

An Overview of the Journey of Political Parties in Indonesia from a Socio-historical Perspective

Safrizal Rambe¹, Zulkarnain²

^{1,2}Universitas Nasional, Indonesia

Email: Safrizal.rambe@yahoo.com

Abstract:

Democratic country usually generates a healthy, growing, and rooted political party. In Indonesia, political parties had long been known before Indonesia's independence. At that time, the political party became the medium of the founding fathers' struggle to fight against colonialism. Since Indonesia's Independence Day, the existence of a political party was admitted and supported by the government. This study needs to make a political point of view. It will enrich learning and understanding of the existence of political parties concerning the development of Political Science in Indonesia. The focus of this study is to describe how the political party's history and its role from Orde Lama until the Orde Baru era in Indonesia. This study uses a qualitative research method, and data interpretation will be analyzed with the descriptive analysis method. In the meantime, data validation will be checked and rechecked after collecting data. This study concludes that Indonesian politics has experienced a significant shift in values and practices. Indonesia started the state process with the concept of gotong royong. It was oriented to the welfare of the people with the leadership of the assembly institution as the people's representative in the form of deliberation.

Keywords:

political parties; journey; Indonesia; an overview

I. Introduction

According to the experts, the management of a country would be formed into democracy if the preconditions of the political party were fulfilled. As a result, a country without a political party cannot turn into a democracy. A democratic country is indicated with healthy, growing, and rooted from below, which has a political party a channel for society's aspirations. The political party is a legitimate mechanism for recruiting politicians who run the legitimate government.

In Indonesia, political parties had long been known before Indonesia's independence. At that time, the political party became the medium of the founding fathers' struggle to fight against colonialism. Since Indonesia's Independence Day, the existence of a political party was admitted and supported by the government. Keep in mind democratic governmental system is the legitimate general election as a mechanism of leadership regeneration. On the other side, there will be injured if the management of the party system develops an aim to be disintegrative. As a result, the application of the multi-party system inflicted conflict for each party in Orde Lama.

Some countries have applied the multi-party system for decades in the West and generated a stable political system. Unlike the Indonesian version, they emphasize the combination of party and governmental systems. The multi-party system of western countries is in the form of a parliamentary governmental system instead of Indonesia's form of

government applying a presidential system in the democracy era. However, Indonesia had applied a parliamentary system for a moment. According to experts, the parliamentary governmental system is more compatible with a multi-party system. In the meantime, the presidential governmental system is more compatible with a country that applies a two-party or multi-party system.

Learning from the ideas of experts said above. The governmental system applied is inversely proportional to the reality of the political party. As a result, a multi-party system generates an unstable governmental system and conflict between each party.

This research study is about the existence, responsibility, and harmful impact of political parties from the revolution era, the Orde Baru period, until this reformation era in Indonesia. It is valuable, strategic, and evaluative for us as Indonesian to learn and discuss the political party. In addition, it also gives us moral value from Orde Lama until the Orde Baru era. According to Orde Lama and the reformation era, the party system has similarities. They have the same multi-party system, mainly in the democracy era, collaborating with the presidential governmental system. According to Liberal Democracy, from 1945 until 1959, the domination of political parties in Indonesia existed during the reformation era. As a result of several similarities interpreted above, this research hopefully can be helpful not only for giving moral values in that range of time and give us moral values in this era.

II. Review of Literatures

In general, it can be said that politics, according to Miriam Budiarjo (2008, p. 15), is an attempt to determine regulations that are acceptable to the majority of citizens to bring society towards a harmonious coexistence. Efforts to achieve the good life involve various activities that include determining the goals of the political system. This condition involves choosing several alternatives and the order of priority of the goals that have been determined.

However, these activities can cause conflict because the values (both material and mental) pursued are usually rare in nature. On the other hand, in a democracy, this activity also requires cooperation because human life is collective. In this context, politics can be seen as an effort to resolve conflicts (conflict resolution) or consensus (consensus) (Miriam Budiarjo, 2008, p. 15).

According to Ramlan Surbakti, there are five views on the meaning of politics (1992, p. 1-8). First, in the classical view, Aristotle sees politics as an association of citizens whose function is to discuss and organize matters concerning the common good of all members of society. In the classical view, the highest moral basis lies in matters concerning the common good rather than in matters involving private interests.

Politics is the activity of discussing or defining the situation of a political phenomenon (Cholisin, 2007, p. 6). Politics is a competitive definition of the situation. The winner is a definition that can become public opinion and become a political issue that ultimately becomes a decision maker's discussion and becomes a political decision. From the various understandings of politics above, the author concludes that politics is the authority's power over citizens to influence (supporting, changing, opposing) a state/public policy.

Hoogerwerf stated that the object of political science is government policy, the process of its formation and its consequences. What is meant by public policy here according to Hogewerft is to build society in a directed manner using power (doelbewuste vormgeving aan de samenleving door middel van machtsuitoefening) (Budiarjo, 2008, p. 21). Thomas R. Dye defines state policy as whatever government chooses to or not to do (Fauzan, 2000, p. 25).

III. Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative research method. Qualitative research is a method used for exploring and understanding the meaning derived from social issues. This qualitative research process involves fundamental measures, such as submitting questions and procedures, collecting specific data taken from participants and informants, and analyzing and interpreting data. This qualitative research method aims to construct meaning based on phenomena derived from Participants and information (Fawaid, 2016).

In another view, Moleong said that the qualitative method is research aimed at understanding phenomena experienced by the research subject. They are such as attitudes, perceptions, motivation, and other behaviour in the form of words and language in a particular context. The qualitative method also directly gives the essence of the relationship between the researcher and respondents. This method is more sensible and adapts to many values (Moleong, 2011).

A qualitative research method is used in this research because of some reasons. First, the research object used in this issue is compatible with the dynamic state of Indonesia's political issues, which tend to change temporarily. Second, this research tries to give a broad explanation of the issues of using the district system in the general election in Indonesia.

Some data used in this research will be data sources and will be fundamental for developing analysis. The data will be classified as primary and secondary data. Primary data derives from the Local Leaders Election Law and concerning Local Leaders Election. In the meantime, secondary data will use books and magazines that describe the Local Leaders' Election implementation process.

The data collected from both primary and secondary will be classified and categorized into particular aspects regarding the research dimension. Then, it will be elaborated in order to make structured data. In conclusion, the researcher analyzes and enlarges into a systematic arrangement in the form of words and statements.

The data collecting method in this research involves measuring the limitation of research and collecting information through data collecting of documents and interviews. Next, the number of informants nominated in qualitative research refers to Creswell's idea. The sample indicator depends on the qualitative design used (e.g., ethnography or case study). According to Creswell's review of qualitative research, he found 1-2 informants in narrative qualitative research, 3-10 informant in phenomenology qualitative, and 20-30 informant in grounded theory qualitative. The ethnography method can only analyze one particular cultural group concerning a case study involving 4-5 cases (Fawaid, 2016). In this research, the qualitative research method is categorized into phenomenology. Therefore, there will be 3-10 informants.

The data elaboration and analysis method begin with analyzing whole data obtained from research result in several sources and information obtained earlier. Next, the data will be learned and analyzed to earn the essentials derived from the informant should be kept to keep the existence, and the research conclusion will be obtained.

The data elaboration and analysis method in this research consist of: First, data processing; This process begins with collecting data from the field of study and analyzing whole data obtained from several sources. Next, the research instrument classifies the information and will be summarized and described narratively. Second, Categorization; Categorization is a data summary arranged based on thought, intuition, and opinion, refers to specific criteria and will be placed into each category. The researcher forms an information category and gives a code. This process involves what is called an information breakdown. Third, Data Interpreting; Data Interpreting is interpreted or breakdown using an appropriate descriptive analysis method with the aim of the study. Next, it will be interpreted towards analysis results concerning related theory. The result hopefully can be responsible to principle. Data interpretation in this research cannot be separated from guidance derived from theory conceptualization.

Rechecking the data is an activity that cannot be separated from the researchers' level of satisfaction using data sources collected previously. Therefore, ensuring the correctness of data is necessary. The data validation activity is to be carried out by examining the data that has been collected, then confirming it again with the data that has been collected, and then carrying out further data compilation or categorization. This activity is carried out repeatedly until the appropriate research is obtained and the researcher considers it. This data validation is also related to checking and rechecking activities on the collected data. If problems are found in the data research process, the researcher must improve the data from the latest findings.

IV. Discussion

The characteristics of the political parties' birth during the nationalist movement was their vision that the national struggle would be more effective if carried out through existing associations, which they gradually organized in a modern way with the form of political parties—starting with the establishment of the Sarekat Islam, which was the pioneer of Indonesia's national awakening in 1905 (Rambe, 2008), Boedi Oetomo, Muhammadiyah, Indische Partij, Indische SocialDemocratische Vereniging (ISDV), and Indische SocialDemocratische Partij (ISDP), two parties which were the precursors to the growth of the Marxist in Indonesia, Jamiat Khair, Al Irsyad, Youth Association, Islamic Union (Persis), Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Indonesian National Party (PNI), Indonesian National Education (PNI Pendidikan), Indonesian Party, the Indonesian People's Movement (Gerindo), the United Indonesia Party (Parpindo), the Indonesian People's Party and the Great Indonesia Party (Parindra).

Since political parties have sprung up and experienced ups and downs, their influence is felt in our present-day (2009). However, many people did not know that the emergence of political parties shortly after the independence proclamation was driven by an incident sequence of events. On the other hand, the Presidential cabinet formed after the Proclamation was relatively strong, thanks to the relationship with Japan. The entry of Allied troops began to cause several difficulties for the Soekarno-Hatta cabinet. The Dutch were hostile and accused this cabinet of being led and filled by Japanese "collaborators". They propagated that

the government formed was illegitimate and said that Soekarno-Hatta was a war "criminal" who must be arrested.

Under these conditions, there is a consensus among politically aware circles in Jakarta that this conservative government must end immediately. This condition can only be done by overhauling the existing government with a new government that is perceived to take swift action to compensate for the changing situation. The man behind these movements was Sutan Sjahrir, who strongly influenced the youth.

The first step that Sjahrir took was on October 7 to organize 50 members of the Central Indonesian National Committee (KNIP) from 150 of its members to sign a petition to Soekarno-Hatta granting legislative status to the Indonesian Legislative Election (DPR) (Noer, 1991). The second step that Sjahrir has prepared for the transition of the Presidential government system can be more compatible with the Parliamentary which is prepared by preparing the existing party system infrastructure from a single party to a multi-party system.

Hatta issued a new Declaration No. X dated November 3th, which urges the people to establish political parties to accommodate the existing political currents and the struggle for national liberation. The people are actively fighting for something. This announcement was indeed heard as a blessing from the government to establish existing political parties. However, this was just a formal announcement for political figures who had previously founded several parties. When Hatta proclaimed his recommendation for establishing political parties, the three most essential parties representing the three major sects had already been established. However, after the recommendation of the X Declaration, more and more political parties emerged, and this marked a new era with the introduction of the multi-party system along with the transition from the Presidential to Parliamentary government system with the appointment of Sutan Sjahrir as the first Prime Minister of the Republic of Indonesia.

Ever since, the existence of political parties has automatically become important. If observers want to point out the period in which political parties played a significant role, then the period of liberal democracy is often referred to as something. This period also inspired the multi-party system we adopted in this reform era. Fortunately, we used a presidential system of government, not parliamentary.

The period of Liberal Democracy is when the emergence of political parties and their role takes a central position in the Indonesian political system. In addition, this period is also referred to as the "trial period" or "experimental democracy" for the Indonesian people. These periods of experimenting certainly require mature-minded figures and those who have sufficient intellectual skills to apply other people's ideas in changing conditions (Karim, 1983). Feith said that this period is a period when "the world of political thought" and "the world of political reality" are very close together, a political thinker at the same time acting as a politician who is trying to apply the big ideas they think (Yubhar, 1988).

According to Arbi Sanit, it was not easy to reach a consensus among the existing political parties because it was triggered by the thick ideological ties surrounding each party. No ideology moves the elites to be able to cooperate based on fundamental agreements in politics, state, and nation. The ideology expected to bring people to an ideal condition that they aspired to is inversely proportional to what they want. The existing ideologies provide an overview of the ideals to be achieved and function as laws that judge the right or wrong of

other ideologies without critically assessing their ideology (Nuswantoro, 2001). Not to mention the competition between parties/groups in fighting over certain positions that are more of personal interest and parties/groups, also sharpening the conflict in society.

However, what is far more dangerous than just clashes among the elites is how the conflicts at the national level have also penetrated the mass level in rural areas, which has made the previously maintained communal order often torn apart by conflict. The culmination of this ideological dispute occurred during the lengthy 1955 election campaign after enacting the Election Law. The elections, held for the first time since Indonesia's independence, were enthusiastically responded to by political parties. However, they forgot that the involvement of the masses in the political arena—more remarkable than in the revolutionary era, had caused the masses at the grassroots level to become often turbulent. Neither the elite nor the masses are aware that excessive and blind political participation has confirmed what Geertz said is a polarization of religiosity and political culture that is vulnerable to conflict. As Geertz points out, the *santri* and *abangan* variants are increasingly facing each other.

Since the first attempt was made in 1946, the long-awaited general election was finally held on April 4, 1955. Many surprises occurred, which were an anomaly to the alleged potential strength of the existing political parties. Perhaps the biggest surprise was NU increasing its seats in Parliament from 8 to 45 people. It is even more surprising that the PSI, whose influence during the ten years of Indonesia's independence was considerable, even had some of its figures crisscrossed to fill important positions in the cabinet. The vote was only 2%, which was very a small gain.

Even though the election has filtered out the parties no longer as many as 40 parties, political instability persists. Dissatisfaction with the cabinet continues. Burhanuddin Harahap's cabinet, which successfully delivered the election, still fell. His successor to the Ali Sastroamidjojo II cabinet also did not last long, only until March 1957. After that, the mandate was returned to President Soekarno (Karim, 1983). Disappointment throughout parliamentary democracy with its practices and consequences quickly spread to many circles. In this case, Soekarno was the one who showed the most resistance to the idea of Western democracy. In one of his speeches, for the first time, Sukarno put forward his idea of a new system, which would later be known as Guided Democracy. Indeed, Soekarno said that he did not want to be a dictator. However, he said the importance of Guided Democracy. 1 year later (1957), Soekarno then went even more clearly when he criticized liberal democracy, which he said was the culprit for the destruction of the government system.

Soekarno's concept referred to what he put forward in his June 1, 1945 speech. It is about cooperation. He stated that there were two offers that he thought were a way out to resolve the spread of sectarian groups and parties, namely the Gotong Royong Cabinet and the National Council. Both ideas must be seen in Soekarno's scepticism toward political parties. As we will see in the following years, the role of political parties is getting less and less. Three years later, in February 1959, the power of political parties was finally disarmed. He suggested that the Indonesian people return to the 1945 Constitution as the basis for their Guided Democracy. Furthermore, he asked all the people that the Constituent Assembly, which had been convening for three years but could not finalize the new Constitution, should immediately disband and use the 1945 Constitution again.

After implementing the Guided Democracy cabinet, the Parliamentary turned into a Presidential cabinet, unlike the previous period where the cabinet was led by a Prime Minister (who headed the government). Nevertheless, now the government is directly held by Soekarno himself as the President (Head of State) and concurrently Prime Minister (Head of Government). The role of political parties and Parliament gradually shifted to Soekarno as he tried to concentrate power in his hands. Leaders of high state institutions such as the Provisional People's Consultative Assembly (MPRS), House of Representatives for Mutual Cooperation (DPR GR) and Budget Execution Documents (DPA), according to the Constitution, are equal to the President, but Soekarno is positioned as ministers.

The collapse of the Old Order, which the New Order later replaced, has brought about significant changes in the Indonesian political system. The New Order emerged with the determination to implement Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution purely and consistently. In the early days of the New Order, the classic debate about which should take precedence between political development and economic development resurfaced. Political and economic development are two things that cannot be separated and are two main elements that must always be present in national development (Mas'ood, 1989).

In this case, the General Election is the main focus. The people's representatives who sit in Parliament are not elected based on elections but are appointed directly by President Soekarno. Several strategies have been prepared to support this plan. Several regulations concerning the General Election and the composition and membership of the Parliament were being discussed. The Election Law was passed in 1969. The government benefited from the fact that several people were elected, and some were appointed as members of the House of Representatives (DPR) and the People's Representative Council (MPR). The result of a compromise between the government and all existing political parties is stated in Article 10 of Law no. 16 of 1969, which states, "There are 460 members of House of Representatives (DPR), 360 people are elected through elections, and 100 people are appointed".

Realizing the disapproval of the Masjumi revival, the leaders concluded that they should be more flexible in responding to the existing developments. They finally decided to form a new party called the Indonesian Muslim Party (Parmusi) which would accommodate the aspirations of the ex-Masjumi people and try to communicate them with the government. Suharto stated that he had no objection to the formation of this new party as long as this party was not a continuation of the Masyumi party (Aminudin, 1999).

The early period of the New Order was also marked by a strong desire from the government to carry out political stabilization. Thus, during this period, the government must organize political party arrangements. Political parties are often criticized as the most significant factor behind political instability (Soekarno often said (Soekarno, 1956). The New Order government did not like many parties and preferred to replace them with functional groups, to remove religious and ideological influences from the national political system.

In 1966, the Army offered the concept of a way out for the simplification of political parties by distinguishing five groups. They are Islamic groups, Christian-Catholic groups, nationalist groups, Pancasila socialist groups, and the non-affiliated Golkar (with a note that affiliates must join political parties). A Party Bill also suggested the formation of three groups; nationalist, religious and socialist Pancasila. Then in March 1967, Suharto, who had only been inaugurated for two months as President, publicly proposed that the existing parties fuse.

The policy of oppression and terror is aimed at political parties that can organize the masses into their activities. Villagers are prohibited from political activity except during election campaigns, and this is the central policy in institutionalizing political passivity (Indrakusuma, 2007). The political world is directed to stay away from the community. If necessary, if the community's activities are out of bounds, then the "banning" of the political world will be carried out immediately. The government wants people to be busy with development. The public must be avoided from the frenetic world of politics. So, the concentration of the community is maintained. Indeed, that is the main goal so that the community can participate in development. Society is reduced to the same as "robots" who have to work from time to time. They have no desire for politics. Finally, the world of politics became a world that was foreign to most Indonesians under the New Order. If we pay attention, this situation is the opposite of the Old Order era in power. During the Old Order, the masses were very familiar with the parties with representatives in the villages. Mass involvement is often very exploitative. From time to time, the masses are gathered in open meetings, agitated and directed by party leaders to do things that can increase the party's bargaining price when dealing with other political forces.

With the implementation of the floating mass concept, people are no longer bound to political parties. Their aspirations will be accommodated in functional organizations whose establishment is sponsored by Golkar (but has no formal ties to Golkar). UU no. 3 of 1975 concerning floating mass has created a contradictory situation. On the one hand, the law requires rural communities to be isolated and sterile from the political world. Meanwhile on the other hand, at the same time, the bureaucracy has even expanded its reach to the countryside through bureaucratic "extension" institutions such as Village Community Resilience Institute (LKMD), Village Mediation Institution (LMD), Village Unit Cooperative (KUD), Family Welfare Empowerment (PKK), Etc. These institutions do not only function to mobilize rural communities to participate in development.

On the other hand, they function as institutions that mobilize people's political aspirations, like political parties. In other words, the independence of the bureaucracy is not maintained. In fact, in the hands of Golkar, the bureaucracy has functioned as an extension of Golkar to the villages.

In the political field, the structuring of the political format is carried out through several strategies; such as the composition of the membership of the House of Representatives (DPR) and the People's Representative Council (MPR) OF the Republic of Indonesia, the arrangement of political parties/mass organizations, the floating mass strategy, the application of a single principle and the canalization of the potential of people's power aimed at supporting the government by establishing corporatist institutions. In order to blunt the revolutionary potential that exists in social nodes, the government sponsors the establishment of several social institutions. , the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce (KADIN), the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) and others. In addition, this is to polarize it to remain weak when dealing with the authorities.

Lastly, in order to maintain stability, the whole core of controlling people's political participation is supported by the territorial command institutions within the Armed Forces. It is from this understanding that the military in Indonesia perceives their existence. In the 1950s, the origins of the dual function of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia (ABRI) began to be discussed openly when General Nasution formulated the military position into the concept of the "middle way". This concept explains that the Indonesian National

Army - Land Force (TNI-AD) is not like soldiers in Latin American countries. They are not playing a direct political role, not like the military in Western countries who position themselves only as a defence and passive defence force in political life. The Indonesian military took a "middle way" to accommodate both, not directly entering into political life, such as carrying out a coup d'etat but not being a mere spectator in the political arena. Indonesian National Army (TNI) officers, Nasution, said that Army should be allowed to participate in determining state politics, whether in the economy, finance and other fields. Therefore, the Indonesian National Army (TNI) must also be given a place in government political institutions, not only in the National Council and Cabinet as has been implemented but also in other state institutions.

V. Conclusion

This study concludes that Indonesian politics has experienced a significant shift in values and practices. Indonesia started the state process with the concept of gotong royong. It was oriented to the welfare of the people with the leadership of the assembly institution as the people's representative in the form of deliberation. However, along the way, the concept of representation became ambiguous in the hands of political parties. In practice, political parties have complete power over every policy in Indonesia. This situation arises because anyone who will come forward as a policymaker must be approved and follow directions from political parties.

Indonesia must begin to review the political system, nation and state. Whether this is following Pancasila as the basis of the state and the source of all sources of law must immediately become a central discussion and issue. The risk of losing the Indonesian nation and state on the way to the ideals of the nation and state is a fear that is very likely to occur if the current situation continues and develops in the wrong direction.

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