

**Changes and Continuities in Post-Suharto
Indonesia: The Politics of the Survival of the 1965
Narrative**

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All translations of Indonesian material that appears in this work are my own.

Abstract

Fifteen years after the fall of the Suharto dictatorship in Indonesia, the authoritarian historical narrative about 1965 that was created by the New Order regime has been defended and reaffirmed by the post-New Order 'democratic' state. During the New Order, the 1965 narrative was used to justify and legitimize state sponsored violence against the PKI and other left wing nationalists that resulted in at least half a million deaths in the mid 1960s. This same narrative underpinned the political legitimacy of the newly emerging New Order state and articulated a version of national identity and nation building that was the antithesis of the previous era.

The survival of the 1965 narrative has facilitated the survival of anti-communist ideology from the New Order. It continues to underpin political legitimacy for those in power as well as provide impunity for acts of political violence and repression that are used to defend their social and political power. Anti-communist ideology continues to support a restricted notion of citizenship and national identity. Restricted notions of citizenship today significantly constrain the freedoms of civil society to engage in open discourse about the possibilities for deepening and strengthening political democracy and its institutions.

The ongoing contestation over the 1965 historical narrative indicates that history and versions of 'the past' are part of the dynamic of democratic politics in Indonesia. Analysis of the contestation over the 1965 authoritarian historical narrative allows us to examine the changes and continuities in concepts of national identity and citizenship, and in the categories of political 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' from the New Order authoritarian regime to the reformed democratic state that exists today.

Glossary of Terms

Aliansi Jurnalis Independen (*AJI*): Alliance of Independent Journalists

Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (*ABRI*): Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia

Badan Intelijen Negara (*BIN*): State Intelligence Agency

(NU) Barisan Serbaguna (*Banser*): Multi-Purpose Brigade

Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (*DPR*): People's Representative Council (the national legislature)

40 Hari Kegagalan G-30-S 1 Oktober–10 Nopember: The Forty Day Failure of the 30 September Movement 1 October–10 November

Gerakan Pemuda Ansor (*GP Ansor*): Ansor Youth Movement

Gerakan 30 September (*G-30-S*): 30th of September Movement

Gerakan Wanita Indonesia (*Gerwani*): Indonesian Women's Movement

Golkar (*Golongan Karya*): Functional Group

Ikatan Keluarga Orang Hilang Indonesia (*IKOHI*): Indonesian Association of the Families of the Dissapeared

Jagal: Butcher

Keterbukaan: Openness

Ketua Majelis Pimpinan Cabang Pemuda Pancasila: Chairperson of the branch executive of *Pancasila* Youth

Koalisi untuk Keadilan dan Pengungkapan Kebenaran (*KKPK*): Coalition for Justice and Truth Finding

Komando Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Ketertiban (*KOPKAMTIB*): Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order

Komisi Nasional Hak Asazi Manusia (*KOMNAS HAM*): Indonesian National Commission for Human Rights

Komisi untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan (*KONTRAS*): Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence

Komite Rakyat : People's Committee (proposal initiated by the students' Forum Kota (Forkot): City Forum)

Komunitas Taman 65: Garden of 65 Community

Laskar Jihad: Moslem Holy War Fighters

Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Jakarta (*LBH Jakarta*): Jakarta Legal Aid Institute

Lembaga Penelitian Korban Peristiwa 65/66 (*LPKP*): Institute for the Research of the 1965/66 Affair

Lembaga Perjuangan Rehabilitasi Korban Rejim Orde Baru (*LPR KROB*): Institute of Struggle for the Rehabilitation of Victims of the New Order Regime

Lembaga Studi dan Advokasi Masyarakat (*ELSAM*): The Institute for Social Study and Advocacy

Lubang Buaya: Crocodile Hole

Mahkamah Konstitusional (*MK*): Constitutional Court

Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (*MPR*): People's Consultative Assembly (Indonesia's supreme legislative body)

Majelis Ulama Indonesia (*MUI*): Indonesian Islamic Clerics Council

Masyarakat Santri untuk Advokasi Rakyat (*Syarikat*): Santri Society for People's Advocacy

Monumen Pancasila Sakti: Sacred Pancasila Monument

Nahdlatul Ulama (*NU*): (Revival of the Islamic scholars) the largest traditional Sunni Islamic group in Indonesia

Orde Baru: New Order

Paguyuban Korban Orde Baru (*PAKORBA*): Society of the Victims of the New Order Regime

Pancasila: Five Principles

Panglima Daerah Militer (*Pangdam*): Military Area Commnader

Panglima Kodam IV/Diponegoro: Commander of the 4th Military Area Command/Diponegoro

Partai Amanat Nasional (*PAN*): National Mandate Party

Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (*PDI*): Indonesian Democratic Party

Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan (*PDI-P*): The Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle

Partai Golkar: The Party of the Functional Groups

Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (*PKS*): Prosperous Justice Party

Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (*PKB*): National Awakening Party

Partai Komunis Indonesia (*PKI*): Indonesian Communist Party

Partai Nasional Indonesia (*PNI*): Indonesian National Party

Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (*PPP*): United Development Party

Partai Rakyat Demokratik (*PRD*): People's Democratic Party

Pemuda Pancasila (*PP*): Pancasila Youth

Pengkhianatan G-30-S/PKI: The Betrayal by the 30th September Movement/ Indonesian Communist Party

Penguasa Keamanan Daerah (*Penganda*): Regional Security Commander

Pengurus Besar Nahdhatul Ulama (*PBNU*): Nahdatul Ulama Executive Board

Peristiwa Tanjung Priok: Tanjung Priok Affair

Persatuan Purnawirawan Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (*PEPABRI*): Association of the Retirees of the Indonesian Armed Forces

Poros Tengah: Central Axis

Reformasi : Reform/Reformation

Resimen Para Komando Angkatan Darat (*RPKAD*): Army Para-Commando Regiment now known as KOPASSUS

Sekretariat Bersama 65 (*SEKBER 65*): Joint Secretariat on 1965

Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret (*Supersemar*): Order of March the Eleventh

Tentara Nasional Indonesia (*TNI*): Indonesian National Military

Yayasan Penelitian Korban Pembunuhan 1965/66 (*YPKP*): Foundation for the Research of the 1965/1966 Massacre

Yayasan Penelitian Korban Pembunuhan 1965 (*YPKP 65*): (Foundation for Research of the Victims of 1965 Massacre

Yayasan Penelitian Korban Pelanggaran Hak Asasi Manusia (*YPKP HAM*): Foundation for the Research of The Victims of Human Rights Violations

Yayasan Kasut Perdamaian: Shoe for Peace Foundation

Introduction

The authoritarian historical narrative about 1965 that was created by the New Order regime remains a fundamental tool underpinning political legitimacy for the current democratic political order in Indonesia and the social and economic interests that it defends. The current state opposition towards a re-examination of historical events and the 1965 events in particular, are not just bad history, but rather a defense against what is understood to be a challenge to the ideological underpinnings of the Indonesian New Order regime, which in turn challenges the current political, social and economic order.

Indonesia's centralized military state, born out of 'crisis' with the purpose of protecting the nation from a political and ideological foe (communism), justified its need for constant surveillance and repression of political opposition through the creation of 'myth' about the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and a version of history that placed at its centre the ongoing latent danger of a resurgent communist threat. The Indonesian state's contemporary defence of anti-communist ideology, relies upon this narrative which remains a potent political tool for ensuring support for, and the silencing of, opposition to acts of political repression and violence carried out or supported by the state.

Fifteen years after the massive political upheaval that led to the downfall of Suharto's 32-year military rule, successive 'democratic' Indonesian governments have largely failed to act on the issue of state sponsored violence and the widespread abuse of human rights during the period of the New Order regime. The most significant events of mass violence were those directed against the PKI and other left wing nationalists that resulted in at least half a million deaths in the mid 1960s. In the wake of this mass violence the New Order state was quick to create a new official narrative of Indonesian history. This narrative created an official silence over the events of 1965 and rewrote the history of Indonesia and its struggle for independence and of nation building. Its principal purpose was to provide political legitimacy for the New Order state that was being built, a version of nation building that was the antithesis of the previous era of nation building.

Responses from government officials as well as representatives of civil society to recent events that articulate different 'versions' of the 1965 period of Indonesian history, indicate that there are ongoing tensions between entrenched elements from within the current political regime, representing an order or interests based on this founding 'myth', and social and political forces seeking to re-examine this history. These contesting social and political forces are coming from civil society, but also from within state institutions, specifically, the National Human Rights Commission (KOMNASHAM). The purpose of this study is to analyse the reasons for the survival of the 1965 New Order narrative after the end of New Order authoritarian rule.

The concept of 'authoritarian historical narrative' in this thesis refers to the representations¹ or national myths created by an authoritarian regime about the past to provide an ideological underpinning for political legitimacy. This thesis is primarily concerned with what happens to this narrative in the process of political change from an authoritarian state to a reformed and democratized state, which requires the state and its political institutions to redefine its authority and legitimacy to its citizens. In these moments representations of the past may disappear, be transformed, lose their legitimacy or they may in fact persist.

Previous academic investigation provides us with extensive evidence that the New Order 1965 narrative was constructed² to legitimize the bloody massacres that took place in the mid 1960s across the Indonesian archipelago. These massacres were part of a systematically organized plan by the Indonesian military to wipe out the PKI and to seize state power under the leadership of General Suharto. This research has substantially undermined the myth created by the New Order about the events of the 1 October 1965. It is in this context that we examine the reasons for the recent opposition by the Indonesian state and some groups in civil society to a reexamination of the 1965 events. Studying this contestation allows us to analyse the political interests that are at stake, the interest groups that are

¹ Authoritarian historical narrative refers to official state versions of historical events that have been constructed for ideological purposes and that underpin the legitimacy of political elites to hold power. McGregor's use of the concept of 'representation' is similar to the use of the concept of historical narrative in this thesis. McGregor explains that representation attempts to emphasise the influence of the present on re-representing the past (2007, 5).

² John Roosa 2006; Kate McGregor 2007; Douglas Kammen and Kate McGregor (eds) 2012.

involved in the contestation and the function the narrative serves for those in power today.

Previous academic work has demonstrated that despite a process of democratization since 1998, there is much political continuity from the previous authoritarian New Order regime, which might suggest a limited or shallow democratization has taken place³. Other academic work has emphasized the reform nature of the Yudhoyono government elected in 2004, its achievements in democratic consolidation and its responsiveness to societal pressures for ongoing reform⁴. Analysing the contestation over the 1965 authoritarian historical narrative allows us to construct a framework to examine changes and continuities in concepts of national identity and citizenship, and in the categories of political 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' from the New Order authoritarian regime to the reformed democratic state that exists today. The results of this examination provide some evidence on the nature of the democratic change that has taken place in the post-authoritarian Indonesian state.

The authoritarian historical narrative about the mass violence and destruction of the PKI in 1965 that was created by the New Order regime became part of the foundation of New Order ideology, underpinning its political legitimacy⁵ and creating a concept of citizenship that was cut off from its previous historical traditions. Chapter one outlines a theoretical framework for analyzing the functions and uses of historical narrative by nation-states generally and by authoritarian states specifically in providing an ideological underpinning for political legitimacy. 'Defence of the nation' is often used as an ideological weapon

³ Hadiz and Robison 2004; Ryter 2009; Zurbuchen 2005

⁴ Mietzner 2009b; Aspinall 2010b; van Klinken 2008.

⁵ The concept of political legitimacy is used in this thesis in two (mutually supportive) ways. One is a general use of the concept of political legitimacy to talk about the process by which power is both institutionalised and given moral grounding, whereby those who hold power claim their legitimacy on the basis of either traditional, charismatic (affectual or emotional grounds), or rational-legal grounds (Marshall 1998, 363). In the case of the systematic campaign of mass violence against the PKI in Indonesia in 1965 the concept of political legitimacy has an additional use. The 1965 historical narrative was used to 'legitimise' (provide a justification for) the actions of the military in annihilating the PKI and in creating a new political order fundamentally different from that which it had replaced. It did this by holding that there are certain groups of people who, by virtue of a specific assigned characteristic (ie communist), ought to be excluded from the moral and legal protections normally owed to humans (Bellamy 2012, 161). Legitimacy and the process of justification are important components of the politics of mass atrocities. At the same time these acts are almost never legitimate to all social groups and hence the efforts to cover up and hide the nature of the massacres both domestically and internationally.

in creating categories of political inclusion and exclusion in relation to the past. The study of power and political contestation is key to understanding the range of responses, discourses, and social imaginings that influence the survival or not of authoritarian historical narratives in post authoritarian states. In the context of significant political upheaval alternative historical narratives may undermine the political status quo and turn 'the past' into a site for struggle over power and political legitimacy. Chapter one focuses on theories and aspects of analysis that are specifically relevant to the case of Indonesia and outlines the possible functions and purpose of a surviving authoritarian historical narrative.

Chapter two outlines an extensive body of academic work that critically contradicts the official historical narrative about the events of 1 October 1965 and the historical role of the PKI in nation building. It discusses how the New Order regime used the 1965 narrative to legitimise the Indonesian military's actions in carrying out mass violence against a legitimate, legal political organization, the PKI. It explains how the 1965 narrative was initially used to provide the ideological foundation for legitimizing a fundamentally different version of nation-building and national identity from the previous order. Over time the narrative was extended to articulate more explicitly the nation's principal foe, the communists. Anti-communist ideology then provided ongoing legitimacy for acts of state repression against those that challenged the legitimacy of the New Order regime.

Chapter three discusses the contestation over the 1965 narrative that emerged in the first decade of *reformasi*⁶. This is analysed in the context of the democratization process that began when Suharto stepped down from power in May 1998. The character of the contestation over the New Order historical narrative about 1965 that emerged from 1998, was part of the broader democratic struggles that existed and the discourses about the forms that a new democratic society could take. I examine the conditions in which this contestation took place and the social forces involved in the contestation. Using Cesarini and Hite's analytical framework I argue that the management of the transition by predominantly New Order elites⁷ made it likely that the 1965 authoritarian narrative would be maintained and

⁶ *Reformasi* is the term used to describe the period of reform or reformation that Indonesia entered into after the fall of Suharto in May 1998. It also refers to the aspirations of the democratic movement that struggled to bring down the dictatorship.

⁷ These include the semi-opposition elements described by Ed Aspinall (2010a).

defended in this initial period. Using this same framework I examine where the authoritarian legacy of the 1965 narrative was defended and affirmed in this first decade.

Dealing with the past is shaped by the legacies of authoritarian rule and the political, institutional and legal factors that influence the development of the post-authoritarian state (Barahona de Brito 2001, 158). The narrowing of political space, particularly after the end of the Wahid presidency, witnessed a narrowing of options for seeking truth and justice for the victims of 1965 and their families and for changes to the official narrative. The renewal of public contestation over the 1965 narrative since early 2012 is framed more explicitly within the framework of human rights discourse. Chapter four analyses some factors stimulating this renewed contestation and the actors engaged in the contestation. It analyses the significance of the Komnas HAM report that was released in July 2012 and the response of other state institutions and government officials to its release. It briefly discusses the contribution of the film 'Act of Killing'⁸ to this contestation and the responses within Indonesia to the film. This analysis is then used to draw some conclusions about the nature of government, political institutions and the reforms that have been made under the Yudhoyono led government.

Chapter five examines the nature of democracy that develops in post-authoritarian states when it is negotiated by previous authoritarian elites. Using a comparative approach I examine the functions that the 1965 narrative plays for those in power today with particular attention to restricted notions of citizenship. Restricted notions of citizenship, passed on from previous authoritarian regimes usually indicate the non-democratic values of the elite forces that currently hold power. It is these same restricted notions of citizenship that often place significant constraints on pressures from civil society to deepen and strengthen political democracy and its institutions.

I conclude by proposing that the process of democratization in Indonesia has not been deep. The decline of a politicised civil society, particularly after 2001, the weakness of the democratic parliamentary opposition and the ongoing restrictions on citizen's democratic rights, have limited the democratic options available to

⁸ 'Act of Killing' is a film that documents the stories of acts of killing that occurred in Medan in North Sumatera during the mass killings of 1965-66 in Indonesia. The stories are told by the killers themselves who reenact their stories in front of the camera (Oppenheimer 2012).

Indonesian society. The defence of the 1965 narrative is not only about what has taken place in the past. Arguably more significantly, the narrative continues to play an ideological role in constructing notions of citizenship that exclude political ideas and ideologies that challenge the social and economic interests of those in power today. These factors indicate that a shallow democracy has taken hold in Indonesia, one that is not representative of the needs and aspirations of the array of social forces involved in toppling the Suharto dictatorship in 1998.

Chapter One

Historical Narrative: The Creation Of National Identity And Political Legitimacy

Historical Narrative, Nationalism and Ideology

The historical narrative about the mass violence and destruction of the PKI in 1965 that was created by the New Order regime became part of the foundation of New Order ideology, underpinning its political legitimacy and creating a concept of citizenship that was cut off from its previous historical traditions. This chapter outlines a theoretical framework for analyzing the functions and uses of historical narrative by nation-states generally and by authoritarian states specifically in providing an ideological underpinning for political legitimacy. It discusses the factors that influence the survival of these authoritarian historical narratives in post authoritarian states. It focuses on themes and aspects of analysis that are specifically relevant to the case of Indonesia and outlines the function and purpose of a surviving authoritarian historical narrative for those who hold power.

Historical narrative is present in all societies in multiple forms. The dominant form of historical narrative in the era of modern nation-states is historical narrative(s) about nations and nation building (Anderson 2006; van Klinken 2005).

Nationalism has inclusive democratizing forms that emphasise commitment to political ideas and institutions that are representative of the people (civic nationalism). It also has exclusionary essentialist forms that highlight myths of origin (cultural nationalism or ethnic nationalism) (van Klinken 2005, 234) and often include exclusive identities or notions of membership/citizenship. A strongly defined form of national identity may be present in state ideology or a variety of expressions of nationalism may coexist within a specific national context (Gol 2005).

State narratives of historical events are often critical in underpinning particular types of political order or power relations⁹. What may happen to an authoritarian

⁹ The Turkish state was established in 1923 on the basis of a denial of the multiethnic status of peoples living within the territories of the previous Ottoman Empire in which the Turkish State Territory was declared. Unresolved issues of ethnic discrimination that had existed within the Ottoman Empire remained when the Turkish state was created. The national identity and concept

historical narrative in the process of political change (transition) from an authoritarian to post-authoritarian state can tell us some things about the nature of this change and of the post-authoritarian state itself. On a state level, official historical narrative often, if not usually, plays an ideological role in the shaping of the acceptable limits of national identity. Concepts of citizenship are based on a construct of national identity that allows people to 'belong' usually so long as they relinquish their right to claims to other possible identities (Gol 2005; Dixon 2010, Anderson 2005). The degree of persuasiveness of the selective traditions of official nationalisms hinges on state systems' control over the means of distribution of social meanings and on the relations of forces in society. This can be understood as a strategy of creating a selective tradition of nationalism, which becomes the key for the consolidation of state legitimacy, which is produced by the institutions and personnel of the state system (Gol 2005, 135; Isyar 2005).

The potential for alternative historical narratives to undermine the political status quo turns 'the past' into a site for struggle over power and political legitimacy (Anderson 2006; Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez & Aguilar 2001, 38). Consequently, it is no accident that nation-states systematically develop their own official narratives of history in an attempt to legitimise the state and the existing power relations through the control of (representations of) the past. The study of official historical narrative over time can provide a key to understanding the nature of changes in power relations within a society at particular moments in time (Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez & Aguilar 2001, 39).

Mass Violence and National Ideology

'Defence of the nation' is often wielded as an ideological weapon in creating categories of political inclusion and exclusion in relation to the past. At times of significant rupture such as the experience of genocide or mass violence, people and societies experience changes in consciousness that 'bring with them characteristic amnesia. Out of such oblivions, in specific historical circumstances, spring narratives' (Anderson 2006) based on myth. These narratives are also referred to

of citizenship that was created at that time was based on a Turkish ethnic identity that actively excluded other ethnic groups including Kurds, Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians. The official Turkish state narrative denies the massacres and forced deportations carried out against ethnic Armenians in 1915 that claimed the lives of more than 300,000 people. It continues to suppress democratic and civil rights of other significant ethnic minorities, such as the Kurdish minority living within the boundaries of the Turkish state (Gocek 2008; Gol 2005).

as 'social memory making' (Schwartz in Barahona 2010, 17). These narratives most often rely on the assertion of a collective identity that allows membership or not. Social memory is used as a membership making apparatus, which is at the core of the creation of "Imagined Communities" (Anderson 2006). Myths and memories legitimate power holders and shape how people know and interpret political realities (Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez & Aguilar 2001, 38). Fear of exclusion is a factor that motivates individuals and collectives to remember as well as to forget (Cesarini 2004).

Power and political contestation are key to understanding the range of responses, discourses, and social imaginings that often are in conflict with one another within societies and cultures and in individuals struggling to continue to find meaning years after the experience of extreme violence. These struggles invariably intensify in new political conditions of democratic transition from authoritarian regimes (Pouliny, Chesterman & Schnabel 2007). While we might imagine that a post-authoritarian democratic state and civil society would facilitate the revisiting and active contestation of authoritarian historical narratives, in many cases authoritarian narratives persist even decades after the end of an authoritarian regime (Gocek 2008). The survival of these historical narratives can provide clues to what has happened in the process of political change to a post-authoritarian state. Post-authoritarian states may develop as some form of liberal democracy, introducing new democratic institutions such as free parliamentary elections or they may be in a new form of non-democratic or authoritarian regime (Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez & Aguilar 2001). Politico-business oligarchies inherited from previous regimes may exist in both situations and their relative power in the new post-Authoritarian situation will be dependent upon their ability to gain hold over the new, revamped or same old institutions of power that develop or exist in the new political situation (Robison and Hadiz 2004).

Nationalism and Legacies of Authoritarian Regimes

Cesarini (2004, 172-73) argues that periods of significant social change are crucial moments for re-making 'myths' regarding the nation and the past. These myths can support the revitalization of people's interest and support for new democratic institutions, which will undermine the continuation of authoritarian legacies from the past. Similarly where these historical moments are not seized upon as

opportunities for significant political change, there may be little or no change in the level of people's (dis)interest in political institutions.

The persistence of authoritarian historical narrative or the 'politics of the past in the present' in a post authoritarian state or democratic transition can be defined as being part of the legacy of an authoritarian regime. Cesarini and Hite (2004, 2) conceptualize authoritarian legacies in three ways: as structures and institutions that are inherited from previous authoritarian regimes; the lingering power and influence of traditional / conservative groups; and as cultural or psychological manifestations of authoritarianism (uncertainty, fear, distrust). Authoritarian historical narratives may be present in one or all of these legacies and may be reproduced via political institutions (government policy, lawmaking), official discourses (school curriculum, museums and other official historical representations) and non-official discourses (social discourses that define 'good' and evil').

Narrative and Contestation of Power

Economic crisis and the fall of authoritarian political regimes do not always signal the end or the automatic removal of entrenched economic and political interests of a previous authoritarian regime. Conditions of economic and political crisis open the door to new political opportunities to forge new constellations of power¹⁰ and the opportunity to strengthen civil and political rights. What will emerge in new conditions after the end of an authoritarian regime will depend on new alliances that are formed in a struggle to determine who will be able to capture political power. Political alliances may be based on temporary or more enduring interests (Robison and Hadiz 2004). It will depend on the strength of the new contesting political forces as well as the capacity of old authoritarian interests to transform themselves in the new political landscape.

¹⁰ Hadiz and Robison conceive the problem of power and political change (in Indonesia) "in terms of vast struggles between coalitions of state and social power" (2004, 13). Power is not conceived of as lying within the institutions of the state but rather in specific coalitions of social, economic and political interests. The coalitions of social interests that held power in the New Order regime included the state bureaucracy, politico-business families, corporate conglomerates and commercial propertied interests. Economic (and social and political) crisis from 1997/1998 allowed for other social and economic forces to compete or make alliances in the political environment of parliamentary capitalism that emerged post-Suharto. The new constellation of power that has been consolidated post-Suharto includes the same New Order elites in alliances with new political players who constitute social and economic interests that were previously on the fringes of power under the New Order (ibid. 2004, 12-13,16).

The reorganizing of power and the establishment of political legitimacy for those who hold power in a post-authoritarian state may rely on 'new imaginings' of the nation and society or may rely on previously established narratives that provided political legitimacy for the previous political order. The contestation over social memory or historical narratives reflects a struggle over power and who gets to decide the future (Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez & Aguilar 2001, 38). The persistence of authoritarian historical narratives in a post authoritarian state can be understood, at least in significant part, to be a product of the outcome of contestation over power in a post authoritarian state. Whether there is opportunity to promote new political 'imaginings' (narratives) about the past will depend on how significant the changes in the state structures and personnel from the previous regime are.

The nature of a democratic change and who holds power in a post authoritarian state will significantly determine who has control over the (re)making of stories or official narratives about the past. The involvement of elites from the previous authoritarian regime in the process of brokering or negotiating these transitions or periods of change will significantly influence the extent to which there is a major break with the past as well as the strength and influence of the authoritarian legacies that survive the transitions (Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez & Aguilar 2001). How significant the changes in state structures and institutions as well as formal discourses are will be influenced by the capacity and success of alternative social forces (from outside of the previous authoritarian regime elites) in undermining the legitimacy of the elites from the previous order and discrediting them politically.

The upholding of authoritarian historical narrative by post-authoritarian states can serve several of or all of the following purposes. In the first instance this historical narrative serves an ideological purpose, providing legitimacy for the new power arrangements or the political, economic and social order that is consolidated in the new political conditions. In the period of democratic change or transition this narrative serves the purpose of maintaining categories of political inclusion and exclusion from the past regime. This facilitates the 'forgetting' of past atrocities and reflects the lack of political will to deal with the past because of fear of punitive actions for crimes of violence that beneficiaries of the new power

arrangements have committed in the past (McGregor 2012, Molino 2010)¹¹. It provides a defence not only against the threat of punitive actions, but also against challenges to their hold on power and to their economic or financial interests for those who have been material beneficiaries of the previous political order¹². Social relations that are (re)formed in societies after the experience of mass violence or genocide are complex (Pouliny, Chesterman & Schnabel 2007). Beneficiaries are not limited to actors who wield significant economic and social power but also to 'ordinary people' who have and continue to benefit from the suppression of alternative narratives or a search for truth¹³.

In providing an ideological defence for the previous authoritarian state's acts of political violence, the authoritarian historical narrative legitimizes the ongoing use of repressive measures including violence by the new democratic regime against those that challenge the new power arrangements. Acts of state violence are justified and legitimized on the basis of the ideological construction of the national interest and exclusive definitions of citizenship. Challenges to the existing political order are identified as primarily 'internal threats' to the sovereignty of the nation and deemed to be a threat to the national interest.

The maintenance of the old categories of inclusion and exclusion deny an alternative lexicon or ideological frame to social forces and classes seeking more substantive social change and political reform. The threat of or actual use of violence and other repressive measures by the post-authoritarian state restricts the capacity of civil democratic movements to campaign for the deepening of democratic institutions.

If state narratives of historical events are critical in underpinning particular types of political order or power relations, then the survival of authoritarian historical narrative in a post-authoritarian democratic state tells us something about the

¹¹ Despite one of the central demands of the reform movement being a call for justice for victims of state violence limited steps have been taken to make state officials accountable for gross human rights violations committed during the New Order (Suh 2012; Sulistiyanto 2007).

¹² Suharto and his family and several other oligarchy figures became the personal owners of state assets and accrued enormous wealth during the New Order. One of the demands of the reform movement was for the seizure of these private assets that rightly belonged to the people of Indonesia. None of these demands have been acted upon (O'Rourke 2002).

¹³ In Bali, a significant factor in the violence was inter-clan rivalry. Perpetrators became immediate material beneficiaries of assets that were seized after people were murdered or incarcerated (Dwyer and Santikarma 2007).

nature of the political change process that has taken place and about the balance of forces between different social forces contesting political power.

It would generally indicate that elite forces from the previous authoritarian regime have played a significant role in negotiating or managing the process of political change. Studying the changes in concepts of national identity and citizenship and categories of political 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' from the previous regime provides some measure of how substantial the development of democratic political institutions has been. A failure to re-make myths about the nation and the past after the end of an authoritarian regime will undermine the interest of people in politics and political institutions and hence weaken the potential for the ongoing undermining and dismantling of authoritarian legacies.

Chapter Two

New Order Historical Narrative and Political Power

The New Order narrative about 1965 was critical in providing legitimacy for the new political, social and economic order that was created after the mass violence of 1965-68¹⁴. This narrative played an ideological role in legitimizing a fundamentally different version of nation-building and national identity from the previous order (Hadiz 2006; Dwyer & Santikarma 2007; Goodfellow 2003; Djakababa 2010; Van Langenberg 1990). Discrediting the previous social and political order was essential in providing legitimacy for the acts of mass violence initiated, coordinated and carried out by the military. This required the severing of any historical links with the politics of the past and the creation of silence over the mass violence (McGregor 2005, 228; Djakababa 2010, 143-144; Dwyer & Santikarma 2007, 194-195).

Through the control over the representations of past historical events this narrative created a new and exclusive concept of citizenship¹⁵ based on loyalty to *Pancasila* ideology (Hadiz 2006; McGregor 2007; Anderson 2005). The New Order regime created a new Indonesian national identity and ideology that demonized communists and communism and created a version of history about the PKI as 'betrayers' in the historical struggle for national independence and in the early years of formative nation building. At the same time discussion of politics became taboo. National unity was now to be based on the singular ideological principle of *Pancasila* (McGregor 2007; Djakababa 2010) which did not allow other ideologies. This would subsequently justify the banning of Marxist-Leninist (communist) ideology in 1966.

¹⁴ The majority of killings were carried out in the first four months of the military's campaign starting in early October 1965. Kammen and McGregor (2012) talk about the contours of mass violence that took place between 1965-68 to describe the multiple forms of violence that took place across the Archipelago as a 'counter-revolution intended to curtail the mass mobilizations and popular participation unleashed by the national revolution; destroy the social bases of Sukarno's left-leaning political system; and to establish a new pro-Western military authoritarian regime'.

¹⁵ For example people applying for public servant positions had to demonstrate their commitment to *pancasila* and assert their communist-free family background. Any actions considered to be political such as a labour demonstration could be deemed communist as they were divisive and disrupted the social harmony required to build the nation collectively based on consensus. Former political prisoners were required to carry ID cards that stated their former political prisoner status (Conroe 2012).

For the purpose of this thesis the use of ‘authoritarian historical narrative’ or the ‘1965 New Order narrative’ refers in the first instance to the New Order regime version of events that took place on the morning of 1 October 1965 with the murder of six generals at the *lubang buaya* (crocodile hole) in Jakarta. This narrative was created by the newly emerging power of the New Order shortly after the events took place¹⁶. The ‘version’ of historical events about 1965 that was upheld by the New Order regime was not only about the events of 1 October 1965 and the murder of the six generals specifically. More crucially this narrative told a story that was then used as justification for the removal of President Sukarno, the mass murders of at least 500,000 members and sympathisers of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and other left wing nationalists and the creation of an anti-communist ideology by the New Order military regime.

The ‘New Order narrative about 1965’ refers to the explanations that do exist for the mass killings that occurred in 1965 as being provoked by the PKI who threatened people’s lives and the values of *Pancasila*. It argues that the PKI were atheists and murderers and that they had always provoked rebellion and disunity. This narrative argues that the political climate at the time in 1965 was one of ‘kill (communists) or be killed’ (Zurbuchen 2005, 15).

This chapter outlines the historical background to the contemporary politics that are the focus of the thesis. It explains how the New Order regime used the narrative to provide legitimacy for the Indonesian military’s actions in carrying out mass violence against a legitimate, legal political organization, the PKI (Anderson 2013; McGregor 2007). It describes the basic facts of the massacres, the purpose of the violence, the establishment of the New Order system of political power, the creation of the official version of Indonesia’s 1965 history and the silence that was imposed on any discussion of this history in subsequent decades.

Origins of the Mass Violence

Six army generals were murdered in Jakarta on 1 October 1965. Who is responsible for their kidnapping and murder remains highly contested (Roosa 2006, Djakababa 2010). Despite uncertainty over who was responsible for the 30

¹⁶ The first official version entitled the *The forty day failure of the 30th September Movement* was produced within 40 days of the 1st October 1965 and was published before the end of 1965 (McGregor 2007, 62).

September movement (*G30S*)¹⁷ (Roosa 2006), significant academic research clearly supports the argument that a faction of the Indonesian army led by General Suharto used this event as justification to begin a systematic campaign of mass violence and terror across the Indonesian archipelago (Kammen & McGregor 2012; Djakababa 2010; Melvin 2013). They physically wiped out the Indonesian Communist Party and other left-wing nationalists through massacres, incarceration without legal process, disappearances, torture and sexual violence. Estimates of the numbers killed vary between 500,000 to 3 million people, the majority being killed in the first four months of the violence. A further 600,000 to 750,000 people¹⁸ were interned as political prisoners for years and in some cases decades (McGregor 2013).

Since 1998, a growing body of research and testimonies about the actors, processes and forms of violence in different localities across Indonesia has been published. These works provide detail of the specific roles and motives of the elite army the para-commando unit (RPKAD), regional army commands and their non-military allies in priming, facilitating and carrying out the violence. (Cribb 1990; Fealy and McGregor 2012; Siregar 2007; Jenkins and Kammen 2012)

The military at both central and regional level played a pivotal role in the orchestration and conduct of the violence. The violence was not spontaneous nor was it anarchistic. The military were actively supportive of violence that was carried out or directly coordinated the violence (Kammen and McGregor 2012). Social class, ethnicity and local factors affected local patterns of violence. These factors were used to provide explanations of the causes of the violence as simply struggles between nationalists, religious organisations and the communists (Kammen and McGregor 2012; Dwyer and Santikarma 2007). Local conflicts were exploited by the military to initiate or facilitate the carrying out of the violence ¹⁹

¹⁷ A group that referred to themselves as the 30th September Movement (*G30S*) kidnapped and murdered six army generals on the morning of 1 October 1965 (Roosa 2006).

¹⁸ Reported figures vary wildly from 70,000 to 1 million people interred.

¹⁹ In East Java followers of the mass Islamic organisation NU often believe that religion is valid as a justification for the violence that took place. Fealy and McGregor (2012) argue that political and socio-economic factors were more important than religion as such. The PKI in supporting and sometimes initiating poor farmers' claims for land brought them into conflict with wealthy NU ulama elite. They conclude that retaining power and privilege was critical in explaining the killings in East Java.

In many cases the military spread hearsay and rumours to provoke and provide mass support for violent actions including the murder of PKI members²⁰.

Purpose of the Violence

Prior to October 1965, Indonesia had been in a state of increasing social, political and economic conflict. In 1965 these tensions became increasingly sharp and there were several indications that a political struggle was being waged between the PKI and left-wing nationalists and the military in a grab for power that would enable these contradictions to be resolved in either a more explicitly socialist or a more clearly pro-capitalist direction (Kammen & McGregor 2012; Hadiz 2006; Djakababa 2010; Lane 2008; Siregar 2007). The destruction of the PKI removed the army's only rival for power. The army then removed President Sukarno. Throughout 1966 the army sought to undermine Sukarnoism, first by purging the civil service, then by targeting the Sukarnoist Indonesian National Party (PNI) and finally by purging the ranks of the military itself of all leftist and Sukarnoist elements (Kammen and McGregor 2012).

These actions were carried out to realize a number of strategic goals. These were the elimination of the PKI and the broader left-wing nationalist movement as the military's only significant political rival for power; to punish communists and left nationalists for actions that threatened long established property relations that were discriminative and based on feudal or colonial relations; and to realize their political and economic ambitions to create a modern capitalist nation state (a counter-revolution) that would initially have at its helm Suharto and an influential military faction in alliance with Western developed countries. In other words a fundamental reshaping of the nature of power and social relations in Indonesia (Kammen & McGregor 2012; Hadiz 2006; Lane 2008; van Langenberg 1990).

Western governments were committed to the establishment of an authoritarian regime in Indonesia prior to the events of 1965-66. Simpson (2012) explains that in August 1964 the United States adopted a covert strategy to remove Sukarno, which it was hoped would provoke a violent conflict between the Indonesian

²⁰ The provocation by the military was to such an extent that in areas in Bali where there were not any significant numbers of PKI members or sympathizers, people were accused of being PKI and then murdered to ensure that local leaders met their 'quota' of PKI members. This was out of fear that if they did not find PKI members they themselves would be accused of being communist (Dwyer & Santikarma 2007; 200).

Armed forces and the Indonesian Communist Party²¹. The U.S gave critical financial support to the army during the campaign against the PKI (Simpson 2012 60-61). The British and Australian governments likewise supported Suharto's coming to power and the establishment of the New Order regime²². This explains why western powers have never questioned the Suharto regime or any post-Suharto government over the campaign against the PKI and the narrative that was subsequently created²³.

The leaders of this newly emerging military state moved quickly to consolidate their legitimacy by gaining control of the content of the immediate past (about the PKI, left-wing nationalism and Sukarnoism) that was then to be re-made in the minds of the public (McGregor 2007; Wieringa 2003; Djakababa 2010).

The Creation of the New Order Myth

The dominant political ideas or ideology in Indonesia prior to October 1965 were communist, socialist and left wing nationalist ideas. Lieutenant-General Ali Moertopo lectured his propoagandists in the Information Department that,

“ "Indonesians have been influenced by communism as a system of thought for so long that it came to be identified as the Indonesian way of thinking." (p. 110)

Moertopo was designing indoctrination courses "to make Indonesians truly Indonesian", because he wanted to divorce them from their nation's history.”

(Bourchier and Hadiz 2003, 110-111)

As such, the actions of Suharto and those that came to power with him were not only a repudiation of Sukarnoism, but a decisive destruction of the social basis for a new kind of political power. It was an ideological rejection of the popular mass participation that was unleashed during the Indonesian revolution and which continued to thrive in the 1950s and early 1960s.

²¹ The mass violence in Indonesia commenced at a time when the United States was actively engaged in war against 'communists' in Vietnam and where U.S economic interests were being challenged in Sumatera by plantation workers. There was significant political debate about the need to nationalize foreign oil enterprises and there was a growing climate of insecurity for foreign economic ventures in Indonesia (Simpson 2012).

²² Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt commented in *The New York Times* (6 July 1966) "With 500,000 to a million communist sympathisers knocked off...I think it's safe to assume a reorientation has taken place."

²³ In stark contrast to the horror expressed by the same western governments over the Communist Khmer Rouge killings in Cambodia in 1975-79, Western governments never raised challenges to the Suharto regime over the mass killings of 1965-66, rather they actively promoted the campaign against the PKI (Simpson 2012).

The New Order government led by Suharto created the myth of the demon PKI, the enemy of the nation. They created the myth that the PKI had repeatedly committed treason against the state, and that by encouraging communists and trying to shelter them even after their treason Sukarno forfeited his right to lead the nation²⁴.

In the first instance the narrative made use of the *Pancasila* ideology of the previous order led by Sukarno, but redefined it to exclude the 'atheist communists'²⁵. The use of gender ideology became a critical factor in the establishment of the New Order state²⁶. This narrative recast the identity of Indonesian women as the subservient supporters of their socially active husbands, the guardians of home and hearth. It erased the leading role that women had played socially and politically in nation building. It did this through the creation of an image of the political left activist woman as sexual and dangerous, immoral, threatening the moral values of the true Indonesian society (Wieringa 2003; McGregor 2007).

The black propaganda campaign against PKI and the Indonesian Women's Movement (*Gerwani*) not only facilitated the actual change of power, it laid one of the ideological foundations for the New Order's military rule. From then on, any resistance to the military has been blamed on some PKI remnant or the latent danger the PKI is said to represent (Wieringa 2003; Zurbuchen 2002). The new version of nationalist ideology said that the heroes of the anti-colonial movement were no longer the people, but the military (male) generals and aristocrats. Museums were created, guidebooks, films, textbooks, school curriculum, reenactments of past events and commemorative histories were published that emphasised the military including its political role and a revised version of *pancasila* (McGregor 2007, 28).

²⁴ Internal military conflicts over rationalisation and decommissioning of leftist divisions in the army led to an uprising in 1948 where communists and muslim leaders were killed. These events were reconstructed in the form of myth about the 'Madiun Affair' that became part of the systematic campaign to discredit the PKI (McGregor 2013).

²⁵ Compulsory *pancasila* indoctrination education was instituted for school students in the early 1970s, for university students in the mid 1970s and for civil servants in 1978. The military were the defenders of the *pancasila* and the PKI were the enemies of the *pancasila* (McGregor 2007).

²⁶ Saskia Wieringa explains how the New Order created a representation of *Gerwani* women as 'debauched', which became a metaphor for the disorder of the latter period of the Sukarno era (Guided democracy period 1959-1965). The New Order regime used these representations to depoliticize the Indonesian Women's Movement and to put forward 'appropriate' social roles for women (in McGregor 2007, 82).

The sacred *pancasila* monument, which includes the preserved *lubang buaya* (crocodile hole)²⁷, became significant in the creation of the narrative and the 'representation' of the 30 September movement (McGregor 2007). The monument, using a diorama, shows images projected of communists (including *Gerwani*) as representing everything the New Order rejected. Suharto declared the purpose of the monument was to present the facts of the treason of the PKI and the New Order government as the protectors of the Indonesian national philosophy of *Pancasila*. The *Lubang Buaya* was preserved to provide the physical evidence of the need to kill the communists (McGregor 2007, 70).

The narrative was not singular and unchanging, but was added to and strengthened over the period of the New Order. In the 1980s and again in the 1990s the myth of the 30th September Movement and the treachery and evilness of the PKI was focused on specifically for elaboration (Budiawan 2004; McGregor 2007). In 1983 a four hour long film entitled the *Treachery of the 30th September Movement* was produced and became required viewing for all high school students on the annual anniversary of the 30th September movement²⁸. The representations of the communists are more developed as evil, scheming and corrupt characters (McGregor 2007, 96).

In the 1990s new official versions were produced that were more complex and detailed about the communist threat. The Museum of PKI Treason was opened in 1990 (Roosa 2006) and a torture scene was added to the original diorama. A White book²⁹ was published by the New Order state, with an introduction by the Minister of the state secretariat in 1994³⁰. This book extended the narrative originally created by Nugroho about the PKI (Budiawan 2004; McGregor 2007). Its focus was the revival and elaboration of the communist threat as the main threat to the integrity of the Indonesian state.

Aspinall explains this as a response to the reform elements that were emerging at that time (2005). Any individual or organization that challenged the New Order version of *Pancasila* ideology, the version of 1965 history or the legitimacy of the regime was labeled a (communist) threat to national security. They would often

²⁷ The bodies of the six murdered generals were found in a well called the *lubang buaya*.

²⁸ It was also shown on national TV on the same day.

²⁹ Official state publication

³⁰ Writer's translation taken from Budiawan 2004.

experience intimidation or direct repression by the military³¹. The military actively used the threat of the 'latent danger of communism' to legitimize the repression of opposition forces that emerged during the period of openness or *keterbukaan* in the early 1990s (McGregor 194-197; Aspinall 2005).

While the military initially led a campaign for greater openness in order to broaden their political base in the late 1980s and early 1990s,³² the 'communist threat' was at the same time revived and strengthened by Suharto. Several actions were taken to strengthen the 1965 narrative including a presidential decree against former communists warning that 18 million former communist members were at large and could make a comeback (McGregor 2007, 196)³³.

There were challenges to versions of Indonesian history during the New Order era. The response by the regime was usually to ban and censor them. Of more than 2,000 books that were banned during the New Order, most dealt with the events of 1965-66 (Van Klinken 2005, 239). Through their control of official discourses such as history books, monuments and museums, laws and legal instruments and the repressive apparatus of the military the New Order regime were able to effectively control historical discourses and maintain the silence over the mass killings that had legitimated their taking of power. *Pancasila* ideology was the cornerstone of this post-ideological developmentalist state requiring the active repression of alternative ideologies and political thought and action, which was deemed to undermine unity and the nation-building project.

The silence over the killings provided protection for those who benefited materially and politically from the mass killings and who benefited directly in the social, economic and political order that was established after the defeat of the Army's only political rival the PKI. This included assets of the young Indonesian republic which subsequently became the property of the military bureaucracy and individual state officials as well as civilians who had seized as their own, property

³¹ One of the organizations targeted using the anti-communist ideology was the People's Democratic Party, who were hunted down, arrested, tortured and disappeared after a violent clash at the Indonesian Democratic Party headquarters on July 27 1996 which they were accused of masterminding.

³² As conflicts between Suharto and the military under Benny Murdani became increasingly sharp (Aspinall 2005, McGregor 2007).

³³ One event that marked the return to repression was the banning of three publications Detik, Editor and Tempo on June 21 1994. Following this the military returned to a pattern of intimidation and coercion and a return to the use of the 'danger' of a communist threat (Aspinall 2005).

and goods of those who had been massacred or interred without legal process (Hadiz 2006). The enforced silence over the mass violence provided impunity for those responsible for and who were directly involved in carrying out the mass killings (McGregor 2012). Throughout the New Order a culture of impunity for acts of mass violence by the state became legitimized. The Indonesian state bureaucracy, the military and representatives of civil organisations directly responsible for carrying out or having links to those involved in the mass killings have been the prime defenders of the official narrative since the establishment of the New Order government.

The development and strengthening of the narrative during the New Order period legitimized the fierce anti-communism of the regime and was actively employed to legitimize the repression of more radical (non-elite) political opposition throughout the New Order and specifically against the political opposition to the dictatorship that emerged during the 1990s. It is with this legacy that Indonesia entered into its journey of democratization that began with the stepping down of Suharto in May 1998.

Chapter three

History as a Weapon: The Struggle for Democracy

After the fall of the dictator Suharto in May 1998 there was a significant opening up within society of discussion about many aspects of Indonesian history including the events of 1965 (McGregor 2007; van Klinken 2005; Zurbuchen 2002). The lifting of restrictions on the press and a freer publishing environment allowed long suppressed historiographies to emerge³⁴. The narrative about 1965 was challenged directly by, amongst others, former armed forces personnel and by the survivors of political repression of 1965 and their families.

Remembering that alternative historical narratives always have the potential to undermine the political status quo (Anderson 2005) it can be argued that this contestation over the past was indeed part of the struggle for power and political legitimacy (Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez & Aguilar 2001, 38) by competing social forces in the immediate period after the fall of Suharto. The character of the contestation over the New Order historical narrative about 1965 was part of the broader democratic struggles that existed post the fall of Suharto and the discourses about the shape that a new democratic society could take. At the same time that there were challenges to the New Order narrative there were explicit calls to bring Suharto and his cronies to justice for their robbery of state assets and for abuses of human rights (O'Rourke 2002; Hadiz and Robison 2004).

However the managed transition of power by New Order elites in the first three years of *reformasi* resulted in a failure to take action on significant political demands of the *reformasi* movement, specifically the calls to bring Suharto and his cronies to justice. The political climate remained one where it was often difficult to hold open political discussions about the past³⁵ and actions taken by the Attorney-

³⁴ Many people protested official historical versions that were perceived as promoting a cult of the personality of Suharto as well as the historical role of the Army as the nation's saviour. Ordinary people, parents, school children, as well as retired military officers and former officers from the Sukarno era were part of a groundswell where people began to talk about and to 'correct' history (van Klinken 2005, 242). At the same time the military was active in ensuring that many publications did not make it to press (van Klinken 2005).

³⁵ Former Deputy secretary-general of the Indonesian Women's Movement (Gerwani) was instrumental in the establishment of the YPKP. She routinely experienced threats and attacks were made on her home and workplace. The YPKP website reports that on May 14, 2000 20 to 30 people

General's office in 2007 officially silenced any official discourses that challenged the 1965 historical narrative explicitly³⁶.

Chapter three discusses the contestation over the 1965 narrative that emerged in the first decade of *reformasi*. It outlines the initial opportunities that existed for those contesting the 1965 narrative to put forward alternative versions of history and the social forces involved in the contestation. Using Cesarini and Hite's (2004) analysis I argue that the management of the transition by predominantly New Order elites³⁷ made it likely that the 1965 authoritarian narrative would be maintained and defended in this initial period. I outline how conservative New Order elites gained control of the new democratic government and, along with the military, were successful in defending and reaffirming the New Order 1965 narrative. This chapter then draws on the theoretical framework provided by Cesarini and Hite to identify where authoritarian legacy of the 1965 narrative has been defended in the *reformasi* era.

Indonesia's experience after the fall of Suharto in 1998, confirms Cesarini's argument that periods of significant social change are crucial moments for remaking 'myths' regarding the nation and the past. Following the stepping down of Suharto in 1998, expectations of significant political reform and democratisation were high amongst many social groups within civil society. Aspinall (2005) argues that this reflected the ongoing process of politicisation since the early 1990s of many social layers within society from the middle classes to students, workers, and poor farmers³⁸ and significantly in the events of 1998, a significant section of the urban poor of Jakarta.

Aspinall (ibid) describes the social and political expectations of many social layers from civil society that had been brought into a variety of forms of political action in the process of building of opposition to the dictatorship. Once the dictator had gone, people expressed their will for new democratic freedoms in the political

from the Anti-Communist Command came to the YPKP office (Ibu Sulami's home), claiming they were ready to kill anyone who sought to remove the anti-communist laws in Indonesia and claiming that Ibu Sulami was one such person. YPKP website
<http://wirantaprawira.de/ypkp/sulami.htm>

³⁶ In 2007 the Attorney General issued a formal decree or *surat keputusan* that required all history books to refer to the 30th September Movement as 30th September Movement / Indonesian Communist Party (G30S/PKI). (Roosa 2008, XV).

³⁷ This includes the semi-opposition elements described by Ed Aspinall (2010a).

³⁸ Political protest by workers and farmers emerged as an increasing phenomenon during the 1990s (Aspinall 2005).

space that had opened up. While much of the struggle for power took place between New Order elites or those who were lower down the food chain in the New Order system, there was some ideological contestation over the (re)making of the post New Order social, economic and political order in the early period of reformasi (Aspinall 2005; Robison and Hadiz 2004; Lane 2008). In this struggle, history became one site for ideological contestation.

The struggle for history after Suharto

The political conditions surrounding the fall of Suharto allowed for the opening of a political space³⁹ that had not existed since prior to the mass violence of 1965. There was intensive debate in civil society about who would oversee the political transition until democratic elections could be held and President Habibie⁴⁰ faced constant attacks on his legitimacy⁴¹ (Hadiz and Robison 2004; Aspinall 2005). Political uncertainty allowed relative freedoms that had not existed previously (Robison and Hadiz 2004; van Klinken 2005, 233; Aspinall 2005; Lane 2008;). For a time, discussion and debate about the nation, society and history was very open and who would emerge to decisively hold political power in the new social, political and economic reality post Suharto had not yet been settled. The challenges to the New Order version of history were significant and involved different social groups and interests within society (van Klinken 2005; McGregor 2007, 16).

³⁹ Aspinall (2005) refers to the 'political space' that allowed reform elements to openly and directly organize to challenge the New Order institutions of state power and their officials with a greatly reduced threat or fear of repression.

⁴⁰ President Habibie made several institutional and legal reform initiatives (Aspinall 2005; Anonymous 2009) including loosening the restrictions on political parties and trade unions, the freeing of political prisoners, freedom of the press and Habibie promised free and fair elections in the near future. These were arguably necessary political concessions made in response to the constant pressure to reject Habibie as a legitimate president and calls for his resignation (Aspinall 2005, 271; Hadiz and Robison 2004). Through these concessions Habibie was able to reconstitute his administration as an interim government until elections were held in 1999.

⁴¹ Efforts to establish a presidium of People's Council consisting of opposition figures, students and people's representatives did not eventuate. There was not extensive support for reforms initiated outside of the state institutions, most significantly from what Aspinall refers to as the semi-opposition figures of Amien Rais, Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Sukarnoputri. The student movement, including its more radical wing were not in agreement about uniting and forming alliances with the mass of poor workers, farmers and urban poor citizens (Hadiz and Robison 2004).

With the implementation of political decentralization and the organising of direct elections, ordinary people were not afraid to challenge Golkar⁴² officials directly, demanding their resignation from local and regional offices in the initial period of *reformasi*. The military were keen to demonstrate their reform credentials as they came under pressure not only domestically but from the international human rights community that were calling for accountability for the violence carried out in East Timor at the time of the referendum in 1999 (Suh 2012; Mietzner 2009a). The challenge to key New Order institutions, specifically the military and Golkar, which had been discredited in the eyes of many Indonesians (Mietzner 2009a), provided opportunities to challenge the New Order version of history in its broadest sense (Van Klinken 2005). This new political climate allowed a freeing of discussion about Indonesian history, not only or specifically about the New Order version of the events of 1965 but about just about everything⁴³. The battle over history was one part of the struggle for political change and democratisation.

Challenges to the New Order narrative about 1965

In the initial period of *reformasi*, some pro-*reformasi* groups campaigned explicitly to undermine the legitimacy of New Order institutions of authoritarian rule and for the removal of New Order political figures from government institutions (Robison and Hadiz 2004; Aspinall 2005, 227; Lane 2008). It was in this political environment that some survivors of the 1965 mass violence established new organizations and along with human rights organizations began investigations into the past through the collection of oral testimonies, exhumation of mass graves and the collection of surviving historical documentation that contradicted the New Order version of history (McGregor 2012, 234-5).

⁴² GOLKAR was the principal political organization used by Suharto to manage many aspects of the dictatorships' organisations. Organised explicitly as a 'functional group' (Golongan Karya – Golkar) not a political party it was the main vehicle for obtaining access to and becoming part of the 'in-group' of the Suharto regime. Being active gave opportunities to receive political, economic or social privileges. During the Habibie presidency, Habibie used the structures of Golkar right down to the local level to mobilize political support. By offering the release of certain central government powers to the regions he was able to effectively mobilize political support for his presidency which was aimed at providing those whose power was threatened to regroup and reorganise themselves in a new power sharing arrangement.

⁴³ In the early years after Suharto's fall from power in 1998, censorship of publications almost disappeared. Long-forbidden works by dead communists – going back as far as the 1920s – were resurrected. Accounts by communist survivors of their suffering in Suharto's gulag circulated without being banned. A flood of conflicting analyses of 'what really happened in 1965' sold well, especially if they claimed that the secret masterminds of the *Gerakan 30 September* (G-30-S) were Suharto, the CIA, or MI-5 (Anderson, 2013).

From 1998 until 2003, there were three significant groupings that openly challenged the historical narrative about 1965. The principle challengers of the New Order historical narrative about 1965 and the PKI, were the former political prisoners, the survivors of the mass violence and their families. These were the citizens who had been 'excluded' and denied civil and human rights by the Suharto dictatorship. They formed organizations in the first few years after the fall of Suharto with the purpose of researching the killings, imprisonments and human rights abuses that took place during 1965-68⁴⁴. They included the remnants of those politically conscious sections of society that remembered what had happened in 1965 (McGregor 2007; Lane 2008). The evidence they produced and the testimonies that they published, directly challenged the New Order historical representation of communists.

Secondly, were the liberal reformers from the 'semi-opposition' New Order political elites. The three principal political figures were Abdurrahman Wahid, Amien Rais and Megawati Sukarnoputri⁴⁵ who led their respective political parties of the National Awakening Party (PKB), the National Mandate Party (PAN) and the Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle (PDI-P). Both Wahid and the PDI-P initiated bills into the parliament to repeal the law banning communism. Arguably, only with this reform could a truly open discussion about 1965 take place⁴⁶.

Amien Rais was openly hostile to communism and the PKI (Hadiz and Robison 2004) and Megawati Sukarnoputri tended to avoid direct statements in support of

⁴⁴ The leaders of these organizations included figures such as Sulami, former vice-secretary-general of the Indonesian Women's Movement (Gerwani) and Pramoedya Ananta Toer a cultural activist prior to the New Order (McGregor 2012). Katharine McGregor (2012) discusses the work of some of these organisations in her chapter "Mass Graves and Memories of the 1965 Indonesian Killings" focusing on a case study of the work of one organization, the Foundation for the Research into Victims of the 1965-66 killings (YPKP). Other organizations include: Society of the Victims of the New Order Regime (PAKORBA), Institute of Struggle for Rehabilitation of the Victims of New Order Regime (LPR KROB), Institute for Research into the 1965/66 Affair (LPKP), Research Foundation for The Victims of Human Rights Violations (YPKP HAM), Research Foundation for the Victims of 1965 Massacre YPKP 65, Joint Secretariat on 1965, (Sekretariat bersama 65 - Solo), Shoe for Peace Foundation (Yayasan Kasut perdamaian), Santri Society for People's Advocacy (Syarikat), Garden of '65 Community (Taman 65 -Bali).

⁴⁵ Abdurrahman Wahid was the former Chairperson of the Nahdlatul Ulama, Indonesia's largest muslim organisation and Indonesia's fourth president from 1999-2001. During the Suharto dictatorship Amien Rais was a leading critical muslim academic and leader of Muhammadiyah Indonesia's second largest muslim party. Megawati Sukarnoputri is the populist leader of the Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle. She served as Indonesia's first woman president from 2001-2004

⁴⁶ In 2000 the KOMNAS HAM refused to set up an investigation into the mass killings of 1965-66 on the basis that the parliament had not yet lifted the ban on Marxist-Leninist teachings (McGregor 2012).

the victims of 1965 (McGregor 2012). However Abdurrahman Wahid and several leading figures in the PKB and the PDI-P⁴⁷ were prepared to challenge the historical narrative about 1965 specifically and the ban on Marxism-Leninism and the PKI.

During the Wahid presidency key figures from the PKB, including the parliamentary leaders of the DPR and MPR,⁴⁸ openly supported Wahid's initiative to provoke public debate about repeal of the laws banning communism and rehabilitation of the victims of 1965, yet the party as a whole was not unanimously in support. When Wahid made an apology to the victims of 1965 on behalf of the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) it became clear that the organization was deeply divided over their attitude to the events of 1965. Following Wahid's apology, younger NU activists⁴⁹ became concerned about the role of the NU in the mass violence of 1965-68 specifically in Java (McGregor 2012, 238).

The third group were Indonesian Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) that campaign for human rights. These NGOs included the Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence (*Komisi untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan - KONTRAS*), the Institute for the Study and Advocacy of Human Rights (*Lembaga Studi dan Advokasi HAM Masyarakat - Elsam*), Association for the Families of the Disappeared Indonesia (*Ikatan Keluarga Orang Hilang Indonesia - IKOHI*) and the Legal Aid Institute (*Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Jakarta - LBH Jakarta*). These organizations played a significant role in the early political debates about how to deal with the past, particularly in the development of legislative options for truth and reconciliation and justice and rehabilitation for victims of violence in the past (Suh 2012). They have continued to play a significant role in maintaining the ongoing contestation of the 1965 narrative.

⁴⁷ The PDI-P as a party actively supported and reintroduced the bill to repeal the laws banning Marxism-Leninism in 2003. "Ditolak, Pencabutan Tap Soal PKI." 2003. Suara Merdeka. August 3. <http://suaramerdeka.com>.

⁴⁸ Hamdani, D., Asrori S.K. and Haryadi,R. 2000. "Dagang Politik Palu Arit." Gatra Nomor 21/VI, April 8. From: <http://www.library.ohiou.edu/indopubs/2000/04/13/0034.html>

⁴⁹ Historically members of the NU had officially celebrated their role in crushing communists as their contribution to the nation. Many youth from NU acknowledged this history and met together in 1999 to discuss the NU youth wing Ansor' relationship with the events of 1965. These youth subsequently established Syarikat (Santri Society for People's advocacy) (McGregor 2012, 248).

Human Rights activist Munir⁵⁰, a former operational director of the Indonesian legal aid institute and chairperson of KontraS, made clear statements that the law banning Marxism-Leninism should be repealed, because in a democracy the state had no right to control ideology. Munir stated that reconciliation could only be achieved by seeking the truth about the past and that formal (state) apologies are usually made after the truth of the events is known⁵¹.

From 1998, legal, institutional reforms were made including the widening of the powers of Indonesian Human Rights Commission (KOMNAS HAM) and new legislation that provided for the provision of ad hoc human rights courts to respond to cases of human rights abuses in the past⁵². School history curriculum was reviewed (van Klinken 2005). These initiatives appeared to indicate state institutional support for alternative versions of the 1965 narrative to be discussed and to address the need for rehabilitation of victims. At the same time, there was significant opposition and open hostility to initiatives that related to attempts to establish the truth about the events 1965.

Abdurrahman Wahid Presidency

During his presidency Wahid apologized to the victims of the 1965 violence as the leader of the Nadhlatul Ulama organization⁵³. Wahid initiated several significant democratic political reforms during his short presidency, but he wanted a managed pace of reform⁵⁴. One of his proposed reforms⁵⁵ was his initiative to

⁵⁰ Munir was widely known as a human rights campaigner who believed in political action by people (Suh 2012). Munir was murdered in 2004. It is widely believed that the mastermind behind his murder were senior officials from the National Intelligence Agency (BIN) and that he was murdered because of his human rights advocacy. Information taken from the Commission for forced disappearances and victims of violence (KONTRAS) monitoring report on the murder trial of Munir. 17 November 2005.

⁵¹ "Penuntasan Kejahatan HAM Terbelenggu Kepentingan Politik." 2012. *Rimanews.com* July 30. <http://rimanews.com>.

⁵² Ad hoc human rights courts can only be established in cases where it can be demonstrated that human rights violations constitute an act of genocide or 'crimes against humanity' (Kerrigan, F. and Dalton, P. 2006).

⁵³ Nadhlatul Ulama is Indonesia's largest Islamic organization that claims 30 million members.

⁵⁴ Wahid initiated a process to restructure the military's command structure, which during the New Order had allowed the military institutional autonomy and political influence. Wahid also initiated a new approach to resolution of separatist conflicts in Papua and Aceh that were based on discussion and negotiation not on military repression (Aspinall 2010; Mietzner 2009a).

⁵⁵ Wahid proposed the repeal of this law for two principled reasons. Firstly that no institution can prohibit ideology because ideology is part of people's thinking. Secondly, because the truth about the events of October 1, 1965 needed to be reexamined (Budiawan 2004, 4).

repeal the laws banning communism⁵⁶. According to spokespeople from the National Awakening Party (PKB), such as the chairperson of the Central Leadership Committee (*Dewan Pimpinan Pusat*) of PKB, Matori Abdul Djali⁵⁷, this was part of an attempt to promote open (democratic) political and ideological discussion in society⁵⁸. While some PKB leaders claimed that the PKB had no party decision on the question of the repeal of the law, Matori stated that PKB had a single opinion on the repeal of the law because it was consistent with the PKB's platform to build a national system that was democratic and aspirative towards human rights⁵⁹. Wahid believed that ideological debate and political pluralism were critical in the democratization process (Zurbuchen 2005; Lane 2008; Robison and Hadiz 2004) and he inspired the educated youth of NU to reexamine NU's past in relation to 1965-66 (Budiawan 2004).

Abdurrahman Wahid's initiative to repeal the laws banning Marxism-Leninism during his presidency provoked significant public contestation over versions of the 1965 history. It was at this time that the defenders of New Order 1965 narrative started to make clear public statements about their opposition to a revisiting of this period of history. Parliamentary groups that were opposed to repealing the laws included the Indonesian national military (TNI) as well as Amien Rais' National Mandate Party (PAN), Golkar, and the United Development Party (PPP)⁶⁰.

While a significant group of NU and National Awakening Party (PKB) public figures and elected representatives supported President Wahid's initiative⁶¹, important Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) leaders such as Yusuf Hasyim, also President Abdurrahman Wahid's uncle, made public statements, that, NU could not support (the repeal) as they had been one of the key organizations that supported the introduction of the original law in 1966. The Chairperson of the national committee of the Nahdlatul Ulama, K.H Hasyim Muzadi, welcomed Wahid's initiation of reconciliation but rejected the repeal of the law saying that "we have to protect the poor (members

⁵⁶ This is known as the Tap MPRS that bans the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and the dissemination of communist or Marxist-Leninist ideas. It is referred to as Tap MPRS No. XXV/MPRS/1966.

⁵⁷ Also vice chairperson of the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) at the time.

⁵⁸ Hamdani, D., Asrori S.K. and Haryadi, R. 2000. "Dagang Politik Palu Arit." *Gatra* Nomor 21/VI, April 8. From: <http://www.library.ohiou.edu/indopubs/2000/04/13/0034.html>

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ Ditolak, Pencabutan Tap Soal PKI." 2003. *Suara Merdeka*. August 3. <http://suaramerdeka.com>.

⁶¹ Detail will be discussed later in this chapter

of) society so that they are not carried away by communist teachings” (writer’s translation⁶²).

The Survival of the 1965 Narrative

Despite the introduction of new democratic institutions after the fall of Suharto, and bold reform initiatives by president Wahid, the results of the contestation over power were that significant elements from the New Order regime finally emerged as key players in a reorganizing of power (Hadiz & Robison 2004; O’Rourke 2002; Heryanto 2006; Oppenheimer 2012; Zurbuchen 2005; Ryter 2009). In line with Cesarini and Hite’s thesis (2004) I have argued it is therefore these same New Order elements who have had significant control over the remaking of narratives about 1965.

Significant changes in structures of political power, or the removal of personnel from old authoritarian state structures, will be influenced by the capacity and success of alternative social forces (from outside of the previous authoritarian regime) in competing for power. Aspinall (2010) argues that alternatives to the broad coalition of elite forces that formed government in 1999 did exist⁶³ and there were key opportunities for more liberal reform to be carried out. This rested with the three central opposition figures of Wahid, Megawati and Rais. These figures could have acted more decisively to exclude significant sections of the old New Order elites but instead chose to make alliances with them⁶⁴.

⁶² “Hantu atau Dihantukan?” 2000. Tempo Magazine. 05/XXIX/3: April 9. <http://tempo.co.id>

⁶³ There is significant debate about the possibilities that did exist in 1998-2001 for more fundamental changes in the nature of power and economic, social and political organisation of society after the fall of Suharto. Lane (2007) argues that the role of ordinary people, in particular the urban poor of Jakarta could have been much more significant and could have provided the basis for a more radical leadership to struggle for more fundamental political reforms. However the potential leadership for such a decisive political change was weak and indecisive at critical moments (Aspinall 2010, Hadiz and Robison 2004) in some part due to the loss of historical knowledge and experience of the left as a result of the mass violence and incarceration of the left from 1965 (Lane 2008; Hadiz 2006).

⁶⁴ Aspinall (2010) describes the ease with which what he refers to as the ‘semi-opponents’ of the New Order transformed themselves into a coalition partner of their ‘erstwhile rulers’ after 1999. These same semi-oppositionists were the modernist and traditional Muslims and moderate Sukarnoist nationalists who allied themselves with or supported the military in 1965 and became part of the New Order system, albeit in subordinate positions. In the elections of 1999 they emerged in the political parties of the National Awakening Party (PKB), The Indonesian Democratic Party- Struggle (PDI-P), The National Mandate Party (PAN) and the United Development Party (PPP) with a collective vote of 64% of the total votes.

Wahid chose to make alliances with the Central Axis of Islamic parties⁶⁵, the military and the Habibie faction of Golkar (Aspinall 2010). This was despite the initiative by intellectuals and students to form a *reformasi* coalition built around the biggest of the old semi-oppositionist forces such as the PKB and PDI-P (Hadiz and Robison 2004), which was supported by the grass roots of these organizations. Reformers from the former New Order elite had gained control of the new democratic institutions of parliament and they were opposed to political mobilizations even of their own grass roots (Aspinall 2010).

Ultimately, Wahid's decision to ally himself with old authoritarian elite New Order elements, which included the military parliamentary fraction, to secure his presidency in 1999 had a significant effect on the political dynamic in Indonesia and his ability to carry through his democratic reforms initiatives. It created uncertainty about the position of the Indonesian authoritarian past and its democratic future (ibid). The consequences of Wahid's actions meant that he brought in New Order elites, both individuals and political forces, into the highest level of government where they could block genuine attempts to make democratic reform, for example, crucial ministries such as that would have influence on reform of the military were given to military figures. Aspinall (2010) argues that what may have been a period of dramatic transformation was wasted.

As Cesarini's (2004) thesis outlines, this confusion led to demoralization and demobilisation of non-elite democratic reform elements. The grass roots of parties like PKB and PDI-P indicated their willingness to mobilise in defence of Wahid and yet they were consistently directed not to mobilize. At the same time actions and demonstrations with clear political demands became smaller and more marginalized as the political space became narrower. The *reformasi* momentum and the political space that existed at the end of the Habibie presidency to push forward more significant political reforms dissipated and the non-elite reform elements became involved in debates and conflicts over Wahid, the character of his government and the tactics that should be employed (Aspinall 2010).

The reorganisation of power that did take place at a state level did not significantly challenge the previously existing economic, social and political order or many of the state institutions that had been built by the New Order (Hadiz and Robison

⁶⁵ The Central axis, initiated by Amien Rais, was formed as a coalition of Islamic Parties in 1999.

2004; Aspinall 2010). While this reorganization of power was not consolidated immediately, over time it became clear that many of the New Order state institutions and their personnel remained intact, and very significantly those related to the judicial system and the members of the judiciary itself (Robison & Hadiz 2004; Zurbuchen 2005, 15). Many of the personnel from New Order institutions and organisations still hold positions within state structures from the national down to the regional, and even the local level (Robison & Hadiz 2004; Van Klinken & Baker 2009; Ryter 2009). The ongoing political influence of the military has remained, in particular through its ability to maintain its regional command structure (McGregor 2007, 259; Mietzner 2009a).

While decentralization of the political system did take place, the extensive reach of Golkar's organization and other New Order institutions such as youth social Organisations (Ryter 2009) allowed this process to be organized through social networks down to the local level, in particular during the period of the Habibie caretaker presidency immediately after the fall of Suharto. Many of those who had benefited during the New Order regime and/or had participated directly in or had links to the 1965 violence, were able to make successful bids in the new structures that were established with a decentralization of power (Hadiz 2006; Oppenheimer 2012; van Klinken and Baker 2009, Mietzner 2009a).

It is here that we can explain why actors promoting alternative narratives to the New Order version of history of 1965 would be rejected by state institutions and government officials, in particular demands for a truth and reconciliation commission. The findings of a formal state investigation into the past could potentially challenge and undermine not only the myth that underpinned the legitimacy of the New Order regime in the past but also the legitimacy of those who had benefited most in the reorganization of the social, economic and political order of the post New Order state.

Reaffirming the New Order 1965 narrative

Cesarini and Hite conceptualise authoritarian legacies in three ways: as structures and institutions that are inherited from previous authoritarian regimes; the lingering power and influence of traditional and conservative groups; and as cultural or psychological manifestations of authoritarianism. Here we analyse

some cases of where and how the 1965 New Order narrative has been contested and defended since 1998.

Despite the introduction of several legal mechanisms for establishing the truth about the past and justice for victims of state violence there have been no significant results⁶⁶. While the Indonesian constitution has strong human rights provisions, the procedures for investigation and legal prosecution allow for organized political intervention to block concrete action on investigations into 1965 (McGregor 2012, 261; Kerrigan and Dalton 2006). The role of retired anti-communist military figures in government, including the President Yudhoyono⁶⁷, has been critical in the ongoing rejection of substantial steps to begin a reconciliation process.

A new school curriculum was introduced in 2004 before the end of the Megawati presidency (Sawitri 2006). Van Klinken argues that it was social pressure from parents and students accusing school teachers of lying about history, for example the history of Supersemar⁶⁸ and the PKI, that initially led the education minister appointed by Habibie to initiate a review of school curriculum (2005, 233-236). The new curriculum version of the 30th September movement stated that who was responsible for the movement and the killings of the six generals was uncertain. This curriculum was withdrawn in 2006, during the first Yudhoyono presidency (Sawitri 2006). Following this, the Attorney-General's office declared an official ban on fourteen school history text books in March 2007 and ordered that they be burnt⁶⁹. At least 30,000 books were subsequently burned. The official reason given by a spokesperson for the Attorney-General's intelligence department was

⁶⁶ In 1998 the National Human Rights Commission's (KOMNAS HAM) powers were widened to allow the establishment of ad hoc teams to investigate past cases of human rights abuses (Suh 2012). In 2000 under the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid, the Indonesian government passed Law no. 26 (Fergus Kerrigan & Paul Dalton 2006) which allowed for the formation of ad hoc human rights courts to deal with gross violations of human rights retrospectively, specifically acts of genocide and crimes against humanity. Since then only two ad hoc courts have been established. In 2004 under the presidency of Megawati the government passed Law no. 27 (Suh 2012) which provided a mandate for the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission. The law was subsequently repealed by the Constitutional Court in 2006 after declaring it unconstitutional (Sulistyanto, 2007, McGregor 2013).

⁶⁷ Susilo Bambang Yudhoyon was first elected as president in 2004 and is currently serving his second presidential term, which will end in 2014.

⁶⁸ Supersemar is the letter of 11 March 1966 signed by President Sukarno that supposedly provided the legal basis for Suharto to assume formal power (Baskara 2007).

⁶⁹ "Kejagung Segera Edarkan Larangan Buku Sejarah Kurikulum 2004." 2007. AntaraNews. March 13. <http://antaranews.com>.

that it was considered to “create a polemic and disturb public order”⁷⁰. A criminal investigation into the authors of the banned textbooks was also ordered (Forbes 2007). Education department staff involved in developing the revised 2004 curriculum were interrogated by the Attorney-General’s office, the state intelligence office (BIN) and the police. A historian with the Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Asvi Warman Adam, said the AGO was trying to intimidate the people who were trying to understand what really happened in 1965 and the subsequent political events leading to Soeharto's rise to power (Sawitri 2006).

In 2007 the Attorney General issued a formal decree or *surat keputusan* that required all history books to again refer to the 30th September Movement as 30th September Movement / Indonesian Communist Party (G30S/PKI). Publications that did not do so must be burnt (Roosa 2008, XV). This decision effectively provided legal support for the ongoing defence of and use of the New Order 1965 narrative.

Museums and public institutions that hold representations about 1965 in particular remain the same (McGregor 2007). These include the Crocodile Hole (*Lubang Buaya*) monument and the PKI treason museum in Jakarta.

Organisations and individuals that attempted to facilitate public discussions about alternative versions of history faced the ongoing threat of and actual repression and violence either from state institutions or civil militias. In March 2001, a public ceremony to bury the recovered remains of victims from 1965 according to cultural and religious practice, in Kaloran, Central Java, was attacked by ‘Islamic groups’. According to McGregor’s (2012, 248) analysis of those involved in initiating the attacks, it was the military that tried to provoke the conservative or hard-line factions of the PPP and the PKB to participate in the action and to intimidate members of the NU Ansor youth group from supporting the group carrying out the ceremony⁷¹.

The political conditions surrounding the end of the Suharto dictatorship provided an opportunity to make significant social changes including the remaking of

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ An ANSOR youth leader said that the majority of demonstrators came from the Holy War Fighters (Laskar Jihad) in Yogyakarta⁷¹. Had these ceremonies been carried out, this would have symbolically undermined the myth of the victims as godless (communist) atheists and returned their ‘human’ identities as people who believed in god (McGregor 2012).

'myths' about the past. Institutional mechanisms were introduced that allowed for formal challenges to the narrative. However the unwillingness of the reform oriented semi-opposition elites to make tactical alliances with non-elite reform elements, to force more substantial reforms in the first few years of *reformasi*, allowed the conservative New Order elites to in large part control the reform process and minimise democratic reforms that would challenge their own power. The election of the government led by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in 2004 marked a turning point in the contestation of the history of 1965. It marked the beginning of the winding back of legal and other reforms that had been initiated since 1998, in particular the cancellation of legislation to establish a commission for truth and reconciliation in 2006. Since 1998 only two ad hoc courts have been constituted, to investigate the case of referendum violence in East Timor in 1999 (Suh 2012, 158) and the Tanjung Priok killings in 1984 (Sulistiyanto 2007) and none have been established during the Yudhoyono presidency. By 2007 it was clear that the New Order categories of political 'inclusion' and 'exclusion', that specifically exclude 'godless' communists, have remained intact within state institutions and formal discourses. Despite the formal removal of the 'ex-political prisoner' status on their national identity cards in 2004, the communist stigma against these former political prisoners and their families remains pervasive (Conroe 2012; Budiawan 2004).

Ten years after the fall of Suharto the New Order narrative about 1965 had survived and been reinforced through institutional legal forums (ongoing ban on communism and limited legal avenues for challenges) as well as through formal discourses such as school history curriculum and state museums. While fear of punitive actions (McGregor 2013) remains one of the motivations for the defence of the New Order 1965 narrative, the narrative continues to serve one of the dominant functions that it did for the New Order regime in underpinning legitimacy for the state and those who hold power. In maintaining the New Order anti-communist ideology the state retains an ideological defence for political repression and encourages the culture of impunity that has existed since 1965. It supports the continued denial of the historical lexicon of political organization and resistance for the classes and social groups that were socially, politically and economically disenfranchised in the power relations that were established under

the New Order and that in large part remain disenfranchised today. These social classes, for example urban and rural poor, are those most in need of alternative historical and political perspectives and without them they are often disorganized or attracted to sectarian organisations⁷².

⁷² for example conservative/radical Islam or gangs based on ethnic ties.

Chapter Four

History that will not go away

I have argued that the character of the contestation over the New Order historical narrative about 1965 that existed immediately after the fall of Suharto was significantly linked to the nature of the political space that existed for broader democratic struggles and discourses about the shape that a new democratic society could take. However the managed transition to a post-authoritarian state by New Order semi-opposition elites in the first three years of *reformasi* resulted in a failure to take action on any of these political demands and there was no official change in the New Order narrative about 1965.

The narrowing of the political space, particularly after the end of the Wahid presidency, saw a narrowing of political options for seeking truth and justice for the victims of 1965 and for changes to the official narrative. The narrowing of the political space for dissent and opposition combined with the general public consciousness and understanding of communism, the PKI and the 30th September movement (Heryanto 2006), make it difficult today to openly challenge the official narrative. Some social forces may oppose any revisiting of the past because they themselves have only ever known the New Order version of history and the PKI. However, there are social forces that remain in power, that are opposed to a revisiting of the narrative as it potentially challenges their economic and social interests and their political legitimacy and threatens some of them with the possibility of punitive actions (Hadiz 2006). State institutions at a national level, such as courts and the judiciary, are staffed by people who have in many cases have defended these same interests.

In post-authoritarian states, efforts to deal with the past as well as the broader democratization process are shaped by country specific historical conditions and developments. Dealing with the past is shaped by the legacies of authoritarian rule and the political, institutional and legal factors that influence the development of the post-authoritarian state (Barahona de Brito 2001, 158). Like many countries, where the past remains a source of social conflict in the aftermath of mass violence in a post-authoritarian state, one of the political options available for contestation

over historical narratives about the past is through human rights struggles (Barahona de Brito 2001, 158). The renewal of public contestation over the 1965 narrative since early 2012 is framed more explicitly within the framework of human rights discourse. It is not significantly related to, nor dependent upon, discourses regarding broader democratic reforms, including civil rights.⁷³ This contestation has reemerged largely due to the work of the KOMNAS HAM and human rights and survivor organizations.

Chapter four analyses some factors stimulating this renewed contestation and the actors engaged in the contestation. It analyses the significance of the Komnas HAM report that was released in July 2012 and the response of other state institutions and government officials to its release. This analysis is then used to draw some conclusions about the nature of government, political institutions and the reforms that have been made under the Yudhoyono led government.

The Truth is Told: KOMNAS HAM Breaks Ranks

After the repeal of the Law 27. in 2006, the legal options for initiation of investigations into the crimes of mass violence that occurred in the past were narrowed⁷⁴. Investigations by the National Commission for Human Rights (*Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia - KOMNAS HAM*) into the mass violence of 1965 began in 2008 after years of lobbying by survivors and human rights groups⁷⁵. That this investigation was commenced at all is significant given that *KOMNAS HAM* is funded by the central government. However while legal provisions for responding to human rights exist, there are significant deficiencies and ambiguities within the laws themselves that make it easier for conservative officials to limit the implementation of laws. Any legal action that may arise from the investigations carried out by *KOMNAS HAM* are dependent on the Attorney-General's response, or

⁷³ In private discussions with *Taman 65*, an NGO in Bali that does work on reconciliation over 1965 and is part of the National Coalition for Justice and Truth (KKPK) in July 2013, one representative explained that their organization has taken a consciously cultural approach to their campaigns and lobbying.

⁷⁴ The DPR or the Attorney-General have the power to establish an ad hoc human rights court. Both require evidence to establish that acts of 'genocide' or gross violations of human rights have occurred. The definitions are specific and it must be demonstrated that the human rights violations fit the above definitions. Details of the legal human rights mechanisms that exist and the problems with them can be found in Kerrigan and Dalton (2006).

⁷⁵ Early attempts to lobby the KOMNAS HAM to investigate cases from 1965-66 in 2000-2001 failed. KOMNAS HAM argued that the ban on communism would not allow them to investigate (McGregor 2012).

the DPR may initiate an ad hoc court if it agrees that it is warranted (McGregor 2012, 260; Kerrigan and Dalton 2006).

While KOMNAS HAM is a legally independent body, it was created by and is funded by the Indonesian state to carry out a range of functions in line with government legislation⁷⁶. Their mandate for activities include, research and studies on legal instruments, legislation, fieldwork and national comparative studies of human rights.⁷⁷ What it does not have are legal powers to arrest, detain or put on trial people accused of human rights violations⁷⁸. Constitutionally they may only make recommendations to the president, the Attorney-General's Office and the People's Representative Council (DPR) based on their investigations (Suh 2012).

KOMNAS HAM's report on the results of the investigation into the gross violation of human rights in the events of 1965-66 took four years to complete (KOMNAS HAM 2012, 2). The KOMNAS HAM report states that nine separate forms of human rights violations took place during the mass violence of 1965-66 including murder, extermination, slavery, eviction or the forced removal of citizens, deprivation of liberty and other arbitrary forms of deprivation of freedoms, torture, rape, persecution and forced disappearances. In addition they found that victims (survivors) and their families had experienced inter-generational suffering in the form of discriminatory acts in relation to civil and political rights, as well as their economic, social and cultural rights (KOMNAS HAM 2012, 1).

The report states that the violent actions taken were assessed as being in 'the form of a military operation to annihilate a movement that was referred to by military and civilian officials as a 'subversive movement'. The report alleges that 'crimes against humanity' were carried out and that they were 'related to an attack aimed at the civilian population'. It states that acts of mass violence 'were not isolated incidents' but rather were related to and took the form of 'part of a series of (an overall) attacks that was aimed at members and sympathisers of the PKI'. The attacks were widespread and systematic and the crimes were collective in nature (ibid, 15-16).

⁷⁶ It fits within the traditional democratic frame of a third arm oversight institution.

⁷⁷ Komnas ham website – profile – about the komnas ham. see <http://www.komnasham.go.id/profil-6/tentang-komnas-ham>

⁷⁸ This is in contrast to the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) that has powers to detain people, extensive powers to investigate claims of corruption and the ability to request the assistance of other state institutions. <http://kpk.go.id/id/tentang-kpk/fungsi-dan-tugas>

The time frames of the investigation go beyond the immediate 1965-66 period and include until 'at least late 1978' (ibid, 24) when orders were given to begin the release en masse of a majority of political prisoners imprisoned since the early period of violence. The report clarifies the nature of the events, that is, that they were a planned and organized campaign by the military under the direction of the Operational Command for the Restoration of Security and Order (*Komando Operasi pemulihan keamanan dan ketertiban KOPKAMTIB*) to annihilate the PKI and its sympathizers. The report does not indicate in any way that the NU as an organization, was responsible⁷⁹ for the campaign against the PKI.

The report addresses directly the question of responsibility for the crimes and outlines that there are several types of criminal responsibility that can be identified in these cases. They are *individual criminal responsibility*, *direct criminal responsibility* and *imputed criminal responsibility*, which includes *command responsibility* (ibid, 22). The report goes further by naming those people responsible by referring to their structural positions within the formal structures of the military and state institutions within specific time frames that played a part in the military operation to annihilate the PKI. These include in the first instance, Suharto as commanding officer of KOPKAMTIB, responsible for the policy decision. It mentions the commanding officers of specific military area commands (*Pangdam*) that hold duty of control towards their troops and regional security commanders (*Penganda*) (Ibid, 24-25) This would include Lieutenant General Sarwo Edhie Wibowo⁸⁰ as the commanding officer of the RPKAD at the time.

The report's major significance is in the fact that for the first time, a state institution recognizes and attributes blame for crimes against humanity committed by the Indonesian national military during 1965-66. It is in this context that we can understand the response from various political figures and civic organizations that have rejected any further action and investigations on this issue. This report provides official evidence from a legal state institution that the 'myth' that has been promoted about the PKI and the historical events of 1965 are a lie.

⁷⁹ The myth promoted by the New Order about the nature of the violence is that much of it was spontaneous based on deep horizontal social conflicts. The NU and its youth organization played a significant role in carrying out the violence, especially in East Java, however the KOMNAS HAM report clarifies that the responsibility for the violence was with the military command.

⁸⁰ Sarwo Edhie Wibowo is President Yudhoyono's father in law.

What is at stake is not only the potential punitive actions that could arise from such an investigation but a challenge to the legitimacy of the previous New Order regime and those who became partners not only in the mass violence of the past but in the creation of the New Order state itself. It challenges the legitimacy of many people who hold positions within today's state bureaucracy including the courts, the legislature and the executive today, as many were formerly part of the New Order structures of state bureaucracy and the political system.

Since the appointment of the new KOMNAS HAM commissioners in October 2012 the commission has experienced internal conflict⁸¹. This conflict emerged after the new chairperson, Otto Nur Abdullah, was elected in November 2012. He made public statements when he was first appointed that he would focus on pursuing two cases of gross violation of human rights in Aceh, the 1965 report as well as the investigation in to the Lapindo mud flows (Aritonang 2012b)⁸². All of these issues touch sensitive nerves for key political actors likely to be nominating as presidential candidates in 2014 including Prabowo Subianto, Wiranto and Aburizal Bakrie⁸³. There is speculation that this conflict has been an attempt to interfere in the Commission for politically motivated reasons (Aritonang 2013) through direct dealings between some KOMNAS HAM commissioners and powerful individuals who were linked to human rights abuses⁸⁴.

Renewal of Contestation

Despite the failure to undermine the New Order narrative about 1965 in the first ten years of Indonesia's new democracy, human rights and survivors' organizations have continued to promote investigations into the past. After the repeal of legislation in 2006 that would establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the majority of human rights groups including those that focus particularly on the mass violence of 1965, organized a united forum in 2008 under

⁸¹ "NGOs Call Komnas HAM Turnover Suspicious." 2013. Jakarta Post. February 9. <http://thejakartapost.com>

⁸² A mudflow began in 2006 that has caused massive damage to communities in East Java is believed to have been caused by the actions of a Bakrie company (Harsaputra 2013).

⁸³ Prabowo and Wiranto are former TNI generals implicated in several cases of gross violations of human rights that occurred under their command. Aburizal Bakrie is the chairperson of the Golkar party and one of Indonesia's wealthiest men.

⁸⁴ "Kontras report Komnas HAM to Ombudsman." 2013. Jakarta Post. April 9.

the umbrella of the Coalition for Justice and Truth Finding (KKPK)⁸⁵. Its central mandate is to organize advocacy for the formulation of legislation for a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Its establishment was in direct response to the repeal of the truth and reconciliation legislation in 2006. While KKPK is not exclusively focused on the mass violence in 1965, its member organizations are representative of the diversity of organizations that campaign and promote human rights and justice for victims of human rights violations in Indonesia in the past and in the present.

Suh (2012) argues that a tradition of human rights campaigning existed in Indonesia prior to the fall of Suharto and that this was significant in the post Suharto period. Institutional mechanisms already existed and Indonesian human rights groups had influence on the debates about new human rights mechanisms that were required, recognizing the new political context that now existed. Despite the repeal of the laws for establishing a truth and reconciliation commission in 2006 and the very limited ability to make use of new institutions such as ad hoc human rights courts in the post Suharto era, it was human rights organizations that were significant in ensuring that these mechanisms were established in the first place (Suh 2012). In the recent contestation they have been advocates working at the grass-roots level promoting the year of truth and reconciliation in 2013 and holding public hearings to promote community education about human rights violations in Indonesia in the past and the present.⁸⁶ These organizations also work collaboratively with international institutions to maintain ongoing internal and external pressure on the Indonesian government in relation to its human rights record.

Unlike the early period of *reformasi*, figures from elite politics that support discussions about alternative narratives are much more narrow. There are few government officials or holders of public office who publicly support the right to contest the official 1965 narrative. Elected officials (outside of KOMNAS HAM) that have made public statements about the right to freedom of belief (including

⁸⁵ These include the following Non-Government Organisations: Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence (*Kontras*), Asia Justice and Rights (*AJAR*), The Institute for Social Study and Advocacy, (Elsam), Association of the Families of the Disappeared Indonesia (IKOHI), and Jakarta Legal Aid Institute (LBH Jakarta). Other organizations include those mentioned previously in footnote 45.

⁸⁶ See KKPK website. <http://kkpk.org>

communism) and the need to discuss openly the history of 1965 include PDI-P members Pramono Anung⁸⁷ and Eva Kusuma Sundari⁸⁸.

Two KOMNAS HAM commissioners who were part of the 1965 investigative team from 2008-2012 have emerged as public figures in the public contestation. Nur Kholis presided as the head of the ad hoc investigation into the events of 1965. On release of the report he reminded the government that there are other non-judicial methods to seek justice for the victims/survivors through a truth and reconciliation commission as provided by human rights court law (Achmad and Rami 2012). He was re-elected as a commissioner for 2012-2017.

Yosep Stanley Adi Prasetyo a former member of the Alliance of Indonesian Journalists (AJI) and a human rights advocate during the Suharto era, was a commissioner of the KOMNAS HAM for the period 2007-2012. Stanley has been outspoken in reminding the government that victims should have their full legal and civil rights rehabilitated. In many cases victims lost not only their liberty or their lives, but their land was seized and they were denied the right to be productive members of society (Dwyer and Santikarma 2007).

Those defending the official narrative of 1965 in the most recent contestation have some noticeable differences. Most significantly the more liberal reform elements within the PBNU and PKB that were prominent during the Wahid presidency have been sidelined. In the recent contestation those who opposed the recommendations of the KOMNAS HAM report included generals from the Indonesian military (ABRI/TNI)⁸⁹, prominent government officials and their institutions, the National Executive Committee of *Nadhlatul Ulama* (PBNU)⁹⁰, NU Youth Organisation *Ansor* (*Gerakan Pemuda Ansor*), NU Youth Militia *Banser*⁹¹,

⁸⁷ Vice-chief of the National People's representative Council (DPR) and the head of the Indonesian Democratic Party of struggle (PDI-P) parliamentary fraction.

⁸⁸ PDIP member of the House of Representatives (DPR) commission three, which oversees law and human rights.

⁸⁹ These include the PEPABRI (retired armed forces officers' organisation) and the Forum for the Sons and Daughters of the Pensioners of the Indonesian Armed Forces (FKPPI) (Siswadi 2012).

⁹⁰ On the 15 August 2012 in an activity referred to as the declaration of beware of the revival of the PKI held at the central office of the PBNU the vice-chairperson of the PBNU, As'ad Said Ali, said that Former president Gus Dur had given space to the restoration of the rights of the descendents of PKI (members) and therefore an apology was not necessary (Republika August 16 2012). As'ad Said Ali is a former official in the National Intelligence Agency Badan inteligen Negara (BIN).

⁹¹ NU youth wings were mobilized during 1965-66 to carry out the mass violence, particularly but not exclusively in East Java and to a lesser extent in Central Java.

Pancasila Youth (*Pemuda Pancasila*)⁹², radical Islamic groups, explicitly anti-communist groups⁹³ and the GOLKAR party,⁹⁴ the principal political organisation of the New Order era.

On 4 August 2012 a declaration of opposition to an official presidential apology was made in the form of a signed petition in Bandung. Those who signed the declaration included Golkar politicians, Sons and Daughters of the Pensioners of the Indonesian Armed Forces (FKPPI), the *Pancasila* youth organisation and the Indonesian clerics council (MUI) (Siswadi 2012). Their statement rejected a presidential apology and the formation of ad hoc human rights courts.

On the 15 December 2012, Major-General Hardiono Saroso, commanding officer of the *Diponegoro* regional army command (Panglima Kodam IV/Diponegoro), made a public statement that they believed the PKI was being resurrected and that they would hunt them down and kill them (Sodiq 2013). There was no reaction in the form of public statements by government officials in response to the public statements of a general declaring his intent to hunt down and kill Indonesian citizens on the basis that they were communists.

The vice-chairperson of the People's representative Council (DPR) Priyo Budi Santoso, stated that the findings in the KOMNAS HAM report should not be reported to the public. The Commission for the disappeared and victims of violence KONTRAS, responded that Priyo made such a statement because he was from Golkar, the party that during the New Order era contributed to many cases of human rights violations (Revianur 2012).

Despite the KOMNAS HAM's report finding that the NU did not have active responsibility for the mass violence, the Executive Board of the NU made a

⁹² Oppenheimer's film *Jagal- the Act of Killing* outlines the role of the *Pemuda Pancasila* in the mass killings in North Sumatera.

⁹³ The military has systematically organized and mobilized gangs or organized militias to carry out mass violence throughout the Suharto era and since the beginning of reformasi (O'Rourke 2002, 346, 400).

⁹⁴ GOLKAR was the principal political organization used by Suharto to manage many aspects of the dictatorships' organisations. Organised explicitly as a 'functional group' (Golongan Karya – Golkar) not a political party it was the main vehicle for obtaining access to and becoming part of the 'in-group' of the Suharto regime. Being active gave opportunities to receive political, economic or social privileges. During the Habibie presidency, Habibie used the structures of Golkar right down to the local level to mobilize political support. By offering the release of certain central government powers to the regions he was able to effectively mobilize political support for his presidency which was aimed at providing those whose power was threatened to regroup and reorganise themselves in a new power sharing arrangement.

statement saying that they would forget what the PKI was suspected of having done in 1965 and that they hoped that all parties could forget (the past) and look to the future (Wahyu 2013). They rejected the establishment of any ad hoc human rights courts, any formal apology to the victims of mass violence and they supported the ongoing ban on communism. The Nahdatul Ulama Executive Board (PBNU) statements were supported by 23 ‘mass organizations’ including the retired Indonesian national army officers’ corp. These statements were issued by the vice-chairperson of the *Pengurus Besar Nahlatul Ulama* (PBNU), himself a former vice-chairperson of the national intelligence agency (BIN) of Indonesia⁹⁵.

The current chairperson of the PBNU is former-President Wahid’s uncle, who was in a minority within the NU leadership at the time of Abdurrahman Wahid’s presidency, but now is the representative voice of NU as the reformer and liberal elements have been sidelined. Chairperson of the *Ansor* youth movement, Nusron Wahid, made a statement that while they encouraged efforts for reconciliation they did not support a state apology being made⁹⁶. Nusron Wahid is also a Golkar party representative in the People’s Representative Council (DPR).

Key ministers and government officials such as the Attorney General and the minister for Politics, Law and Security, that have significant influence on the procedural aspects of responding to KOMNAS HAM’s report have been openly hostile to the report. In October 2012⁹⁷ the Attorney General made a press statement that they had rejected the report from KOMNAS HAM on the grounds that it was not complete. On 1 October 2012 the coordinating Minister for Politics, Law and Security, Djoko Suyanto, said that the government did not need to apologise for the tragic murders of thousands of PKI members and sympathizers in 1965 (Ira Guslina Sufa 2012). Djoko said that these murders had to be seen as a form of defence of the state because at that time there were great protests that threatened security and stability. He said that ‘we have to understand 1965 through the lens of 1965’. ‘This incident was beneficial’ he said. ‘If it didn’t happen our country wouldn’t be like it is now’ (ibid).

⁹⁵ At the time of his appointment to the leadership of PBNU in 2010, media agencies reported that there were rumours that his appointment had been encouraged by those in power and could be seen as a sign of state intervention in the NU (Purwoko 2010).

⁹⁶ “Apology to 1965 Purge Victims not Necessary: GP Ansor”. 2012. *Jakarta Post*. August 15.

⁹⁷ “AGO rebuff of KOMNAS HAM Report a Blow to Human Rights”. 2012. *Jakarta Post*. November 12.

These statements arguably clarify in an explicit way the actual position of many if not the majority in power and in government positions of strategic influence. A member of the DPR from the Justice and Prosperity Party (PKS) from Aceh, Nasir Djamil, said that the lack of will to respond to the KOMNAS HAM report about the mass violence of 1965-66 was from all parties, particularly the government. In his opinion, everyone is held hostage to the political interests of their respective parties with the result that DPR members are not free (to act independently)⁹⁸.

Presidential Apology

Prior to the release of the KOMNAS HAM's report, new momentum had already emerged in the controversy over how to deal with human rights violations that occurred in the past including 1965. One explanation for this was that President Yudhoyono was concerned about his poor track record on human rights (McGregor 2013) and that he hoped to leave a more positive legacy. In April 2012, Albert Hasibuan, a member of the Presidential Advisory Council for President Yudhoyono announced that the president was considering making an apology to the victims of the 1965-66 violence (Pramudatama 2012). An apology was considered to be a realistic response to cases of human rights violation in the past as it did not require long legal processes. Human Rights organizations were positive about the initiative but critical also, saying that what was required was disclosure of the truth of past events. However an official apology remains politically highly sensitive and in 2013 any official reference to a state apology has largely disappeared from public discourse (McGregor 2013; Hatley 2013)⁹⁹.

A Jakarta Post (30 September 2013) editorial stated that President Yudhoyono is unlikely to make an apology and that there is still general apathy over 1965. It argues that this is not surprising given that those linked to the '1960s witch-hunt are still influential'. This view was substantiated in early November when it was announced that President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) had agreed that Lieutenant General Sarwo Edhie Wibowo should be made a national hero in 2014. Sarwo Edhie was the military officer responsible for leading the command of the

⁹⁸ "Penuntasan Kejahatan HAM Terbelenggu Kepentingan Politik," 2012. *Rimanews*. July 30. <http://rimanews.com>.

⁹⁹ It should be noted that KOMNAS HAM clearly pointed to Yudhoyono's father-in-law, Sarwo Edhie Wibowo, as one of those responsible for the mass violence in 1965 in his position as Commander of the RPKAD.

(RPKAD) Special Forces that organized the mass killings across Indonesia in 1965-66. He is specifically mentioned as holding responsibility for gross violations of human rights in the KOMNAS HAM report released in July 2012. Despite the unresolved status of the KOMNAS HAM report on 1965, the government's decision to appoint Sarwo Edhie as a national hero, demonstrates clear support for this general's actions in the mass killings in 1965-66. It can be argued that this step by the Yudhoyono government provides a clear signal that the Minister for Politics, Law and Security's comments in October 2012 were not isolated but in fact represent the actual position of the current government on the question of 1965.

Talking About the Past: New Hopes and New Fears

Shortly after the media debate provoked by the release of the KOMNAS HAM report, a new 'incident' provoked a fresh round of debate. A film entitled *Jagal – The Act of Killing* was screened for the first time in Colorado on August 31 2012. The film tells a story about some gangsters in Medan, the capital city of North Sumatera, who in 1965, under the tutelage of the military, became the local 'butchers' (*Jagal*) of PKI members and sympathizers. *The Act of killing* has an ideological, a political purpose. In the first instance to turn on its head what is maintained institutionally as a political truth – that the PKI victims were barbarians and that the mass murderers were heroes, and then to explain that the real barbarians are still in power ¹⁰⁰.

Shortly after its first international release a new facebook page emerged with the same name that provided a forum for reporting on and discussing screenings of the film that were taking place inside Indonesia itself. These screenings were almost all covert. Contact could be made through facebook or an email address to discuss organizing screenings or to get information about screenings taking place in different locations across Indonesia. In Malang the venue for a screening

¹⁰⁰ The purpose of the film, in the director's own words is: "For Indonesians old enough to remember the genocide, the film makes it impossible to continue denying what everybody in that generation already knows. For Indonesians too young to remember the genocide, but who grew up during the Suharto dictatorship, and who remember the anti-communist propaganda, the film is the nail in the coffin of the official history. For younger Indonesians who do not remember the Suharto dictatorship, the film confirms the general sense that there is something rotten in Indonesia's fledgling democracy, something that prevents the supposedly democratic institutions from expressing the popular will. Moreover, the film reveals the source of the problem: terror and corruption, and it shows how both have their roots in impunity for a genocide that has, grotesquely, been celebrated." (Melvin 2013)

attracted the attention of police and Brimob¹⁰¹ officials. The screening had to be cancelled as local organizers were confused and intimidated¹⁰². In another case members of Pemuda Pancasila attempted to shut down a screening but were subsequently convinced to have discussion about the film and the events that it portrayed (Hatley 2013).

Some who have watched the film think that the knowledge about alternative versions of history is important. But some are also concerned that open discussion may provoke renewed conflict. Members of the Garden of '65 Community (*Komunitas Taman 65*), say that there are real fears that widespread viewings of the film could stir up anger and reprisals from younger members of survivors' families and a new conflict with paramilitary groups¹⁰³. *Komunitas Taman 65* member Tks said that "I do worry that there may be a new conflict. After Suharto's 'New Order' collapsed we thought (the perpetrators) would be found guilty" (Irvine 2013). Until now of course the culture of impunity remains strong, as the perpetrators have never been made accountable.

These fears are well founded. In early October 2013 a group of families of the survivors of 1965 gathered for a social meeting in Jogjakarta. Their gathering was attacked by members of the Indonesian Anti-Communist Front (Front Anti-Komunis Indonesia - FAKI). Despite several reports that people were taken to hospital after suffering injuries from the attacks, the police made statements that no one had been injured. The FAKI also staged a demonstration outside of the Legal Aid Institute office in Jogjakarta demanding that communists cannot be defended by the organization and that they would kill communists (Perdani and Saragih 2013; Syaifullah 2013).

While there have been significant obstacles to making the film broadly available inside Indonesia it should be acknowledged that the number of people actively seeking out the film has not been as widespread as some may have imagined. Ariel Heryanto (2012) was originally cautiously optimistic about the possible Indonesian public response to the film, however in August at a conference in Melbourne he reflected that Indonesian's lack of reaction (to the film) is because

¹⁰¹ Brimob is the Indonesian elite military squad.

¹⁰² Reported by film screening organizers on Jagal official Facebook page (February 18 2013).

¹⁰³ Discussion with Taman 65 members in Bali 2 July 2013.

news about gangsterism, criminal boasting and impunity is all too common in Indonesia (Indrasafitri 2013).

In 2013 there has been some international pressure to focus attention on Indonesia's human rights record in the past, particularly from the UNHRC (Aritonang 2013b). In October 2013 KOMNAS HAM and the Attorney General's Office agreed to set up a joint investigation team to review and follow up on KOMNAS HAM's findings about gross human rights violations committed in the 1965 mass violence (ibid). This decision followed a United Nations Human Rights Commission recommendation made during the International Convention on civil and political rights meeting in Geneva in July 2013. The UN agency urged the Indonesian government to resolve the deadlock between the KOMNAS HAM and the Attorney General's Office. However British, US and Australian governments in particular, who overtly and covertly supported the actions of Suharto in directing the mass violence and in seizing power before the PKI was able to do so, are most likely to retain their historical silence (Reuter 2013; Evans 2001).

Democratic Stagnation

During the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono presidency the political space that had opened up in the first few years of reformasi has narrowed. The actions taken by the Yudhoyono government in relation to the narrative specifically or the truth about the events of 1965 indicate a conservative shift from previous governments and from Wahid's government in particular. Not only in relation to the myth but more broadly in terms of the democratic agenda that promotes open ideological debate and a revisiting of the truth of past historical events. The anti-communist narrative is still used to politically discredit genuine democratic claims by ordinary citizens such as the Pluit residents in Jakarta who were accused by the Vice-Governor Ahok of acting like 'communists' when they disagreed with government plans that would result in them losing their homes (Rimadi 2013).

The military remains strong having significant independent financial interests as well as retaining their territorial command system that mirrors the civilian government down to the village level (Mietzner 2009a). Hard line anti-communist and Islamic organisations continue to organize and intimidate human rights and victims' organizations and there is evidence that these organizations are often

linked to military interests or are implicitly supported by the police (Mietzner 2009a; O'Rourke 2002).

In the same vein, laws relating to national elections have been reviewed several times since 1999 and each review has made it more difficult for political parties to participate in elections and to gain seats. Political parties require enormous financial resources to gain access to the formal political arena, that is, to be eligible to stand candidates or to obtain adequate minimum votes to secure a seat in parliament (Freedomhouse 2013). This makes it almost impossible for local and regional candidates to participate or to form their own representative parties or for groups with limited financial resources to participate as candidates in the electoral process. The need to obtain support backing from one of the major electoral political parties requires candidates to submit to the dictates of the various political party machines. Money politics is now dominant in ordinary people's decision-making process when it comes to choosing electoral candidates. This is in contrast to 'aliran' politics or traditional organizational affiliations that were more dominant in people's decision making in 1999 and 2004 elections (Aspinall 2010b).

In July 2013 a revision to the mass (civil society) organizations legislation (UU Ormas) was passed. Prior to its passing it was criticized by many civil rights organizations as providing the state with the opportunity restrict political freedoms. The United Nations Human rights Commission quickly recommended that the legislation be repealed after it was passed on the grounds that it was in conflict with the covenant on political and civil rights (Firdaus 2013). Mietzner (2012) argues that there has been consistent action from civil society responding to attempts to roll back democratic reforms by the current government in relation to corruption, electoral reform and protection of minority rights. He argues that it has been the resistance coming from civil society that has resulted in democratic stagnation rather than democratic reversal in Indonesia.

The renewal of public contestation over the 1965 narrative since early 2012, framed more explicitly within the framework of human rights, reflects the narrowing of political options for public contestation. The defence of the New Order narrative about 1965 is indicative of a powerful social and political elite with vested interests in maintaining the narrative. The current government is

largely dominated by conservative ex-New Order elites and the more liberal reform elements have been marginalized. There are no parties in government that explicitly support the pursuit of a revisiting of the past. Ministers and public officials appointed by SBY to a range of state agencies and institutions are actively hostile to alternative versions to the New Order 1965 history.

The failure to make changes in the official narrative has taken place in the context of the retreat and demoralization of the majority of elements of civil society that actively mobilized for democratic reforms in the early period of *reformasi*.

Organisations or individuals that challenge the political program of those in power by challenging the 1965 narrative are suppressed or intimidated through the use of anti-communist ideology or by force. Far-reaching democratic reforms including the right to hold different ideological views or defence of some basic democratic rights by the state, such as freedom of thought and organization, appear to not yet be possible in Indonesia.

Chapter Five

Politics of the Past: Changes and Continuities

Political Change and Dealing with the Past

In periods of political change (transitions) from authoritarian regimes to more democratic political regimes, two broad kinds of change processes are identified (Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez & Aguilar 2001). Changes that occur as the result of a collapse of an old regime or changes that take the form of negotiated transitions between an incoming democratic elite and elites from the old regime. Indonesia experienced a negotiated transition. Arguably it is because of this negotiated transition that Indonesia has not embarked upon far-reaching government sponsored efforts to deal with its authoritarian past in its first fifteen years of democratic rule.

Significant efforts to deal with the past in the early period of *reformasi* emerged in large part through unofficial efforts such as campaigns by victims' and human rights organisations. Where official initiatives were made they were more often than not stymied due to the position of the old elites in managing the processes of 'democratic' transition. Official 'transitional policies' that dealt with the past, that were initiated by the Habibie or Wahid governments, were largely quashed within the first term of the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono led government. In this instance Indonesia joins a long list of nations, such as the Philippines or Cambodia, that have experienced significant political changes at the end of a dictatorship, yet have not implemented any significant process of accountability for mass violence and repression in the past (Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez & Aguilar 2001, 9-10).

This thesis is not concerned with the literature on transition types or forms of accountability but rather with the function or purpose of authoritarian historical narrative as a legacy of an authoritarian regime. At the same time the literature on transitions does address the question of processes of accountability (or truth and justice seeking) and a study of the nature of the democracy that develops (or not) in a post-authoritarian state. The key variable for the success or not of truth and

justice seeking measures, including the revisiting of official historical narratives about the past, seems to rest with the relative strength of the pro-reform elements (from the moderates to the radicals) that emerge from the old regime and the authoritarian elites that participate in these transitions. It is also significantly influenced by the choices of political alliances that are made in processes of democratic change.

Przeworski argues that legacies of dictatorships are difficult to resolve in cases where transitions are negotiated by old elites. He identifies the crucial element as being who controls the repressive apparatus during a transition and the attitude of the armed forces to the previous regime (in Barahona de Brito 1991, 67). In Indonesia's case the military have retained much of their privileged political and economic status since 1998, through their regional command structure and independent financial means.

The results of such a managed 'democratic' change have been, like in many Latin American democracies, a situation of 'unrule of law' that results in the exclusion of vast sectors from the benefits of democracy (Barahona de Brito, Gonzalez-Enriquez & Aguilar 2001, 30). There is a lack of control of elected representatives and state officials and the form of politics favours powerful economic interest groups and tends to limit the civil liberties of the majority. Restrictions on the democratic rights of some citizens or restricted notions of citizenship passed on from previous authoritarian regimes indicate the non-democratic values of the old elite forces who continue to benefit from these same restrictions on democratic rights of some of their citizens. One of the obstacles to a greater quality of democracy is the functioning of the judiciary and the resistance of the same judiciaries to change¹⁰⁴.

In Indonesia where there has been active resistance to challenges to authoritarian legacies, specifically the historical narrative of 1965, there are comparative examples of the survival of authoritarian historical narrative that demonstrate some of the various functions of such narratives for post authoritarian societies. In Turkey the historical narrative about the massacres of more than 300,000 Armenians in 1915 by the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), who would

¹⁰⁴ Indonesia's judiciary has demonstrated its resistance to dealing with the past in cases such as Tanjung Priok where convictions have been overturned on appeal or East Timor where only lower ranking military personnel have been tried by courts (Sulistiyanto 2007).

subsequently lead the formation of the Turkish republic in 1923, is one such comparison. The creation of the Turkish state and a Turkish concept of citizenship in the former territory of the Ottoman Empire, required the active suppression of other significant national or ethnic groups including Armenians, Kurds, Greeks and Assyrians. Ninety years after the establishment of the Turkish state the truth about the Armenian massacres and forced deportations is still denied by the Turkish state.

The construction of Turkish national identity was predicated on the suppression and denial of the existence of other ethnic groups within the newly formed Turkish state (Gol 2005, 135; Isyar 2005). This became a central platform in the creation of political legitimacy for the leaders of this new state. The official narrative guaranteed impunity for those responsible for crimes of mass violence and theft. Many of the perpetrators of the genocide were involved in organising and leading the republican movement and their support, organisational skills and networks in Anatolia were invaluable (Gocek 2008; Canafe 2007, 243).

'Turkish' nationalism has been the bedrock of the Turkish nation since its inception. The suppression of other ethnic as well as religious identities has been critical in the conceptualization and formation of the nation. While the genocidal acts towards the Armenians were arguably the most significant in terms of scale and lives lost, the republican Turkish state has actively suppressed all alternative possible ethnic identities (Efegil 2011; Gol 2005). This has precluded the possibility in more recent times of a more plural approach to politics in relation to ethnicity, politics and religion. It has placed significant constraints on pressures to democratise, as the opening of political space would allow public discussion of these issues. To acknowledge the massacres and forced deportations of Armenians could stimulate a far wider political dynamic that would challenge the hegemony of the Turkish bureaucratic elite that retains links with the early Turkish state (Dixon 2010). Another factor that requires the ongoing defence of the official narrative is the concentrated interests of a small group of business and political elites whose wealth can be traced back to confiscated Armenian assets (Akcem 2004).

Contemporary scholars argue that the survival of the official Turkish narrative is predominantly shaped by continuities and constraints that have been inherited

from the founding of the Republic (Akcam 2004; Gocek 2008). This official narrative continues to provide legitimacy for the political repression of its citizens by the state, impunity for government officials who direct or conduct acts of political violence and defend vested interests in relation to property.

Continuities and the Prospects for Change

In Indonesia's case anti-communist ideology has outlived the New Order regime. The 'latent communist threat' (bahaya laten komunis) is still used by the Indonesian state to provide legitimacy and impunity for acts of violence and repression by the military or police or 'militias'. It is not only (those accused of being) 'communists' that are targeted but any group or individuals that are deemed to oppose *Pancasila* ideology which includes the principle of a unitary state (NKRI) (Mietzner 2009a, 228). This ideology has been used to legitimize acts of state violence against democratic movements particularly in Aceh and Papua. The same ideology restricts free and open debate of political ideas and alternative ideologies which is demonstrated by the maintenance of the ban on communism. The ongoing contestation of the historical narrative of 1965 indicates the relative strength of non-government organizations that continue to contest official decisions on how to deal with the past. While foreign governments rarely, and in general are unlikely to, challenge the Indonesian government over its human rights violations both in the past and in the present, bodies such as the UNHRC and International and regional human rights organizations have become strong partners for Indonesian based victims and human rights organizations (Suh 2012). However while state institutions and political parties remain dominated by the vested interests of the politico-business elites, it is unlikely that there will be any changes in the official narrative. Since 2007 the trend has rather been to strengthen the New Order 1965 narrative. What this ongoing contestation indicates is that history and versions of 'the past' are part of the dynamic of democratic politics in Indonesia. Within elected government there is almost no opposition to the official 1965 narrative. The contestation predominantly takes place at the level of state-society relations as Human Rights organizations

challenge or sometimes cooperate¹⁰⁵ with state institutions or the government to obtain truth and justice (Barahona de Brito 2001, 159).

Changes in the official 1965 narrative are most likely to be linked to other political factors that involve the broadening and deepening of democratic institutions.

Given the lack of effective political opposition within the parliament, this would most likely have to involve new actors promoting democratic reforms that challenge the current power relations. Reid (2011, 150) argues that history as a tool was used to legitimize a dictatorship and it is history that can help to awaken people from amnesia. If new national narratives condemn the state violence and terror carried out in 1965 and throughout the New Order period they will need to search for a new and representative framework for national identity itself.

¹⁰⁵ As in the case of KOMNAS HAM.

Conclusion

Fifteen years after the fall of the Suharto dictatorship, the authoritarian historical narrative about 1965 that was created by the New Order regime has been defended and reaffirmed by the post New Order 'democratic' state. This is because those in power today are largely drawn from the old New Order elites or from social groups that benefited from the New Order system of power. The defence of the narrative serves several functions for the new 'democratic' social and political order. In the first instance the defence of the 1965 narrative facilitates the 'forgetting' of past atrocities. It demonstrates the lack of political will to deal with the past, in part, out of fear of punitive actions for crimes of violence that beneficiaries of the new power arrangements have committed in the past.

The narrative also facilitates the survival of the anti-communist ideology from the New Order regime. This ideology continues to be used by the Indonesian state to underpin political legitimacy for those in power and to provide impunity for acts of political violence and repression that are used to defend their social and political power from any challenges. Pancasila (anti-communist) ideology has been strengthened with the incorporation of the concept of the unitary Indonesian state (NKRI), identifying now two principal 'threats' to Indonesian sovereignty. It is used to legitimize acts of state repression against democratic rights movements generally and particularly in Aceh and Papua. This same ideology restricts free and open debate of political ideas and alternative ideologies, which is demonstrated most clearly by the maintenance of the ban on communism.

This anti-communist ideology supports a restricted notion of citizenship, which in its most grotesque form supports discourses that advocate killing communists. This ideology, inherited from the New Order regime indicates the non-democratic values of many of the elite forces that currently hold power. These same restricted notions of citizenship significantly constrain the freedoms of civil society to engage in open discourse about the possibilities for deepening and strengthening political democracy and its institutions.

The democracy that has been consolidated in Indonesia is not representative of the needs and aspirations of the array of social forces involved in toppling the Suharto

dictatorship. The decline of a politicised civil society after 2001, the marginalization of liberal reformers within formal state institutions, the weakness of the democratic parliamentary opposition and the ongoing restrictions on citizen's democratic rights, limit many of the current democratic options available to Indonesian society. However despite the non-democratic values of many of those in power, political initiatives for the extension or deepening of democracy in Indonesia, such as struggles for justice for victims of state violence, continue to be raised by forces from within civil society. The most recent renewal of contestation over the 1965 narrative suggests that history and versions of 'the past' are likely to be an ongoing part of the dynamic of democratic politics in Indonesia.

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