

Change as a Historical Process

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At this stage, having studied seven cases in this book, we can draw some conclusions. We will only draw conclusions regarding some more important issues, especially how we these cases enable us to attain a greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the pro-democracy actors. It is hoped that with an improved comprehension of such factors we will all be better equipped to form more effective pro-democracy movement in the future, which is very important in a situation where it is possible that an authoritarian government can reform new alliances and hegemonies.

From Limited Interests to a Democratic Agenda

From a study of the seven cases arranged in this book, we can see that a pro-democracy movement generally emerges in the wake of a clash between a particular social group and the state. The clash itself takes place when one or more community groups are constricted by governmental measures. Protests take place and increase in volume and audacity. A movement begins when group protests are later developed (of course, this is not always the case) into efforts to weaken government power structures and to broaden the space for civilian demands and greater respect for basic rights. In other words, a protest movement can sometimes become a demand for democracy.

In Kedung Ombo, for example, villagers protested government measures to force them off their lands to make way for a giant dam. In Nipah, Madura, villagers struggled to save their lands from a similar fate. In Medan, workers protested because their employers were treating them as they pleased and the government was not representing their rights at all. Journalists from *Tempo* magazine were supported by segments of the Jakarta middle class in a protest against the banning of three popular media – *Tempo*, *Editor* and *Detik*. The Amungme in West Papua staged protests because the government, together with foreign companies, were exploiting their natural resources whilst the Amungme remained poor and backward in comparison. Members of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) led by Megawati, the daughter of Indonesia's founding father, *Bung Karno*, were supported by various community groups outside of the party structure in a protest against arbitrary government interventions upon the party. Mudrick Sangidoe, a member of the United Development Party (PPP) in Solo, challenged the arrogant dealings of the local government with a wide range of social groups.

In further developments, these different groups developed their own agendas. Stemming from the direct and limited interests developed in their struggles, a number of these movements developed broader programs and agendas for a democratic movement, 'people's power'. Other groups did not develop to such an extent.

It appears that, from the seven cases presented here, the group were most concerned to develop their struggle into a championing of democracy was that formed by the former *Tempo* journalists. Out of this struggle two important organisations, the Alliance of Independent Journalists (*Aliansi Journalis Independen*, AJI) and the Institute for the Free Flow of Information (*Institut Studi Arus Informasi*, ISAI). These two organisations are still endeavouring to open up a space for community groups to have a voice, and providing the public with an example of how to ensure freedom of information in Indonesia.

PDI-Mega, later called PDI-P (Indonesian Democratic Party **of Struggle**), have also continued to provide a check upon the balance of power in a parliament by infiltrating the alliances of the old regime.

The other cases studied here appear to have been focussed more upon particular demands than a broader engagement with democratic ideals. Villagers in Kedung Ombo gained compensation for the land which had been seized, although this was hardly satisfying for them. The Nipah case attracted some government attention and involved the Indonesian legal aid institute; the Medan workers' movement was crushed after the arrest of various actors accused of leading demonstrations; the Amungme resistance gained widespread attention and the local people did manage to milk some of the profits made by the multi-nationals operating there; and finally, the Mudrick case along with the Mega-Bintang alliance one was never institutionalised, although both of these cases gained widespread support amongst the broader society.

Although these five cases did not develop further, their demonstration of resistance has no doubt provided much inspiration for later pro-democracy groups. These cases will be remembered as heroic struggles against a powerful, authoritarian state. Events in Nipah and Solo produced two leaders who have gained widespread respect - Kyai Alawy Muhammad and Mudrick Sangideo. The good name of these two figures proves that their struggles have been appreciated, despite the fact that they were not entirely successful. People admire the bravery of a struggle, not the end results.

It is interesting to note that the five cases which did not develop into democratic movements were regional ones, were led directly by people at the grassroots level (Kedung Ombo, Medan workers, Amungme), or were led by traditional leaders (Nipah and Solo). As such, it appears that the democratic agenda developed most successfully in the big cities where there were many youths with a Western-style education. But, this does not alter the fact that all of these movements have provided significant moral encouragement for a wide range of groups.

To reach a conclusion from these seven cases, it must be admitted that the former *Tempo* journalists produced the most far-reaching concepts and agendas for a pro-democracy movement.

Creating an Institution

Pro-democracy movements usually emerge out of an important issue of local significance. This issue then develops into an agenda for establishing a more democratic political system. This is what has been discussed and demonstrated in the preceding chapters of this book.

One very important matter to note here is whether or not a particular movement ushers in the establishment of new institutions, or whether it is better characterised as a spontaneous movement amongst individuals who happen to share the same interests at the same time. In the latter situation individuals will generally not form an organisational basis to fulfill their goals, and at most they will form a loose organisation on the issue of their struggle.

>From a close analysis of the seven cases it appears that there are three categories of movements:

An organisation is formed which remains very flexible. The Medan workers case fits in such a category. The workers were not organised in a strict formation. They simply received assistance from a number of NGOs, and some of these NGOs were not interested in the broader movement of the workers. At the same time, the Indonesian Prosperous Labour Union (SBSI) only emerged after the strikes had already begun. It needs to be added here that SBSI, which was an alternative to the government-sponsored workers' union, was still very weak organisationally because they had to involve themselves quietly to avoid attacks from the government.

The university students and NGOs who helped the villagers in Kedung Ombo also lacked a strong organisational structure. Many smaller student organisations and NGOs had provided assistance but this was still insufficient to form a central coordinating team to direct the movement. University students themselves did manage to form a Solidarity Group for Victims of the Kedung Ombo Development Project (*Kelompok Solidaritas Korban Pembangunan Kedung Ombo*, KSKPO), but this organisation was not tightly organised and was poorly coordinated.

Movements which led to a stronger form of organisation. We can cite the cases of Nipah, Amungme and Mega-Bintang here. These three cases made use of institutions that were already there. The Nipah people made use of the *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) of the Nahdlatul Ulama organisation. The Amungme employed local traditions and ethnic alliances in their struggle. The Mega-Bintang alliance was possible with the support of the political party branch of the United Development Party (PPP) in Solo, Central Java. These were local organisations that did not gain sufficient support from their parent organisations in Jakarta or elsewhere (especially, in the case of Nipah and Mega-Bintang). The Amungme's

ethnic alliances were not even connected up with power holders in a capital city. As such, the organisational capacity of the Amungme people was very limited.

Sturdy, larger and tightly controlled organisations were developed by the *Tempo* journalists and the PDI-P movement. In the *Tempo* case, journalists eventually formed AJI and ISAI. Despite the fact that membership was very small to begin with these organisations were capable of producing a wide range of alternative media. The PDI-P, on the other hand, had a very strong following nationally.

Thus, it can be concluded here, that struggles of *Tempo* and PDI-P were stronger than the other movements when viewed in terms of organisational outcomes.

The Problems of Networks at the Center and in the Regions

Networks are a decisive factor in social movements of any kind. The success of a pro-democracy movement really depends upon its capacity to involve outside groups or organisations from the centre of power relations. In the Kedung Ombo case, the most best outcomes were attained when this movement was internationalised, reaching NGOs in Western Europe, Japan and the United States.

From these seven cases, it appears that the Kedung Ombo movement achieved the broadest and strongest network of people during their struggle. This is interesting because it was really just a local case in a region somewhat removed from Jakarta. The issue that was fought for was local and did not really penetrate political discourses in Jakarta. Nevertheless, because they were funded by the World Bank, this project has had a strong international dimension and checks surrounding it.

The *Tempo* and PDI-P case spread to national and international level but the strength of these cases was built upon solidarities within the country. This was possible because *Tempo* was, after all, a national magazine, and PDI-P was a national political party with a very large support base. Many Indonesians felt they were part of these organisations, and were therefore directly implicated by tough government measures brought upon the party.

The Mega-Bintang case, which was spear-headed by Mudrick Sangidoe, also achieved a national significance. This case demonstrated an awesome effort in terms of how many people engaged themselves in the Mega-Bintang coalition of PDI-P and PPP. Unfortunately, reactions, both from the parent organisations of PDI-P and the PPP, were not encouraging. This meant that the zeal of the Mega-Bintang coalition was confined to the Solo region in Central Java. Eventually, heavy government measures against the leaders of this coalition effectively stopped further developments.

The other cases were even more limited in scope. The Nipah people established a working relationship with the Nahdlatul Ulama (and this was what enabled this local

case to gain a national significance), but the NU themselves were keeping a low profile at the time because of another conflict with the government. The Medan case was really only handled by local NGOs, but with the involvement of SBSI's leader, Mochtar Pakpahan, a well-known labor figure at the national and international levels, this case came to the attention of national and international audiences. But SBSI was weak organisationally and this placed limits on how far the case could be taken. Labour figures, including Mochtar Pakpahan, were eventually arrested. In the Amungme struggle the environmental NGO WAHLI and the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute (YLBHI), both attempted to raise the issue of their suffering at national and international levels, however, they were not as successful as activists in the Kedung Ombo case. One possible reason for this weakness was that the media was not capable of offering good coverage of such a distant and isolated area.

These facts enable us to conclude that in order to become an effective national movement, the issues at stake would need to be directly connected up with contemporary national politics. This was possible in the *Tempo*, PDI-P and Mega-Bintang cases. The Mega-Bintang case in Solo gained the media spotlight and was taken up in national political discourse because it implicated Jakarta politics, or was at least related to political events in Jakarta. The four other cases (Kedung Ombo, Nipah, Medan and Amugme) were local issues that were not considered imperative issues in Jakarta circles. Also, it was only because of the diligence of university students to involve elite politicians that the Keudng Ombo case gained the significance it did. But the "success" of the Kedung Ombo movement was mostly due to international support achieved after placing pressure upon the World Bank.

Interconnections

The main theme from this study is the interconnectivity of the movements. Although there might not have been any official linkages between individual movements, the fact is that each movement would have influenced later ones, but we cannot determine the extent of such influence. At the very least, they would provide inspiration and courage to oppose an authoritarian government.

Chronologically, the movements studied in this book took place in the following order:

- Kedung Ombo (1989)
- Nipah (November 1993)
- Medan (April 1994)
- Tempo (June 1994)
- Amungme (April 1996)
- PDI-P (July 1996)
- Mega-Bintang (May 1997)

The clearest linkages between these movements can be seen in the Kedung Ombo, *Tempo*, PDI-P and Mega-Bintang cases.

In many important respects, the Kedung Ombo case provided training for university students for later engagements in the cities and the regions. The student movement had been “broken” by the Soeharto government in 1978 when the army surrounded the Institute of Technology in Bandung and dispersed demonstrator who were demanding that the president step down. After that, a system later referred to as the Normalisation of Campus Life (*Normalisasi Kehidupan Kampus*, NKK) was applied nationally, whereby the government placed direct restrictions upon student involvement in practical politics. Consequently, students were politically neutered.

The Kedung Ombo case brought students out of the lecture halls and inspired them to engage in practical social and political problems. Also, cooperatives between students in various cities throughout Java and Jakarta were established.

When the *Tempo* case erupted on the national scene in 1994, such networks assisted in the subsequent development of the anti-banning movement. Demonstrations protesting the ban did not only take place in Jakarta, but also in a number of cities throughout Java. University students and NGOs seemed eager to assert their basic rights by joining in the protests, and the memory of the Kedung Ombo case, that was brought to a premature end, remained a strong inspiration.

As already mentioned, the *Tempo* case gave birth to two important pro-democracy institutions, AJI and ISAI. The two of them operated skilfully in making information available freely to the broader public, both through the internet (*Tempo Interaktif*) and through books that were written and published by ISAI. A number of activists who were active in these two institutions were former activists from the Kedung Ombo case who later moved to Jakarta to complete their studies.

In 1996, the PDI-P office was attacked by an undercover security force. Before this attack a severe conflict between members of the Megawati party faction and the government-sponsored faction had emerged. During and after the attack upon the PDI-P office, the student network (amongst them were many activists who had been involved in the Kedung Ombo case), AJI and ISAI was clearly influential. Information censored by the government spread quickly through unofficial channels, especially through AJI and ISAI. In fact, it is possible that if the attack upon the PDI-P had occurred prior to the *Tempo* case, it might not have received nearly as much coverage from pro-democracy communication networks.

This was also true of the Mega-Bintang case in Solo. The diligent and enthusiastic people who had initiated a protest campaign in support of Mudrick Sangidoe were also student activists. This was because the Mega-Bintang issue and the so-called anti-yellow campaign spearheaded by Mudrick represented a national political issue, not just a regional political discourse. The contribution of AJI and ISAI along with *Tempo Interaktif*, who all disseminated news of this movement, garnered

widespread public sympathy for the cause. Once again, the publicity would not have been so great if the Mega-Bintang had occurred prior to the banning of *Tempo* and the conflicts between PDI Mega and the government.

The Nipah, Medan and Amungme cases, on the other hand, were relatively isolated. This was especially true of the Amungme in Irian Jaya. When these events took place, the solidarity achieved was not as strong as the other four.

Leadership Types

Two types of leadership, the traditional and the modern leader, emerged in these struggles and provide some interesting comparisons.

To employ the definition provided by Max Weber, modern leadership consists of a legal-rational type where leadership is based upon the capacity for rational judgment and action and engagement with the legal process. It does not depend only upon lineage or personal charisma (yet these factors remain significant). Traditional leadership, on the other hand, is directly related to the lineage and charisma of the leader.

Organisations are generally formed in accordance with the type of leader at its helm. An organisation led by a traditional leader is bound to consist of traditional elements and will be organised along traditional lines, and vice versa.

If we consider the seven cases discussed in this book, the movement initiated by the *Tempo* journalists possessed the most modern characteristics. Following this, it can be said that the pro-democracy movement in Kedung Ombo and the workers' movement in Medan, involved a wide range of cadres who shared a variety of leadership styles. In these cases "clientelism" best describes the relationships formed between the leaders and their followers. Such relationships are not really traditional in nature, but are variously constructed upon systems of interdependence. The client has no choice but to assume a leadership role.

For example, when the farmers of Kedung Ombo had reached intolerable levels of frustration they demanded that their "leaders" assist them. This was also the case with workers in Medan, who also needed protection from their leaders. A traditional leader, on the other hand, gains a leadership position through his lineage or charisma.

The PDI-P movement, along with the struggle of the Amungme people, the Nipah struggle and the case of Solo, were led by traditional leaders. PDI-P and the Mega-Bintang movement possessed a modern organisational structure (a political party), but their leadership was based upon traditional values: lineage and charisma. In the Nipah case (working with organisational support from a *pesantren*) and the Amungme (ethnicity), the organisation was clearly traditional.

The fact that it was only *Tempo* and PDI-P who continued to engage with a discourse of democracy shows that democratisation movements can be pioneered by both modern and traditional organisations. But, if we pay attention to what has already been achieved by these two groups, it appears that AJI and ISAI are more

consistent in their commitment to democracy, whether that be through discourse or in practical ways. Relationships between these two organisations have been established upon firm principles of togetherness and equality. The same degree of mutuality might not have been achieved in the ranks of the PDI-P because the leadership is still centred upon more traditional values.

It is not difficult to see that although the groups involved in the *Tempo* and PDI-P cases were firmly pro-democratic, a significant qualitative gap appears when we look more closely at the democratic values underpinning their struggles.

In the future, it is highly possible that there will be big differences between these two types of institutions when the time comes for applying these democratic principles.

Conclusion

Having considered a number of aspects of pro-democracy movements, all of which can be considered contributions to the culmination of the student demonstrations in 1998, we can draw a number of conclusions.

Although all of these movements developed resistance to an authoritarian government, only those movement which consciously developed a discourse of democratisation, and those insitutions modern forms of resistance can be referred to as effective pro-democracy actors over a significant time period. The problem of institutional struggle is also an important consideration. Those movements that institutionalised their struggles professionally would survive the longest.

The expansion of networks was also an important matter. A broadened network, nationally and internationally, noticeably strengthens a movement.

Pro-democracy movements influenced and built upon each other's efforts. In fact, from this study it appears that some movements might not have succeeded if other movements had not preceeded them.

Finally, the type of organisation and leadership, whether traditional or modern, does not yet appear to have presented a very significant influence upon the movements. From the seven cases studied in this book, most functioned with traditional forms of organisation and leadership. But, the differences between traditional and modern ways might well gain in significance when some of these movements operate within a more democratic political framework.

Under an authoritarian political system, the most important thing is to build strengths to resist military repression.

Finally, we need to reflect briefly upon the student demonstrations in 1998 which led to the downfall of Suharto. The student movement of 1998 appears to have been built upon a solid basis. *Firstly*, PDI-P masses were already prepared for these demonstrations after they had suffered a military attack upon their central

headquarters in 1996. PDI-P masses numbered in the millions and were spread nationwide. *Secondly*, elite groups in universities (students and academics) appeared willing to provide direction and legitimation for a reform movement. Alternative parties such as the Indonesian Democratic Union Party (PUDI) (led by Sri Bintang Pamungkas) and the People's Democratic Party (PRD) (led by Budiman Sujatimiko) had already adopted resistance tactics by making public statements demanding an overhaul of the old regime. *Thirdly*, the mass media had also established alternative networks through AJI and ISAI to channel radical information through those mass media institutions that were brave enough to disseminate the news.

In such a situation it is not surprising that the university students emerged with a loud voice and were quickly followed by masses from outside of the university, and received support from elements of the media. The rest, as they say, is history.

As mentioned, this research has not focussed upon the student demonstrations of 1998. This movement must be studied individually. This book, on the other hand, limits itself to some of the pre-conditions that contributed to the student demonstrations of 1998. We can only properly comprehend this later movement if the pre-conditions throughout Indonesian society are properly accounted for.

Also, attention also needs to be given to how such pro-democracy actors will function in a relatively free political atmosphere. Will they retain their effectiveness or will they lose it? The experience in the Phillipines after Marcos and the experience in Kerala (India), where substantial social movements have taken place in a relatively democratic system, shows that the strategies and tactics of such movements are much more difficult compared to pro-democracy movements under an authoritarian regime. During an authoritarian regime a singular agenda suffices, that is opposing repression. This itself becomes a difficult task to achieve; there must be coordination, mobilisation and perspective. But in a more democratic environment, a pro-democracy movement must fill the spaces that have been attained with much more mature concepts of how to retain and deepen democratic structures. And in such a situation many complex obstacles appear. (The lack of explanation regarding a number of perspectives relating to democracy, focus upon a singular issue or particular interest, the lack of real relationships between political activists and the communities they represent, weak coordination at local and central levels, all represent weaknesses that are often encountered by pro-democracy activists, in Indonesia and elsewhere).

Thus, the problems that have been encountered in the Phillipines and in Kerala, problems that have been discussed in this short conclusion, will appear in a dramatic way. Confusion as to how to retain democratic structures, how to create an effective institutional basis for democracy, how to maintain effective local, national and international networks, the problem of clashes between traditional and modern organisational approaches, all raise their ugly head on a more intense scale. These matters clearly deserve much closer study, that is, how pro-democracy actors cope in

a more democratic (free-for-all) environment.

The political process is a historical one marked by the rise and fall of different powers. One event will have an influence upon the following event. This research proves, once again, that this is an unavoidable fact for pro-democracy movements in Indonesia.

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