

The Idea of Indonesia

Indonesia the nation-state is a miraculous and unlikely construction. At first sight, the material for national unity could not be more unpromising: Indonesia's history is marred by deep and often bloody internal disputation based on ideology, ethnicity, religion and region. Yet Indonesia, as concept and as nation-state, endures and is perhaps beginning once again to thrive. R. E. Elson, one of the leading figures in the field, seeks to discover the origins of the idea of Indonesia in the mid-nineteenth century and explores its often vexed and troubled trajectory through to the present time. He examines why Indonesia exists, against the odds, as a nation-state, and in what different forms it has existed, seeking to explain the nation's character as it has struggled for unity and purpose. The analysis provides a chronological narrative which examines Indonesian politics, its political elites and their relationship with the Indonesian people.

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For Rosemary Robson-McKillop
dear friend, generous host and kind support over
so many years

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Glossary and abbreviations

AAS	Archief van de Algemene Secretarie van de Nederlands-Indische Regering en de daarbij gedeponeerde archieven, 1942–50
<i>abangan</i>	less devout, syncretist Muslim
ABRI	Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia (Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia)
<i>adat</i>	customary law
<i>aksi sepihak</i>	unilateral action
AMK	Archive of the Ministry of Colonies
Ansor	NU youth organisation
APRIS	Angkatan Perang Republik Indonesia Serikat (Armed Forces of the Republic of the United States of Indonesia)
<i>AS</i>	<i>Asian Survey</i>
BFO	Bijeenkomst voor Federaal Overleg (Federal Consultative Assembly)
<i>BIES</i>	<i>Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies</i>
Binnenlands Bestuur	Internal Administration
<i>BKI</i>	<i>Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde</i>
BPUPK	Badan Untuk Penyelidik Usaha-usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan (Committee for the Investigation of Independence)
BU	Budi Utomo (Glorious Endeavour)
CAC	Central Advisory Council
CAD	Centraal Archiefdepot (Central Archive Depot)
<i>daerah</i>	region
<i>DB</i>	<i>Djawa Baroe</i>
DDII	Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic Propagation Council)
DI	Darul Islam (Abode of Islam)

DPR	Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (People's Representative Council)
<i>dwi fungsi</i>	dual function
<i>ENI</i>	<i>Encyclopaedië van Nederlandsch-Indië</i>
Ethicist	Dutch adherent to the paternalistic and associationist values of the Ethical Policy
<i>FEER</i>	<i>Far Eastern Economic Review</i>
GAM	Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement)
Gapi	Gabungan Politik Indonesia (Indonesian Political Federation)
Gerindo	Gerakan Rakyat Indonesia (Indonesian People's Movement); leftist nationalist movement of the late colonial period
GG	Governor-General
Golkar	Golongan Karya (Functional Groups)
<i>gotong-royong</i>	mutual assistance
<i>HP</i>	<i>Hindia Poetra</i>
<i>IG</i>	<i>De Indische Gids</i>
<i>IM</i>	<i>Indonesia Merdeka</i>
Indië Weerbaar	'Indies able to defend itself'
IP	Indische Partij (Indies Party)
<i>IPO</i>	<i>Overzicht van de Inlandsche en Maleisch-Chineesche Pers</i> (Survey of the Native and Malay-Chinese Press)
IV	Indische Vereeniging (the Indies Association)
IVS	Indonesisch Verbond van Studeerenden (Indonesian Association of Students)
<i>IVVM</i>	<i>Indische Vereeniging: Voordrachten en Mededeelingen</i>
<i>JAS</i>	<i>Journal of Asian Studies</i>
Jawa Hokokai	Java Public Service Association
<i>JIAEA</i>	<i>Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia</i>
JIB	Jong Islamieten Bond (Association of Muslim Youth)
JSB	Jong Sumatranen Bond (Association of Young Sumatrans)
<i>JSEAH</i>	<i>Journal of Southeast Asian History</i>
<i>JSEAS</i>	<i>Journal of Southeast Asian Studies</i>
<i>kabupaten</i>	district
<i>kampung</i>	(urban) village
<i>kekaryaan</i>	(functional) role exercised by the military
<i>kekeluargaan</i>	'family-ness'
<i>kiai</i>	Muslim teacher

xii Glossary and abbreviations

KNI	Komite Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Committee)
KNIL	Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger (Royal Netherlands Indies Army)
KNIP	Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat (Central Indonesian National Committee)
Kodam	Komando Daerah Militer (military region)
<i>konsepsi</i>	Sukarno's political concept
Kopkamtib	Komando Operasi Pemulihan Keamanan dan Ketertiban (Operations Command for the Restoration of Order and Security)
<i>KS</i>	<i>Koloniale Studiën</i>
<i>lasykar rakyat</i>	popular militias
Lekra	Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat (Institute for People's Culture)
Manipol-USDEK	Sukarno's political manifesto
marhaenism	Sukarno's theory for analysing the plight of poor (but non-proletarian) peasants
<i>MAS</i>	<i>Modern Asian Studies</i>
Masyumi	Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia (Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims)
MIAI	Majelisul Islamil a'la Indonesia (Indonesian Muslim High Council)
MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat (People's Consultative Assembly)
MPRS	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Sementara (Provisional People's Consultative Assembly)
MR	Mail Report (x indicates a secret mail report)
<i>mufakat</i>	consensus
Muhammadiyah	modernist Muslim social organisation
<i>musyawarah</i>	deliberation
MvD	Ministerie van Defensie (Ministry of Defence)
NADH	Nationaal Archief, Den Haag (National Archives, The Hague)
Nasakom	Nasionalisme, Agama, Komunisme (Nationalism, Islam, Communism)
Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia	Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia
NIOD	Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie
NIT	Negara Indonesia Timur (State of East Indonesia)

NSA	National Security Archive documents on Transfer of West New Guinea to Indonesia, www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB128/papua.pdf
NU	Nahdlatul Ulama (Revival of Religious Scholars), traditionalist Islamic association
P-4	Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila (Guide to the Realisation and Implementation of Pancasila)
<i>PA</i>	<i>Pacific Affairs</i>
PAI	Persatuan Arab Indonesia (Indonesian Arab Association)
<i>pamong praja</i>	civilian territorial officials, especially in Java
Pancasila	the five principles of Indonesia's state ideology
<i>panglima</i>	commander
<i>pangreh praja</i>	indigenous territorial officials in Java
Partindo	Partai Indonesia (Indonesia Party), successor organisation to the PNI
<i>patih</i>	chief minister in local bureaucracy
PBB	Partai Bulan Bintang (Crescent and Star Party)
PBI	Partai Bhinneka Tunggal Ika
PBI	Persatuan Bangsa Indonesia (Association of the Indonesian Nation)
PDI	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (Indonesian Democratic Party)
PDI-P	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle)
<i>peranakan</i>	mixed blood
Permesta	Piagam Perjuangan Semesta (Charter of Total Struggle)
Permi	Persatuan Muslimin Indonesia (Union of Indonesian Muslims)
Persis	Persatuan Islam (Islamic Union)
Pertamina	Pertambangan Minyak dan Gas Bumi Nasional (National Oil and Gas Mining)
Peta	Pembela Tanah Air (Defenders of the Fatherland)
PI	Perhimpunan Indonesia (Indonesian Association)
PKI	Perserikatan Komunis India (Indies Communist Union)/Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party)
PKS	Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Prosperity and Justice Party)

xiv	Glossary and abbreviations
PNI	Partai Nasional Indonesia
PNI	Perserikatan Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Association)
PPKI	Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia (Committee for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence)
PPO	Politiek Politioneële Overzicht (Political Survey)
<i>PPO</i>	<i>Politiek-politioneële overzichten van Nederlandsch-Indië</i> (Political surveys of the Netherlands Indies)
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (Unity Development Party)
PPPKI	Permufakatan Perhimpunan Politik Kebangsaan Indonesia (Congress of Indonesian National Political Associations)
<i>priyayi</i>	nobility
PRRI	Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia)
PSI(I)	Partai Sarekat Islam (Indonesia) ((Indonesian) Sarekat Islam Party)
PTI	Partai Tionghoa (Indonesian Chinese Party)
PUSA	Persatuan Ulama ² Seluruh Aceh (All-Aceh Union of Islamic Teachers)
Putera	Pusat Tenaga Rakyat (Centre of the People's Power)
<i>rakyat</i>	people
<i>RIMA</i>	<i>Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs</i>
RIS	Republik Indonesia Serikat (Republic of the United States of Indonesia)
RTC	Round Table Conference
SA	Sarekat Ambon (Ambon Association)
<i>santri</i>	devout Muslim
SI	Sarekat Islam (Islamic Association)
<i>sini and sana</i>	us and them
SOKSI	Sentral Organisasi Karyawan Socialis Indonesia (Central Organisation of Indonesian Socialist Employees)
Spri	Staf Pribadi (Personal Staff)
SPSI	Serikat Pekerja Seluruh Indonesia (All-Indonesia Association of Workers)
SSKAD	Sekolah Staf dan Komando Angkatan Darat (Army Staff and Command School)

Glossary and abbreviations

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STOVIA	School tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Artsen (School for the Training of Native Doctors)
Supersemar	Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret (Letter of Authority of 11 March 1966)
<i>syariah</i>	Islamic law
TII	Tentara Islam Indonesia (Islamic Army of Indonesia)
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Army)
<i>totok</i>	pure blood
TT	Tentara dan Territorium (military territorial region)
<i>ulama</i>	Muslim religious scholar
<i>ulëëbalang</i>	Acehnese indigenous aristocracy
USISIPR	United States Information Service, Indonesian Press Review
V	Verbaal (minute)
<i>VFI</i>	<i>The Voice of Free Indonesia</i>
<i>VH</i>	<i>Handelingen van den Volksraad</i> (Volksraad debates)
Volksraad	People's Council, partly elected deliberative body in the Netherlands Indies
Wawasan Nusantara	Archipelago Concept

Short biographies of key figures

Abdulgani, Ruslan (1914–2005): Surabaya-born nationalist. Cabinet minister in the mid-1950s and 1960s who achieved his greatest influence as an ideologue of Pancasila thinking both in the later Sukarno period and under Suharto's New Order.

Aidit, D. N. (1923–65): Sumatran who revitalised the PKI in the 1950s and framed its united front policy of cooperation with nationalist forces as a strategy for the party's success. Murdered in the aftermath of the so-called coup attempt of 1 October 1965.

Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar (1938–): Fundamentalist Islamic teacher and leader of Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia; allegedly the spiritual inspiration of Jemaah Islamiyah-linked terrorists.

Beureueh, Daud (1899–1987): Acehnese; leader of PUSA following its founding, and appointed as military governor of Aceh during the revolution. Went into revolt against the central government in 1953 in association with Kartosuwiryo's Darul Islam.

Cokroaminoto, Umar Said (1882–1934): Charismatic leader who took Sarekat Islam to its greatest popularity in the early and mid-1910s before internal division brought decline which led to the association's taking a more specifically Islamic path.

Colijn, Hendrikus (1869–1944): Served as both soldier and colonial administrator in the Indies and carved out a successful business and political career upon his return to the Netherlands, serving as conservative Prime Minister on several occasions as well as Minister of Colonies.

Douwes Dekker, E. F. E. (1879–1950): Idiosyncratic and highly influential Eurasian intellectual who formed the Indische Partij in 1912 to promote the cause of Indies independence. In consequence he was exiled to the Netherlands, and his influence waned thereafter.

Gunawan Mohamad (1941–): Noted journalist, author, poet, editor, critic and intellectual, frequently at odds with government over matters relating to human rights, democracy and Indonesian identity.

Habibie, B.J. (1936–): Born in Pare-Pare of mixed Gorontaloese and Javanese parentage; secured outstanding academic results in his studies of aeronautical engineering in Germany which led to a burgeoning industrial and management career. Recalled by Suharto to head Indonesia's technological development, he came to the Presidency after Suharto's fall in 1998, instituting numerous social and political reforms, until his accountability speech was rejected by the MPR in 1999.

Hatta, Mohammad (1902–80): West Sumatran intellectual who became a leading light in the Indonesian Association in the Netherlands and later in the nationalist movement at home. Arrested by the Dutch in 1934 and thereafter exiled, he was freed by the Japanese and played a prominent part in occupation politics. Vice-President from 1945 until his resignation in 1956 when his differences with Sukarno finally became intolerable.

Heutsz, J. B. van (1851–1924): Military conqueror of Aceh, Governor-General 1904–9, and consolidator of the Netherlands Indies.

Hinloopen Labberton, Dirk van (1874–1961): Sugar chemist, influential theosophist, associationist and politician with close links with many indigenous leaders in the emerging nationalist movement.

Juanda Kartawijaya (1911–63): Highly respected West Java non-party intellectual and technocrat who headed the post-parliamentary democracy 'Work' Cabinet of 1957; he proclaimed the archipelagic doctrine in 1957.

Kartosuwiryo, S.M. (1905–62): Muslim politician and activist who established the violent Darul Islam movement in 1948 which sought to re-create Indonesia as an Islamic state. Eventually captured and executed in 1962.

Latuharhary, Johannes (1900–57): Educated in law in the Netherlands and active in Ambonese politics and the nationalist movement; served as governor of Maluku after independence.

Lim Kun Hian (1896–1952): Banjarmasin-born Sino-Indonesian and founder of the nationalist-minded Partai Tionghoa Indonesia.

Majid, Nurcholish (1939–2005): East Java-born student leader and influential liberal Muslim intellectual who called for Muslims to adopt a more pluralist and secular approach to politics.

xviii Short biographies of key figures

Malaka, Tan (1897–1948): West Sumatran who played a leading role in the early PKI. Returning to Indonesia in 1942, he came to prominence as the leader of a national Communist movement which demanded the struggle for unconditional independence rather than negotiation with the Dutch. Murdered in the wake of the failed Madiun uprising.

Mangunkusumo, Cipto (1886–1943): Javanese. Driving force in early nationalist thinking and action who was exiled from the Indies in 1913 because of his involvement with the Indische Partij. Upon return he continued to press for an independent Indies free of racial and religious discrimination, suffering frequent obstruction and eventually exile.

Mook, H. J. van (1895–1965): Liberally minded colonial administrator who rose to become Lieutenant Governor-General; sought a federal solution to the ‘problem’ of Indonesian independence.

Mudzakkar, Abdul Qahhar (1921–65): Charismatic activist figure from Sulawesi who fought in the cause of the revolution but sided with Kartosuwiryo’s Darul Islam after the Republic refused to accommodate his wishes.

Muis, Abdul (1883–1959): West Sumatran journalist and activist; key figure in the development of Sarekat Islam.

Murtopo, Ali (1924–84): Central Javanese military figure; his closeness to Suharto saw him appointed to important strategic and intelligence positions within the New Order hierarchy where his ideas on modernisation, development and de-politicisation were highly influential.

Musso (1897–1948): Key figure in the early PKI and its failed revolt in 1926–27. Returned to Indonesia during the revolution and sought to re-energise the PKI; led the party into the disastrous Madiun rebellion of 1948.

Nasution, Abdul Haris (1918–2000): Muslim Batak who joined the colonial army, then the Indonesian army at the outbreak of the revolution, commanding the famous Siliwangi division. As Chief-of-Staff spear-headed army unification and expansion in the 1950s, and became a key ally of Sukarno in the move to Guided Democracy. Later a critic of Suharto’s New Order.

Nasution, Adnan Buyung (1934–): Prominent activist and lawyer, human rights advocate and opponent of Suharto.

Natsir, Mohammad (1908–93): West Sumatran who became the leading Muslim politician and political intellectual of his day. As leader of

Masyumi, he was Prime Minister from 1950 to 1951, and increasingly pushed the argument for an Islamic state in Indonesia.

Noto Suroto (1881–1951): Javanese aristocratic author, poet, educationist and intellectual; Dutch-educated. His persistently associationist views earned him the enmity of nationalist activists.

Rasyid, Ryaas (1949–): US educated administrator and politician from South Sulawesi; played a crucial role under Habibie in developing the legislation for free elections and enhanced decentralisation.

Ratu Langie, G. S. S. J. (1890–1949): Minahasan politician; studied in the Netherlands and became a noted champion of eastern Indonesian interests in the Republic, serving as the first governor of North Sulawesi.

Rum, Mohammed (1908–93): Muslim politician and diplomat who played a central role in the negotiated conclusion of the Indonesian–Dutch dispute in 1949.

Salim, Haji Agus (1884–1954): West Sumatran intellectual, editor and activist, key figure in moving Sarekat Islam towards a more specific religious and ideological emphasis upon Islam. Later Foreign Minister of the Republic.

Sastroamijoyo, Ali (1903–75): Studied in the Netherlands and became a stalwart of the PNI. Headed two PNI-led cabinets in the 1950s characterised by their focus on building national solidarity and self-confidence.

Snouck Hurgronje, Christiaan (1857–1936): Legendary Islamologist, official and academic whose research and writings on Islam and specifically Indonesian Islam shaped government policy towards Islam for decades.

Sudirman (1915?–1950): Prominent Peta leader and revolutionary officer elected by his fellows as army commander (*panglima*); led the guerrilla resistance in 1948–49.

Suharto (1921–): Of Central Java origin and lowly background, he joined the Dutch colonial army and the Indonesian army after independence. Served with distinction as a field commander in different posts, and came to the fore at the time of the so-called coup of 1 October 1965 when his actions against the coup group proved decisive. He slowly manoeuvred his way to the (acting) Presidency by 1967, inaugurated the New Order regime, and remained President until his forced resignation in 1998.

xx Short biographies of key figures

Sujatmoko (1922–89): Born in West Sumatra of Javanese parents; cosmopolitan official, diplomat and journalist, and leading and highly influential PSI intellectual of the 1950s.

Sukarno (1901–70): Of mixed Javanese/Balinese parentage, studied engineering in Bandung and founded the PNI in 1927. Imprisoned and exiled by the Dutch for his nationalist activities, he was freed by the Japanese and led the movement which proclaimed Indonesia's independence in 1945, when he became the Republic's first President. Led the movement against liberal democracy in the 1950s. Forced to hand over power to Suharto in the wake of the so-called coup attempt of 1 October 1965.

Sukarnoputri, Megawati (1947–): Daughter of Sukarno who emerged in the later New Order period as Suharto's most serious opponent. Her PDI-P party was the most successful in the 1999 elections, but she failed to gain the presidency and had to await Wahid's fall before finally securing the post in 2001.

Sukiman Wiryosanjoyo (1896?–1974): Of Javanese origin and a leading political and intellectual figure in Muslim/nationalist politics and, post-war, in Masyumi. Prime Minister in 1951–52.

Sumitro Joyohadikusumo (1917–2001): Dutch educated, he returned to Indonesia to contribute significantly to the diplomacy and politics of the revolutionary period. Played an important educative role as dean of the economics faculty at the University of Indonesia and served as minister in various post-war cabinets. Involved in the PRRI rebellion, but afterwards recalled by Suharto to serve as Trade Minister.

Supomo (1903–58): Javanese; educated at Leiden under Van Vollenhoven, became a leading authority on constitutional law and played a crucial role in the development of Indonesia's three constitutions.

Suriokusumo, Sutatmo (1888–1924): Aristocratic Javanese politician and theosophist, and champion of a culturally based Javanese nationalism.

Suryaningrat, Suwardi (1889–1959): Aristocratic Javanese who later took the name Ki Hajar Dewantoro. His activities in the Indische Partij brought him exile in the Netherlands in 1913, where he exerted a strong influence on the Indonesian student association; subsequent to his return he founded the Taman Siswa educational movement, and later served as a leading figure in Japanese occupation politics.

Sutarjo Kartohadikusumo (1892–1976): Official and Volksraad representative who presented a petition in 1936 calling for a greater measure of autonomy for the Indies.

Sutomo (1888–1938): Medical doctor, intellectual, and nationalist figure from East Java, co-founder of Budi Utomo; founder of the Indonesian Study Club (1924) and the PBI (1931).

Syahrir, Sutan (1909–66): West Sumatran; studied in the Netherlands where he formed a close intellectual association with Hatta. A leading figure in early post-independence politics because of his anti-fascist, social-democratic views, he served as the Republic's first Prime Minister and led the intellectually influential PSI.

Syafruddin Prawiranegara (1911–89): Leading Muslim politician who served in various post-war cabinets and led the rebellious PRRI government in 1958. Later a strong critic of Suharto's anti-Islamic policies.

Syarifuddin, Amir (1907–48): Christian Batak who emerged in the nationalist movement in the late 1930s; Indonesia's second Prime Minister, he declared himself a Communist and was murdered in the wake of the abortive Madiun uprising of 1948.

Thamrin, Muhammad Husni (1894–1941): Probably the dominant indigenous politician in the Volksraad of the 1930s, often outspoken in his demands for enhanced autonomy.

Vollenhoven, Cornelis van (1874–1933): Dutch legal scholar and teacher famed for his broad-ranging research which established the contours and significance of customary law systems in Indonesia.

Wahid, Abdurrahman (1940–): Member of noted East Java Muslim family; prominent leader of and political actor on behalf of the large Muslim association Nahdlatul Ulama. Third President of the Republic, impeached and dismissed in 2001.

Wahidin Sudirohusodo (1852–1917): Medical doctor and tireless champion of indigenous education; played a highly influential role in the development of Budi Utomo.

Wijoyo Nitisastro (1927–): Noted economist and technocrat who played a leading role in generating the development strategies of the New Order.

Yahya, Yunus (1927–): Sino-Indonesian Dutch-educated economist who championed the idea that Indonesian Chinese must submerge their ethnic identity into a broader (Muslim) Indonesian identity.

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Yamin, Muhammad (1903–62): West Sumatran lawyer, author, poet, historian and nationalist activist. Played a prominent role in the debates leading to the development of Indonesia's constitution in 1945.

Yani, Achmad (1922–65): Javanese; charismatic army commander; murdered on 1 October 1965.

Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang (1949–): Made his name as a cautious and calculating staff officer rather than commander in the army, and subsequently served in Wahid's and Megawati's cabinets. Contested the first direct presidential election in 2004 and easily defeated Megawati.

Preface

The idea for this book emerged in the shapeless, restless years surrounding and especially following the fall of Suharto and the end of his long New Order, when many Indonesians questioned the success and direction of the project of ‘making Indonesia’, and many Indonesians, and others as well, went so far as to canvas the possibility of its break-up or fragmentation.¹ When I visited Jakarta a week or so after Suharto’s fall in 1998, the city’s inhabitants were still in shock from the trauma of the May riots. At the same time, however, there was a palpable sense of exultation and triumph at their final release from the heaviness of Suharto’s rule. But behind the strange combination of fear, nervousness and celebration, there dwelt other important Indonesian feelings and emotions. A central one was confusion about the meaning of the recent events and about what they might presage, together with a deeper and more inchoate sense of self-doubt and uncertainty about their country’s direction and future. Just what was Indonesia? What did it value? Where was it going? What were its rules? What impressed me most of all was not the fear of impending disintegration but the vibrancy of politics and political thinking, most of it focussed critically on Indonesian identity and on its failings and possibilities, emerging contagiously within so short a time and expressing itself with the verve that freedom brings. The deep impression of that visit set me on the path of researching and analysing the longer historical trajectory of this seductive, troubling idea of Indonesia.

This is not a book about Indonesian nationalism as a movement, much less about the testing, ever present problem of national integration. It is, rather, a book that sets out to explain the origins, development, triumph, tragedy and, more recently, persistence and reframing of the idea of Indonesia as both state and nation. It seeks to explore the contesting

¹ Anne Booth, ‘Will Indonesia break up?’, *Inside Indonesia* 59 (1999), 5–6; Robert Cribb, ‘Not the next Yugoslavia: prospects for the disintegration of Indonesia’, *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 53, 2 (1999), 169–78; Donald K. Emmerson, ‘Will Indonesia survive?’, *Foreign Affairs* 79, 3 (2000), 95–106.

varieties of thinking and political action about ‘Indonesia’ – including the thinking of those who opposed it – which have animated and shaped that state/nation: what Indonesian leaders and thinkers have thought about the meaning of their country at different times, the effects that thinking had when expressed in action and contestation, and why some variants of the idea prospered and others failed or were abandoned or even killed off. It probes the ways in which the idea of an archipelago-wide ‘Indonesia’ developed and, from time to time, gained strength though not necessarily clarity and focus, from the later nineteenth century up to the present. In a certain sense then, the book, notwithstanding its attachment to such ideas as contingency and voluntarism, is historicist. It takes for granted that Indonesia existed, if only in people’s minds, before it was actually, weakly realised in 1945. It seeks to understand better the development, tenacity, variety and power of the single shaping idea – that the archipelago is one – that gave the Indonesian nation-state birth and which sustains it in life, and the differing, competing contents given that basic idea. Together, that fundamental notion, itself controverted, and the contested ways in which that notion has been imagined and sometimes realised, constitute the idea of Indonesia which forms the subject of this book.

Of course, one might conceive of other and more important books which might be written about the history of the idea of Indonesia. One that still remains to be written would deal systematically, in historical depth and in archipelagic breadth, with the popular reception (or otherwise) of the idea of Indonesia amongst Indonesians themselves. Another, similarly challenging, might tackle the ways in which locally varying social structures, cultures and social processes have fed into the idea of Indonesia and its implementation and in turn affected it and its deployment in different ways. Again, one might wish to track much more deeply and exhaustively the immense variety and shadings of Indonesian narratives about the history of the idea of Indonesia; as Vickers reminds us, ‘a country as huge and heterogeneous as this does not have a single narrative’.² My effort is altogether more modest; it takes up such crucial concerns only occasionally and marginally, and only insofar as their consideration might serve to shed some light on the minds, values and actions of key Indonesian leaders and political thinkers who have wrestled with the idea of Indonesia for nearly a century.

² Adrian Vickers, *A history of modern Indonesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 3.

Sources, places, people

In creating this narrative, I was continually and uncomfortably reminded of how fleeting and incomplete was my acquaintance with the vast array of possible sources on this immense subject. In collecting my material, I had, perforce, to make choices for the sake of brevity and sanity, and do the best that seemed to me possible at the time in covering the subject matter. There are many more newspapers that might have been scoured, more interviews sought, more piles of archive documents riffled through or carefully weighed, more thoughtful papers, articles and books digested, more bulletin boards consulted. In the end, though, there are always limitations of time, money, life. I apologise to those, Indonesians and others, who may find my limitations of scope and analytical power all too obvious upon reading what follows.

The lived and recorded modern history of a country as diverse and complex as Indonesia generates a vastness of sources of every kind, scattered in numerous locations around the globe, and I am deeply in the debt of very many people and organisations who have assisted my quest for the idea of Indonesia. The Australian Research Council provided me with generous funding not just to travel to Indonesia, the Netherlands, the United States and other parts of Australia, but also to obtain periodic release from teaching to free me for the travelling, thinking, reading, discussion and continual (re-)writing that a project of this scope and breadth demanded. The libraries and archival institutions of four continents welcomed me and shared with me their riches: In Australia, the University of Queensland's Social Sciences and Humanities Library and Fryer Library, especially through the unfailingly enthusiastic and helpful Mark Cryle, provided continuing support and assistance, as did the Griffith University Library and the Menzies Library of the Australian National University. In Sydney, John Ingleson generously made available to me his large collection of archival documents and notes relating to the development of Indonesian nationalism in the first decades of the twentieth century. In Indonesia, the library of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies was most useful. In The Hague, the archives and collections of the National Archives were of inestimable value, as was the advice and friendship provided by Francien van Aanrooij and Sierk Plantinga. At the wonderful library of the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Rini Hogewoning and Josephine Schrama were especially gracious and helpful, as were other members of the Institute, as well as the staff at the Universiteits Bibliotheek of Leiden University. In Amsterdam, I made use of the unique collections of the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation

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with Elly Touwen's help. In the United States, the generosity of Audrey Kahin provided me access to the extraordinary papers of her late husband, George McT. Kahin, in the Kahin Center at Cornell University, while the riches of the Kroch Library at Cornell, and the fellowship and support I found generally at Cornell, were invaluable. I should also like to thank the editors of *Asian Ethnicity* and the *Australian Journal of Politics and History* for permission to use some previously published material.

Many other people helped me in all kinds of ways. I have dedicated this book to Rosemary Robson-McKillop, who has always welcomed me to her home and supported my research in uncountable ways. In Munich, Prof. Dr Ir B. J. Habibie and his wife Dr Hasri Ainun Besari could not have been more generous, kind and thoughtful. John Butcher read numerous drafts with his customary patience and generosity of spirit, as well as his critical acuity and his keen eye for the mangled and obtuse sentence and the unnecessary comma. As well, and in addition to those I have mentioned above, I should like to thank the following for their assistance and support: the late Roeslan Abdulgani, Taufik Abdullah, Ali Alatas, Subagio Anam, Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Rosihan Anwar, Ed Aspinall, Luthfi Assyaukanie, Michael Barr, Ikrar Nusa Bhakti, David Bouchier, Rod and Mita Brazier, Richard Chauvel, Helen Creese, Daniel Dhakidae, Greg Fealy, the late Hasnan Habib, Michael Heazle, David and Tina Henley, Nadirsyah Hosen, Clara Joewono, Gerry van Klinken, Wati Knapp, Sarwono Kusumaatmadja, Michael and Judy Laffan, the late Daniel S. Lev, Angus McIntyre, Jamie Mackie, Julian and Ratih Millie, Deliar Noer, Noorhaidi, Annie Pohlman, M. C. Ricklefs, Mohammad Sadli, Emil Salim, Wiryono Sastrohandoyo, Harry Tjan Silalahi, Juwono Sudarsono, Ratmini Soedjatmoko, Rizal Sukma, Ryaas Rasyid, Eric and Kathy Tagliacozzo, Thee Kian Wie and Tjoe, Elly Touwen-Bouwsma and Hans Touwen, Patrick Walters, Sofyan Wanandi, Agus Widjoyo, Wiranto, Wimar Witoelar, Renee Worringer and H. Yunus Yahya. Most of all, of course, I thank my beloved wife Elizabeth for her eternal kindness and patience with me, and not just when I'm writing books, and my children; though they now just shrug when I plod off to my little office to read and write, they know that they inspire me.



Map 1 Map of Indonesia