# Introduction
## Assessing Indonesian Democracy from Below
### Olle Törnquist[1]

It is generally accepted that democracy*,* from the Greek words *demos* (people) and *kratos* (rule), is when politically equal people control what they consider to be public affairs in a given society, for instance in Indonesia.[2] However, the frequently applied contrast between a 'bad' democracy that is labelled 'procedural' and a 'good' democracy that is described as 'substantive' is unviable and should be rejected from the outset.

It is not a problem if by procedures we mean formalities without real meaning and if by substance we mean that the rights and institutions that are supposed to promote democracy really do so - which in turn presupposes that all citizens really can advance and use these instruments. Democracy should not be a formality – the rights and institution should favour political equality and popular control of public affairs and ordinary people should be capable of using the instruments of democracy.

As already suggested however, 'procedural' and 'substantive' are often used in other ways. The notion of 'procedural' is frequently applied to indicate that the 'rules of the game' are insignificant, while 'substantive' indicates that it is not just the *output* in terms of making democracy operational and meaningful that matters but

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[1] I am particularly thankful for the valuable comments and input from members of the *Demos* team and colleagues within the Contextual Politics Network, CPD. The faults and mistakes that remain are mine.

[2] Thus democratisation is the introduction *and* advancement of such conditions. The definition used here is based on Beetham (1999).

also the general *outcome* in terms of additional social and economic equality - and it is this that is both misleading and dangerous.

First, certain procedures are imperative. It is true that the old dominant elite in countries like Indonesia often use various laws to protect their property and individual rights against ordinary people who make democratic decisions in favour of redistribution of wealth. Constitutional arrangements that constrain land reform legislation are one example. Yet, this is not an argument for avoiding rules and regulation. On the contrary, ordinary people with little 'raw power' at their disposal need recourse to laws that uphold the principles of political equality and popular control and which discipline and prevent abuse. This calls for well functioning civil and political as well as social and economic rights in order to guarantee political equality. It also requires a series of judicial, political, administrative and civic institutions that enable public control of public affairs in the territory as a whole.

Second, citizens must be both willing and able to advance and make use of these rights and institutions when fighting for their interests and ideas. Freedom is not enough, one must also have enough resources to use it. However, this does not presuppose social and economic equality. People who are politically well-organised may promote and use democratic rights and institutions without having first reached an advanced standard of living or attaining social and economic equality. History is proof that democracy can also make sense to underprivileged people in developing countries.

Third, citizens, rights and institutions that taken together help create a democratic *output* are insufficient in themselves to generate or explain the more general *outcome* in terms of winners or policies. That wider *outcome* calls for ideologies, broad strategies and favourable conditions in addition to democracy. Thus

it is not possible to assess the pros and cons of democracy by looking at the broader *outcomes*. We must limit ourselves to the *output* in order to assess whether democracy works and is a meaningful tool with which politically equal people are able to control public affairs.

In short, the attraction of democracy is 'only' that everyone, including the weak, has a real chance to struggle in a peaceful and fair way for what they consider to be of public interest and for the social and economic policies that they prefer. This, for example, includes regulation of capital, environmental pollution and domestic violence.

This is what we mean by a substantial or meaningful democracy: a democracy that both works *and* is substantial enough to be meaningful for all. This is not the same thing as an ideal society, but it is probably the best way of striving for it.

While Putnam (1993) asked what makes democracy work in terms of widely defined institutional performance or policy *outcome*, we limit ourselves first to the *output* of the rights and institutions that are supposed to promote democracy as such (since 'good outcome' is not intrinsic to democracy), and then add the geographic and thematic scope of the rights and institutions as well as the citizens' capacity to promote and use these instruments. While Putnam responds with reference to social trust and cooperation in civil society, we point to the *politics* of democratisation.

In short, we do not write generally about 'making democracy work' but specifically about 'making democracy meaningful' and thus the title of the book.


**Lessons from history**

Indonesia, after India and the United States of America, is the third largest – albeit fledgling, democracy in the world. The re-emergence of Indonesia's democracy at the

time of the fall of the Soeharto regime in 1998 remains an historical opportunity of major proportions. Should the re-emerging democracy stabilise and become meaningful for the people at large, it would be a milestone for human rights and democracy in general, with direct importance for hundreds of millions of disempowered citizens and anti-corruption oriented professionals and business people, as well as their partners in other countries.

So what are the problems and options involved? Some things are rather more self-evident than others. Let us begin by recalling the obvious - in brief, there are seven historical lessons.

To begin with one may remember that even if many of the ideas concerning human rights and democracy originate in the West, and even if the West has shown substantial interest in promoting them in Indonesia during recent years, it was not the West but the anti-colonial liberation movement - a large majority of which was made up of Muslims, that brought human rights and democracy to Indonesia. This is not to say that the liberation movement was in turn untainted by the hierarchical practices of indirect colonial rule, only that the real struggle for democracy developed and took root in Indonesia itself – not thanks to, but in spite of the West.

In addition, one may wish to distance oneself from one of the foremost ideological thesis of the authoritarian rule - first under Sukarno, then under Soeharto, that earlier efforts during the 1950s to introduce liberal parliamentary democracy had to be abandoned because the country was 'not modern enough' for democracy (including free and fair elections). According to the thesis, democracy even made things worse by generating religious and ethnic divisions and blocking strong leadership. In reality, the two major problems in the mid-1950s were that (a) the small, West-oriented middle class (that was organised, for instance, within the

Socialist Party) failed to generate popular support and opted instead for enlightened technocracy, and (b) that even the electorally more successful political parties (the nationalists, the two Muslim blocks and the Communists) were more concerned with positioning themselves within the framework of the externally imposed Cold War between the dominant powers of capitalism and state-socialism than with democracy.

The third historical lesson is the invalidation of the widely acclaimed theory that social and economic modernisation and the growth of the middle class would generate democracy. Remarkably rapid modernisation and a substantially expanded middle class under Soeharto did *not* facilitate democracy from within Indonesia itself. Neither did the fully modernised, middle-class oriented and liberal democratic countries around the World oppose the dictatorial regime (but argued instead that 'economic cooperation' would generate human rights and democracy).

Fourth, very little of this changed in Indonesia even as the West reduced its support for authoritarian Latin American regimes in the 1980s and engaged in more widespread international intervention for human rights and democracy with the end of the cold war in 1989. Indonesia was one of the major exceptions, along with a number of other countries in Asia and the Middle East – something which might have had more do with vested interests than the argument that Indonesia and the others were culturally unique. Right up to the Asian economic and political crisis, it was widely believed that a dynamic and fairly stable capitalism was being fostered from top down, and that an elitist, reformist and democracy-oriented pact would be negotiable once President Soeharto either decided to step down or passed away.

The fifth lesson is simply that this was proved wrong. The weakness of this argument should have at the very least become obvious with the crackdown on dissidents in 1996, symbolically spearheaded by former President Sukarno's daughter,

Megawati. It is true that at that time popular resistance against authoritarian exploitation coincided with middle class protests against corruption and repression. But popular resistance as well as middle class protests were poorly organised, plus the regime's response undermined all attempts at negotiated, reformist compromise.[3] Moreover, it is true that it took only another year and a half of unrest and repression before the argument that the regime remained stable and that the conflicts were only 'business as usual' was proved wrong. International financial institutions and foreign investors began to panic. Having lost their trust in the capacity of the regime to guarantee the lucrative combination of primitive and advanced accumulation of capital, 'flexible' investors abandoned the scene, causing devastation to hundreds of millions of ordinary people. Yet it was neither capital nor the supposedly human rights and democracy-oriented international community that finally brought down the Soeharto regime, but the 'instant' student movement that substituted for the lack of broad popular organisation by paralysing Jakarta and several other cities with large-scale protests and demonstrations.

The sixth point is that thereafter, the internationally dominant model of transition to liberal democracy through pacts within a somewhat enlarged establishment rose to prominence with remarkable speed.[4] Once Soeharto stepped down on 21 May 1998, most sections of his loyal associates realised the need to negotiate a compromise with the moderate opposition. Mainstream dissident leaders Megawati, Amien Rais and Abdurrahman Wahid, alias Gus Dur, responded positively by abandoning the popular oriented movement. The major turning point was the

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[3] C.f these arguments in Törnquist (1996), the opposite 'business as usual' position in Cribb (1996) and the 'ample opportunities for more open-minded politicians' position in Antlöv (1996).

[4] For the major scholarly introduction to Indonesia, see the 1998 conference contributions in Liddle (2001). For some of the originals, see Linz and Stepan (1996) and O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986).

decision to opt for early elections in 1999, which paralysed the activists who had been chiefly responsible for bringing democracy to Indonesia, most of whom opted instead for sustained direct action within civil society.[5] This is how the idea that democracy should be built with international support for compromises within the elite and skilful construction of basic rights and institutions became hegemonic – while the popular forces bet on direct action in civil society.

The seventh and final lesson is that neither the results of the elitist strategy nor direct civic actions have been impressive. Just as with many other new democracies in the South as well as the former Eastern Block, [6] the elitist model of democracy has generated some important civil and political rights as well as technically free and fair elections. But ordinary people continue to suffer economic and social deprivation, and the problem of corruption has probably increased within the framework of decentralisation and the increasingly powerful political parties and legislative assemblies. The territorial organisation of the 70 percent 'self-financed' military has been sustained, while much of the previous state repression is being 'outsourced' to semi-private militias and other security groups. The pact-making elite have largely remained unable to form stable, trustworthy and effective governments. As a consequence, in the 2004 general elections the well organised, semi-sectarian Muslim party *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (PKS)[7] rose from marginal status to gain more than 7 percent of the national vote, becoming the largest party in the capital region Meanwhile, the old elite dressed up in conservative populism and was returned to dominance behind the new president, managerial retired general, Susilo Bambang

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[5] For a general analysis, see Törnquist (2000).

[6] See e.g. Grugel (2002), Bell et al. (1995), Mkandawire (1999), Abrahamsen (2000), Ottaway (2003), McFaul (2002), Carothers (2004), Törnquist (2000/2002)

[7] The PKS advocate separate, religiously-grounded codes on certain critical issues rather than universally applicable regulations. 'We stick to that principle of peaceful coexistence, but of upholding Sharia among Muslims. 'New Party President Tifatul Sembiring', in *Jakarta Post,* 6 June 2005.

Yudhoyono (SBY), with successful Soeharto-era businessman Jusuf Kalla as his ambitious deputy.

In contrast, the poorly organised students, NGOs and uncoordinated groups of labourers, farmers and urban poor were soon demobilised, humiliated and confined to politically marginalised civil society activity.[8] According to a comprehensive review and comparative case study program on and with the post-Soeharto democracy movement,[9] although many protest groups and activists were still alive and kicking they continued to reflect Soeharto's 'floating mass' politics – fragmented and isolated from ordinary people, and thus unable to make much headway in the new democratic politics beyond their lobbying and pressure groups-type civil society activities. In the 2004 elections, it was only the semi-sectarian PKS that included some representation from the movement that had given birth to democracy. The risk is thus (to paraphrase Gramsci) that while the old is dying and the new cannot be born, morbid symptoms will appear.

**The current debate**

In summary, it is clear from history that the struggle for democracy has deep roots in Indonesia itself, that much of the early democratic experimentation was undermined by the externally imposed Cold War, that modernisation and a rising middle class were insufficient to foster real change, that it was neither the combination of authoritarian rule and neo-liberal economics nor international ideas of interventions in favour of human rights and democracy that finally brought down the Soeharto regime. In addition, it is equally clear that the model of elite-led transitions to liberal

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[8] Prasetyo Stanley, A., Priyono,A.E, and Törnquist, O. (2003)

democracy that was dominant in other regions only gained prominence in Indonesia when the poorly organised pro-democrats had changed the turn of history but then lost the initiative – and that the results have been quite poor.

*What is less clear, however, is how this victorious transition paradigm has failed to produce expected results, how the pro-democrats have failed to generate a viable alternative, and what should be done instead. In general there are five competing arguments.*

The first argument is over whether the problems are overstated since democracy with elections, governance reforms and anti-corruptions measures have become the irreversible 'only game in town'. What is needed now, some say, is simply more of the same – plus political stability and liberalisation of the economy, which should pave the way for economic growth and more jobs.[10] The critics however, point to growing corruption and a persistent culture of authoritarianism and violence. The military, they say, retains much influence, money politics rather than people govern the parties and the old powerful bureaucrats-cum-businessmen continue to dominate, for example in the form of localised oligarchs. Democracy, therefore, will remain a façade until there is 'real' structural change. Ironically, much of this critique is accepted by Marxists and liberal modernisation theorists alike.[11]

The second argument concerns the pros and cons of decentralisation. Supporters of decentralisation associate central governance with the old authoritarianism and want to see more space for direct participation and for civil associations to take a larger role in public life. They are cautiously optimistic over

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[10] One proponent is Professor William Liddle, who introduced the top-down crafting of democracy perspective in Indonesia; c.f. Liddle (2001). Another example is the position of the recently outgoing European Union representative to Indonesia, see interview in *Jakarta Post,* 10 December 2005.

[11] One of the best studies in the Marxist genre is by Robison and Hadiz (2004). One of the most outspoken modernisation theorists is the Minister of Defence, Professor of Political Science Juwono Sudarsono.

what has been achieved so far.[12] The sceptics however, point to negative examples and counter-evidence that upholds no clear-cut relation between decentralisation and democracy.[13] One argument is that nationalists in the political and military elites want to defend the centrally governed nation state at any price. Others see decentralisation as inviting the growth of petty-Soehartos, 'uncivil' sections of civil society, and the territorially-based organisation of the military. These critics maintain that more powers devolved to the local level in combination with weak government and weak civic institutions paves the way for abuse of political and administrative power, the rise of religious and ethnic sentiments and the destruction of the natural environment for a quick profit. Priority, some argue, should be given to citizenship and other democratic institutions, not to decentralisation *per se*. This calls for strong regulatory institutions and democratic popular organisations at central as well as local levels.[14]

The third argument is over how to counter corruption and revitalise the economy. One side favours neo-liberal measures that (in theory) allow the market to discipline those actors that currently take shelter behind administrative and political arrangements.[15] A different perspective suggests that a stronger state is needed to discipline the institutions and actors. This perspective encompasses revolutionary socialists as well as discipline-oriented retired generals, and in between are the commentators inspired by the comparatively strong 'developmental' executives in Singapore, China, Japan and South Korea.[16] It is unclear how the dominant

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[12] C.f. for example the assessments of the Asia Foundation
http://www.asiafoundation.org/Locations/indonesia_projects.html and some of the contributions to Aspinall and Fealy (2003).

[13] For a good general analysis, see Schulte-Nordholt (2004)

[14] See for example Malley (2003), Hadiz 2003) and (2003a)*,* van Klinken (2001), (2002) and (2003).

[15] Leading advocates include scholars at the Indonesian Freedom Institute and Dr. Sri Mulyani, Minister of National Development.

[16] One forum for discussion on the latter position has been the Habibie Cente. Other leading scholars-cum-sometimes politicians have also argued in similar directions, including Kwik Kian Gie.

Indonesian actors would accept this and what the implications for human rights and democracy would be.

The fourth and most extensive debate takes place between the advocates of elitist and government-driven institution-building to favour human rights, good governance and democracy, and proponents of civil society-based solutions to the same effect.[17] There are similarities as well as differences between the two, but many middle class civil society activists remain sceptical about state and organised politics and advocate alternative civic institutions and autonomous pressure policies as well as direct democracy and self-help activities. One major controversy is thus over state versus civil society approaches to tackling such major issues as land reform, human rights, gender equality, the environment, provision of basic services such as fresh water, waste collection, as well as security, electoral regulations, education and the possibilities for participatory local practices. Corruption is another such issue, and a number of anti-corruption bodies have been formed and new regulations have been passed but in reality, almost all concrete measures taken at top-level have been due to civic pressure.[18]

The fifth, even more fundamental debate takes place between on the one hand the closely related top-level institution-builders and their civic counterparts, and on the other hand groups that give more priority to mass action and organisation based on common interests and political vision.[19] In principle, there is nothing to prevent

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[17] Liddle's (2001) introduction of the elitist institution building perspective is a basic example, and the most well know a scholarly based campaign organisations drawing on similar ideas are CETRO (The Indonesian Centre for Electoral Reform) and *Sekolah Demokrasi* supported by the Dutch Institute for Multiparty Democracy (IMD). The civil society based development is advocated most clearly by, *inter alia*, scholars and activists related to INSIST (Indonesian Society for Social Transformation).

[18] Teten Masduki, the executive director of Indonesian Corruption Watch, estimates that ninety-nine percent of the cases being handled by the Attorney General's Office are as a result of public pressure. *Jakarta Post*, 27 April 2005.

[19] The first is probably best represented by the Partnership for Governance Reform while the second my be illustrated by on the one hand civic activists who discuss ways of supporting mass organising and political

combinations between the two camps and, indeed, certain civic groups try to broaden their base and engage in politics. But the controversy between elitist institution-building and popular mobilisation has deep historical roots in Indonesia, from the deterioration of parliamentary democracy in the 1950s to the elimination of all radical popular movements in the 1960s.[20]   In other words, there is no lack of opinions and positions.

**Tasks and mandate**

In early 2002, a taskforce appointed at a national conference attended by pro-democracy scholars and activists concluded that the real problem the pro-democrats faced was the lack of solid empirical knowledge beyond specific experiences and case studies. In order to both facilitate fruitful discussion on the best arguments and enable the drafting of a minimum program for broad and unified action, the taskforce decided that there was need for an academically solid and reliable national survey to identify the real problems and options of meaningful human rights-based democracy according to the experiences of citizen related pro-democrats, rather than the elite-driven experts who dominate the debate.[21] This is the background to the writing of this book.

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intervention, including ideas of local parties or political blocks, and on the other hand more top-down oriented organisers of radical parties such as the PRD (People's Democratic Party)

[20] Feith (1962) and Törnquist (1984)

[21] Some of the members include the late Munir, previously with the Legal Aid Foundation and later of KontraS (the Kontra-Soeharto, Commission for Disappearances and Victims of Violence) and Imparsial (The Indonesian Human Rights Watch),  Poengky Indarty with the same background, Stanley of ISAI (Institut Studi Arus Informasi – Institute for Free Flow of Information), the late Dr. Th. Sumartana of Interfidei (often referred to as DIAN (Dialog Antar Iman – interfaith dialogue) Asmara Nababan previously with INFID (International NGO Forum for Indonesian Development), ELSAM (Lembaga Studi dan Advokasi Masyarakat) (among other organisations) and the outgoing secretary general of Komnas HAM (National Commission on Human Rights)  Maria Hartiningsih, senior journalist and feminist activist, and committed scholars A.E Priyono, Dr. Nasikun, Professors Arief Budiman and Olle Törnquist.

The author of this introduction assisted the taskforce in developing an analytical framework and methodology for a national-level expert survey that could then be put into operation alongside a research team made up of some ten young committed scholars coordinated by AE Priyono.[22] The association *Demos,* directed by Asmara Nababan and governed by representatives from the democracy movement, was established to provide back up the research team, mobilise support and follow-up the results.

In addition to being available electronically, I have visited the team four to five times a year, thus co-directing the application of the approach, the collection and interpretation of the data and the writing of the separate executive reports. Maybe the idea of such a limited intervention was too ambitious, but we managed, in spite of several difficulties. Thus the aim was to produce a comprehensive final report in a similar way. The body of the book was to be written by the members of an executive team that would support each other by working collectively – under the executive director as well as my general academic direction, to analyse data, provide concrete examples and relate the conclusions to the prevalent discourses of democratisation. In this joint effort we did not succeed - for a number of reasons that we should learn from in a separate evaluation. [23] The draft Indonesian version of this book for an international conference in late 2005 had to be extensively revised. In this process we have opted instead for a closely integrated anthology.

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[22] Additional coordinators include Antonio Pradjasto and Debbie Prabawati. The other researchers in the central team include Willy Samadhi (data manager), Rita Tambunan, Agung Wijaya, Otto Yulianto, Sofian Asgart, Syafa'atun Kariadi, Nur Subono and Attia Nur, with administrative back-up provided by Laksmi Pratiwi, Inggrid Silitonga, Sumadi Hardjono and Heru Utomo. Occasional contributors include Lalang Wardoyo, Teresa Birks, Wiratmo Probo and Adriana Adhiati. Additional full time contributors during the first round included Donni Edwin and Shirley Doornik.

[23] The challenges faced include organisation, communication, translation and coordination as well as different priorities regarding structure, in-depth analyses, and presentation.

The editors, including myself, share the responsibility for the overall concept and structure, basic data and conclusions, while *Demos* as a collective, under the direction of Asmara Nababan, is responsible for the recommendations. The principle author(s) of each chapter, however, remain solely responsible for their respective texts.

The implementation of a national expert-survey of this kind is a huge operation. Thirty one provincial representatives, one hundred and nine local assistants, leading Indonesian democracy organisations, concerned scholars and international organisations provided support and respect for the intellectual integrity of the team. This is not a donor-driven project. We designed and proposed the programme in all its details as independently as if we had applied for money from an academic research foundation. When our proposals were accepted, they were respected and nothing of importance has been changed in the process.[24] Most importantly, we would not have managed without the patience, commitment and trust of the some eight hundred informants who have spent between six hours and several days to answer our many and difficult questions.

The project was launched in January 2003, less than a year after its inception. The analytical framework was refined, two rounds of an extensive survey were conducted, in addition to less structured interviews with special informants, and the early results were published in two executive reports,[25] discussed in seminars around

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[24] Aside from the Indonesian democracy movement, this project has benefited from the support of the University of Oslo and public Norwegian and Swedish agencies for the promotion of development and democracy, supplemented by contributions from the Ford and TIFA Foundations and the representation of the European Union to Indonesia. Unfortunately, International IDEA did not sustain its early engagement with the programme.

[25] DEMOS (2004) and DEMOS (2005)

the country and popularised in twelve supplements of leading weekly Indonesian newsmagazine *Tempo*.[26] The final results are presented in this book.

Before doing so however, the critical reader needs to know how we have arrived at our conclusions. The stakes and expectations have been high. We have sailed largely in uncharted waters. Much of the remaining part of this introduction will be devoted therefore to a presentation of the approach and methodology.

**Existing assessments of democracy**

The available models for auditing democracy were not able to assist us in collecting empirical information on how experienced pro-democrats assessed problems and options of meaningful human rights-based democracy on a national scale - and thus put the aforementioned arguments in the debate about the problems and options of Indonesia's democracy to test.

Conventional approaches tend to focus on separate, specific elements of democracy such as basic freedoms, human rights, rule of law, elections, governance, participatory practices or civil society etc. with the best known example probably being that of the Freedom House ratings. Such approaches generate descriptive and often static measurements, rarely addressing the process of advancing and implementing rights, institutions and policies, thus avoiding how the intrinsic elements of democracy relate to the various actors and conditioning factors. Moreover, the models that do try to consider actors and conditions, such as the academic studies of development and democracy and UNDP's *Human Development Reports,* were usually much too limited to general indicators of democracy and

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[26] See *Tempo* (Indonesian edition) October 10, 2004, December 19, 2004, January 23, 2005, March, 6 2005, April 3, 2005, April 24, 2005, May 22, 2005, May 30, 2005, June 20, 2005, July 24, 2005, August 7, 2005 and August 28, 2005.

development.[27] Other approaches concentrate on social movements or NGOs without making systematic links to the theory and institutional structure of democracy. Developing a realistic framework for linking studies of such collective actors and institutions had to be a major priority. An important partial exception is the democracy assessment promoted by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA), which builds on the 'democratic audit' pioneered by David Beetham and others.[28] But although that model makes firm distinctions between human rights and democracy, the aims and instruments of democracy, the intrinsic and conditioning factors of democracy and so on, it too suffers often from static descriptions of institutional performance at the expense of actors, mechanisms, and processes.

In any case, most of the available assessment models are donor-driven and dependent on resources such as databanks that are incomplete in countries like Indonesia and, often, confined to elite-level informants that have limited contact with and understanding of the grass-roots. Alternatively, various opinion polls have been made with frequently quite dubious identification of the respondents and non-contextual operationalisation of ill-problematised variables, suggesting, for instance, that ordinary Indonesians do not understand the meaning of democracy where they are insufficiently informed on electoral procedures.

In the following section, we shall turn first to our alternative framework and then on to how we have attempted to collect information from a more grounded citizen perspective – not through a statistical sample of democracy activists in general

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[27] See e.g. the UNDP (2002) and Hadenius (1992). C.f. the World Bank (1997) and (2000),
[28] Beetham (1999) and Beetham et.al. (2002)

but by relying on systematic and careful qualitative selection of local experts within the movement to thus conduct an expert survey.

**The alternative framework**

The analytical framework consists of seven elements: (1) a definition of 'meaningful human rights-based democracy'; (2) the identification of what rights and institutions are needed to promote such a democracy; (3) a set of principles for assessing the performance; as well as (4) the scope of these instruments; (5) indices to estimate the will; and (6) the capacity of the actors to promote and use the instruments; and (7) indicators of how the actors relate to the structural conditions. Each of these elements is discussed in more detail below.

Meaningful Human Rights-Based Democracy

The core elements of the dependent variable – meaningful human rights-based democracy – must be specified in order to allow distinctions within the key parameters and operational indicators. The usual understanding of 'meaningful' is functional. In any given context therefore, the actually existing instruments of human rights-based democracy do not have to be perfect - but substantial enough to be relevant to the citizens at large in their attempts to control and influence what they deem to be matters of common concern.

Beetham argued convincingly that democracy's generally accepted meaning or aim is 'popular control of public affairs on the basis of political equality', and that this presupposes seven principles, namely, everyone's right and ability to *participate,* the *authorisation* of representatives and officials and their *representation* of main currents of popular opinion and the social composition of people – in addition to being

continuously *responsive* to the opinions and interests of the people and *accountable* to the citizens for what they have done. This in turn requires *transparency* and *solidarity* between citizens and others who fight for democracy.[29] The importance of *human rights,* finally, is simply that they are fundamental to most (if not all) of these principles, while the principles are in turn, critical to the shaping and practice of human rights. [30] The two may not be separated.

Intrinsic Rights and Institutions

It is also fruitful to start off from Beetham's widely accepted argument that the listed aims of democracy have to be promoted by a set of means or rights and institutions. [31] Since these instruments tend to be contextual, one should avoid attempts at universal lists. Elections, for instance, may be organised in many different ways. However, one may list the semi-universal outputs that the rights and institutions should generate:[32]

- **Constitutionalism by way of the judiciary:** equal citizenship, rule of law, justice, civil and political rights, and socio-economic rights in terms of basic needs;
- **Popular sovereignty by way of legislative and executive government:** democratic elections, representation, and responsive and accountable government and public administration;
- **Civic engagement by way of civil society:** free and democratically oriented media, art, academia, associational life and other forms of additional popular participation, including consultation and various forms of 'direct democracy'.

We shall return to the importance of peoples' political capacity to generate these outputs, but a closer discussion of them may serve as a basis for the much needed specification of the intrinsic elements of democracy, in contrast to the

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[29] Beetham et.al. (2002)

[30] In terms of every human being's right to justice and freedom, regardless of ethnicity, race, religion and social background, in addition to basic social and economic needs.

[31] Institutions are defined broadly as the rules of the game, thus including constitutional as well as informal arrangements. Conventions on democratic governance within civil society organizations for example, or that political parties should represent the opinions and interests of their constituents are also vital.

[32] Beetham et.al. (2002).

simplistic 'black box' studies that only consider variables such as free and fair elections. Yet advocates of deliberative and direct democracy could object to the relative importance attached to representative democracy here, and the inclusion of 'social and economic rights' in terms of basic needs might also be controversial. But representation and government are unavoidable beyond pure associational democracy and extreme forms of sectoral and geographical fragmentation of the *demos*; and 'basic needs' are necessary for all citizens to survive and form their opinions with some degree of critical independence from the dominant actors.

Moreover, it is essential to add one precondition to Beetham's list, namely whether there is correspondence between the official identification of citizens and how people identify themselves in public matters – in our case as Indonesians or members of the districts rather than as members of a local or religious or ethnic community. In addition, the framework offered by Beetham and IDEA is very unwieldy, so the alternative framework that was created for research in Indonesia - and which was improved over the course of two rounds of survey interviews, contains a list of the democratic output of just 40 partially aggregated rights and institutions (see Box 1), rather than Beetham's tally of 85 instruments.

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**Box 1. The infrastructure of democracy**

Aside from basic correspondence between citizenship and how people identify themselves in public matters,
it is intrinsic to democracy that contextual rights and institutions generate the following outputs:[33]

I    Citizenship, Law and Rights
1.    Equal citizenship
2.    The rights of minorities, migrants and refugees
3.    Reconciliation of horizontal conflicts
4.    Government support and respect for international law and UN human rights treaties
5.    Subordination of the government and public officials to the rule of law
6.    Equal and secure access to justice
7.    The integrity and independence of the judiciary
8.    Freedom from physical violence and the fear of it
9.    Freedom of speech, assembly and organisation
10.    Freedom to carry out trade union activity
11.    Freedom of religion and belief

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[33] The output of the 40 instruments was measured in the 2nd round of the Indonesian survey. In the 1st round, however, only 35 were applied. The consolidated data to which we shall refer later on in the report relates, therefore, to those 35 instruments only. In the list above, the combined instruments are underlined.

We shall return to the major challenge of relating all the rights and institutions and their outputs to the Indonesian context(s), but it is important to mention at this stage that the informants were asked to choose whether to answer all the questions either from a general national perspective or with reference to a specified local context. Almost everyone opted for the local context, thus improving the quality and originality of the results.

Assessing the Instruments' Performance

To be meaningful, these rights and institutions must not merely exist but also perform well – i.e. generate the output as indicated in box 1. Beetham's most crucial argument

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[34] Given the pro-democrats' substantial interest in participatory forms of democracy, including 'deliberative democracy' and 'participatory budgeting', instruments generating these outputs may be more specified in a forthcoming version of the list of instruments.

is that one cannot assign democracy merely because some of its instruments, such as elections, are in place – it all depends on the extent to which these instruments and institutions actually contribute to the aim(s) of democracy, in this case by way of *democratic* elections. A question must thus be formulated that enquires after both existence and performance in relation to each and every instrument; and where there is a lack of comparative data, an additional question may be posited concerning changes over time (in Indonesia since the first post-Soeharto elections in 1999).

This is not to evaluate whether the instruments are producing policies that are - or at not, to our liking (the outcome), only the extent to which each instrument fulfils its purpose of contributing to the democratic infrastructure (the output). For instance, to what extent are the institutions that are supposed to uphold equal citizenship really doing so?

However, detailed follow-up studies on the nature of and reasons for good or bad performance in terms of the institutional mechanisms and the balance of power are difficult to handle in a broad survey. Some factors may be addressed by considering the answers to other questions. For example, poor institutional performance concerning the promotion of equal citizenship may be combined with the performance of instruments intended to uphold the rule of law or prevent corruption. Yet other factors relate to the scope of the instruments and to the will and capacity of the actors to engage. This calls for additional variables and indicators (other than Beetham's on performance) for a democracy to be meaningful, namely that the instruments must have a reasonable scope and that citizens must be willing and capable of promoting and using them.[35] We shall discuss these one by one.

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[35] In addition to local experience of the scholars and activists involved, the remaining parts of the framework draw primarily on Mouzelis (1986), Tarrow (1994), and Törnquist (2002).

<u>Assessing the Scope of the Instruments</u>

Well-performing institutions may have a very limited scope. It is possible for instance, that the instruments do not function beyond certain urban areas, or that some regions are indirectly ruled through customary leaders or warlords. Similarly, the instruments may be more or less inclusive of the issues that people think ought to be part of public affairs. In some cases, elements of supposedly public agencies such as the military or a local irrigation department may have been virtually privatised and withdrawn from the public sphere. In other cases it is more difficult to judge, as when some people argue that domestic violence is a matter for public concern while others say that it is a private matter. The assumption in the framework is that while a widely defined public sphere is conducive to a meaningful democracy, this 'ideal' cannot cover the widest possible scope since this may undermine fundamental human rights, which must be upheld. Additional questions must be formulated about the geographical and substantive scope of each and every instrument and how this has changed over time.

Finally, there must be sufficient institutional capacity. A widely defined scope on economic matters for instance, is of little use if there is bad performance – both are needed. One example may be that foreign business or financial institutions are making many of the most significant decisions, thus fostering so-called choice-less democracies.[36]

<u>Citizens' Will to Promote and Use the Instruments</u>

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[36]C.f. Mkandawire 1999. (In addition to this combination of space and performance with regard to all the instruments of democracy, a special question is also included on the general independence of the government from foreign interventions, except UN conventions and applicable international law.)

Conventional assessment schemes are often limited to the mapping of the state of democracy, neglecting its dynamics and the process of democratisation, or in other words the fact that rights and institutions do not emerge and act by themselves. Thus, one must first ask about the extent to which the citizens are willing to promote and use these instruments.

Assuming that actors' will to engage varies according to the extent to which they find that the instruments make sense (or would make sense), then the general question should be to establish whether the actors promote and use the instruments, simply use them, or try to look for alternatives beyond the democratic framework. Do the actors produce democracy, only consume it or even obstruct it?[37]

At this point one should also distinguish between citizen-oriented democracy actors and dominant actors. Dominant actors may of course also be democrats, but particularly in new democracies with strong remnants of authoritarianism, the dominant actors tend to be based on powerful positions in state and business rather than among ordinary citizens. Questions about the actors' will to promote and use the instruments of democracy (and later also the capacity to do so) must therefore be sub-divided between these different actors. In our alternative framework however, it is the experienced and reflective pro-democrats on the ground who are chosen to represent the major source of information – so the general question is what their experiences reveal of first, the citizen based democrats and second, the dominant actors.

Citizens' Capacity to Promote and Use the Instruments

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[37] 'Looking for an alternative' does not only mean that one tries to avoid or obstruct existing more or less democratic instruments but also that one may try to develop different ones.

An actors' will is not enough – there must also be capacity. Given structural conditions, what characterises the actors' capacity to promote and use democratic politics? The framework is limited to the basic factors that most students of political and social movements would suggest:

(a) Effective presence in the political landscape;
(b) Effective politicisation of issues and interests;
(c) Effective politicisation or inclusion of people into politics;
(d) Effective strategies to promote and use the instruments of democracy.

On the political landscape (see Figure 1), previous research indicates that citizens must be effectively present within the spheres and arenas that *de facto* affect politics. The framework distinguishes between the spheres of the state, business and self-managed units such as cooperatives. In addition, there are private and public domains both within and in between these spheres.
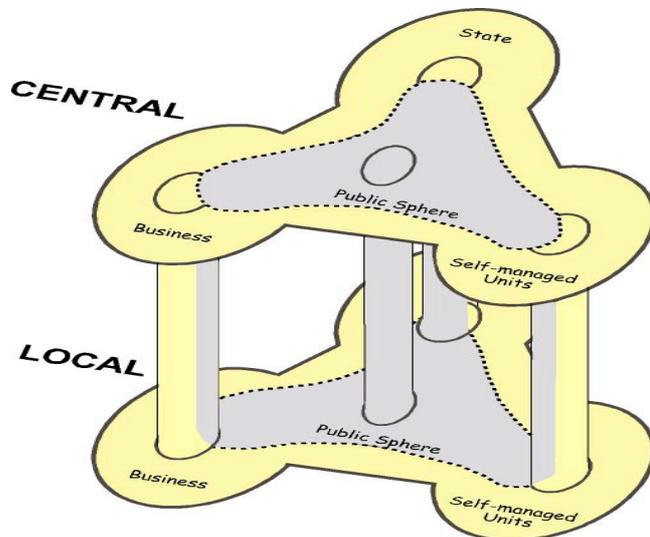


FIGURE 1: THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

The public domain (as opposed to the private), includes open arenas, institutions, forums and practices for citizens to deliberate, negotiate, and cooperate. A public sphere is thus not necessarily managed by the state or government (in fact, the state

and government may be partly closed or privatised); it may also be an open association or a place to meet, or 'civil society' in terms of citizens' actually existing organisations beyond the state and corportate business. 'Civil society' may thus be more or less public and open – *or* part of the private and exclusive sphere;[38] and whether the citizens act as 'good citizens' *or* 'abuse ethnic sentiment' for instance, also remains to be analysed. At this point we are 'only' interested in the presence of the actors. These spheres (and arenas) may be located in the central and local levels as well as in the links between them – structured, then, according to the logic of territories (such as regencies or towns) or sectors (such as industry or agriculture, youth or women, education or media).

In sum, the important question is to identify where the actors are present, most often and at first hand. One argument from our previous studies that may be evaluated is that new democratic endeavours tend to be weak where the old progressive forces are strong, for example in relation to the workplace and the state.

On the politicisation of ideas and interest, an additional requirement of meaningful democracy is that citizens be able to turn those of their ideas, interests and conflicts that they believe relate to public matters into politics, or in more general terms, public action.  While it does matter what issues or policies people focus on, the character of politicisation is even more crucial. The questions in the framework are intended to probe the results of our previous case studies, which suggest that pro-democrats often focus on 'single issues and specific interests', and are rarely able to aggregate these into 'broader interests', 'agendas', and 'ideologies', whereas

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[38] This space for various actors within the spheres and arenas is addressed later on in terms of the opportunity structure.

dominant actors may work more on the basis of 'general values and perspectives', such as religion or nationality.

On the inclusion of people into politics, meaningful democracy implies collective action. Citizens without vast individual powers must have the capacity to come together in movements and organisations in favour of their ideas and interests. Drawing on Mouzelis' work already cited, a distinction is made in the framework between the integration of citizens into politics on the basis of relatively autonomous broad popular movements as against the incorporation and cooptation of people, for instance through populism and clientelism.[39] Based on our previous research, the possibility of 'alternative patronage' is also added. This refers, for example, to instances where an NGO or radical party tries to provide 'protection' so that people can act more independently, at least in relation to their previous patrons. Turning to the integration of people into politics, and drawing on Tarrow's work on mobilisation structures,[40] a distinction is made between the old anarchist or syndicalism tradition on the one hand, and the tradition of left socialists, social democrats and many Christian democrats on the other. Based on empirical studies in the Indonesian context, the framework applies the notions of networks, federative networks, non-programmatic political machines, and comprehensive organisations where groups with similar perspectives are unified. So, for example, one thesis that may thus be evaluated is that new democrats prefer temporary networking to more highly organised integration, whereas dominant actors prefer a mix of populism, clientelism and machine politics.

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[39] Populism involves charismatic leaders who are able to express popular feelings and ideas; clientelism is associated with patrons that have their own capacity to deliver some protection in return for services and votes.

[40] Tarrow (1994) and previous adjustments and applications in Törnquist (2002)

Finally, with respect to strategies, the meaningfulness of the democracy rests with the capacity of the actors to harness their position in the political landscape, their quality of politicisation and their ability to mobilise in a strategy on how to promote and use the previously identified instruments of democracy in order to favour their views and interests. Of course a fully-fledged strategy also includes policies, ideologies and the like, but the fundamental question is where people turn to when they have a problem that they do not perceive of as being private. Can they make use of the actually existing democracy? Do they act directly within civil society, do they turn to the courts, do they go the state (government and public administration) or do they bypass all these and turn to a patron, burn down a police station, draw on some networks or try to buy themselves some leeway? Our previous case-studies suggest that pro-democrats shy away from elections, legislation and governance.

Figure 2 illustrates eight possible strategies identified on the basis of the previously specified instruments of democracy[41]and earlier research.[42]

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[41] The three sectors correspond with the previously identified major sectors of rights and institutions that are supposed to promote democracy. The 'Judiciary' is short for institutions charged with controlling the application of rights and laws; 'Legislative and executive government' is shorthand for institutions related to election, representation, legislation and implementation of laws and regulations.(A further developed version of our framework should make the additional distinction between the legislative and politically appointed sections of the administration on the one hand and the supposedly non-political professional administration/executive on the other.) 'Civil society' refers to relatively autonomous citizen activities within media, culture, academia, associational life and various forms of direct democracy. The actors may be individual or collective, such as NGOs, interest organizations and political parties.

[42] The broad indications at this point may then be tuned into more detailed pictures based on our previous question as to how the actors relate to the individual instruments.
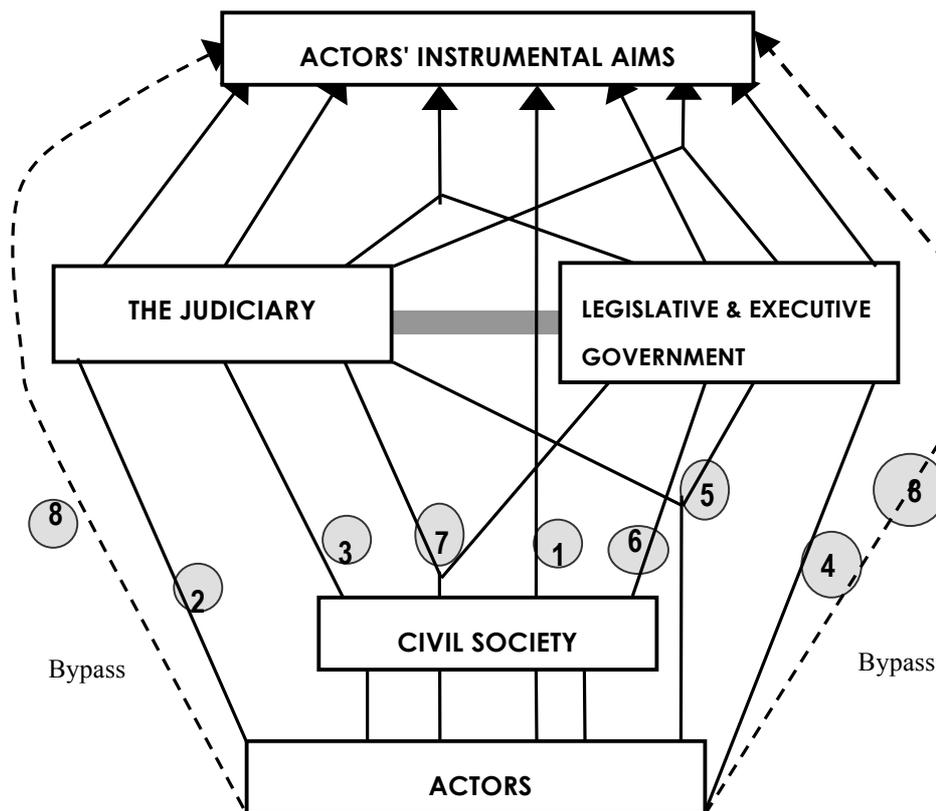
FIGURE 2: STRATEGIES IN RELATION TO INSTRUMENTS OF DEMOCRACY

Relationship of Actors to Structural Conditions: the Importance of Power and Opportunities

This focus on the actors' will and capacity should not overlook conditioning structures and power, but remain within the framework of the minimum factors that are fundamental to meaningful human rights-based democracy. Which factors are intrinsic and which are not? Extreme rightists and leftists often argue that while some human rights may be omitted, certain pre-conditions and outcomes in terms of power, market and property relations are inseparable elements of democracy. Thus for example, radical rightists still argue that democracy must be prevented from

interfering with the market and private property rights whilst their opponents argue the very opposite. These extremes are unsatisfactory as they are liable to undermine meaningful human rights-based democracy. Moreover, while it is true that 'real' powers are crucial conditions for what can be done, it is also true for instance that even quite downtrodden though organised, well informed and reflective *dalits* (oppressed castes and tribes) in India can make reasonably good use of the available democratic instruments. To negate the core instruments of meaningful human rights-based democracy as formalistic or procedural would be to neglect the beauty of democracy in terms of its potential to limit the use of raw power and even enable the powerless to increase their political capacity to thus alter their lives.

What democracy is used for then is crucial. Personally, for instance, one may choose to use it to foster social and economic equality.[43] But to widen the concept of democracy to include conditions that are not absolutely necessary even for a sufficiently substantial democracy to be meaningful would mix up dependent and independent variables and, moreover, put at risk the practical chances of forming alliances between groups who are agreed on the fundamental importance of a reasonably meaningful human rights-based democracy while not necessarily subscribing to the ideal of wholesale socio-economic equality.

An alternative position – as incorporated by the framework, is that even if it is possible for actors with sufficient capacity to fight for and practice democracy without first having to drastically alter the power structure, it is essential that they consider actual existing conditions. The position in between idealism and structuralism is located in the actors' ability to read, adjust and make use of the prevailing conditions.

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[43] 'Social democracy' is not employed as a synonym for social and economic equality since the latter may be achieved by means other than through political democracy – which is the basic trust of the social democratic ideology on how to promote social and economic equality.

Thus beyond the actors' will and capacity, the framework asks how they relate to prevailing conditions in order to render their capacity something real and tangible.

If the relations of power themselves are not intrinsic to democracy and democratisation, but the citizens' ability to understand and employ them are, what are the most important dimensions? What are the crucial structures and relations of power that the actors have to consider? In an attempt to ensure the ability to consider the critical arguments in the discussion, the framework first enquires after the actors' understanding of the most important variable in the social movement paradigm - the opportunity structure, in terms of the openness of the broadly defined political system and the availability of allies and the risk of repression. Second, a series of questions are raised concerning the actors' reading of the power relations, as conceptualised in Pierre Bourdieu's studies of dominance: (a) the actors' social, cultural, economic, and (the framework adds) coercive-capital in terms of good contacts, access to information and knowledge, property and wealth, and pressure, demonstrations and violence respectively; (b) the actors' transformation of such powers into legitimacy and authority; and (c) and the actors' *habitus* or permanent dispositions guiding their habits.[44]

Within the framework, these concepts are defined and operationalised in an outright empiricist way, incorporating lessons from open questions in the first round of the survey. In order to assess the actors' understanding of the opportunity structure informants have, for example, been asked about the pros and cons of the post-Soeharto political situation. Transformation of power has proved to be the most revealing dimension, with an open-ended question generating sub-categorisations

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[44] In the case of Borudieu's concepts, the framework draws extensively on K. Stokke (2002) and Harriss, Stokke, and Törnquist (2004).

such as discursive activities (which seem to be the most common among the dissidents) and gaining positions within the legal and representative organs (which score high among the dominant actors).

In general conclusion, the framework thus combines (1) analyses of institutions, actors and their capacities, (2) a descriptive mapping of the situation and (3) an evaluation of the most frequent explanations. The latter is done by reformulating vital Indonesian and other arguments about democratisation - both academic and 'popular', into hypotheses that are brought to test by being confronted with empirical information about the variables. The 13 questions in Box 2 capture the essence of the key variables.

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**Box 2.   The 13 major questions used to assess meaningful human rights-based democracy from below**

Intrinsic factors

- political identity/*demos*
  1. How do people identify themselves in public matters (as Indonesians, as members of districts or as members of a local or religious or ethnic community)?

- performance of instruments
  2. What is the efficiency and capacity-based performance of the 40 major instruments of democracy, and has performance improved or deteriorated since the 1999 elections?

- scope of instruments
  3. What is the geographical and substantive scope of the 40 instruments of democracy, and has it improved or deteriorated since the 1999 elections?

- actors' relation to instruments
  4. How do crucial actors relate to the 40 instruments of democracy (promote and use, use only, sometimes use, bypass/abuse), and in relation to what instruments are they strong or weak?
  5. What do pro-democracy actors deem to be the pros and cons of working with the 40 instruments of democracy?

- actors' capacity to promote and use or abuse instruments
  6. In what spheres of the widely defined political landscape are the actors present?
  7. In what way do the actors politicise which kind of issues, interests and ideas?
  8. In what ways do the actors mobilise popular support/involve people in politics?
  9. What strategies do the actors apply in making their way through or avoiding the political system?

Link to non-intrinsic conditions

- actors' capacity to read, adjust to and make use of structural and other conditions
  10. What do the actors deem to be their structural political opportunities?
  11. What sources of power do the actors rely on?
  12. How do the actors attempt to transform those powers into authority, legitimacy and thus political influence?
  13. What kind of values, ideas and experiences are the actors consciously or unconsciously guided by in their public activities?

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Before turning to the results however, the reader may also wish to know how we sought to collect the best sources of information with regard to these variables.

**Assessment from below**

Given the poor quality and availability of relevant databanks and previous research (which existing assessments nevertheless tend to draw on), the challenge is how to formulate questions and assemble information in such a way that one reaches beyond the usual elite-oriented surveys, and instead obtain information about the experiences and endeavours of ordinary people in local contexts. Participatory appraisals are good at generating ideas but lack precision and are difficult to multiply, standardise and generalise. A statistical sample of representative respondents is not a viable option when there is a need for the best possible substitute for hard data. People's perceptions matter of course, but realities exist beyond post modern interpretations. Besides, even researchers with political experience and extensive networks are not in command of what various opinion poll institutes seem to take for granted, namely sufficient knowledge of various contexts in large and complicated countries to formulate theory driven questions that ordinary people will be able to make sense of.

So the research project instead asked experienced and reflective democracy-activists around the country. After all, they should be the most knowledgeable sources about the problems and challenges of promoting and using democracy that they along with ordinary citizens face. They should also be able to understand more abstract questions and they should be capable of answering questions pertaining to both pro-democrats and the most dominant actors that they know of within their own contexts or fields of activity. They should be committed, experienced and reflective enough to answer with care and consideration. All the interviews were conducted by trained local assistants thus capable of relating the general questions to local conditions. The interviews were conducted in two rounds, allowing for a trial and

error process that would both help us to improve on the questions and to introduce well known examples in relation to most of them.

Issue-areas

The selection of the expert-informants was the most critical process. The first step was to identify the main issue-areas of pro-democracy work in Indonesia - issue-areas within which we would then select the grounded experts. This was done on the basis of an earlier, more limited survey carried out among human rights activists and reflective local journalists around the country and based on our case studies of the democracy movement as well as on the theoretical conclusions drawn from previous comparative research.[45]

One of the interesting survey results, to which we shall later return, is the variation of problems faced and options available between the issue areas, given their different histories, character and dynamics.

The issue-areas within which experts-informants were selected during the first round of the survey are as follows.

(1) *The struggle of peasants and agricultural labour to gain control of their land.* This is one of the most widespread mass movements around the country with deep historical roots in the anti-colonial struggle and the struggle for land reform. Currently many of the conflicts are over land expropriated during the Soeharto period, when peasants and agricultural workers were not allowed to organise - and their organisations remain scattered, fragmented and politically marginalised. The survey benefits from 72 expert informants in this issue-area.

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[45] Prasetyo, Priyono and Törnquist (2003), Törnquist 2002 and Harriss *et.al*. (2004)

(2) *The struggle of labour for better working conditions and standard of living.* Trade unions have an equally long history and are almost as widespread and politically marginalised as the farmers' groups. Having organised large sections of the workers during the 1950s, the trade union movement was severely undermined and repressed under the New Order. Various smaller groups and localised unions emerged in conjunction with rapid industrialisation, but rarely converged. The movement as a whole remains scattered, fragmented, weak and also isolated from many other sections of the democracy movement. There are 39 expert informants in 22 provinces from this issue-area.[46]

(3) *The struggle for the social, economic and other rights of the urban poor.* Poor people having to live on the margins of big cities have a series of specific problems in common, including the lack of clean water, sanitation, reasonable waste collection, schools and social security, in addition to regular problems with flooding, criminality and more. These problems increased with rapid economic growth under Soeharto and generated partially new social movements. We have 40 expert informants from this issue area.

(4) *The promotion of human rights.* The struggle for civil and political rights has been fundamental within the broader democracy movement since the 1970s and remains so to this day. When human rights campaigners became more engaged in the root causes of violations - as well as in involving the victims themselves in the struggle, and as campaigners within other issue-areas needed legal advice, the human rights arena also turned into a meeting place for various activists. There are 70 expert informants from this issue area.

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[46] The number of informants within this issue area is obviously not up to par. This partly reflects the poor integration between the labour and other sectors of the democracy movement. We regret not having observed this low number of informants at an early stage so that special efforts to increase the number could have been made.

(5) *The struggle against corruption in favour of 'good governance'.* The broad movement against KKN (corruption, collusion, and nepotism) under the New Order is in many respects alive and kicking, focusing on corruption within the public administration and the newly elected politicians. After many years, some sections of government have become involved with certain measures of their own. The survey has relied on 46 expert informants.

(6) *Attempts to democratise the party system.* Even though most pro-democracy activists appear sceptical of existing political parties, some realise that there are few alternatives and that there is a need therefore to either reform them or build new ones. Forty eight expert informants from within this field contribute to the survey.

(7) *The promotion of pluralism and religious and ethnic reconciliation.* Ethnic and religious differences were exposed and nourished during the reorganisation of power relations and the development of new economic, administrative and political regimes in Indonesia, at the central as well as local levels. This partially continues and there exists a broad movement for peace and reconciliation against the manipulation and abuse of Indonesia's unique plural system. There are 48 expert informants from within this issue-area.

During the second round of the survey, expert informants active in the following issue areas contributed their assessments of the problems and options of democratisation:

(8) *The improvement and democratisation of education.* Teachers were central to Indonesia's struggle for national independence and during its first period of democracy, until the late 1950s. The New Order put an end to this, and teachers in state schools are still prevented from entering politics. Yet vital efforts at promoting democracy are being made, including promoting the quality of education, resisting

commercialisation and advancing various alternatives. Sixty seven expert informants have been involved in the survey.

(9) *The promotion of professionalism as part of 'good governance' in public and private sectors.* There is widespread scepticism within the democracy movement of the role of business and the bureaucracy in relation to democracy. Yet we know from many other cases that in addition to teachers, journalists and politicians, there are also several other professionals who share an interest in promoting public accountability, professional efficiency, values and work ethics. There are 57 expert informants from this issue area.

(10) *The freedom, independence and quality of media.* In addition to the few lawyers who were committed to human rights and played a vital role in the struggle against the dictatorship, the wider and more solid constituency of serious journalists became increasingly engaged by the mid-1990s. This was when they realised that their interest in the freedom of the press also called for democratisation. At present the main preoccupation remains one of defending the freedom of the media, not only from political but also economic vested interest. The survey has relied on 73 expert informants.

(11) *The promotion of gender equality and feminist perspectives.* The struggle to fight gender inequality and bring women's experiences and interests to the forefront of public life away from hidden private domains has gained some momentum in Indonesia, especially since the fall of Soeharto. Sixty eight expert informants from this issue area have contributed to the survey.

(12) *The improvement of alternative representation at local level.* Many activists sceptical of the established parties and politicians have tried to develop alternative forms of representation at local level – for instance through community organising

and customary institutions, some of which may play a vital role in the furthering of democracy. We benefit from 63 expert informants from this issue area.

(13) *Attempts to form popular rooted political parties.* Given the key-importance of representation and political parties in any democracy, an assessment of democracy in Indonesia by those involved in Post-Soeharto party building is crucial. Fifty eight informants contributed to the survey.

(14) *Attempts at promoting interest-based mass organisations.* Another key-factor in most processes of democratisation is the emergence of interest-based mass organisations, including those related to major contradictions related to, for instance, labour and capital, control of land and other resources as well as gender. Indonesia clearly lags behind in this regard. Forty nine expert informants within this field have contributed to the survey.

Local representatives and informants

Having selected the issue-areas, the second step was the identification and mobilisation of good *key*-informants or local representatives – in our case in 32 provinces. This process supplemented the knowledge of the team, helped identify strategic processes and the best informants from the various issue areas. It also enabled the selection and supervision of the (109) assistants who carried out the interviews. The local representatives must be accountable for their work and thus their identities are public, whereas the expert-informants themselves remain anonymous.[47]

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[47] Demos local representatives: 1. Aceh, Juanda M. Djamal (human rights activist, General Secretary Achenese Civil Society Task Force, Banda Aceh), 2. North Sumatera, J. Anto (press activist, Director of KIPPAS Foundation, Medan), 3. Riau, Irfan Misuari Sudrajat (anti-corruption activist, Director LPAD, Pekan Baru) and Ahmad Jamaan (journalist, press activist in AJI Pekanbaru & Dumai Pos), 4. Kepulauan Riau, Hendri Anak Abd. Rahman (local government watchdog, Batam), 5. West Sumatera, Edi Indrizal (lecturer at Andalas University, Director LASP, Padang), 6. Jambi, Kasmadi (social activist, Director LSPS, Jambi), 7. Bengkulu, Usin Abdisyah

In Indonesia, the ideal equation would thus be a minimum of two expert-informants (independent of each other) within each of the 14 issue areas in 32 provinces – a total of 896 informants. In practice, the target had to be reduced because of sheer lack of sufficient experts within certain issue areas in some of the provinces. There were also some informants who could not participate due to security problems, misunderstandings, as well as a few unreliable local assistants

Meanwhile, the assessment framework generated more than 300 questions and tests indicated that each interview (carried out by our trained field assistants) might take as long as six hours. In reality, some informants took several days to complete the questionnaire. These were therefore rather demanding tasks for all the parties involved, quite apart from risks to personal security in some places. In fact, it is primarily thanks to good cooperation with remarkably committed sections of the democracy movement that the outcome yielded a total of 798 valid responses. The interviews were conducted in two rounds to allow for trial and error. A total resurvey

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Putra (human rights activist, General Secretary United Fishermen of Bengkulu, Bengkulu), 8. South Sumatera, Taufik Wijaya (press activist, Palembang), 9. Lampung, Idhan Januwardhana (active in peasant organisations, Director PUSSBIK, Lampung) and Turaihan Aldi (activist at Kantor Bantuan Hukum Lampung), 10. Bangka Belitung, Emil Mahmud (press activist, journalist in Bangka Pos, Pangkal Pinang) and Nurhayat Arif Permana (activist at Tavern Institute of Political and Social Culture), 11. Banten, Iwan Kusuma Hamdan (Director CIRED, Serang) and Agus Sutisna (Director of LPSDM HAM Banten), 12. Jakarta, Agustinus Agung Wijaya (researcher at Demos, Jakarta), 13. West Java, Haneda Sri Lastoto (human rights activist, lawyer at Biro Hukum Pasundan, Bandung) and Hemasari (labour activist, Director of IUF), 14. Central Java, Johny Simanjuntak (lawyer, Director Yayasan ATMA, Surakarta), 15. Yogyakarta, Erry Syahrian (Lapera Indonesia, Yogyakarta), 16. East Java, Cahyo Suryanto (social activist, Director Pusdakota, Surabaya), 17. West Kalimantan, Bambang Bider (journalist, active in Yayasan Pancur Kasih, Pontianak) and Evi Flavia (activist at Institute Dayakologi), 18. Central Kalimantan, Mathius Hosang (environment activist, active in HIMBA, Palangkaraya), 19. South Kalimantan, Noorhalis Madjid (reconciliation activist, Director LK3, Banjarmasin), 20. East Kalimantan, Methodius Nyompe (active in JEF, Samarinda) and Darius Dalip (human rights activist at Samarinda), 21. Bali, Putu Wirata (Director Bali Corruption Watch, Denpasar) and Drs. Chusmeru, Msi (lecturer at Udayana University), 22. West Nusa Tenggara, Sulistyono (KOSLATA, Mataram, Lombok), 23. East Nusa Tenggara, Sarah Lerry Mboeik (human rights activist, Director PIAR, Kupang), 24. Maluku, George Corputty (conflict reconciliation activist, active in Yayayan Baileo, Ambon), 25. North Maluku, Murid (journalist in Ternate), 26. North Sulawesi, Reiner Moh. Jusuf Ointoe (Director Yayasan Serat, Manado), 27. Gorontalo, Alim S. Niode (lecturer in IKIP Negeri, activist in anti-corruption movement, Gorontalo), 28. Central Sulawesi, Arianto Sangaji (environment activist, local government watch activist, active in Yayasan Tanah Merdeka, Palu), 29. Southeast Sulawesi, La Ode Ota (local government watch activist, active in WALHI, Kendari) and Jumwal Saleh (press activist, Executive Secretary at Komunika Kendari), 30. South Sulawesi, Adnan Buyung Azis (active in LBH, Makassar) and Aidir Amin Daud (lecturer at University of Hasanuddin, also media watch activist), 31. Papua & West Irian Jaya, Paskalis Letsoin (LBH Papua, Jayapura) and Mohammad Kholifan (journalist, activist at Common Ground).

should now be feasible within half the time and budget that was allotted for this pioneering exercise.

Contexts

As already indicated, it was beyond the capacity of the team to adjust all the questions to the many different local contexts in the country and produce several yet compatible versions of the questionnaire. We had to rely on the skill of the interviewers, the experience and expertise of the informants and (in the second round of the survey) the addition of general examples in relation to each question. It was also not possible to identify qualified informants within all the issue areas in all the provinces simply because there *are* differences between the contexts. As in relation to the issue-areas, an exciting outcome of the survey, therefore, lies in the similarities and differences between those contexts.

The best regional sub-categorisation would no doubt have been the many hundreds of districts – the *kabupaten,* to which much of the organised decentralisation of powers has taken place. And the second best would have been the thirty-two provinces. The *kabupaten* in particular are where much of the new local political dynamics is evolving around parliaments and directly elected executives. Neither the districts nor the provinces were possible as regional sub-categories due to limited economic and human resources. To the other extreme then, one might consider working with a general division between Eastern and Western Indonesia, arguing that there are major differences between the less developed East with more ethnic and religious segregation between various communities and residential areas than in the economically more developed West. Yet that involves too many simplifications, and geopolitical aspects must also be added to the formula. In drafting a compromise with

semi-large regions, additional characteristics had to be applied. One category was obviously major economic, social, cultural and political differences, including those that may spur the much feared centrifugal tendencies. Another category relates to geopolitics, i.e. where it is possible for political activists to meet and unite - not just for problematic separatist ambitions but also for possible pro-democratic purposes. In this connection it was also important that suitable regions were selected in order that regional assessment seminars could be organised between the *Demos'* team and local informants as a forum in which to deliberate the results and recommendations arising out of the survey.

By taking all this into consideration, we finally opted for separate analyses of five clusters of provinces – Eastern Indonesia (with Papua), Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Java-Bali, and Sumatra (with Aceh). On several variables we have added separate analyses of the disturbed provinces of Aceh and Papua.

*Eastern Indonesia* (including Papua, Maluku and North Maluku, and East and West Nusa Tenggara) is not as densely populated as several other parts of the country and in general economically less developed than other regions and thus a possible loser in terms of decentralisation. The population is ethnically rather diverse – there are areas with transmigrates, and in terms of religion there are important Christian pockets. Aside from these pockets, Golkar dominates politics. Papua is of course special in terms of the excessive exploitation of raw materials and long standing conflicts over economic, cultural and political rights, and the strong demands for special autonomy or independence. One hundred and six of *Demos'* informants are located in Eastern Indonesia.

*Sulawesi* with its five provinces is economically better endowed with various natural resources and dynamic business centres such as Makassar. There are areas

with transmigrates, and Muslims dominate outside of some Christian pockets. Politically Golkar is at the forefront. One hundred and thirty three of *Demos'* informants are located in this region.

Sparsely populated *Kalimantan* with its inhabitants scattered across four provinces benefits from various natural resources and is thus a winner in terms of decentralisation. It suffers however from poor infrastructure and ethnically and religiously divided population with many transmigrates as well as complicated political and other conflicts. Eighty-six of *Demos'* informants are from Kalimantan.

Most densely populated *Java-Bali* with seven provinces and special regions is the economically, infra-structurally and administratively most well-developed part of the country. The industrial centres are mainly in the North, from around Jakarta (but also Bandung) in the West, via Semarang in the Centre and Surabaya in the East. Java-Bali is of course a melting pot in many respects, with many migrants and religious as well as economic and political differences; but it has clearly turned into one social and political power system. Two hundred and forty seven of *Demos'* informants are from Java-Bali.

*Sumatra* with its nine provinces, including Aceh, is perhaps the most internally diverse region. It is also rich in natural resources, though they are unevenly spread. There are vital industries located in the main around Medan in North Sumatra. Some provinces such as Riau are economically very well endowed while others are not. Ethnically, religiously and politically Sumatra is also mixed. Aceh is of course special in terms of long standing exploitation and repression but also popular resistance (with and without arms) and demand for human rights, democratic principles and self-rule or independence. Our survey was carried out before the

tsunami and recent peace agreement. Two hundred and twenty six informants contributed to the survey from Sumatra.


**Limitation, and checks and balances**

Mass data-based analysis is necessary in order to reach general conclusions, and expert-informants are necessary where it is difficult to specify and contextualise the questions and when there is a need for experienced judgments – but there are also major weaknesses.

First, of course, contextual factors may not be considered in the same depth as they might in case studies and it is difficult to probe into special factors as is possible with more thematic essays.

Second, one may indeed criticise our rough regional divisions, but given the pattern of previous conflicts and centrifugal tendencies in Indonesia it should be possible to trace major tendencies regarding differences and similarities in the problems and options of democratisation.

Third, in contrast to an ordinary survey based on a statistical sample, an expert survey helps in obtaining the most qualified and innovative answers, but generates problems of representation. In our case, the major problem seems to have been the dominance of middle-aged informants and the low representation of women. Whilst this may in itself be a reflection of the actual composition of experienced and reflective experts within the Indonesian democracy movement (or the perception of what constitutes an expert by others), it is important to at least try to compensate for the gender biases in any future surveys.

Fourth, the background, personal opinions and other biases must have affected: (a) the team's selection of the key-informants as well as their joint selection

and training of the local assistants and identification of the expert-informants to be interviewed, (b) the interviewers' guidance given to and recording of the informants assessments, and (c) the interviewed informants' own judgements and estimates. Aside from trying to live up to the basic principles of concerned scholarship,[48] the team has been able to control some of the weaknesses through comparisons within the material itself, including by contrasting information from partially overlapping questions and experts related to different issue areas, regions and gender. Overall then, the general level of consistency within the material has been high. The concern among many colleagues that critical pro-democracy activists on the ground would be prone to exaggerate the problems in spite of being experienced and reflective has been proven wrong. Many of their collective judgements have in fact been more balanced than those of media-hungry, top-level experts. Both the consistency within the material and the comparatively mature judgements also testify to the commitment and seriousness of the informants – and to the value of assessing democracy from below.

In addition, the alternative assessment framework includes quality checks by the team itself and the provision of supplementary information through (two) national and (13) regional assessment councils with senior scholars and reflective activists. This is in addition to meetings with interested organisations and a series of semi-structured interviews with particularly experienced informants in three of the issue areas that stood out as strategically important based on the results of the first round survey: alternative local representation, party building, and attempts to broaden interest-based mass organisations.[49] A mini re-survey on key factors with a limited

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[48] C.f. Törnquist 2004a

[49] Thirty-five extensive interviews were carried out by the central team with nine informants in Sumatra, fourteen in Java - including Jakarta, three in Kalimantan, four in Sulawesi, two in East Nusa Tenggara, and one in Bali, Papua and Maluku respectively.

number of informants has also been carried out in order to glean some preliminary ideas concerning changes over time.

Unfortunately, as previously mentioned, it has not been possible to uphold the highest possible quality control in this concluding book. The reason is not due to irresolvable disagreements on the fundamentals, but to quite practical problems of organisation, communication, translation, coordination and different priorities regarding structure, in-depth analyses, and presentation. Nevertheless, the basic data, the most important arguments and the general conclusions have been thoroughly checked, and I take due responsibility for the conclusions in my capacity as academic co-director. Of course, the principle authors of each chapter have also done their utmost to control the detailed facts and the accuracy of their more precise arguments.


**User-Oriented Approach**

Whereas the first major task of developing and applying a framework for bottom-up assessment of the problems and options of a meaningful human rights-based democracy may thus have been achieved, the second phase of putting the results into practice by facilitating implementation of the recommendations has just started.

The initial steps have been fruitful. The prestigious assessment councils have served the purpose of providing the team with improvements to its work and legitimacy of the results. Popular presentations of the results in twelve instalments in the country's leading weekly news magazine *Tempo* have disseminated the results widely. Additional presentations and discussions with activists and politicians, data

summaries and related information and resources are now being made available on the *Demos* website.[50]

The major task of improving the recommendations and facilitating their implementation in cooperation with the democracy movement is, however, much more difficult.

The foundations are created in three parallel steps. The first is to promote public academic education and further analysis beyond the immediate aims of *Demos* by sharing de-personalised data and international academic cooperation with committed scholars and students in the country.[51] The second step is the generation of an agenda based on the deliberations of the survey results within major sections of the democracy movement for what type of research and services *Demos* should prioritise with its supportive funding partners. The third step is this revised concluding report from the survey to the international conference in Jakarta in late 2005 in order to facilitate discussion on a fresh agenda for the reinvigoration of democratisation.[52]

The results presented in this book will be followed up with more specific topics of research and consultancies, dissemination of information and the facilitation of cooperation based on comments and proposals from the regional assessment councils, meetings with various pro-democracy organisations and scholars and the already mentioned conference. For more information, visit www.demos.or.id .

**Outline of the book**

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[50] www.demos.or.id

[51] Part of the background to *Demos*' work is that academically critical students and scholars were displaced from the academic world under Soeharto. Thus we are eager to contribute to the restoring of such critical milieus rather than to the 'privatization' of universities through NGO and think tank-driven research whenever it is not necessary to produce good independent research.

[52] Hopefully the report will also be a useful tool in the development of educational programmes in human rights-based democracy, including cooperation between the University of Gadjah Mada and the University of Oslo.

It is time to turn to the results.

*Chapter two* comprises of a discussion on the deficit of democracy. In contrast to many sweeping critics, most pro-democracy actors do not view what has been achieved as meaningless and democracy as unattainable. While our informants agree that there is a long way to go and even signs of a crisis, they also view the civil and political freedoms in a rather favourable way (the one exception is freedom from physical violence and the fear of it). It is true that basic social and economic rights (such as the right to work) and the real tools of democracy (such as the instruments of law and governance) are generally poor and almost non-existent in places like Aceh, but even our sceptical informants say that it makes sense to defend, use and further develop many of those institutions as well.

Meaningful democracy, however, will need more than just top-down institution building with, for example, well designed parliaments and anti-corruption bodies. The survey clearly suggests that this approach has reached a dead end. Aside from the rather positive freedoms, almost all rights and institutions that are supposed to promote democracy are deemed to be poor or defunct, and there have been few signs of improvements since 1999. Many informants even suggest that specific institutions that should prevent money politics, corruption, paramilitary groups, thugs and organised crime, and promote subordination of the executives to the rule of law have deteriorated.

The *third chapter* asks what should be prioritised. The conventional positions are better rule of law, anti-corruption or people's rights and participation. Our grounded experts are more clear-cut. Their message is that while those sectors are all poor, the worst is the defunct representation of people's own basic interests and ideas on how public life should be organised. In other words, the building of better

institutions must be guided and propelled by broad-based representation of citizens' interests and vision rather than by more or less enlightened elite. The free and fair elections have mainly been contented by unrepresentative and unresponsive parties and politicians; and mass based interest organisations such as unions are scattered and marginalised. This has been neglected by democracy supporters. Influential actors and middle class lobby groups may live with that, but the people at large cannot. In addition, improved popular representation is strategic in being the only way in which all the other defunct sectors can be improved in a democratic way rather than, for example, by authoritarian Singaporean means of anti-corruption.

*The fourth chapter* demonstrates that the stagnation of democratisation is due to the fact that the established elite that were supposed to promote - or at least be disciplined by, the new institutions, have instead 'colonised' them. Interestingly, Indonesia is not like many other new democracies where powerful elites mainly bypass new institutions like parliaments by taking the real decisions in company boardrooms or military quarters. Even our critical informants 'admit' that dominant actors such as district heads, military officers, businessmen and even militia leaders relate to the new rules of democracy. On a superficial level democracy has thus become 'the main game in town'. The real dilemma is instead that the dominant elite bend and abuse the rules of that game by monopolising elections, parliaments, the judiciary and the bureaucracy.

To fight this one must know and understand the root causes. The fourth chapter also demonstrates that the sources of power and strongholds of the dominant elite lie in neither private business nor in the state alone, but in a combination of both. Similar to the practices of indirect colonial rule, powerful businessmen use local state and politics to obtain privileges – thus simultaneously nourishing 'bad governance',

while many bureaucrats and politicians sustain this process to enhance their position and develop their own business interests. Consequently, the monopolisation of democracy can neither be fought by privatisation nor by statism as this would only enhance one or the other of the destructive tendencies involved. Neo-liberal Russian-like oligarchs or Chinese-like state capitalists would be equally bad. Logically, it requires instead an anti-monopolistic social pact – a class compromise between on the one hand businessmen and professionals who can advance without privileged protection but need a reliable labour force, and on the other hand ordinary people who can work hard if they obtain jobs and social security.

Historical lessons from South Africa and Brazil to parts of India and Europe suggest that such pacts must be negotiated and guaranteed by a democratic state. In this regard, the conclusion is that a reinvigorated democracy movement is the only potential force that could facilitate an Indonesian pact. Most elite groups would stand to lose, independent private business and professionals are weak, and labour is both weak and poor.

The remaining question is how this potential of the pro-democrats can become real. The *fifth chapter* addresses the final and self-critical but bold conclusion of our informants: that pro-democrats remain vital within associational life and as pressure groups but are unable to present a viable alternative. The problem is that they are short of a broad social base and confined to the margins of politics. About 55 percent of the informants say that activists prioritise efforts at direct democracy through associational life, while only some 7 percent say that they combine this with engagement in constitutional, representative democracy. The space is thus wide open for continued elitist monopolisation of the basic democratic institutions. To facilitate de-monopolisation and a meaningful democracy, the activists have to widen the social

base of their local civic capacities, transform concrete issues and interests among emerging social movements into governance agendas, federate associated political formations and foster combined forms of direct democracy in associational live and representative democracy through political institutions. If the democracy movement cannot fight the crisis of representation and thus pave the way for a social pact against political monopolisation it will become irrelevant.

*The sixth chapter* then, analyses the extent to which these general conclusions are simply aggregates or also valid for the different regions. Interestingly, there are few major differences. Aceh and Papua are indeed separate cases with more severe problems than elsewhere, but generally speaking a rather coherent political system seems to emerge in the country in terms of similar problems and options of democracy. One conclusion is thus that there is much for pro-democrats to unite to fight, defend and promote – even if they start working from below and in special contexts rather than resort to elitist top-down measures. And it may make more sense for pro-democrats in Aceh and Papua to link up with these efforts to thus transform violent conflicts into peaceful politics than to fight in the mountains. Whether the dominant elite will also realise that the emerging democratic system and improvements from below is a better opportunity to handle regional diversity and inevitable conflicts than constraints and coercion from above is another matter, but the option is there.

The *seventh chapter* asks a similar question with regard to the myriad of activists along as many as fourteen different frontlines of pro-democracy work: are our results a pure aggregate of their expert assessments or do they share similar judgements? Is it perhaps that they have quite a few things to agree on, in spite of certain differences? The answer is mixed. The pro-democrats tend to specialise within

their different issue areas and there are few overlaps in terms of their respective concerns – aside perhaps from policies and actions that would internationally be associated with a 'green-left' agenda with little base amongst organised labour. There are clearly more disagreements amongst the informants from the fourteen different issue areas than between the informants from different regions. The movement remains fragmented. For example, those focusing on human rights or gender, or those who work with the urban poor are particularly critical with regard to the state of democracy, while those trying to reform political parties are more positive. Yet there *is* a movement of democrats, not just a cluster of scattered groups. One thing that brings these groups together is their general (if not detailed) agreement on the four major problems and options of democratisation that are emphasised in this report. And aside from the difference between networking middle class groups and more broadly and firmly organised groups related to the subordinate classes, most branches of the democracy movement seem to be almost equally floating and politically marginalised.  Thus there is potential for agreement on a series of critical demands as well as the need for joint improvements among the activists themselves.

The *eighth chapter*, then, summarises the salient points and discusses the extent to which they validate or invalidate the major arguments on democratisation that were outlined in the beginning of the book.

In addition, in *chapter nine Demos* initiates the collective discussion concerning recommendations on how to proceed. Only the struggle is possible to predict. But given the options and the potential of bringing the democrats back in, meaningful human rights-based democracy is not a lost cause.

Finally, *chapter ten* reports briefly on the mini-survey that was carried out after the technically successful 2004 elections had been completed and while this

book was in production, in order to check if major changes with regard to the problems and options of democracy had occurred. The general conclusion is negative.

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These are harsh conclusions presenting serious problems. It may be rewarding, however, to examine the results in somewhat more detail. This is because as is made clear from the following chapters, pro-democracy actors are faced with several options and potential for moving forward, not just problems.