 had seemed to be the inviolable basis of the Indonesian state. By that date, however, the once so powerful golden formula of the founding fathers of the Republic, and the binding agent in the struggle for independence, had become mere empty rhetoric after more than twenty years of indoctrination under Suharto. Hence the need to arrive at a national consensus. The *pancasila*, as a mere formula, appeared to be inadequate to heal the deep wounds made in Indonesian society the previous few years.

The state ideology not only had become eroded, but also appeared to have become imbued with the ideas of *politik islam*. The ICMI, with Habibie as general chairman, had been the means by which this political end had been achieved. Within the ICMI, Amien Rais, since becoming chairman in 1995 of the second-largest Islamic movement in the country, the Muhammadiyah, played a crucial role (Ramage 1995). From the moment of the Muhammadiyah's foundation at the end of 1990, important groups in or possessing close connections with this organization had been systematically but secretly working on a take-over of power by means of what was then called SDM, *sumber daya manusia*, derived from the highly popular international manage-

¹¹ He and his children and cronies were allegedly deeply involved in many activities aimed at undermining and obstructing the *reformasi* movement.

¹² This study can still be regarded as the seminal work on Indonesia's state ideology.

ment term HRD, human resource development. In fact, SDM was used as an excuse to appoint political friends to strategically important positions, first and foremost in the bureaucracy, then in the armed forces, and finally at key economic points.

Abdurrahman Wahid, chairman since 1984 of the largest Muslim movement, the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), was fiercely opposed to the ICMI from the start. This was largely because he realized that the members of his NU executive would have little chance of appointment in the competition for strategic posts because of their generally low level of education, which had been a fact for many decades but especially under the New Order. Hence it is not surprising that when in October 1999 their own leader became president of the Republic, certain groups emerged within Gus Dur's organization which pledged to defend him by any means. From an emancipatory point of view, NU members now in a material sense had what they had long wanted. From their perspective, nineteen months is far too short a time to satisfactorily catch up with other groups.

At the national level, not only is the *politik islam* confronted, much as in the fifties, with the national-secular ideology as originally formulated in the *pancasila*, but there is now clearly also an internal political division within Islam, as is evident from the direct confrontation between the two large Muslim movements Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah. This division is aggravated by the powerful political positions of the two main rivals, President Abdurrahman Wahid and the chairman of the MPR – the highest constitutional body – Amien Rais. The competition between the two organizations nowadays is more political in nature, one of the important issues being the emancipation of the NU's rural supporters, who have their power base in East Java.¹³

The confusing thing is, however, that there is another discourse in evidence throughout these two large groups. This is the discourse of '*dari agama*' versus '*dengan agama*'. These terms derive from a book by Abdurrahman Wahid (1993), in which he explains that by '*dari agama*' he means that, starting from one's own religious conviction, one meets 'the other' halfway in order to try and solve national problems together, while with '*dengan agama*' he refers to those who believe they can solve the national problems by applying the norms and standards of their own religion. So in reality this is an ideological discourse about inclusive versus exclusive thinking. It is my

¹³ Nurcholish Majid commented on this important issue of emancipation in connection with the NU's political aspirations vis-à-vis the Muhammadiyah in the weekly *Tempo* in July 1999 – that is, well before Abdurrahman Wahid was elected president. Since the violence against the Muhammadiyah in East Java as a result of the second motion of censure in April/May 2001, articles on the subject of competition and emancipation have appeared in many Indonesian dailies.

belief that the outcome of this discourse will eventually determine the identity of Indonesia. It will become a nation-state either with equal room for adherents of all worldviews, or with room only for one dominant religion, with the danger that the present Republic of Indonesia will disintegrate. The opposition between inclusive and exclusive thinking is manifesting itself at the regional/local level in many parts of the archipelago in a conflict of ethno-nationalism and ethno-religion versus an emergent *civil society*.

Besides, in reaction to the repressive, centralist Suharto regime, for which 'Jakarta'/'Java' always stood central, a widespread, deep feeling of opposition has developed, encompassing not only anti-Jakarta and anti-Java but also anti-army, anti-police and anti-bureaucracy sentiments. As a result, the scales are tipping in favour of the largest possible measure of autonomy, even where this is hardly realistic because of sheer lack of ability to give such autonomy adequate form, no matter how justified the desire for autonomy itself may be.

On the regional level the building up of a society has to start virtually from scratch and the idea of a civil society is almost absent. However, on regular visits to West and Central Java and Yogyakarta in the past few years I have observed a number of signs of a strengthening of *civil society*.¹⁴ I can imagine a similar development taking place in large parts of Sumatra.

Even so, in every region there are still fundamental questions that need to be addressed. For example, the question of how the available resources are to be distributed fairly. This involves the economic relations not only between the regions and the centre but also, and even especially, among regions, where the question concerns the fair division of resources among poverty-stricken regions and regions richly endowed with natural resources. I deliberately use the word 'region' here, for another crucial question is at what administrative level the distribution should be organized: the provincial or the district level. Decentralization laws numbers 22 and 25 of 1999, which should address these questions, leave much open to interpretation on this point. Even worse, because they came into force prematurely on 1 January 2001, they themselves are a source of conflict. One could even speak of a time bomb here as far as the environment, or even national unity, is concerned.

At the same time, regional administrators and political party leaders are forced by circumstances to think about and make choices in matters about which, until a few years ago, they had only to wait for 'instructions from Jakarta'. In a sense one can therefore say that the weak and powerless Wahid government in Jakarta is offering the regions ample room to take initiatives of their own.¹⁵ This might imply a friendly judgement on the Wahid govern-

¹⁴ This is confirmed by my recent field research in Central Java in June and July 2001.

¹⁵ During recent fieldwork in Central Java in July 2001, I came across many examples of this, so that I am able to confirm this with some degree of certainty.

ment, despite all the misery it now finds itself in and in which it has plunged the country, had not this room in many cases been seized by 'local tyrants' or virtual warlords.

In spite of all this, it was the Wahid government's intention from the start that the Indonesian people should be able to hold their heads high again. Juwono Sudarsono, then Secretary of State for Defence, told me in August 2000 that this was in fact the deliberate policy of the first Wahid cabinet (October 1999 - August 2000). He went on to explain this as follows. Sukarno, who proclaimed independence, gave the Indonesians a sense of belonging to a great nation that could pull its weight on the world stage, a feeling of being Indonesian, and was a *nation builder*. Sukarno forgot, however, to work on the basic needs of the people, the economic foundation of the nation-state, and was no longer able to cope in the ensuing general economic misery of the nineteen sixties. Then General Suharto emerged and spent over thirty years building the *state* of Indonesia, with all its institutions. He brought the people – at least some people, mainly those in important places – prosperity, but forgot two vital things: justice and dignity for the average citizen. Gus Dur's aim, as he explained to his cabinet members on his accession, was: 'In addition to the recovery of the economy, it is my intention that the Indonesian people shall develop themselves' (Juwono here used the term *social empowerment*) 'and that justice shall prevail' (*penegakan hukum*).

The first measures taken by that cabinet were in agreement with this aim. These measures comprised the following:

1. The Department of Information was shut down, as it was considered too paternalistic: the people should decide for themselves.¹⁶
2. The Department of Social Affairs was closed at the national level and its duties and responsibilities were delegated to local authorities, who were to discharge them in co-operation with the local population.¹⁷
3. Gus Dur's far-reaching announcement at the beginning of November 1999, within three weeks after stepping into office, that the people of Aceh would be allowed to express their view on the future constitutional status of Aceh through a referendum. He had always shown an explicitly open attitude towards state structures and calls for regional autonomy, as long as the regions remained within the fold of the Republic. For that matter, he had sworn an oath of loyalty to the constitution of 1945, which provided for a unitary state, and could not and dared not do anything but respect

¹⁶ Although a logical decision, it entailed that Wahid was left without any public medium when a few months later most of the press turned against him. In particular some influential television channels, such as Metro-TV in Jakarta, waged a fierce anti-Gus Dur campaign the last year, and especially the final months, before his impeachment.

¹⁷ A wonderful idea, but because of the abrupt nature of the decision, it led to widespread unrest and, in many cases, to a deterioration in the situation of the poorer members of society.

the borders of this state. However, he argued, with the political agility of an acrobat, that the regions should be allowed to voice their feelings, so that subsequently all these 'anti' feelings (of which, as an active NGO leader, he was very well aware) might be accommodated by 'amending the constitution'. In this connection he made the political blunder of too frankly asking: 'Why should the people of Aceh be deprived of something the people of East Timor have been given?' To all the hardliners in the armed forces, in the state bureaucracy, and especially in Megawati Sukarnoputri's nationalist PDI-P, this was like a red rag to a bull. For it is these hardliners' sincere belief that the politico-economic system of the New Order is the only system that can keep the vast archipelago together. In their view this New Order broke down mainly because of the *Korupsi, Kolusi, dan Nepotisme* (KKN) of the Suharto family, and *not* as a result of the centralist state structure with its dual function for the armed forces.

4. On top of this, Wahid provoked the hardliners with his generous attitude towards the aspirations of the Papuans. He allowed them to use the name Papua again, and in so doing symbolically recognized their ethnic identity. He allowed them to fly their own flag, the Morning Star (although this had to be slightly smaller than the national red-and-white flag and had to be flown slightly lower than it). In particular, he expressed the wish to continue the dialogue regarding their future status within the Indonesian state with them. In June 2000, when politically speaking he had already sustained serious damage in the struggle for power with his political opponents, he financed a large congress of Papuans at which they formulated their demands to him.
5. To make matters worse, Wahid enjoined Indonesians to accept the former communists, who were still treated as pariahs, as full citizens. To the hardliners, and also to his opponents in the *politik islam* block, this was unacceptable.
6. Finally, the Wahid government energetically carried through the separation of the police from the armed forces. It clearly stated that from now on the police would be primarily responsible for maintaining law and order. The decision accordingly had already been taken during Habibie's short term in office, but the formal launching of this policy took place in the first year of the Wahid government. Unfortunately we must conclude that the policy was implemented more on paper than in practice.¹⁸ Further, one

¹⁸ Here it is interesting to note that, according to a diplomatic source in Jakarta, all the western embassies had evacuation plans ready for their nationals because of fears that the police might become involved in fighting with the army (personal communication, 25 July 2001; see also footnote 6). To me these fears seem, in line with a statement by former Secretary of State for Defence M. Mahfud (*Kompas*, 9 August 2001), to be more an indication of CIA concern to bring the armed forces round to its stance in the impeachment of President Wahid than the outcome

can say that this decision to split up one of the most important pillars of the New Order as a politico-economic system has been a prime cause of conflict on many levels and in most regions. The list of these conflicts is too long to give in its entirety, but some examples are: the case of the elusive Tommy Suharto; the judicial inquiries into the numerous bomb attacks in which the army systematically obstructed police investigations; the rioting in the Moluccas, in which the army and police were often adversaries; the tragedy in Wamena in the Baliem Valley in October 2000, in which internal differences in the police force were exploited by army units; and the recent ethnic violence in Central Kalimantan, in which the army stood idly watching Madurese being slaughtered. When all is said and done, is it not the task of the police to maintain order?

If one considers only the centres of conflict, then one's impression at first sight is that not much social empowerment has been achieved. Nevertheless, there are numerous other, positive examples. I have already mentioned my own observations in West and Central Java and Yogyakarta, where I have for a number of years monitored various groups engaged in poverty alleviation, in voter education, and in the education and training of regional Members of Parliament and local religious leaders. More recently I have become familiar with the work of Baku Bae, a group of Muslim and Christian Moluccans who are working at grassroots level for reconciliation within their torn society. Also in this context should be mentioned Ibu Peduli, a movement of women from all walks of life who, after the ethnic violence against the Chinese minority in May 1998, are actively opposing all forms of oppression. All these groups are crossing religious boundaries. However, in spite of their numbers, and in many cases notwithstanding their great personal courage, or rather in this context *civil courage*, all these groups have to put up with the opposition of the hardliners, who do not shrink from using Mafia methods. Therefore it is appropriate at this point to describe the positions of these hardliners in the political arena in terms of their power.

Three quarters of the budget of the armed forces and the police is still supplied externally by special funds and foundations, most of them controlled by generals of specific units, in particular the KOSTRAD. Those who have access to, and control over, these 'extra-budgetary' sources in fact have control of the military – and this is not a legitimate government. If these generals were to

of a realistic assessment of the actual power relations between the police and the armed forces. For, although Wahid succeeded on 20 July in appointing General Chaeruddin Ismail acting chief of police, the group of senior police officers allegedly loyal to him not only was remarkably small but also lacked control of combat units. So in reality the police had no real strength over against the army and its KOSTRAD.

join forces with political actors holding similar views to their own on the structure of the state, such as members of the PDI-P, then the real political power would lie with these. Some of these actors may have 'personal political agendas', and this might result in the formation of a monstrous alliance whereby a hardliner from the secular nationalist wing might side with sympathizers of *politik islam* in order to stop the spread of what they view as pernicious ideas on far-reaching autonomy for Aceh or West Papua. Allowing Aceh to follow the *syari'a* is one step too far for the PDI-P, but that does not stop it from siding with the Islamic parties to bring down President Wahid. Such internally contradictory coalitions may also be formed at the local level. In the Moluccas, both Islamic and Christian radical groups may co-operate in using snipers to literally take the lives of more moderate fellow-citizens.

Initially an energetic start was made with the realization of another important objective of Wahid's first cabinet, namely protecting the legal order and so restoring the average citizen's faith in justice (*keadilan*) and public safety and helping him to 'hold his head high' again. But here again one has to observe that hardly anything has been achieved in the last nineteen months.

In October 1999, the newly appointed Attorney General, Marzuki Daroesman, was instructed to re-open the investigation into the KKN practices of the Suharto family. Only Suharto's crony Bob Hasan has since seen the inside of a prison, however, and not even a fraction of the thousands of millions of dollars which the family has amassed has been returned to the treasury.

A second matter that received the cabinet's immediate and full attention was the investigation of war crimes, especially those committed in East Timor prior to and after the referendum of 30 August 1999. Today, this investigation seems to have ground to a halt due to sabotage by the hardliners inside the armed forces.

And yet, the year 2000 began so promising. On 14 February of that year, Wahid, with massive foreign backing, managed to manoeuvre General Wiranto from his powerful strategic position, with as argument that the latter could not remain a minister of state while the investigation into his involvement in human rights violations in East Timor was in progress. For just a short moment it looked as though the civilian president had gained the political upper hand over the army. The euphoria was short-lived, however. Within five months of assigning Lieutenant General Agus Wirahadikusuma the task of making a clean sweep of the armed forces' conservative bastion, the KOSTRAD, Wahid was obliged under pressure from the moderates in the army to relieve him of this task again.

This struggle for power within the armed forces in the middle of last year showed how weak the *reformasi* movement in the TNI really was. The pace at which Agus Wirahadikusuma wanted to do away with the army's dual function in the economic sense was considered far too fast by nearly all ranks in

the TNI. Pressure to bring about Agus Wirahadikusuma's resignation was not exerted by Wiranto and his fellow-hardliners, for instance, but by the generals belonging to the so-called *reformasi* wing.¹⁹ They decided to get rid of him because they regarded him as a danger to the security of the armed forces' sources of finance, and thus to the unity of the state.

Juwono, as Secretary of State for Defence, estimated that it would take about ten years to eliminate the economic dimension of the armed forces' dual function. Lieutenant General Agus wanted to achieve this within five years. The 'reformists' within the army, however, thought in terms of fifteen to twenty years, while the hardliners would not even so much as think of parting with their lucrative sources of income – the basis of their power (Kadi 2000).²⁰

The presence of so many conflicts in places scattered all over the archipelago is advantageous to the hardliners. It enables them to draw the moderates in the TNI into their camp with the argument that 'above all, the unity of the state should be guaranteed'.

In the many conversations I had with Indonesians from all walks of life during my visit to Indonesia in July and August of last year I got the strong impression that President Wahid had lost the struggle for power in the period between the second half of February and the end of July 2000. Everything that has happened since can be interpreted as a desperate attempt on his part to prolong his political life, without, however, seeing his way clear to fulfilling his mission as described by Juwono. The net is gradually tightening around him, and it seems more exciting to speculate about how he will be dumped than if he will be forced to give up his presidency. The cause of the slow weakening of his power seems to be a combination of outright political blunders and the deliberate decision to give priority to the construction of his own power base – through 'money politics' favouring his own political party, PKB, and more generally his NU supporters in East Java – rather than to the general national interest.²¹ Three major such political blunders were:

¹⁹ Personal communication by a three-star general in Jakarta, November 2000.

²⁰ Major General Kadi in this connection distinguishes two main groups within the armed forces (mainly the army), the pro-*status quo* group versus the *reformists*. Within the latter in turn he identifies two groups: one which favours *reformasi* for tactical (pragmatic) reasons and the other for strategic (more fundamental) reasons. According to him, only if these two latter groups move closer together will they be able to provide a sufficient counterweight to the *status quo* supporters within the TNI.

²¹ In addition one should consider his physical handicap. Being almost completely blind, he is wholly dependent on the spoken word, which is relatively easy to manipulate. The more he felt politically cornered, the more suspicious and frustrated he became. His immediate circle in the last months fed him virtually only 'positive' information. Furthermore, particular character traits, such as the mercurial capriciousness that enabled him to remain beyond Suharto's grip for fifteen years, started playing tricks on him once he was president. He lost most of the political

1. The contempt with which he often treated Megawati Sukarnoputri in public. This aroused the hatred of certain PDI-P supporters, which then was readily exploitable in any attempt to oust Wahid as president. An important part was played in this by personal rivalries and ambitions and the hope of easier access to the 'public purse' if Megawati were president.
2. His attempt to negotiate with the Suharto family for the return of some of wealth they had stolen, instead of mobilizing all forces against the KKN of this family. This led directly to a rapid crumbling of his credibility, and to a weakening of the democratic forces, which were undermined by the dilemma of whether or not to oppose one's own leader.²²
3. His decision to strengthen his own power base, the PKB, first through money politics. This led him in March 2000 to get rid of the incorruptible Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, Laksamana, who had been responsible for solving the debt problems of especially state-owned enterprises. Laksamana was a confidant of Megawati's, but Wahid, according to reliable sources, received a tip from Megawati's husband, Taufik Kiemas, that it would be safe to sack him. Wahid later told some friends that he had been completely misled by Taufik Kiemas in this matter.²³ This mistake marked the beginning of a steadily deteriorating relationship with the IMF. At the present moment there is even talk of a direct IMF boycott, which indicates that western donors, with President Bush in the lead, have already written off the Wahid government. In the context of Wahid's desire to strengthen his own power base, Laksamana's 'resignation' was nevertheless absolutely necessary. The affair points to a fundamental problem at the beginning of any democratization process, namely the preoccupation with elections: all the political parties in Indonesia at the moment are devoting all their attention to the 2004 election campaign (Snyder 2000).²⁴

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support of his allies and friends, and particularly from the NGOs, as a result of his unpredictable, arbitrary decisions.

²² This was confirmed in conversations I had with representatives of NGOs in Indonesia in June-July 2001, who said they had felt as though paralysed in relation to President Wahid. On 23 July about twenty of them met to review their position since Megawati's accession as president. On 25 July a statement by Gunawan Muhammad welcoming Gus Dur back in the NGO fold with the words 'Welcome home, *Guru Bangsa*', which had been printed the day before in *Komunitas Utan Kayu*, was reproduced in *Kompas*.

²³ Indeed, on 25 July Wahid told me, too, that he felt betrayed by Taufik Kiemas. Ashadi Siregar points out in his comment in *Suara Pembaruan* of 24 July, however, that Kiemas had wanted to give a tit-for-tat response to Wahid's rude jokes about Megawati, which someone at the palace had taped and leaked to her. He was completely successful in this with his suggestion to Wahid that Megawati would agree to Laksamana's dismissal.

²⁴ Snyder warns against over-optimistic expectations from national elections as such, as in many cases, especially where there is as yet no supporting institutional infrastructure, elections

One could speak here of a kind of guerrilla warfare, in which a small victory in one place may be offset by a loss somewhere else, while none of the parties has succeeded yet in inflicting a decisive defeat upon its opponents. Speaking of guerrilla warfare, fought with different weapons at different levels, Sutan Sjahrir's and Mangunwijaya's notion of *era kegelisahan* automatically comes to mind again. In this kind of situation there is no question of a regular administration of justice or of a legal order. A number of widely publicized, spectacular lawsuits show where the real power lies. As a result, the legal system fails to satisfy people's sense of justice. To quote the prominent Indonesian sociologist Ignas Kleden: '*nulla pax sine justitia*'.²⁵

In Sjahrir's view, no real independence could be achieved until an end was put to the feudal system and until those fighting for independence began to behave in a democratic way. In the same spirit Mangunwijaya stated in 1998 that the democratic forces would have to engage in battle with the New Order (Mangunwijaya 1998). That battle is now being fought as a guerrilla war, and in guerrilla wars one's hands inevitably get dirty.

Epilogue (written 17 August 2001)

The final sentence of the above essay was written in the certain expectation that Abdurrahman Wahid would use the undemocratic means of a presidential decree to try to remain in power, and thus would politically 'dirty his hands'. As I was unexpectedly given the opportunity to be present as an observer at the presidential palace during the last few hours prior to the issuing of such a decree, I now have a slightly different view of this particular event, and especially of Gus Dur's motives. I will write more extensively about this later.

In the present epilogue I would like to try and give a brief answer to the question of what new perspective, if any, the recent change of president offers Indonesia's search for identity and structure. Now that the composition of Megawati's cabinet is known, one is able to formulate a few hypotheses.

In order to accommodate the widespread frustration among the mass of NU supporters as a consequence of the impeachment of President Wahid, Megawati put enormous pressure on the members of her party in the MPR

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may be the very cause of a relapse of the democratization process. This is partly because newly formed political parties tend to become involved in money politics as they need money to conduct an election campaign. Although Snyder does not refer explicitly to Indonesia, his analysis fits the Indonesian case well.

²⁵ Dr. Ignas Kleden used this expression at a meeting with Baku Bae and several religious groups in Utrecht, the Netherlands, on 11 April 2001.

to elect Hamzah Haz as vice-president. At least one third of the 153 members of this party who hold seats in the DPR, particularly Christians and a few Hindus, at first were fiercely opposed to this choice. Hamzah Haz at the MPR's annual meeting of 2000 had pleaded in favour of adding the notorious 'seven words' to the 1945 constitution.²⁶ His election as vice-president, with the full backing of the Islamic parties, including Poros Tengah (Central Axis), led by the chairman of the MPR, Amien Rais, fed hopes of realizing this ideal. Accordingly, the identity of the Indonesian state is still open to question. However, if the struggle to achieve this particular goal is carried on through parliamentary channels, and providing certain conditions are met, it is possible that a consensus about this will be reached. In that case, the threat of violence by militant groups, as a second line of attack, will probably be removed. In that case also, the militias, traditionally nurtured by the armed forces themselves, should disappear from the Indonesian political scene. These militias have their breeding ground in more than one place, but owe their existence mainly to the economic power of the armed forces, uncontrolled by either parliament or the government. As explained above, it is unlikely that much positive change will occur in the next ten to fifteen years. The six main points of the programme of Megawati's Gotong Royong cabinet, and the very composition of this cabinet, also give little cause for hope in this respect.

²⁶ These words essentially signify that every Muslim should live in accordance with Islamic law. This would imply that Indonesia would become de facto an Islamic state. Although these words were included in the original draught constitution, Indonesia's founding fathers in 1945 deliberately scrapped them from the definitive text in the realization that otherwise the religious minorities, which were found predominantly in eastern Indonesia, would not join the struggle for independence for a unitary republic of Indonesia. In the years that followed, the dream of an Islamic state never completely faded, but there was never a majority in parliament to support it. In the 1955 elections the parties trying to achieve this objective won no more than 45% of the vote. In the only other free elections after that, those of 1999, their support had dwindled to approximately 35%. At the MPR's annual session of 2000 the number of supporters was not much higher. However, the struggle to realize this ideal was carried on not only through parliament, but from the beginning also through the use of force. The Darul Islam movement was only defeated, after years of conflict, in the early nineteen sixties. Under Suharto's New Order *politik islam* initially had no opportunity to publicly manifest itself. However, when Suharto realized that he had to contend with considerable opposition from elements in the armed forces, he decided, wholly in contradiction with the internal policy of these forces, to embrace Islam politically, thereby enabling *politik islam* forces to organize themselves. The ICMI found it impossible to continue its above-mentioned SDM policy, aimed at a stealthy takeover of power in the post-Suharto period, in the *reformasi* period due to the changed political circumstances. The two-pronged policy aimed at realizing the old ideal of adoption of the 'seven words', namely by parliamentary means and through the use violence, was continued, on the other hand. Hamzah Haz's attempt in August 2000 to change the 1945 constitution was part of the first prong, and the Laskar Jihad actions formed part of the second. The fact that a member of Hamzah Haz's PPP, Mohammad Jazir, based in Yogyakarta, is the leader of radical Islamic gangs is also a sign that the second prong is still an option.

The first of these points is aimed at maintaining the unitary state, the integrity of the territory, and political stability. This provides ample opportunity for the army to restore its former power base. The relevant strategic ministerial posts, such as those for security and politics, internal affairs, transport and telecommunications, and intelligence, are all occupied by former generals. Also the 'wet'²⁷ Department of Energy and Mines, which is important for the revenue of the armed forces, is headed by someone with very close ties with these forces. The post of Secretary of State for Defence is held by a civilian, Matori, who does not, however, belong to any political party, having been thrown out of the PKB for alleged disloyalty to Gus Dur.²⁸ A politically weak figure like this in this position can only be advantageous to the armed forces, which are thus able to pretend to the outside world that they are acting in compliance with the ideals of *reformasi* since, after all, the defence department is run by a civilian. Internally Matori has no authority or influence.

The ex-general now heading the intelligence service, Hendropriyono, will very probably in the short term be able to impose some sort of discipline on the many militia groups controlled by this service because he has close ties with these groups. This would immediately result in political peace and stability. It will not by itself provide any guarantee for freedom of expression, however, although this is an absolute condition for transparency in the political discourse, under the aegis of parliament. Some recent remarks by Megawati and Hamzah Haz regarding the role of NGOs and the press have aroused fears that Hendropriyono and his intelligence apparatus will impose restrictions on the current freedom of political debate. This will have direct consequences for the discourse within Islam. Because in Megawati's inner circle an important role is played by hard-boiled anti-Islamic generals, restrictions on the freedom of expression could induce the supporters of *politik islam* to resort to their former terrorist tactics.

Much then will depend on the direction in which the media will develop. They have made abundant, though not always responsible, use of the freedom they have won during the *reformasi* period. The hardliners in the TNI, PDI-P and Golkar have used this as an excuse for taking repressive measures. Of course, a healthy democracy is only sustainable where the press acts responsibly. The NGOs are very much aware of this, but generally seem to be politically too weakly organized to make a positive contribution to the solu-

²⁷ The word 'wet', when used with reference to departments or functions in Indonesia, denotes positions providing ample opportunity for skimming funds from the public treasury for one's own (or one's group's) benefit.

²⁸ Matori, despite the fact that he was banned from the MPR session of July 21st, nevertheless fulfilled his role as a vice-president of the MPR presidium. He was therefore expelled forthwith. For his version of the affair, and his defence, see *Kompas*, 9 August 2001.

tion of Indonesia's problems at this stage. Not too much should be expected from the intelligentsia in the short run either. Since Sukarno's 1959 decree on guided democracy, more than forty years of indoctrination have produced two generations of 'yes-men'. It will take at least another ten to fifteen years for a new generation of critical intellectuals to emerge.²⁹

The positive reaction of the 'market' to the composition of Megawati's cabinet was due mainly to the appointments in the financial-economic area. The co-ordinating minister for these policy areas, Professor Dorotjatun Kuntjoro-Jakti, is a very competent economist. His appointment seems intended primarily to conciliate western creditors, in particular the United States, but also Japan, in connection with Indonesia's huge debt, which is an obstacle to all attempts to stimulate economic recovery. In his team he will, however, have to deal with Kwik Kian Gie, who has been made head of the National Planning Office. This headstrong politician, a confidant of Megawati, harbours some extremely nationalistic ideas, which could bring him into conflict with the IMF and the World Bank, thus derailing Dorotjatun's carriage. In other words, the initially highly praised financial-economic ministerial team could, in time, come under considerable pressure should the real political ideas of some of its principal members become manifest. The more so since several other departments have been distributed among the political parties participating in Megawati's Gotong Royong cabinet in the interests of these parties, in such a way that they have been enabled to prepare themselves fully, through money politics, for their election campaigns in 2004. This is bound to provoke strong criticism from the incorruptible Kwik Kian Gie and Laksamana, who are both back in the cabinet. If a compromise is reached, Megawati is likely to find herself acting in conflict with two other points of her programme – the fight against KKN, Corruption, Collusion and Nepotism, and the further continuation of the *reformasi* – since such a compromise will imply a virtual return to the situation under the New Order. Instead of Suharto, his family and his Golkar party enriching themselves, there will be at least five parties with ample opportunity for this: Megawati's own PDI-P, Hamzah Haz's PPP, the PBB of Minister of Justice Yusril I. Mahendra, Amien Rais' PAN, which is in charge of the departments of education and research and technology, and finally again Golkar, which has control of the post of co-ordinating minister of social affairs. Should all these parties take full advantage of this opportunity, then little change for the better is to be expected.

The appointment of a career lawyer from the public prosecutor's department itself as the new Attorney-General is no great confidence booster,

²⁹ This is nevertheless a remarkably more optimistic estimate than Manguwijaya's gloomy assessment (Manguwijaya 1998) that this would take at least two generations.

according to human rights activist Munir of the YLBHI.³⁰ If the skimming of funds from the public treasury can be stopped, the Islamic parties, which in 2001 helped Megawati land the presidency, may possibly want to 'exchange' her as quickly as possible for someone who will help them gain a more favourable material position before the 2004 elections. In that event, Hamzah Haz will be ready to replace her. The facts that Megawati was totally unacceptable as president to the Islamic parties in 1999, that she is a woman, and that there are doubts about her piety as a Muslim are liable to be used as argument again. She is well aware how little all the vows of political loyalty from this grouping are worth. To protect herself against the danger of political betrayal, she will have to rely on the strength of the armed forces more than she might wish, and certainly more than many members of her party find desirable. This implies in particular that she may find herself obliged not only to take stricter measures against the free press and a critical NGO community, but also to exercise greater control over radical Islamic groups. In the long run this will only lead to a further escalation of political tensions and stand in the way of any kind of consensus about the identity of the Indonesian state.

Megawati's ideas about the unitary state, which are shared by hardliners in the army and the bureaucracy, give little cause for hope that the urgent demands for greater equality in the relations between the centre and the regions and for more regional autonomy will be met sufficiently. The recent change of president seems to mark more a continuation of the *status quo* than a step in the direction of a new phase in the *reformasi* process that would eventually lead to genuine democracy.

³⁰ The YLBHI is one of the most influential human rights organizations in Indonesia, see *Kompas*, 15 August 2001.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DPR	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat – Parliament
Golkar	Golongan Karya – Functional Groups
ICMI	Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim se-Indonesia – All-Indonesia League of Muslim Intellectuals
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KKN	<i>Korupsi, Kolusi, dan Nepotisme</i> – Corruption, Collusion, and Nepotism
KOSTRAD	Komando Cadangan Strategis Angkatan Darat – Army Strategic Reserve Command
MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat – People's Consultative Council

NGO	non-governmental organization
NU	Nahdlatul Ulama – Association of Muslim Scholars
PAN	Partai Amanat Nasional – Party of the National Message
PBB	Partai Bulan Bintang – Party of the Crescent and Star
PDI-P	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan – Indonesian Democracy Party of the Struggle
PKB	Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa – Party of National Awakening
POLRI	Polisi Republik Indonesia – Indonesian Police
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan – Party of Unity and Development
SDM	Sumber Daya Manusia – Human Resources
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia – Indonesian National Army
YLBHI	Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia – Indonesian Foundation of Legal Aid Organizations

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