

## Party presidentialization in post-Suharto Indonesia

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# Party presidentialization in post-Suharto Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

Indonesia presents an extremely rare quasi-experimental research case: the constitutional reforms and the transition to full presidentialism have effected a presidentialization of political parties that is largely in line with the changes predicted by the model of Samuels and Shugart [2010. Presidents, parties and prime ministers: How separation of powers affects party organization and behaviour. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press]. Especially the rise of the new president and his difficult relationship with his own party are testimony to this. But a closer look reveals that the model has to be adapted to Indonesian politics. Presidents have tools to forge grand coalitions and to overcome the dualism to an extent. The size and history of political parties as well as wider socio-economic changes, that is an increasing oligarchization of party organization, have to be considered. Moreover, highly personalized vehicle parties serving the interests of a presidential candidate have emerged. It follows that institutional and structural incentives combined have produced a party system consisting of different party types.

## KEYWORDS

Presidentialism; presidentialization; personalization; party system; vehicle parties; Indonesia

## Introduction

This paper focuses on the extent to which Indonesian parties and the party system have been changed by the shift towards a presidential system. This article shows that Indonesian parties have been transformed by the introduction of direct presidential elections, and that processes relatively independent of these institutional reforms have an important impact.

I refer to an approach by Samuels and Shugart (2010, 2014). They criticize the wide notion of presidentialization by Poguntke and Webb (2005a, 2005b). Poguntke and Webb see presidentialization as being closely connected to personalization. In many parliamentary systems (but also in some presidential systems) they identify a presidentialization of politics that is indicated by growing power resources at the disposal of prime ministers in relation to the executive and their own party/coalition. In this context, the party apparatus loses its impact, and parties win elections through adroit marketing campaigns and popular politicians. Instead, Samuels and Shugart focus on the strict separation of the executive and legislative branches of government within presidential systems and its direct consequences for the internal structure of political parties. According to this

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perspective, presidents do not have to permanently seek the backing of their parties/coalitions, and members of parliament are less dependent on the executive head.

Against the background of the Samuels/Shugart model, this paper analyses political developments in Indonesia after 1998, but with a focus on recent events. It demonstrates that the country represents a very rare quasi-experimental research case given that it has fairly recently switched from having an indirectly elected president to having a full presi-dential system in 2004, which has fundamentally changed the party system.

This paper proceeds as follows: first, it outlines the salient constitutional reforms and discusses in the second part the model by Samuels/Shugart. Third, it uses two case studies – Golkar (Partai Golkar) and the Democratic Party of Indonesia–Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan, PDI-P) – to analyse whether the predicted transform-ations have taken place. Fourth, it adapts Samuels and Shugart’s model to the specificities of the Indonesian context; and fifth, it discusses the emergence of vehicle parties. These parties are highly personalized ad hoc organizations with ready-made platforms and are usually financially dependent on a charismatic leader or his/her financial backers.

The article largely corroborates the model by Samuels and Shugart, but also explains major aberrations of it, in particular the rise of vehicle parties, the role of oligarchization, and with reference to presidential strategies to overcome the dualism. The article is inno-vative because it (i) sheds new light on the mechanics of political parties in Indonesia, (ii) tests Samuels and Shugart’s model with one of the most interesting cases worldwide, and (iii) provides us with a better understanding of a new party type, vehicle parties.

## **Constitutional transitions**

Constitutional development in Indonesia was turbulent from the start (Horowitz, 2013; Kawamura, 2013a, 2013b; Sherlock, 2015). After declaring independence in 1945, the country established a presidential system. It then switched to a parliamentary system in 1946,<sup>1</sup> which lasted until 1959, when President Sukarno declared himself prime minister and created the Gotong Royong (Mutual Help) Parliament as part of his Guided Democracy regime. In 1963 Sukarno became president for life. During the New Order (1966–98), Suharto (officially president since 1968) amassed enormous and almost unchecked power; the People’s Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, MPR) was only on paper the highest state organ.

Because Suharto controlled Golkar, the regime party, he was able to subdue the PDI (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia; Democratic Party of Indonesia) and the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP), which were the two semi-oppositional parties. He manipulated elections in order to guarantee supermajorities in both parliaments and he – as the sole candidate – was always unanimously elected. This Demokrasi Pancasila (‘Pancasila Democracy’)<sup>2</sup> within a ‘family state’ with Suharto as bapak (‘father’) and the principle of musyawarah dan mufakat (‘deliberation and consensus’) without any mean-ingful opposition served to legitimate the neo-patrimonial rule of the president and his sycophants.

Since 1999, Indonesian elections have essentially been free and fair. The country’s system of government and electoral laws have been continuously changed (Horowitz, 2013). In 1999/2000 the lawmaking powers of the House of Representatives (Dewan Per-wakilan Rakyat, DPR) were strengthened considerably. Nevertheless, the period after the

fall of Suharto was marked by uncertainty. The Constitution was ill-defined, and the impeachment of President Abdurrahman Wahid in 2001 was the result of a power struggle between the DPR, the MPR, and a president who strongly disagreed with Parliament in regard to defining the authority of his office.

In some respects, Indonesia was presidential before 2004. The president, especially as interpreted by Abdurrahman Wahid (though less so by Megawati Sukarnoputri), was perceived by many as powerful as a chief executive in a full presidential system. Moreover, incentives were high for political parties to support the president in exchange for government positions. Abdurrahman Wahid built a rainbow coalition in order to secure strong parliamentary support because his own party, the National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa, PKB), was relatively small. After Megawati came to power following Wahid's impeachment, she was also keen to secure the permanent backing of most parties and thus continued the tradition of forming rainbow coalitions.

In 2002, and as a reaction to the upheaval created by Wahid's fall, it was decided to hold direct presidential elections for the first time in the country's history in 2004. This reform constituted the full institutionalization of a presidential system. Before, that is during the transition period from 1998 until 2004, the system was parliamentary according to standard definitions because the president was only elected indirectly by the MPR. Yet strong presidential elements were also typical for this hybrid (Sherlock, 2015, p. 94f). This was a legacy of New Order authoritarianism.

Since 2004, Indonesian presidentialism has been characterized by both a strong president and a strong DPR. Today, the DPR consists of 560 members elected in 77 multi-member constituencies.<sup>3</sup> Legislation on DPR elections has been significantly changed, with open lists of candidates replacing closed lists of candidates. In 2014, an open list was fully implemented; in 2009, the relevant regulation was issued just prior to the elections and not yet solidly effective. Whereas the closed-list system saw candidates selected by the central party leadership, the open-list system means that candidates from the same party vie for votes in their respective constituencies although voters retain their right to vote for parties rather than single candidates.

Besides, direct elections of regional heads (pilihan kepala daerah, also known as pilkada) were introduced in 2005. Previously, provincial and district/municipality parliaments had the authority to select governors, district heads, and mayors. Candidates are now nominated by a party or a coalition of parties.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, in order to mitigate the politicization of ethnic and religious cleavages, pilkada and presidential candidates always run for office in pairs. This two-ticket system helps to blur ideological divides because the two candidates usually represent different regions and/or diverse religious communities. Moreover, at the provincial and district/municipality level a range of surprising party coalitions, for instance between Islamist and Christian parties were formed.

One might argue that the decisive step towards a more thorough presidentialization of politics came with the introduction of pilkada in 2005. Pilkada provided new local and regional elites with the opportunity to prove their qualities as politicians and administrators at the subnational level, which enabled people such as President Joko Widodo ('Jokowi') and Jakarta Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama ('Ahok') to advance their unprecedented careers. The political party establishment needed a few years to grasp the fundamental shifts that had occurred following the introduction of direct local elections. Once they had, they tried to revert back to the old system of indirect elections. However, it was

already too late, and their reform proposals faced stiff resistance by a politically well-informed civil society.

The introduction of *pilkada* and the open-list system has resulted in candidates having increased autonomy from their respective political parties (Aspinall & Sukmajati, 2016; Buehler & Johnson Tan, 2007; Buehler, 2010; Choi, 2011, 2015; Erb & Priyambudi, 2009; Hadiz, 2010).

### **Presidentialism and presidentialization: the Samuels and Shugart model**

The literature on Indonesian parties has, so far, hardly dealt with the impact of presidentialism on political parties. The exceptions are Djayadi Hanan (2012), who indeed focused on the workings of the presidential system in general, and Koichi Kawamura (2013a). This paper does not probe whether the Indonesian presidential system is perilous for democratic consolidation (Fukuyama, Dressel, & Chang, 2005), leads to gridlock and deadlock (Djayadi, 2012; Kawamura, 2013b), or is generally marked by a difficult relationship between presidents and multiparty systems (Hanta Yuda, 2010; Mainwaring, 1993); rather, it looks at the effects of presidentialization on parties, particularly with reference to Samuels and Shugart (2010; see also Passarelli, 2015a).

It argues that context-sensitive institutionalism is particularly helpful in analysing the mechanics and shape of parties and party systems. The specific reactions of political actors to institutional incentives with reference to a comparatively tested model tells us a lot about Indonesian specifics and helps to put other factors in perspective.

Indonesia is a very useful quasi-experimental test case for Samuels and Shugart's model because (i) it is one of the very few countries that have experienced a shift towards a presidential system and (ii) the party system has been transformed, at least partially, in the manner predicted by Samuels and Shugart (2010). Samuels and Shugart (2010, p. 170ff) present two quasi-experimental cases that have clearly vindicated the presidentialization thesis. The first is France where the political regime shifted from pure parliamentarism to semi-presidentialism. The constitutional reforms have encouraged 'political personalization, a decline in the importance of ideology, and the marginalization of party organization from political campaigns' (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 171). De Gaulle's powerful personality, for example, undermined party institutionalization of the Union pour la Nouvelle République (UNR) that was created ahead of the elections, and Mitterrand joined the Socialist Party only after he had announced his presidential candidacy. He stood above the party and had his own personal campaign organization. Interparty politics was presidentialized because interparty competition began to revolve around presidential elections. The Communist Party, for example, toned down its ideologies when it supported socialist candidates. But later on, since 2002, almost all parties began to present presidential candidates as a form of political advertisement. This helped radical parties such as the National Front to establish a national presence.

In Israel, direct elections of the prime minister were introduced in 1992 (and after less than a decade abolished because of disastrous effects). In this very unique case that resembled presidentialism, executive and legislative origin were separated, but the directly elected prime minister could lose his office via a vote of no confidence. Within

a short time period parties were presidentialized and then de-presidentialized after the abrogation of the 1992 reforms (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 181).

Major parties began to downplay ideology, nominated relative outsiders, focused on vote-seeking strategies, whereas smaller parties concentrated on office- or policy-seeking campaigns and did not even present prime-ministerial candidates. Thus, the party system was bifurcated. In the end, organizational survival of the two largest parties was threatened.

In its pure form, parliamentarism is characterized by an executive branch that consists of a prime minister and a cabinet which are collectively responsible to parliament. Presidentialism, on the other hand, is marked by the executive branch's dual origin and distinct survival strategies: the president and parliament are both directly elected, and the president can only be removed through impeachment and not by a majority of members of Parliament (MPs) (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 4). Parliamentarized parties 'select their agents from within their own top ranks and maintain effective control over those agents after they ascend to the top executive positions', whereas presidentialized parties 'delegate discretion to agents who may have been selected for characteristics unrelated to their faithfulness to the party itself and who cannot be recalled' (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 251). Here, Samuels and Shugart are referring to a principal-agent model, in which presidents or prime ministers serve as agents of their principals (i.e. political parties, party coalitions, or voters) in direct elections.

The presidentialization of political parties signifies specific organizational and behavioural characteristics (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 6). The separate election of the president and the parliament 'enhances the incentives for politicians in different branches of the same party to go their own way' (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 9). Survival is mutually assured because impeaching a president is difficult and because presidents do not have the power to dissolve parliaments. The two parts of the party supporting the president, that is the legislative, and the executive 'branches', are split because of the constitutional separation of powers. Presidentialized parties exhibit less intraparty leadership accountability and they 'pre-select' candidates who will be the voters' direct agent' (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 65). Presidentialism generally hinders the organizational development of parties. Samuels and Shugart also predict that attempts to coordinate different campaigns will result in collective action problems and that political parties will sacrifice programmatic commitments. Based on their thorough examination of the biographical information of prime ministers and presidents in democracies from 1945 to 2007, Samuels and Shugart found that the rise of outsiders is another indicator of the presidentialization of political parties.

Samuels and Shugart's model of presidentialization is innovative because it highlights the huge impact of the system of government on the structure of parties and the behaviour of party elites. This is something that has seldom been systematically addressed by the literature on Indonesian parties.

### **Cases of presidentialized parties: Golkar and PDI-P**

With reference to Samuels and Shugart (2010), Koichi Kawamura (2013a, p. 6) already pointed out that organizational strength and the chances of winning presidential elections are the two factors responsible for the degree of presidentialization.

If we look at developments within Golkar since the fall of Suharto in 1998 and at the supposed executive–legislative dualism, the presidentialization of Golkar began with the transition towards direct presidential elections.<sup>5</sup> Golkar initiated a national convention to select a presidential candidate (Tomsa, 2006, p. 8ff). In these polls General Wiranto, the former commander in chief, defeated Akbar Tanjung, the Golkar chairperson. Yet, during the presidential campaign, Wiranto was at best only partially supported by the Golkar machinery. Following Wiranto's election defeat and Jusuf Kalla's election as vice president under Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Golkar split into pro-Kalla and pro-Tanjung camps. In the following months, this created serious problems for the Yudhoyono government. In the new DPR, Golkar and the PDI-P – supported by two smaller Islamic parties – formed the Nationhood Coalition (Koalisi Kebangsaan). Yudhoyono's PD (Partai Demokrat; Democratic Party) and a number of partners established the People's Coalition (Koalisi Kerakyatan). At the 2004 DPR leadership elections, the Nationhood Coalition won all five positions. This saw Kalla decide to run for the Golkar chairpersonship, which he subsequently won. After that, Kalla was able to discipline the Golkar caucus within the DPR and to resolve deadlocks. This reveals a noticeable dualism between Golkar (within the DPR) and the vice president, which was only resolved because the party followed Kalla. These developments would not have been realistically possible within a parliamentary system.

In 2009, after the parliamentary election, Golkar terminated its partnership with the PD and decided to field Jusuf Kalla as its presidential candidate. This caused controversy within Golkar because the Tanjung faction expected to get battered by Yudhoyono, who was going to run with Boediono, the respected governor of the central bank. As it turned out, Kalla did not even get enough votes to proceed to the second round of the elections, where Yudhoyono and Boediono beat Megawati and Prabowo Subianto. Only a few prominent Golkar politicians had openly supported Kalla, whereas many others questioned his decision not to hold a party convention to pick the presidential candidate as in 2004. After his defeat, Kalla was made to give way to a new Golkar chairperson, the tycoon Aburizal Bakrie – who was selected because of his money and influence rather than his popularity.

The next example of internal partizan strife because of collective action problems due to direct presidential elections is Aburizal Bakrie's unsuccessful attempt to be nominated as the Golkar presidential candidate for 2014. He failed because of disastrous survey results revealing that he trailed behind both Prabowo Subianto and Jokowi. Once he showed himself even unable to secure the nomination for vice president – a position that was ultimately again filled by Jusuf Kalla – his position within Golkar was even more eroded.

Ahead of the presidential elections in 2014, Jokowi rejected the offer by Golkar to support his campaign because he did not want to engage in the usual horse-trading. Thus, Golkar finally backed Prabowo as presidential candidate. Although Prabowo lost and Golkar was not part of the new government, Bakrie was unanimously re-elected as party chairman in November 2014. Yet, a rival faction led by Laksono held another party congress in December. The Minister of Justice and Human Rights who has the authority to officially recognize one of the competing factions, confirmed Laksono as legal chairman. In the end, the government succeeded in getting installed a new Golkar chair-man, Setya Novanto, who was weakened by corruption allegations. Golkar became a loyal

member of the governing coalition, and in 2016 even re-nominated Jokowi for the next presidency (Mietzner, 2016, p. 217ff).

The Golkar case evinces the tensions that arise within a party leadership when presidential candidates have to be nominated or when a faction within the party wants to follow the victors of presidential elections.

The PDI-P has a dynastic character given that Megawati took over the chairpersonship of its predecessor, the PDI, in the early 1990s (Mietzner, 2013, p. 133ff) due to the reverence for Sukarno by many Indonesians. In 1996, the regime decided to remove Megawati from her position, but after the downfall of Suharto, Megawati and her followers established the PDI-P in 1998. Since then, she has been the party's chairperson and even served as president (2001–2004) following the impeachment of Abdurrahman Wahid. She ran for re-election in 2004 but was defeated by her former minister, Yudhoyono. In 2009 she was again unsuccessful in her bid to once again be president. Megawati decided against running in 2014 after not performing well in opinion polls and being convinced by her party followers to make way for Jokowi.

The salience of Samuels and Shugart's model becomes particularly clear regarding the developments within the PDI-P since 2013. This will be illustrated with reference to the nomination process, the parliamentary and presidential campaigns, cabinet formation, the Budi Gunawan affair, the PDI-P congress in April 2015, and, in particular, the nomination of an outsider like Jokowi – which is typical of presidential systems (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 64). The selection of outsiders has become increasingly common due to the establishment of direct elections and the emergence of a professional polling industry that serves candidates at all levels. Long-established party elites have observed this development with suspicion because it has endowed politicians outside the central executive in Jakarta with a more assertive role.

Jokowi incarnates this trend as he was never a dedicated member of the PDI-P and also did not belong to the country's established elites as did Abdurrahman Wahid (as son of a minister and as former chairman of Nahdatul Ulama, a traditionalist, quasi-feudalistic, Muslim organization); Megawati (as Sukarno's daughter); and Wiranto, Prabowo, and Yudhoyono (as high-ranking New Order generals). Jokowi entered presidential office via stints as mayor of the central Javanese city of Solo and as governor of Jakarta. His fame as a politician is based on his impromptu visits of local markets, his unannounced inspections of offices,<sup>6</sup> and his highly pragmatic style of governance. One may argue that he was elected president precisely because of his humble origins, as well as his determination as a businessman and then as a politician who was relatively independent of old-fashioned party politics (Mietzner, 2015a; von Luebke, 2014).

In 2014, the unspectacular parliamentary campaign focused more on Prabowo and Jokowi and less on parties and platforms. In fact, most PDI-P candidates tried to portray themselves as somehow connected to Jokowi, the most popular politician at that time (Gammon, 2014). This conforms to Samuels and Shugart (2010, p. 13), who contend that presidential elections tend to overshadow the preceding parliamentary elections and produce coattail effects because voters are inclined to choose the party of the presidential candidate they prefer (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 13). In the 2004 and 2009 parliamentary elections, the PD was so successful because voters wanted Yudhoyono to become president.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, the Great Indonesia Movement Party (Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya, Gerindra) gained almost 12% in 2014 because



of Prabowo.<sup>8</sup> Yet, despite the survey predictions, the PDI-P surprisingly barely profited from Jokowi's popularity.

Shortly after the parliamentary elections, the presidential campaign began and laid bare the tensions between Jokowi's team and the PDI-P central executive. Jokowi later complained about the lack of party support he received. In the end, however, he won the election in spite of his failings when presenting himself as a viable alternative to the established political elites. Mietzner (2015a) suggests that Jokowi's success can be attributed to his ability to gather funds via the Internet and mobilize thousands of volunteers from outside the party (e.g. for house-to-house campaigning) – a form of electioneering that was new to Indonesia and obviously inspired by the Obama presidential campaign in the United States.

Jokowi has never been independent of political parties, because they have the sole power to nominate presidential candidates.<sup>9</sup> They function as the principal of the candidate (agent). A few weeks after the presidential elections, Jokowi had to decide on his cabinet (Burhanuddin, 2015, p. 354ff). He had promised to avoid the usual horse-trading and made it clear that he would not automatically reward coalition partners with the top executive positions. Nonetheless, his cabinet line-up disappointed those who had hoped for a clear break with the past. Although it was not a so-called rainbow coalition accommodating almost all political forces in Parliament (see below), Jokowi's dependency on the PDI-P and party chairperson Megawati was clear to see: 14 of the 34 members were political appointments. For instance, Ryamizard Ryacudu (who has a dubious human rights record) was chosen to be the defence minister; Puan Maharani (Megawati's unpopular daughter) as coordinating minister for human development and cultural affairs; and Tjahjo Kumolo (the PDI-P general secretary) as the interior minister. To many observers, the composition of the cabinet clearly indicated the relative weakness of Jokowi.

The simmering tension between the President Jokowi and the PDI-P became even more visible when Budi Gunawan (Megawati's security aide during her presidency) was appointed national police chief with the overwhelming support of the DPR. Shortly thereafter, the National Corruption Eradication Commission (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi, KPK) announced they were investigating Budi, leading the national media and civil society activists to vehemently criticize the selection of Budi. As a result, Jokowi declared he would postpone the appointment, but also selected a panel to advise him in this matter. What followed was a fierce battle between the police and the KPK and the biggest crisis of Jokowi's presidency so far. The conflict between the president and the PDI-P peaked when leading PDI-P members, among them cabinet members, supported the police in attacking the KPK. On this occasion four KPK commissioners were arrested because of past offences. Deputy Commissioner Bambang Widjojanto, for example, was apprehended when a PDI-P politician pressed charges against him. At the same time, prominent PDI-P members pressured Jokowi to confirm the appointment of Budi Gunawan. After some deliberation, Jokowi finally decided to nominate a less controversial figure for the role of national police chief (Burhanuddin, 2015, p. 361f).

The dualism between the president and the PDI-P came to a head during the party congress in Bali in April 2015 when Megawati expressed her frustration over the limited influence of the PDI-P within the cabinet and parliamentary caucus with regard to policy-making. She also tried to re-establish her role as the grey eminence behind the president. She did this within a party that is now the most centralized and personalized in the country. Megawati

had been re-elected as chairperson six months before the congress.<sup>10</sup> She had chosen and announced the national management board and the central executive, on which sat her daughter, Puan Maharani, and son, Prananda Prabowo. In her speech at the congress Mega-wati made it clear that the president is only a servant to the party (and her); Jokowi himself was not allowed to speak during the congress (Kompas, 'Kongres PDIP', 2015). Megawati interpreted the relation between her party and Jokowi as one where the party instructs its candidate and delegate (petugas) to act in its name (Kompas, 'Megawati: Mestinya', 2015). She also indirectly criticized those close to Jokowi, such as Andi Widjojanto, the cabinet secretary, and Luhut Pandjaitan, the chief of presidential staff.

In July 2016, Jokowi reshuffled his cabinet quite independently from PDI-P. This became evident, for example, by his enduring reliance on Rini Soemarno, the minister for state-owned enterprises. She had helped to finance and organize his campaign, and Megawati 'consistently demanded Rini be removed from cabinet' (Warburton, 2016, p. 304), but Jokowi always refused this. At that time, Jokowi's approval rating rose to almost 70%, he held sway over a large multi-party coalition, and Megawati was less powerful than in previous years.

#### Adapting Samuels and Shugart's model to the Indonesian context

The PDI-P exemplifies the relevance of Samuels and Shugart's model. But if one takes a closer look at Indonesia as a test case, certain amendments and revisions are necessary. These are essentially compatible with the Samuels/Shugart model, but are necessary to understand the dynamics of party politics in Indonesia.

Although the supposed dualism between the executive and legislative 'branches' of the party is plausible in the case of Jokowi and Megawati, the relationship is much more intricate because some of the ministers have been more loyal towards Megawati than to Jokowi. It is, thus, expedient to distinguish between the party central executive, the party in parliament, and the party representatives in the cabinet. Moreover, Indonesian presidents have to rely on coalitions and ministers that are, at times, more loyal towards their own parties and often have to work against the interests of a conservative and obstructive bureaucracy (Sherlock, 2015). Even within Parliament, the cohesion of the caucuses (fraksi) is not always guaranteed. Members of the commissions (komisi), in particular, often act quite independently of the caucus leadership.

Furthermore, Samuels and Shugart's model does not factor in political culture or informal institutions. The presidency under Yudhoyono was marked by intensive consensus-seeking. Yudhoyono saw himself as a mediator between the different groups in Parliament (Sherlock, 2015, p. 110) and strived to ensure stability and avoid conflict. Perhaps this was the outgrowth of a deeply engrained political culture of 'deliberation and consensus' (musyawarah dan mufakat). Under both Sukarno and Suharto reconciliation efforts were typical. During the New Order musyawarah dan mufakat became an instrument used by Suharto to ensure harmony in legislative-related political processes and 'the predominant institutional mechanism in decision making in the legislature' (Djayadi, 2012, p. 399). Voting was avoided and decisions were usually reached by consensus. It has been part of the DPR's standing orders since 1971. Moreover, the current Indonesian presidential system 'determines that the executive and legislative must get involved from the beginning (i.e. the initiation of a bill) until a bill is approved and enacted as a law' (Djayadi, 2012,

p. 402). This process of joint deliberation and joint approval guarantees a high level of executive–legislative integration.

In a similar vein, all presidents before Jokowi relied on so-called rainbow coalitions encompassing the majority of parties represented in the DPR. Cabinets have always been a mix of technocrats with no or little connection to political parties, on the one hand, and politicians from all the parties in the coalition, on the other. Because cabinets must also reflect informal gender, regional, religious, and ethnic quotas, Abdurrahman Wahid, Megawati Sukarnoputri, and Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono found it very difficult not to alienate any of their supporters.

The first rainbow coalition was created during the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid, who was elected by the MPR. Because Wahid only headed a small party, the PKB, he needed broad support from a range of other parties. This backing required remuneration in the form of ministerial positions. Abdurrahman Wahid relied on the so-called *poros tengah* or ‘central axis’ of Muslim parties, but he knew from the start that the modernist Muslim coalition partners within the *poros tengah* could easily retract their support. The president’s relationship with the DPR and the MPR was ill-defined in the Constitution, and Wahid essentially interpreted his presidency differently from how Parliament did. In spite of having the support of a broad coalition, Wahid was later impeached and forced to leave office. Although Wahid’s erratic and provocative style justified his removal, his successors saw his downfall as an important lesson and continued the practice of forming rainbow coalitions. In the case of Yudhoyono there was no exigency to do this, at least not after the 2009 elections when his PD were clear winners with almost 21% of the vote.<sup>11</sup>

Another factor is the role of party size.<sup>12</sup> Samuels and Shugart noted that in France with a directly elected president and separation of executive survival one would expect most or all parties to become presidentialized whereas in Israel with a directly elected prime minister dependent on assembly confidence one would foresee a bifurcation of the party system because only the larger parties enter the presidential elections and, thus, become presidentialized (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 167 and 191).

This bifurcation is also typical for the Indonesian party system. Huge parties such as Golkar and PDI-P are strongly presidentialized. Especially the Islamic parties have been unable to present highly electable candidates and are much less presidentialized. In fact, the PKB is the only Islamic party to have received more than 10% of the vote since 2004. The more traditionalist PKB and National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional, PAN) are linked to the mass Muslim organizations Nahdatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, respectively, and have large followings. Nonetheless, since 2004 they have focused on being part of larger coalitions.

Yet, this does not mean that smaller parties are not directly affected by the dynamics of a presidential system. In recent years, intervention by the government and the incentive to join the government have had an impact on intraparty elections and party objectives. Not only in Golkar, but also in PPP and in PAN, a pro-government faction took control and then managed the entry into Jokowi’s coalition (Warburton, 2016, p. 300). In PPP, incumbent Suryadharma Ali lost against a faction led by Muhammad Romahurmuziy. In PAN, a faction led by Zulkifli Hasan defeated Hatta Rajasa, the running mate of Prabowo in 2014. The Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS) is a cadre party that draws most of its support from young urban middle-class activists. Dwindling electoral

support due to corruption scandals, but most probably also the electoral defeat as member party of the Prabowo coalition in 2014, triggered the removal of party leaders hostile to Jokowi (Mietzner, 2016, p. 226). All this means that the logic of competition within presidential systems even has an influence on power struggles within smaller parties.

The realities faced by the Islamic parties mentioned above also show that different legacies of party organization (Mietzner, 2013, p. 33ff and 114ff; Panebianco, 1988) have to be considered (see in this vein: Passarelli, 2015b). After the fall of Suharto, around 200 political parties were established – many of which reflected different political traditions and represented certain social milieus. Political parties have always been structured by social cleavages (Baswedan, 2004; King, 2003; Ufen, 2008), which was especially the case for those that emerged in the 1940s and 1950s. The degree of personalization and the strength of clientelistic linkages depends on these social roots and, therefore, on ideological and organizational legacies. If parties are not rooted because of certain path dependencies, they tend to be more personalized and less characterized by programmatic ties to voters.

### **Vehicle parties as a result of presidentialization?**

The current Parliament is essentially trifurcated with two strongly presidentialized parties, four smaller parties (all Islamic) that are relatively well-institutionalized but not very presidentialized (if at all), and several vehicle parties. This is the most important revision of the Samuels/Shugart model. The oligarchization of politics has fundamentally changed party organization and behaviour.

Vehicle parties are highly personalized ad hoc organizations that have ready-made platforms and centre around a leader who possesses charismatic qualities, though not necessarily so. These parties are usually financially dependent on this leader or the leader's personal financial backers and have the sole aim of helping the leader obtain a top government position. Establishing a vehicle party requires a great deal of money and is only possible in an environment where money matters – one where politics is commercialized, campaigns are expensive, and even the organizing of intraparty structures depends on financial incentives. But such investment is dependent on the possible benefits. A potential vehicle party leader will only be willing to spend millions of US dollars if he or she has a realistic chance of securing a top executive position, the presidency, or the prime minister-ship. Therefore, the vehicle party option is viable in countries like Thailand and the Philippines, where political parties are very weak, can be built from scratch, or taken over and party factions can be bought. After 2004, Indonesia also became fertile ground for vehicle parties due to the fact that they enable candidates to secure presidential nominations without having necessarily achieved a majority in the parliamentary elections prior to the presidential polls.

Because the establishment of such vehicles is a direct result of the shift towards a pre-sidential system in Indonesia, these parties are also presidentialized – but in the most extreme form. In anticipation of the usual dualism, candidates form their own parties and evade collective action problems. It has to be added, that they do so only if they fail to get nominated by established parties – as Prabowo did after he lost the Golkar pre-sidential primary in 2004.

Yudhoyono relied on the newly formed PD as he knew that the PDI-P would not give him the 2004 nomination despite his popularity, because Megawati would not have allowed him to run (Honna, 2012). The PD, the People's Conscience Party (Partai Hati Nurani Rakyat, Hanura), Gerindra, and the National Democratic Party (Partai Nasional Demokrat, Partai NasDem) were all set up shortly before or after the constitutional reforms in 2002 and serve the interests of political leaders who are able to build party machineries from scratch within only a few years given their enormous financial resources or backing by big capital. In 2006 Hanura was founded by retired generals and is led by the former commander-in-chief of the armed forces, Wiranto, who also served as minister of defence and coordinating minister for political and security affairs. Gerindra was established in early 2008 and is the vehicle of ex-general and former son-in-law of Suharto, Prabowo Subianto. Prabowo lost the 2004 Golkar presidential convention and saw no realistic chance of rising to the top within Golkar afterwards. Media tycoon Surya Paloh also failed in 2004 but decided to remain with Golkar. But after also losing in 2009, against Aburizal Bakrie, he set up the Partai NasDem in 2011 – though he frequently denied wanting the presidency.

Whereas in Gerindra, Hanura, and Partai NasDem a dualism never really arose, it did within the PD (Mietzner, 2013, p. 137ff). The Partai Demokrat was not established by Yudhoyono, but on behalf of him, and it took him a few years until March 2004, a few weeks ahead of the parliamentary elections and after a quarrel with Megawati, to fully support PD as his vehicle. He formulated the party doctrine in December 2001 and the PD subsequently advocated for the constitutional reform towards direct presidential elections (Honna, 2012, p. 475ff). When he launched his new cabinet in October 2004, he largely ignored the leadership of the PD. A dualism had taken shape. Strong factionalism within the PD was resolved by the intervention of Yudhoyono during the first party congress in 2005. It became clear that the PD was his party: his brother-in-law was chosen to be party chairperson; his son Edi Baskoro, head of leadership training; and Yudhoyono himself, chairperson of the Advisory Council (Dewan Pembina), the most powerful party body (Honna, 2012, p. 480).

The tensions between Yudhoyono and the party leadership flared up again at the 2010 congress, when Anas Urbaningrum won the chairpersonship and not Yudhoyono's favourite Andi Mallarangeng. Although Anas was still overshadowed by Yudhoyono as chairperson of the newly established High Assembly (Majelis Tinggi), he occasionally bypassed the official secretary-general and son of Yudhoyono, Edi Baskoro, in daily decision-making (Honna, 2012, p. 487). When the PD walked out of Parliament in September 2014, they enabled a bill abolishing direct local elections to be passed. In response, Yudhoyono issued an emergency decree to overturn the bill, threatened to form a coalition with Jokowi against Prabowo's coalition, and succeeded in preventing the abolition of *pilkada* (Burhanuddin, 2015, p. 356). The PD was thus largely a product of Yudhoyono, but a dualism between the president and his party was palpable.

The role model for the PD, and probably all other Indonesian vehicle parties, was Thaksin Shinawatra's Thais Love Thais party (Thai Rak Thai, TRT) in Thailand (McCargo & Pathmanand, 2005; Phongpaichit & Baker, 2004). Thaksin was a media mogul and billionaire who succeeded in achieving an absolute parliamentary majority by, *inter alia*, winning over (or buying) factions from other parties.<sup>13</sup> The whole TRT media campaign was focused on Thaksin, who used his own media machinery and professionals. The

TRT had no real social roots but skilfully crafted a political programme informed by surveys. The TRT is the best example of presidentialization within a parliamentary system according to Poguntke and Webb (2005a, 2005b).

But what does that mean for Indonesian vehicle parties? Could it be that their rise was caused by factors other than the presidentialization à la Samuels and Shugart? Samuels and Shugart acknowledge that parties in parliamentary systems may be presidentialized – such as in Italy (Berlusconi and Forza Italia) and in Japan (Koizumi and the Liberal Democratic Party) and, of course, Thailand (Thaksin and the TRT) – but presidentialization ‘is at odds with the core logic of parliamentarism, and it is likely the exception rather than the rule or a trend across all systems’ (Samuels & Shugart, 2010, p. 17). In this vein, for Kawamura (2013a) vehicle parties are not presidentialized because the executive–legislative dualism does not have any impact on party organization. This is true, but under specific circumstances the presidentialization of parties does not lead to the supposed dualism, but engenders just the opposite, parties marked by monolithic structures.

Without going into much detail (see Ufen, 2013), although party politics is still characterized by, inter alia, religious, class, and geographic cleavages, various developments since the 1950s (when cleavages or *aliran* were still predominantly shaping the party system) and 1998 in particular have led to weaker linkages between voters and parties, blurred programmatic profiles of parties, and weaker institutionalization (Johnson Tan, 2015; Tomsa, 2008). Today, there is a trend towards building grand coalitions at all levels (as ‘cartels’: see Ambardi, 2008; Slater, 2004), whereas political Islam and the ideologies of the 1950s (e.g. nationalism, socialism, and communism) are less salient. Political parties are increasingly dealigned from their voter base as a result of weakened political ideologies, tenuous links to mass organizations, the pluralization of lifestyles, the individualization of voters, and the mediatization and commercialization of politics (Ufen, 2013). Indicators reveal that party identification is dwindling and vote switching is rising (Mietzner, 2013, p. 44).

At the grass-roots level parties are now weaker because of the professionalization of campaigning and party leaders’ preference to communicate directly with voters via television or new media. The introduction of direct presidential elections, the *pilkada*, and the open-list system have led to the emergence of a huge polling and consultancy industry and have made campaigning much more expensive than it was in 1999 and 2004 (Mietzner, 2015b; Qodari, 2010; Ufen, 2010). Today, many DPR candidates employ survey institutes to gauge their electability, and professional campaign teams engage in political marketing activities long before the polls. The so-called victory teams (*tim sukses*) of pre-sidential candidates consist of consultants, politicians, and businessmen, amongst others, who together develop rather sophisticated public relations strategies and often find themselves competing with the political party machineries.

The new roles of pollsters and ‘professionalism’ in elections led to rising costs, especially after 2004 (Mietzner, 2013, p. 207ff; Qodari, 2010; Ufen, 2010). Different forms of patronage are obvious (Allen, 2015; Aspinall, 2014; Aspinall & Sukmajati, 2016; Shin, 2015; Tomsa, 2015): politicians often have to pay for their candidacies, and party functionaries buy votes from delegates at party congresses. Commercialization in combination with an inefficient political finance regime (Mietzner, 2015b) has furthered the dependency of party apparatuses on oligarchs (Robison & Hadiz, 2013; Winters, 2013). Examples for such magistrates-cum-politicians are Sutrisno Bachir (former chairperson of PAN), Jusuf Kalla (former

chairperson of Golkar), Surya Paloh (chairperson of Partai NasDem), and Aburizal Bakrie (former chairperson of Golkar). Gerindra is financed by Prabowo and his brother Hasyim Djojohadikusumo (Aspinall, 2015, p. 10ff). Some of these oligarchs are big players in the media industry. The Bakrie Group owns Antev and TVOne; Surya Paloh, Metro TV. Hary Tanoesoedibjo (RCTI, MNC TV, Global TV) has supported Hanura and Wiranto (Tapsell, 2015). An example of the influence of party oligarchs on Jokowi are his dealings with Surya Paloh, Prabowo, and Aburizal Bakrie, who were allegedly granted dubious concessions for their companies (Burhanuddin, 2015, p. 359 and 365)<sup>14</sup>, and his close cooperation with ministers Rini Soemarno, Luhut Panjaitan, and Amran Sulaimin (Warburton, 2016, p. 304).

The commercialization of politics and the rise of oligarchs have transformed the Indo-nesian party system in a way that overshadows the mechanisms described by Samuels and Shugart. Within a short period of time, tycoons have built successful political parties with branches spread all over the country without any programmatic profile (Robison & Hadiz, 2013).

### **Concluding remarks**

The Samuels and Shugart's model explains major transformations that have been observed since the introduction of direct presidential elections. The tensions between the president and the president's party or coalition are a logical result of this reform. The difficult relationship between the PDI-P and President Jokowi, an outsider, is the best example of the dualism between the executive and legislative 'branches' of a party.

But this institutionalist approach by Samuels and Shugart does not systematically take into account other, parallel developments. The shift towards a presidential system and the pilkada as well as the open candidate list have accelerated a process of commercialization of politics which is characterized by rising campaign expenses and a preponderance of rich candidates. This has further augmented the role of businesspeople within parties. In the wake of this commercialization and the increased impact of personalities, political parties have become more and more dealigned from their grass roots. The whole process can be understood as an oligarchization marked by (a) the increasing role of money in party politics, and (b) the growing impact by very few people (the oligarchs) on the financing and the decision-making of political parties.

Oligarchization means that the logic of oligarchic economic interests extends into the political realm, resulting in the political relationships between principals and agents often being altered by economic linkages. 'Western' political science tends to see these relationships as merely political, but in Indonesia and many other non-Western countries business-people from outside the political system sometimes operate as presidents' principals. Moreover, businesspeople who take over political parties demand compensation for their support of presidential candidates.

The typical dualism is to an extent weakened by coalitional presidentialism (or the building of a party cartel), and under Jokowi by intervention in internal affairs of other parties. This means that the Samuels/Shugart model, especially in the case of Indonesia, has to take into account the significance of strategies to tone down the conflicts between the executive head and his adversaries.

The institutional change and the oligarchization have resulted in a trifurcation of the party system with larger, presidentialized parties; smaller, weakly presidentialized parties; and vehicle parties. These highly personalized vehicle parties are a direct response to this shifting political environment. Only these two mechanisms combined, presidenti-alism plus oligarchic commercialization, were able to cause the emergence and success of vehicle parties.

One may argue that Samuels and Shugart's model is mostly valid for presidential systems with relatively strong parties. In the Philippines political parties are so weak that MPs defect from losing parties to the president's camp. Because of that, the predicted dualism between executive and legislative branches is not salient. Most parties are merely vehicles for presidential candidates. In the United States, lawmakers rarely defect, because the two main parties are well institutionalized and have different political platforms. Indo-nesia mixes these two types to an extent. MPs usually do not defect from losing parties after the elections, but some parties as a whole may switch sides after the polls. But even these vehicle parties are not quickly dissolved following an election defeat. In the United States parties such as Hanura and Gerindra would not even emerge, whereas in the Philippines they would probably quickly vanish.

Victories of politicians like Jokowi are only possible because of the personalization of the electoral process. Although Jokowi is backed by various oligarchs, he is relatively immune to the tribulations of oligarchic control due to the social rootedness of the PDI-P in certain milieus. Jokowi also seeks support outside of the usual party channels. The pre-sidentialization is, thus, also linked to a growing impact of non-party advisors and deal-makers such as Rini Soemarno, Amran Sulaimin and Luhut Panjaitan, and on money derived from non-party sources.

Another interesting development since mid-2016 is the shift of the dualism into civil society (Mietzner, 2017). Jokowi's opponents, facing a president who largely controls Par-liament, supported radical Islamist groups such as the Front Pembela Islam (Islam Defen-ders Front) in order to mobilize against the then-Governor of Jakarta, the Christian Chinese Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (also known as 'Ahok'). A string of mass demonstrations were not only directed against Ahok who was accused of blasphemy, but were also aimed at discre-diting Jokowi.

An erosion of the whole party system is possible if the older parties continue to dealign from the electorate, and vehicle parties (which lack meaningful traditions and platforms) or populists-cum-oligarchs like Prabowo use the generally low party identification and the dissatisfaction of many voters to seize the opportunity.

## Notes

1. The Constitution of 1945 is still a revered, almost holy, script, and thus a return to it is enticing for many Indonesians. During the 2014 presidential elections, Prabowo Subianto brought forward this idea and essentially called for a system with a very strong president (Aspinall, 2015; Mietzner, 2015a).
2. Pancasila (five pillars) is the so-called state philosophy.
3. The MPR, which is the second chamber, consists of the DPR members and an additional 132 parliamentarians who form the Regional Chamber (DPD, Dewan Perwakilan Daerah). The DPD has only consultative powers. Its members are elected through plurality votes in multi-member constituencies at the provincial level and cannot belong to a political party.



4. Independent candidates may also run, but the nomination requirements are still onerous.
5. The vote by the Akbar Tanjung faction against President Habibie (Golkar) and his accountability speech (given before the MPR in October 1999) does not fit Samuels and Shugart's model because the president was not directly elected back in May 1998. As then vice president, Habibie automatically assumed office following Suharto's resignation. Habibie inherited some of the presidential powers of Suharto but was eventually subject to the MPR. During his tenure, one might say that a transition from New Order presidentialism to a hybrid form of presidentialism/parliamentarism took place.
6. Both these practices are called *blusukan*.
7. Mujani and Liddle (2007, p. 850) wrote that Indonesia was likely to be a 'genuine instance of the presidentialization of voting behaviour in a new democracy'.
8. Although political parties were strongly personalized, the campaign for the parliamentary election in June 1999 was not particularly influenced by strategic planning with respect to the indirect presidential election scheduled for October 1999.
9. In the 2014 presidential elections, only parties or coalitions that received at least 25% of the vote or 20% of the mandates in the preceding parliamentary elections were allowed to nominate candidate pairs. Jokowi was nominated by a small coalition consisting of the PDI-P, the traditionalist Islamic PKB, Partai NasDem, and Hanura. Prabowo Subianto ran for his own party Gerindra, Golkar, and the Islamic parties PAN (which appointed Hatta Rajasa as vice presidential candidate), PKS, and PPP.
10. This was decided upon at the party's national meeting (Rakernas) in Semarang in September 2014, notably on the suggestion of Jokowi. According to PDI-P deputy secretary general, Ahmad Basarah, the decision 'represents the process of consensus democracy and guided democracy' (Jakarta Post, 'PDI-P congress', 2015).
11. There is a growing literature on the success of multiparty presidentialism (Pereira & Melo, 2012). The 'Coalitional Presidentialism Project' at the University of Oxford (Chaisty, Cheeseman, & Power, 2015) looks at the surprising sustainability of multiparty presidentialism in Africa, Latin America, and postcommunist Europe. Presidents may use specific tools to secure support: legislative powers (through the initiation, deliberation, modification and enactment of laws), partisan powers (over their own party or allied parties within the coalition), cabinet management or cabinet allocation (via patronage distribution), budgetary powers (in the form of public spending in order to obtain targeted political support) and the exchange of favours between the president and legislators (Chaisty, Cheeseman & Power, 2015, p. 6ff).
12. This has already been dealt with by Kawamura (2013a).
13. Buying out whole factions is, in contrast to Thailand, unknown in Indonesia.
14. This pertains to Prabowo's company Kiani Kertas and a governmental compensation fund for the victims of the Sidoarjo mudflow disaster, for which the company Lapindo, owned by Abur-izal Bakrie, is responsible.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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