
Renewing the New Order?: Public History in Indonesia

PAUL ASHTON, KRESNO BRAHMANTYO AND JAYA KEANEY

Today, the Republic of Indonesia, the fourth most populous nation in the world, is home to around 246 000 000 people and more than 300 ethnic groups. Geographically, it stretches over 17 500 islands, the largest of which are Sumatra (164 000 square miles), Celebes (67 400 square miles) and Java (48 900 square miles). From the arrival of the first traders in the late sixteenth century, Dutch control spread tenuously through the archipelago. Prior to 1945, this area was the Netherlands East Indies: Indonesia did not exist, though the term had come into usage arguably from the 1850s. The earliest nationalist movement, the Budi Utomo, declared itself in 1908, heralding decades of struggle for independence. In August 1945, two days after the Japanese surrender, Sukarno and Muhammad Hatta, nationalist political leaders, declared Indonesian Independence. Thus began the Indonesian Revolution. Four years later, on 27 December, Indonesia became a sovereign state. But its national history was to be littered with civil war, regional uprisings in

the later 1950s and early 1960s, economic problems, conflict between communists and anti-communists, corruption and a coup on 1 October 1965 which provided an ostensible reason for the murder of at least half a million people, most of whom were communists.¹

As in other nation-states, public histories were to become critical to galvanising the new, extremely diverse and unstable Indonesian nation. Indeed, as David Thelen has observed,

Modern professional historical scholarship grew up alongside the nation-state. Its mission to document and explain the rise, reform, and fall of nation-states. And professional history developed a civic mission to teach citizens to contain their experience within nation-centred narratives.²

David Christian has also noted the substantial political and financial support that nationalist governments have provided to historians to craft public histories ‘to inspire loyalty’.³ Indonesia was no exception. As in many other places, too, the business of constructing national narratives saw some events and people disappear or reappear somehow altered.

Between 1957 and 1966, under the charismatic though increasingly authoritarian leadership of President Sukarno, Indonesia was ruled by a doctrine of ‘Guided Democracy’. Giving greater powers to the military, political representation was primarily achieved through groupings such as workers, women and the military. This was a key strategy of the Indonesian Revolution to achieve national unification. A critical glue in this process was national history. As Vickers has written, the regime ‘claimed ancient kingdoms as predecessors for the modern state. To this vision of ancient greatness, Sukarno and his ministers added a pantheon of “national heroes”’.⁴ These were mainly leaders in the nationalist movement as well as a few women and a number of religious figures, thus giving each group a place in the national story. Monuments and memorials were erected to the vision and its champions, new traditions – such as folk dances – were invented and Haussmannian-style thoroughfares were driven through prominent parts of the capital, Jakarta.

Some challenged this revisionist history. Novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer had earlier and famously written about the people’s struggle to achieve independence through the Revolution. While a supporter of national unification and, for a time, Suharto’s methods for achieving it, he was imprisoned for his outspoken support for the leftist cause from 1965 to 1978 and spent a further thirteen years under house arrest in Jakarta.⁵ The spur to his and many other people’s incarceration

was the 1965 coup. A watershed in Indonesian history, the coup allowed General Suharto to launch a counter coup and ultimately seize power ushering the 'New Order' in from 1966. The 'New Order' Government's ideology rested on the 1945 Constitution and Five State Principles – *Pancasila* – which, written by Sukarno, were the belief in one God, just and civilized humanity, Indonesian unity, democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultations and social justice for all the peoples of Indonesia.⁶ It replaced Sakarno's principle of Nasakom – nationalism, religion and communism – now that communism had been discredited after the coup by a massive propaganda campaign. Under this new national ideology, the 'people were the "floating mass" ... who needed guidance so they would not be lured into politics'.⁷ Strict, official guidance was to be given to how Indonesia's past should be presented and remembered in public. (The 'evidently active and potent, if still murky, role of the United States, Britain and Australia in the events leading up to the great killings of 1965-66' is not addressed in this article.)⁸

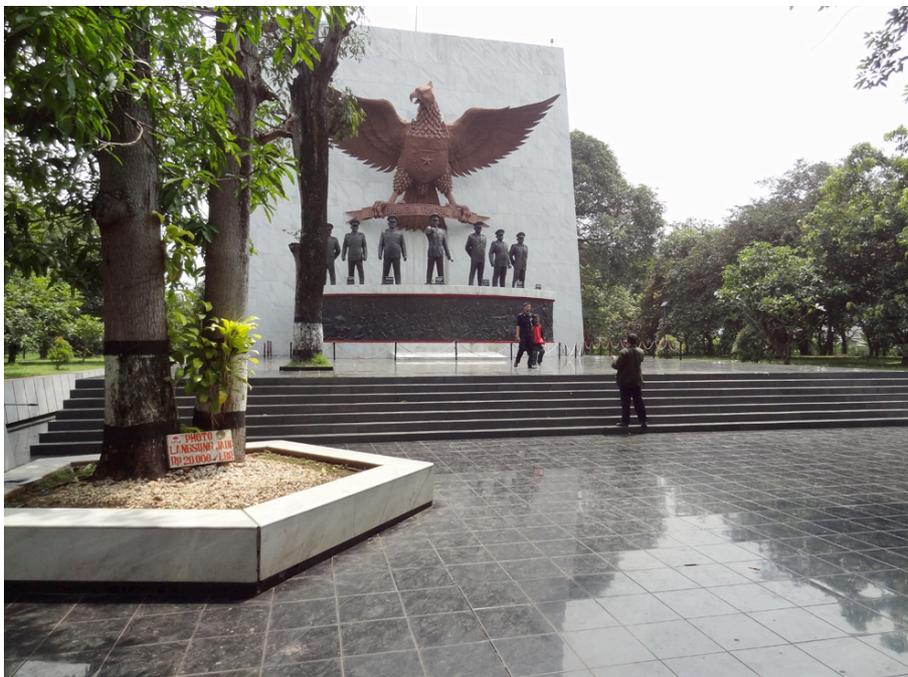
After the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998, public debates over the nature of history proliferated. While focusing on a number of key national events, most notably the 1965 coup and the mass killings – separate but causally events which are often conflated – these debates have raised critical issues over the role or potential role of public history in contemporary Indonesian society. Questions of historical authority are paramount as Indonesian historians, public intellectuals and politicians struggle with a deeply entrenched historical paradigm and narratives of the old 'New Order' which continue to inform history in schools, cultural institutions, the media, literature, personal narratives, public rituals and the academy. This paradigm was based on an unquestioning or reluctant acceptance of official accounts of the past in an environment of fear.

THE SACRED PANCASILA MONUMENT

Opened in 1969 at Lubang Buaya (Crocodile Hole), the Sacred Pancasila Monument (Monumen Pancasila Sakti) is arguably the most powerful work of public history in Indonesia. It features seven bronze, lifesize statues of seven military officers standing in front of a five-metre tall Garuda, Indonesia's national symbol. Below the officers is a ten-metre long bas-relief frieze depicting the violent murder of the officers by communist men – members of the 30 September Movement which supposedly sought to overthrow the government – with almost naked communist women dancing sadistically around them wearing garlands



Above and below, the Sacred Pancasila Monument (Monumen Pancasila Sakti) at Lubang Buaya (Crocodile Hole), 2012 (Photographs Paul Ashton)



of flowers. The frieze further demonises the Indonesian Communist Party (Partai Komunis Indonesia or PKI) by depicting it as a wicked agitator in postcolonial Indonesia. Its narrative stops in October 1965 with Suharto vanquishing the PKI and bringing order to the nation. This is strongly reinforced in the Museum Pengkhianatan PKI on the same site which misrepresents the history of Indonesian communism.

For many, perhaps most Indonesians, this familiar narrative has become part of the country's social memory. Social memory, as Fentress and Wickham remind us, is concerned with 'an understanding of the meaning the past has for people, whether they experienced it directly or had it recounted to them, or, indeed, read about it in a book'.⁹ One Jakarta tourist website, for example, notes of this venerated site:

It was a very disastrous and horrific moment in Indonesia's historical timeline.¹⁰

Another provides a description of the place:

Located southeast of Jakarta maybe 20 kilometers from central Jakarta, you will find a park honouring the memory of six army generals and an officer slain in a poorly co-ordinated Communist-style coup d'etat. You will find the main attractions are the statues as part of the Pancasila monument showing the seven heroes near a well that they were apparently thrown into after being tortured and murdered by the communist death squads.¹¹

Historians, among others, continue to dispute interpretations of the events which took place over the first few days in October 1965. Were the officers sadistically mutilated? According to Benedict Anderson, based on the *visum et repertum* from the official doctors, there were no such mutilations.¹² Who organised the coup? As a General himself, why wasn't Suharto captured and executed by the 30 September Movement? Was Suharto aware of the Movement? Was he involved in it? Debates have divided the Indonesian historical profession into pro-official and anti-official schools of thought. Much of the debate focuses on the issue of empirical evidence. For the American historian John Roosa, however, the 'claim that the PKI organized the movement was, for the Suharto regime, not any ordinary fact; it was *the* supreme fact of history from which the very legitimacy of the regime was derived'.¹³

The short-lived coup and the 30 September Movement have become icons in Indonesian historiography, overshadowing other events and

groups in Indonesia's recent national past. For Indonesian politics, the power of the Sacred Pancasila Monument lies in it being both the shrine of the New Order ideology and the burial place of communism, politically and ideologically. Suharto held an annual ceremony on 1 October for the country and its leaders to reaffirm their faith in Pancasila. Even after the New Order regime's demise, citizens continue to observe 1 October. On that day in 2011, for example, 'Thousands of members of the cadre of Barisan Ansor Versatile... perform[ed] in the city of Bogor rally to commemorate the miracle of Pancasila Day [Hari Kesaktian Pancasila]'.¹⁴ Julia Suryakusuma, author and columnist, wrote recently of Pancasila Day:

It actually celebrates the foundation of the New Order... Much of what really happened back then has long been disputed by historians... In any case, the well is now marked by a huge monument opened in 1969, complete with life-size statues of the seven "martyrs" of Pancasila, and a frieze recounting the New Order regime's version of the actions of the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party) since independence. Yep, the New Order foundation myth is alive and kicking.¹⁵

The myth, however, is not monolithic. Mary Zurbuchen has noted the five basic interpretations – some of which are used in combination – of the coup. The first is that the PKI was responsible for plotting the generals' murders and carrying them out. The second claims that the failed coup was produced by a power struggle within the armed forces. The third scenario portrays Suharto as the mastermind behind the coup or that he knew about it and used it to gain power. The fourth interpretation sees Sukarno facilitating 'disaffected officers to act against others said to be part of a secret "Council of Generals"'. Finally, foreign intelligence agencies – notably the CIA – are ascribed an active role in the coup, aiming to bring leftist and influential Sukarno down.¹⁶

The New Order narrative, however, remains dominant. This is not surprising in a society that had this narrative drummed into it for three decades. During the mid 1990s, challenges to this foundational myth emerged. The context included the emergence of the international human rights movement which grew out of the civil rights movement in the late 1970s and focused its activities on totalitarian regimes, helping to bring about a Human Rights Law which passed through the Indonesian parliament (the DPR) in 1999; the rise of the internet which made different narratives more accessible and, depending on the source, more

authoritative;¹⁷ and economic crisis, brought about in part by deep-seated and wide-spread corruption in Indonesia. Although Asia was hit by a general financial crisis in 1997, Indonesia was deeply affected by the collapse of the clove industry – then the second largest source of Indonesia’s tax revenue – in that year. The monopoly Clove, Support and Marketing Agency (BPPC), formed by Tommy Suharto in 1990, was largely responsible for this industry’s collapse.¹⁸

Growing fear and hatred of Suharto and his immediate relatives – derisively referred to as ‘the family’ – saw Suharto driven out of office by public demonstrations in 1998. He resigned on 21 May. In the immediate years leading up to this backlash, a number of publications appeared about the coup.¹⁹ Some were memoirs. Many were banned. But they continued to be read in private and contributed to destabilising the New Order version of the coup. After Suharto’s fall, works on the coup mushroomed. Contestation over the official version of the coup grew to a point where, by the end of 1999, the new President, Abdurrahman Wahid, attempted publically to address human rights issues and interrogate the New Order history. This, combined with an attempt to revoke the 1966 decree which outlawed Marxism and Leninism, led to political turmoil. Conservative religious leaders slammed Wahid and in April 2000 anti-communist student demonstrations broke out in Jakarta.²⁰ It was clearly too early for post New Order Indonesia to radically revise its national past.

Moves to create a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) from late 2000 also failed. After four years and two presidential administrations, legislation was passed by the DPR which provided the process for the establishment of a TRC. Commissioners were nominated in 2005. A year later the Constitutional Court (Mahkamah Konstitusi) ruled that such a body could not entertain claims for ‘compensation, restitution, rehabilitation and amnesty... simultaneously’ until it had been proven that ‘gross human rights violations had actually occurred.’²¹ It was not until July 2012 that the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) declared that the coup was a ‘gross human rights violation’ and urged that military officials involved should be ‘taken to court for various crimes, including mass rape, torture and killings’.²²

INSTALLING THE NEW ORDER HISTORY

The shift of government from civilian authoritarianism under Sukarno to Suharto’s military authoritarianism began immediately after the overthrow of the Old Order government. As soon as Suharto took the presidency, he moved to legitimise his government within Indonesia.

After the long presidency of the charismatic Sukarno, Suharto had to discredit both his predecessor and the ideology of Guided Democracy. This was done by eliminating the PKI as well as circulating falsified images and accounts of the killing of the generals. The military daily newspaper, *Angkatan Bersendjata* (Armed Forces), played a key role in reporting the communist party's supposed treachery. Next, the regime produced and published the official New Order history textbook of the communist party rebellion, which ends with the hero Suharto forming the New Order.²³ Subsequently, many books that in any way challenged this interpretation were classified by the government as 'threats to national security' and banned, though this process was erratic. Finally, the Pancasila (Five Principles) was legally prescribed as the state ideology and made a compulsory part of moral education for Indonesian citizens.

Under the New Order, tight restrictions were placed on various aspects of political life. The state controlled all media and the education system. Strict limitations were applied to freedom of speech. And elections were manipulated to secure the success of the government party, *Golkar*, at the ballot box. Access to various kinds of historical resources such as newspapers and archives was limited by the government. Communist party newspapers or any others that were considered 'leftist' were banned or categorized as restricted materials. These publications are still kept in the National Library but they are on restricted access. Researchers who wish to use them have to seek permission from the government through the National Intelligence Coordinating Body (*Badan Koordinasi Intelijen Negara*) and the head of the National Library. (This is frustrating for researchers, students and prominent Indonesian historians alike who wish to interrogate these sources. History students, for instance, still have to choose undergraduate thesis topics which are considered 'not sensitive' based on governmental criteria.)

The writing of the official history textbook relied heavily on the prominent military historian, Nugroho Notosusanto. It was published only forty days after the 'attempted' coup. As Katharine McGregor has put it:

In the case of New Order Indonesia, anti-communist ideology outlived the end of the Cold War. One reason for this was anti-communism had become so central to the legitimation of the New Order. Of all historical events, representations of the 1965 coup attempt as a communist plot were critical for the regime. The story behind the rush

to produce the first published version of the coup in days, the determination to defend this version to the outside world in light of the Cornell Paper [a preliminary analysis of the coup by Benedict Anderson and Ruth McVey²⁴] and the progressive and elaborate memorialisation of the well at Lubang Buaya all confirm this claim.²⁵

Nugroho Notosusanto was born on 15 June 1931, in Rembang, Central Java. He joined the Student Army during the struggle for Independence in 1945. While fascinated by military life, he followed his father's suggestion to enrol in the Faculty of Letters in the University of Indonesia. After graduating, he worked as a lecturer at the University of Indonesia from 1964. His first task as a historian was to write an army version of the history of the independence struggle.²⁶ This commission was in fact an order from General, A. H. Nasution, chief of staff of the armed forces and minister of defence. The aim of this 1964 publication was to challenge a rival history said to be planned by the leftist National Front which the regime believed would leave out an account of the so-called Madiun Affair in 1948, a previous communist revolt against the government,²⁷ which occurred on 18 September 1948 during the National Revolution in the town of Madiun. Leftist parties, the PKI and the Indonesia Socialist Party (PSI) led an uprising against the leaders of the newly-declared Indonesian Republic. The new Republican forces eliminated the uprising.

In 1983, the New Order government released a four-hour film – the film maker called it a docu-drama – of the *coup* entitled *Pengkhianatan G 30 S PKI (The Treachery of the 30 September Movement)*. New students at the University of Indonesia were the first audience to publically see the film. It was part of the indoctrination workshop on Pancasila as the National Ideology at that time. The majority of the students believed that the film fairly reflected the facts of what was shown to be a tragedy perpetrated by the communist party. The docu-drama was then screened across the country and was a box office hit, not because everybody wanted to see it but because it was compulsory to do so. Nugroho Notosusanto was the key person in the making of the film. He developed a film script based on the government's version of the *coup*. The film was first screened and checked by various people including the president and senior military figures.²⁸ The filmmakers paid attention to the details in reconstruction of the kidnapping of the generals. The kidnapping and the death of each general was portrayed as a 'horror' to the audience, further demonising communists.²⁹ The message of this New Order

propaganda to Indonesian youth was that communist party should not be allowed to exist in Indonesia.

Under the New Order, Pancasila moral education was made compulsory throughout the country. The subjects started in state universities in the early 1980s and in high school in the mid-1980s. Youth were indoctrinated against leftist (communist) ideology which was categorized as a danger to national unity. Students attend a lecture on Pancasila as a national ideology and were required to present a paper on it, first in small discussion groups and then to the whole class. At the university level this was a compulsory subject which had to be passed. In later years all government employees had to take Pancasila indoctrination courses. As David Bouchier has observed, this was all aimed at create a bond of loyalty between the people and the regime.³⁰ The propaganda was effective since the authoritarian New Order government was the only source of national history. Those who expressed different opinions on the nation's past were considered leftist and a potential threat to national security.

FEMINIST VOICES

There has been a strong emerging commitment to democratisation and pluralism through the critical and revisionist histories emanating from Indonesia in the wake of the New Order. However, recent work is largely marked by deep-seated gender blindness. Mirroring a long line of literature on Indonesian politics and history that is authored by and focused on the lives of men,³¹ this is particularly startling when considering the misogyny and conservative gender ideology in which Suharto's rise to power and presidency was steeped. Nevertheless, a small group of feminist historians and women's groups are writing women back into the often universalising narratives of Indonesian history. In doing so, they recognise the specificities of Indonesian women's diverse experiences and their contributions to projects of nation building, creating a more democratic and inclusive public history landscape in which to ground understandings of Indonesian identity as well as contemporary feminist activism.

Feminist historians face unique challenges in attempting to tell women's histories in public. The conception of 'truth' as in flux and ever-shifting that is embedded in feminist epistemology, as well as the recognition of subjectivity and hegemonies of power and discourse lend themselves to efforts to make visible lives and experiences that have been hidden beneath dominant narratives.³² However, it can be difficult to maintain historical authority in a context where empiricist approaches

are easier to accommodate and often favoured within national histories. This is compounded by the spaces in which women's histories take place – often outside official political realms³³ – making them less accessible and devalued.³⁴ The evidence available to document women's histories is also sparser and more ephemeral than in other cases, resulting in further undervaluing in a context where empirical approaches still hold historical authority. These factors are exacerbated in the New Order political climate, where women's organising was actively suppressed and much documentary evidence of past activism annihilated.

Indonesia has long witnessed the development of a strong women's movement, both shaped by and in turn influencing changing political climates. As Elizabeth Martyn observes:

The political system and dominant ideologies of a nation-state impact on and constrain women's ability to organise, determine women's interests and often set the agenda. Women's mobilization in turn influences these processes and contributes to identity-formation.³⁵

The Indonesian women's movement first clearly emerged in the 1900s, closely entwined with growing nationalism and nationalist organisations in the colonial period. This phase of the women's movement focused on issues like polygamy, workplace discrimination and access to education, and started the first women's congress on 22-25 December 1928, embodying the beginnings of a more organised women's movement.³⁶ Despite overtly political aims, it drew much from Western bourgeois notions of femininity and modernity, indicative of its colonial grounding.³⁷

The movement ebbed and flowed after Dutch rule, coming under closer, militaristic control during Japanese occupation and then framed by the egalitarian gender ideology and nationalist sentiments of the independence movement whilst struggling against the Japanese and the return of the Dutch. When Japanese rule receded, a number of women's organisations tentatively emerged, including the influential umbrella women's group Kowani that is still active today.³⁸ In the early years of Sukarno's republic, women's organisations once again flourished with relatively little government intervention. A significant ideological framework was one of the PKI's nationalist Marxism, and the women's movement was inherently bound up with egalitarian nationalism.³⁹ However this was underscored by Sukarno's firm belief in the specific *kodrat*⁴⁰ of each sex, with women viewed in domestic, caring terms.

Somewhat paradoxically, this era also saw the strident rise of Gerwani, the women's organisation of the PKI, which was an overtly political feminist voice in the midst of other women's groups primarily focused on social issues that accorded with the female *kodrat*, like family welfare and marriage reform.⁴¹ When Sukarno's presidential control increased through the policy of Guided Democracy from 1958 onwards, Gerwani's power augmented, partly through its ties to the favoured PKI, even as other women's organisations lost autonomy. Nonetheless, the feminist movement thrived in the Sukarno period. Many women's



Part of the bas-relief frieze on the Sacred Pancasila Monument (Monumen Pancasila Sakti) (Photograph Paul Ashton)

organisations emerged to campaign around women's rights issues, giving a voice to Indonesian women's experience, albeit often framed in Marxist-nationalist terms.

This shifted dramatically with the events preceding the coming to power of the New Order, and its subsequent 32-year rule. Though there is an increasing body of work scrutinising the New Order's official 'events' of the coup that took place on 30 September 1965,⁴² this area of focus in particular is marked by the gender-blindness symptomatic of Indonesian histories more generally. Despite the centrality of Gerwani

women in the official narrative around the coup, mainstream revisionist accounts of the coup and New Order history have sidelined or ignored this gendered aspect altogether. Women are relegated to what Steven Drakely calls a 'macabre footnote'.⁴³

It is because of this that feminist work has also tended to group around this period in recent years. Feminists have brought to light the negatively gendered propagandist sentiment in which the New Order foundation narrative⁴⁴ – the story of the 30 September movement coup – was steeped. The official version of the coup specifically positioned Gerwani women, rather than other members of the PKI, as the perpetrators of the murders. The women were said to have engaged in torture, mutilation and castration prior to the executions, underscored by broader insinuations of Gerwani women as hypersexual, promiscuous and sexually sadistic.⁴⁵ They were even purported to have performed the Dance of the Fragrant Flowers – an allegedly obscene and sexualised show – at the site of the murders. Indeed, as noted earlier, this facet of the official narrative is literally frozen in the frieze at the Sacred Pancasila monument which features Gerwani women performing the dance around the soon-to-be murdered officials.⁴⁶ Testimonies of Gerwani members and the official autopsy reports – signed and approved by Suharto himself – disprove this interpretation.⁴⁷

The misogyny of this foundation story served in many ways to legitimise the Suharto regime. The positioning of Gerwani as perpetrators served to demonise the group and, by extension, the political party of which they were a part – the PKI. Moreover, though, the portrayal of the aggressors as women served to otherise and demonise the PKI even more in comparison to Suharto's forces. As Drakely notes, 'although intrinsically horrifying, the alleged murders, tortures, and mutilations appeared even more so as the acts of women'.⁴⁸ The inversion of gender roles in women straying from caring, passive femininity into hypersexuality, aggression and murder served as a metaphor for the chaos of communism and the Sukarno regime. By extension, this promised a return to traditional morality through the New Order.

It also created the framework for Suharto's conservative policies on women, what Julia Suryakusuma describes as 'State Ibuism' – wherein women were perceived as dependant, domesticated appendages of their husbands.⁴⁹ In this climate, the New Order was also able to suppress the capacity for women to organise overtly in all but the most prescriptive, state-sanctioned ways. This was instated partly through the suspicion surrounding autonomous women's organizing that underpinned representations of Gerwani members as responsible for the coup. It was

reinforced through the conservative gender ideology and totalitarian restriction of critique and political analysis that more broadly characterized the New Order. Gerwani was all but annihilated through banning the group and arresting or killing its members, women's organisations were converted into state-sanctioned wives groups for the public service⁵⁰ and women more generally were pushed out of politics and back into the home. As Susan Blackburn has written, the New Order had a 'fixed agenda that discouraged the study of politics or of women except in very restricted ways that accorded with its version of Pancasila, the state ideology'.⁵¹

Gerwani is still perceived as a radical, communist affiliated group in Indonesia despite its disbanding.⁵² Divisions resound between Gerwani's legacy and other contemporary women's organisations. The women's umbrella organization Kowani, for example, has in recent years been outwardly hostile to Gerwani ideology, attempting to cleanse Gerwani supporters from its ranks.⁵³ In this sense, feminist work is not just about righting historical wrongs, but also ameliorating the political implications that such narratives have for the women's movement today.

A notable recent development in feminist historical work on Indonesia and the New Order, is Julia Suryakusuma's book of her 1987 thesis, *State Ibuism: the Social Construction of Womanhood in New Order Indonesia*, which was published in 2011.⁵⁴ It was released for the first time in Indonesian as well as the original English. This indicates something of the new climate of academic freedom and critique in the wake of Suharto as well as the active contributions feminists are making to new accounts of Indonesian history, in this case opening up critique of the New Order years.

The overwhelming focus on women's and feminist oppression under the New Order frames women's history in a particular light. Although Indonesia under Suharto was characterised by a clampdown on women's political and social freedom, underscored by a misogynistic foundation myth, it is not the only period in Indonesia's history when conservative gender ideologies have been rife. To give primacy to the New Order period as *the* time of oppression in feminist histories can by comparison pale the sexism of other periods. The state of women's rights under Japanese occupation (1942-5) is an example. The conservative gendered values of this period were magnified by the militaristic nature of the regime and women's primary role was as wives and mothers supporting men in the war effort.⁵⁵ The Japanese occupation in Indonesia was also plagued by the mass phenomenon of comfort women,⁵⁶ an issue still shrouded in social taboo and historical invisibility.⁵⁷ This period in

fact bears much in common with New Order gender ideologies, but is often omitted from analysis in favour of foregrounding the oppression of Suharto's regime. Indeed, little has been written at all about the Indonesian women's movement under the Japanese.⁵⁸

There are some feminist works coming to light in the post-Suharto period that address historical issues other than the New Order reign. In telling histories of same-sex attracted women⁵⁹ and trans people,⁶⁰ and voicing the experiences of Islamic women⁶¹ and working women⁶² in Indonesia, among other things, a more diverse portrait of Indonesian women and feminist movements is made visible. This also serves as a counterpoint to the tendency to conflate Indonesian feminism with Gerwani as the most radical, active and persecuted women's organisation in Indonesian history.

Broader history projects and debates must take into account feminist readings of history if there is to be a true democratisation and pluralisation of social memory and public history in post-New Order Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

On 20 April 1975, the massive Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (TMII) – park of beautiful Indonesia in Miniature – was opened by President Suharto in East Jakarta. It had been under construction since 1971. Suharto's wife, Tien Suharto, had suggested the idea to engender national pride having visited 'such tourist attractions as Disneyland in the United States and Timland in Thailand'.⁶³ There was some public disquiet about the deployment of resources into such a scheme, including a few tiny student demonstrations. But most Indonesians opposed to it did their protesting in private.⁶⁴ While internal and foreign tourism was part of its function, TMII's principal purpose was ideological. It was a national monument to ethnic diversity which sanitizes difference. In his address of welcome, later printed in the first official guide to TMII, Suharto said that: 'By visiting this Park we will know ourselves better, we will know our nation better and we will love our motherland more. Therefore the "Beautiful Indonesia Park" is also a real effort to strengthen national development, both now and in the future'.⁶⁵

The demise of the New Order in Indonesia has left a historiographical vacuum which individuals and groups from a broad range of perspectives are trying to fill. Some, like Professor Azyumardi Azra, are seeking to straddle the divide between professional and public history. Memory has emerged as a key issue in public debates, attempts

have been made at reconciliation between the left and the right, though these faltered, and turf wars have broken out between historians and novelists such as the late Pramoedya Ananta Toer. The movement for freedom of expression, however, did have a victory. On 15 October 2010 the 50 year-old law allowing the government to ban books deemed 'able to disrupt public order' was lifted.⁶⁶ Publications such as John Roosa's *Pretext for Mass Murder* began to circulate legally.⁶⁷

Public history in Indonesia is at a crossroads. New Order history has been successfully challenged but it still holds sway. Public history's future in Indonesia is likely to be a turbid negotiation between state-sanctioned or sponsored accounts of the past and more democratic forms of history.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to thank an anonymous referee for their most useful contributions to this article.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ For a general history of Indonesia see Adrian Vickers, *A History of Modern Indonesia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2010.
- ² David Thelen, 'The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History', *The Journal of American History*, vol 86, no 3, 1999, p965.
- ³ David Christian, 'History and Global Identity', in Stuart Macintyre (ed), *The Historian's Conscience: Australian historians on the ethics of history*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2004, p149.
- ⁴ op cit, p147.
- ⁵ See, for example, Nagesh Rao (ed), *Exile: Pramoedya Ananta Toer in conversation with Andre Vltchek and Rossie Indira*, Haymarket Books, Chicago, 2006, pp32-33.
- ⁶ Eka Darmaputera, *Pancasila and the Search for Identity and Modernity in Indonesian Society*, E. J. Brill, The Netherlands, 1988, pp151-2.
- ⁷ Vickers, op cit, p162.
- ⁸ Richard Tranter, 'Indonesia's dangerous silence', *Inside Story*, 28 April 2011, <http://inside.org.au/indonesia-dangerous-silence/> (accessed 5 January 2012).
- ⁹ James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1992, ppxi-xii.
- ¹⁰ <http://thebigdurian.wordpress.com/2010/10/25/lubang-buaya-memorial-park/> accessed 15 February 2012.
- ¹¹ <http://jakarta.travel/> accessed 15 February 2012.
- ¹² Benedict Anderson, 'How did the generals Die?', *Indonesia*, no 43, April, 1987, pp109-134.
- ¹³ John Roosa, *Pretext for Mass Murder: The September 30th Movement and Suharto's Coup d'Etat in Indonesia*, The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, 2006, p7.
- ¹⁴ *Sriwijaya Post*, 30 September 2011.
- ¹⁵ http://www.juliasuryakusuma.com/column.php?menu_id=1&year=2011&month=10&column_id=266 accessed 14 February 2012; reproduced from her article in *Jakarta Post*, 1 October 2011.
- ¹⁶ Mary S. Zurbuchen, 'History, Memory and the "1965 Incident" in Indonesia', *Asian Survey*, vol 24, no 4, 2002, p566.
- ¹⁷ See Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton, *History at the Crossroads: Australians and the Past*, Halstead Press, Sydney, 2010, p134.
- ¹⁸ Michael Backman, *Asian Eclipse: Exposing the Dark Side of Business in Asia*, John Wiley and Sons, Singapore, 2001, pp267-72.
- ¹⁹ See Institute for Studies on the Free Flow of Information, *Bayang-Bayang PKI* [Shadows of the PKI], Jakarta, 1995.
- ²⁰ Zurbuchen, op cit, p572.

-
- ²¹ *Jurist*, 8 December 2006; Dedy A. Prasetyo, 'Indonesia's Truth and Reconciliation commission as a Mechanism for Dealing with Gross Violations of Human Rights', LLM (Human Rights) thesis, The University of Hong Kong, Faculty of Law, May 2006.
- ²² *Jakarta Post*, 23 July 2012.
- ²³ Adam, Asvi Warman, 'Pengendalian Sejarah sejak Orde Baru', in Henri Chambert-Loir and Hasan Muarif Ambary (eds), *Panggung Sejarah: Persembahan kepada Prof. Dr. Denys Lombard*, Yayasan Obor, Jakarta, 1999, pp567-77.
- ²⁴ The Cornell Paper concluded that the coup emerged from the intern conflict in the Army. See Benedict Andersen and Ruth McVey, *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965 Coup in Indonesia*, Cornell University Modern Indonesia Project, Ithica, 1971.
- ²⁵ Katharine E. McGregor, *History in Uniform: Military Ideology and the Construction of Indonesia's Past*, National University of Singapore Press, Singapore, 2007, p221.
- ²⁶ Kelompok Kerdja Staf Angkatan Bersendjata, *Sedjarah Singkat Perdjjuangan Bersendjata Bangsa Indonesia (A Concise History of the Armed Struggle of the Indonesian Nation)*, Staf Angkatan Bersendjata, Jakarta, 1964.
- ²⁷ Kate McGregor, 'A soldier historian', *Inside Indonesia*, no 68, October-December, 2001.
- ²⁸ McGregor, *History in Uniform*, p96.
- ²⁹ For a detailed account of the film see *ibid*, pp96-100.
- ³⁰ David Bouchier, 'Lineages of Organicist Political Thought in Indonesia', PhD thesis, Department of Politics, Monash University, Clayton, 1996.
- ³¹ Elizabeth Martyn, *The Women's Movement in Post Colonial Indonesia: Gender and Nation in a new democracy*, Routledge Curzon, Oxon, 2005, p8.
- ³² Saskia Wieringa, *Sexual Politics in Indonesia*, Palgrave, New York, 2002, pp16-8.
- ³³ In many mainstream histories, even women's organisations are judged to be outside conventional politics and hence are not documented. For more detail, see Elizabeth Martyn, *op cit*, p9.
- ³⁴ Martyn, p8.
- ³⁵ *ibid*, p14.
- ³⁶ 'Indonesia: The Ups and Downs of the Indonesian Women's Movement', *Jakarta Post*, 20 December 2010.
- ³⁷ Susan Blackburn, *Women and the State in Modern Indonesia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004, p19.
- ³⁸ *ibid*, pp20-22.
- ³⁹ For a history of the effects of nationalism on the women's movement, and vice versa, in the postcolonial period, see Elizabeth Martyn, *op cit*.
- ⁴⁰ This refers to the natural, innate character or destiny of a group.
- ⁴¹ Wieringa, *op cit*, pp98-9.
- ⁴² Mary Zurbuchen canvasses the revisionist and alternative histories that have emerged to interrogate official accounts of the events of 1965-6; see Mary Zurbuchen, 'History, memory and the "1965 incident" in Indonesia', *Asian Survey*, vol 42, no 4, 2002, pp564-81.
- ⁴³ Steven Drakely, 'Lubang Buaya: Myth, Misogyny and Massacre', *Nebula*, vol 4, no 4, 2007, p12.
- ⁴⁴ The official narrative of the coup can be seen as the New Order foundation story because of the way it legitimised the subsequent mass murder of half a million communist sympathisers and the thirty two year rule of Suharto that followed. See Drakely, *op cit*, who also refers to this story as a 'myth'.
- ⁴⁵ *ibid*.
- ⁴⁶ *ibid*, p25.
- ⁴⁷ Helen Van Klinken, 'Coming Out', *Inside Indonesia*, ed 58, 1999, accessed 12 January 2012 at <http://www.insideindonesia.org/edition-58-apr-jun-1999/coming-out-2209692>.
- ⁴⁸ Drakely, *op cit*, p23.
- ⁴⁹ Julia Suryakusuma, 'The State and Sexuality in New Order Indonesia', in Laurie Jo Sears (ed), *Fantasizing the Feminine in Indonesia*, Duke University Press, USA, 1999, pp92-119.
- ⁵⁰ Wieringa, *op cit*.
- ⁵¹ Blackburn, *op cit*, p4.
- ⁵² Saskia Wieringa, 'Reformasi, Sexuality and Communism in Indonesia', paper prepared for 'Living Genders/Sexualities in Southeast Asia' Conference, Manchester, 1999, accessed at <http://members.fortunecity.com/edicahy/selectedworks/saskiaew.html>.
- ⁵³ *ibid*.
- ⁵⁴ Tom Boellstorff, "'State Ibumism" is not dead, it's not even past', *Jakarta Post*, 8 January 2012.
- ⁵⁵ Susan Blackburn, *op cit*, pp20-1.
- ⁵⁶ Asian Women's Fund, 'Women Made to Become Comfort Women - Indonesia', *Digital Museum: The Comfort Women Issue and the Asian Women's Fund*, accessed 19 February 2012 at <<http://www.awf.or.jp/e1/indonesia.html>>

-
- ⁵⁷ Katrin Figge, 'Indonesia's Comfort Women Break Their Silence', *Jakarta Globe*, 18 August 2010.
- ⁵⁸ Susan Blackburn, op cit, p21.
- ⁵⁹ Evelyn Blackwood, *Falling into the Lesbi World: Desire and Difference in Indonesia*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 2010.
- ⁶⁰ Evelyn Blackwood, 'Gender Transgression in Colonial and Postcolonial Indonesia', *Journal of Asian Studies*, vol 64, no 4, 2005, pp849-79.
- ⁶¹ Islamic women are emerging as a vocal group in a context of global Islamisation. See, for example, Sonja van Wichelen, 'Polygamy Talk and the Politics of Feminism: Contestations over masculinity in a new Muslim Indonesia', *Journal of International Women's Studies*, vol 11, no 1, 2009.
- ⁶² Michele Ford and Lyn Parker, *Women and Work in Indonesia*, Routledge, Oxon, 2008.
- ⁶³ *Apa dan Siapa Indonesia Indah* [What and Who is Beautiful Indonesia], p21.
- ⁶⁴ See, for example, Benedict Anderson, 'Notes on contemporary Indonesian political communication', *Indonesia*, vol 16, pp39-80 and J. Hendy, *The Orient Strikes Back*, Berg, Oxford, 2000.
- ⁶⁵ 'Words of Welcome', in ibid, p9.
- ⁶⁶ *Jakarta Post*, 1 October 2010, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2010/01/10/on-alert-afainst-tampering-with-freedom.html> accessed 25 January 2012.
- ⁶⁷ See John Roosa, 'On Book Banning in Indonesia', VIVanews, 3 February 2010, http://us.en.vivanews.com/news/read/126605-on_book_banning_in_indonesia accessed 25 February 2012.