

Sukarno and the Managerial State of Indonesia

Sukarno dan Manajerial Negara Indonesia

Andrik Sulistiyawan

¹ Universitas Teknologi Sumbawa

^a andrik.sulistiyawan@uts.ac.id

(*) Corresponding Author

andrik.sulistiyawan@uts.ac.id

How to Cite: Sulistiyawan. (2024). Sukarno dan Manajerial Negara Indonesia doi: 10.36526/js.v3i2.3948

Received: 18-04-2024
Revised : 11-04-2024
Accepted: 30-06-2024

Keywords:

authoritarian,
managerial state,
Sukarno,
twentieth century

Abstract

The book, *Authoritarian Modernization in Indonesia's Early Independence Period: The Foundation of the New Order State, 1950-1965*, is a remake of the author's PhD dissertation in Leiden University in the Netherlands, and, it consists of seven chapters and three major discussion parts i.e., 1) elite ideology and formation, 2) the development of institutions and the importation of ideas and ideologies during the 1950s, 3) the development of both national planning and scientific management within the context of the Guided Democracy.

Introduction

In discussing authoritarianism of third-world nations, one needs to read Farabi Fakhri's book to discover how such form of government actually formed in Indonesia, one of the most influential third-world state in Asia. As a historical work, the book deserves attention, although I am not quite sure that it will be read correctly by Indonesians. I found this book interesting due to its fresh perspective and solid analyzes. For me Farabi's perspective is a helpful initiative to elaborate the historical understanding of the 1965 tragedy, and, those who are the Sukarnoists may surprise to know that the tragedy was not only a story of Suharto's militaristic government that slaughtered the PKI and their partisan, more than that, the tragedy was a result of Sukarno's the Guided Democracy (Demokrasi Terpimpin) and his ideals of the modern managerial-state in the 1950's that replaced parliamentary democracy with a structured program. Moreover, it was not merely the PKI that was the target of destruction but Indonesian civil society itself and the concept of a non-state power locus.

Therefore, readers looking for the black-and-white historiography of the *Reformasi* era which contain criticism of Soeharto's crimes with his authoritarian government might find themselves disappointed by Farabi's work. Farabi instead focuses on the foundation of Indonesia's New Order (*Orde Baru*) developmental state (1966-1998) during the tumultuous years of Sukarno's Guided Democracy (*Periode Demokrasi Terpimpin Sukarno, 1957-1965*), right after years of a hopeless (1950-1957) (Glassburner 1962, 113). As he stated on page 5, Farabi's main argument is that the development of a new managerial class during the 1950's and early 1960's resulted in the creation of both the ideological and the institutional basis for a military-dominated managerial state.

Method

This paper was written using a historical method. Historical method is the guidelines that historians use to research and write histories of the past. Two techniques such as heuristic as well as interpretation had been accomplished. I make use secondary sources to construct and synthesize some historical facts. The secondary sources used as a reference for this writing is various books as well as journal articles.

Result and discussion

As his previous book, *Membayangkan Ibukota Jakarta di bawah Sukarno* (2005), Farabi seems remains to put Sukarno as the central figure of the 1950's historiography in which his nationalism was based on aspirations of confronting with West and yet accepting their technology. This Sukarno's nationalism reminds me to Veer Savarkar of India. Both figures tend to interpret nationalism as a way to beat the West by adopting and excelling their science, lifestyle, military arms and even some methods of socio-political organizations of the indigenous people (Sangvat 1994, 539).

Indonesians need to place Sukarno in the context of anti-colonial and post-colonial discourses. Following Ania Loomba, nationalism in once-colonized territories commonly demands the creation of a new identity. This new identity sometimes an invented one and it used to oppose colonialism both in an intellectual level and an emotional plane (Zulkarnain 2014, 46), and, for Sukarno of Indonesia such new identity was modern Indonesia with its managerial-state concept.

Sukarno was the radical and ambitious president who has been given innumerable titles 'Great Leader of the Indonesian Revolution' (Hauswedell 1973, 110; see also: Pauker 1964, 1069). He as well as most rulers of postcolonial states has an intention to progressiveness in modern development plans (Koentjaraningrat 2010, 243), Therefore, his idea and rhetoric on revolution included notions about development and modernization which, in many ways, was a precursor to the New Order state and Soeharto's ideas of development (page 5).

Sukarno at the height of his power decided to build an institutional basis of a corporatist form of developmental state. By his political concepts of Guided Democracy (Demokrasi Terpimpin) as well as Nationalist, Islam, and Communist or Nasakom – the unification of various strands of national ideologies as a means of ensuring society's participation in the state that were inspired by Sun Yat Sen of the People's Republic of China (page 260; see also Liu 2012, 209) – Sukarno overthrew the multiparty democracy and appeared as a development-minded person who provided and believed in corporatism and leadership on the one hand, and, although he was not leftist enough according to the PKI, his close relationship with the PKI in the years 1962 and 1963 has led some scholars to identify Sukarno as a mixture of Communists and of a larger number who are nationalist, conservative (in Western terms), and isolationist (Glassburner 1982, 115; see also: Boden 2007, 509 & 523). This identification is quite credible in regard to Sukarno's belief to equate imperialism with capitalism and he thus began his ideological struggle against the West, particularly the United States of America (USA), with their aids and his associating with the communist countries (Anis Chowdhury & Iman Sugema 2005, 188).

As a figure of the twentieth century – a century that not only known as a violent century but also the century of the state in which state-led development and the welfare state are the ruling paradigms that transcend the boundaries of communism and capitalism (page 1) – Sukarno focused his ideas on the state as a provider of actions. He who provides a leadership that guides society on to the path to revolution and brought the nationalist development to the point of ripeness according to Kartono Hadhi (1952) (de Kaizer 1993, 269) was the man behind the rise of Indonesia's managerial-state with its strong and rigid hierarchical structures of authority that was, in many ways, antithetical to civil society.

1.1 Indonesia's Managerial-State

This is a book of Indonesia's modern history that explores the new group of elite so-called the manager-class or what I would like to call the new modern Javanese *priyayi* elite with their modern bureaucracies as a result of decolonization. It is, therefore, inappropriate to identify the book as a de-Sukarnoization book as written by some writers such as Victor M. Vic, Antonie C.A. Dake, or even Lambert Giebels. Moreover, this book provides a comprehensive explanation that the rise of the new managerial class could not be separated from the creation of an international technical-aid structure that was built to help newly independent post-colonial nation-states

modernize and develop. Many in the upper echelon of these new elite became part of the 'community of scholars' who had personal relationships with fellow scholars and officers in American universities and officer schools.

The managers with their imported ideologies, i.e. Taylorism, political science, or even public and business administration science, legitimized and cemented in place the Indonesia's illiberal state. They who could read graphs, conduct tests, and implement programs have a difference objective with Sukarno. While the objective of the managers was to create stable efficiency, Sukarno's objective was to co-opt this new group into a corporatist form of developmental state in which he was unable to create the kind of environment that was conducive. This later resulted in the nature of the Guided Democracy that put in trust in the importance of centralizing the executive.

Conclusion

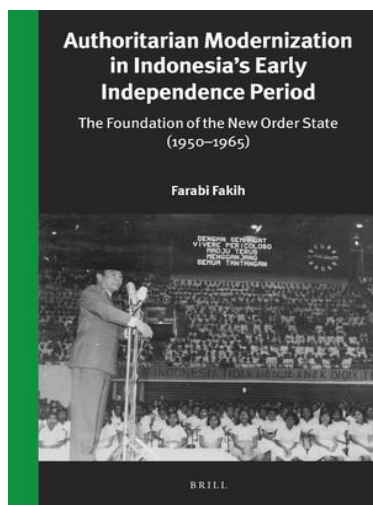
Reading this book will eventually bring us, Indonesian readers, to a new understanding of the managerial-state, a typical twentieth century state that replaced the late-nineteenth century liberal night-watchman state with its limited bureaucracy. There is no doubt that the need for state-led development in Indonesia has leads to the rise of the managerial-state along with scientific management. The dangers of this managerial-state were its anti-liberal and anti-democratic stance. Scientific management became an ideology that legitimized the creation of a welfare state in which administrative efficiency would trump political rights. It placed administrative efficiency as a paramount goal of the state (page 131).

By discussing Indonesia's managerial-state in the 1950's, Farabi, the author, criticizes the brutal character of the managerial-state which with its one-dimensional forms of human experience and outlook existed to discipline and threatened individual liberty and resulted in massive and violent attacks on humankind (page 2). Disciplining the Indonesian society through strategies of extensive control had been on the agenda of army and civilian managers since the Guided Democracy period. By means of indoctrination as well as *retooling*, discipline aims to form efficiency and to change the behavior of Indonesia man who was considered incapable, inefficient, and corrupt. Indonesians behavioral discipline was often a form of re-traditionalization allowing for the expert to take on the authority of tradition.

The combination of managerial efficiency and societal control and counter-insurgency appears to have developed during the Guided Democracy and continued after its end. This not only leads to the ideas about state-society relations that separated the managers of the state and the economy from the rest of the population, but also resulted to the creation of an extremely violent character of the Soeharto New Order's era, a relatively strong developmental state that was able to create significant economic growth of around seven per cent (7%) per year for much of its reign, reducing poverty and sadly lacked democracy and respect for human rights. Moreover, Sukarno's managerial-state itself had problems aplently. His economic measures began to constrict the economy to the point of collapse. Infrastructure and the manufacturing industry were run down as well as hyper-inflation and endemic corruption. All of these problems could eventually confirm Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson views of the unscrupulous postcolonial leaders who not only take the freedom and sovereignty of their citizen but also intensified the extraction (Daron Acemoglu & James A. Robinson 2017, 126).

References

- Acemoglu, Daron, James A. Robinson. 2017. *Mengapa Negara Gagal: Awal Mula Kekuasaan, Kemakmuran, dan Kemiskinan*. PT Elex Media Komputindo: Jakarta.
- Boden, Ragna. (2007). The 'Gestapu' events of 1965 in Indonesia: New evidence from Russian and German archives. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, Brill, Vol. 163, No. 4: 507-528.
- Chowdhury, Anis, Iman Sugema. (August 2005). How Significant and Effective Has Foreign Aid to Indonesia Been?, *ASEAN Economic Bulletin*, ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Vol. 22, No. 2: 186-216.
- Glassburner, Bruce. (Jan., 1962). Economic Policy Making in Indonesia, 1950-1957. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, The University of Chicago Press, Vol. 10, No. 2, Part 1: 113-133.
- Hauswedell, Peter Christian. (Apr. 1973). Sukarno: Radical or Conservative? Indonesian Politics 1964. *Indonesia*, Cornell University Press; Southeast Asia Program Publications at Cornell University, No. 15 :109-143.
- de Kaizer, Madelon. (Apr., 1993) "Mission Impossible": The intermediary Role of the Dutch Politician and Journalist Frans Goedhart in the Dutch-Indonesian Conflict, 1945-1947. *Indonesia, the East Indies and the Dutch*, Cornell University Press; Southeast Asia Program Publications at Cornell University, No. 55: 113-139.
- Koentjaraningrat. 2010. *Sejarah Teori Antropologi II*. Penerbit Universitas Indonesia (UI-Press): Jakarta.
- Liu, Hong. 2012. *China and the Shaping of Indonesia*. NUS Press and Kyoto University Press: Singapore.
- Pauker, Ewa T. (Sept. 1964). Has the Sukarno Regime Weakened the PKI? *Asian Survey*, University of California Press, Vol. 4, No. 9: 1058-1070.
- Sangvat, Sanjay. (Mar. 5, 1994). 'Nation', 'Nationalism' and Mega Projects, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 29, No. 10: 537-540.
- Zulkarnain, Iskandar. (March 2014). "Playable" Nationalism: "Nusantara Online" and the "Gamic" Reconstructions of National History. *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute, Vol. 29, No. 1: 31-62.



Authoritarian Modernization in Indonesia's Early Independence Period: The Foundation of the New Order State (1950-1965)

Author : Farabi Fakhri
 Publisher : Brill, Leiden & Boston
 Year of Publication : 2020
 ISBN : 978-90-04-43772-2 (e-book)