

Democracy During the Old Order: A Study of Historical Characteristics

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ABSTRACT

Background. Democracy is believed to be the best principle and system in a country's political and constitutional system. The treasures of thought and political performance in various countries have come to a common ground regarding this, namely that democracy is the best choice among various other options.

Purpose. This study provide a historical description of the long history of democracy in Indonesia, especially during the Old Order era, both in the form of liberal democracy and guided democracy. Thus, this article can make a better contribution to understanding and interpreting the development of democracy in Indonesia.

Method. The writing of this article uses a descriptive qualitative method with based on data mining through library research/literature studies from several literature sources.

Results. It is clear that in the old order there were two types of democracy, namely liberal and guided democracy. In liberal democracy, people's freedom to participate in politics or political individualism is highly upheld. On the other hand, in a guided democracy, the people have political limitations because power is very centralized in the hands of a president.

Conclusion. These forms of democracy must place the voice of the people, the interests of the people above all else so that in managing the country, attention to the people becomes the main thing.

KEYWORDS

Democracy, Liberal, Historical Characteristics, Guided

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as a country that has been independent for 79 years, has established democracy as part of the political system it adheres to. Democracy in Indonesia has thus gone through a long history, as long as the age of Indonesia itself. Efforts to make the Indonesian state government a democratic country can be seen from various formulations of democratic models, which in this case have been running for at least three periods, namely the Old Order, the New Order and the Reformation.

Democracy itself is a concept that was born from (ancient) Greece. In this case, democracy is rooted in the words "demos" which means people and "kratos" which means power/government.



In practice, the Greeks implemented democracy with a direct voting system. In addition, the practice of democracy in Greece was carried out as part of a power system where the poor and commoners could use this system to defend their interests which were often at odds with those of the rich and nobles (Kuper & Kuper, 2008). Democracy is a concept that is intertwined with the concept of freedom where the two are often used reciprocally, even though conceptually the two are not the same. Democracy is actually a set of ideas and principles regarding freedom, but it also includes a set of procedures (law) and practices (power) that were formed through a long and often tortuous history (Widagdo, 2015).

The ideas and practices of (ancient) Greek democracy can then be said to have disappeared from the Western world when Europe entered the Middle Ages. Before the Middle Ages ended, in (Western) Europe at the beginning of the 16th century, national states emerged in a modern form, causing Western Europe to experience several social and cultural changes in order to prepare the way to enter a more modern era with the belief that reason can free themselves from various restrictions. The two events were the European Renaissance and Reformation (Huda, 2005). In its development, the West emphasized democracy as a source of power rather than the practice of government. In the Western world around the 19th century, the idea of democracy included a system of parliamentary representation, civil rights and other politics such as liberal desires.

Currently, democracy is believed to be the best principle and system in a country's political and constitutional system. The treasures of thought and political performance in various countries have come to a common ground regarding this, namely that democracy is the best choice among various other options (Huda, 2005). In this modern era, almost all countries claim to be adherents of democracy. The concept of democracy is practiced throughout the world differently from one country to another. Each country and even each person applies its own definition and criteria regarding democracy. It has become a paradigm in world communication language regarding government systems and political systems that are considered ideal, although in practice each person applies different standards, according to their own interests.

Indonesia is no exception, where democracy has also become part of the government (civil-society) structure. This can be seen from the General Election (PEMILU) every five years to ask for the people's vote in determining which political party can rule in this country. In this order, the adage of democracy is known that the voice of the people is the voice of God or government of the people, by the people, and for the people. In this way, the (candidate) people's representatives then campaign as hard as they can to sell (promises) programs, figures and images in order to get the support of their people as "holders of power" in democracy.

However, it should be realized that the democratic governance structure in Indonesia did not appear instantly. It is a continuous process that runs dialogue as the Republic of Indonesia ages. The review of democracy is important because it is related to the legal system. In this case, it is impossible to build responsive law without first building a democratic political system. Responsive law cannot be born in an authoritarian political system. Through the constitutional amendment (1999-2002) Indonesia has created a structure and pattern of state power relations that from a constitutional perspective better guarantees the emergence of a democratic political system. The review of liberal and guided democracy can be a reference that supports the development of a better political system, considering one of the adages in history, namely that history is the best teacher.

This article is different from similar articles in that the review raised is about the important characteristics of democracy. However, this analysis is also added with democratic practices that exist in the history of the implementation of democracy itself. This is different from similar reviews that only describe the implementation of democracy chronologically. This article then tries to

provide a historical description of the long history of democracy in Indonesia, especially during the Old Order era, both in the form of liberal democracy and guided democracy. Thus, this article can make a better contribution to understanding and interpreting the development of democracy in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The writing of this article uses a descriptive qualitative method with based on data mining through library research/literature studies from several literature sources (written) (Prayogi, 2024). Qualitative research is used as an exploration for the humanities, social, and religion. And in library research, the resulting information comes from drawing conclusions that come from: citing references and abstracted as research findings. Writing is done through a process extracting data from various reference sources that discuss various articles/writings related to various literatures on democracy during the old order. These various sources published in public media, so that it can be accessed through various places (library) and internet media openly. This article can be elaboration of various related articles and writings. Likewise, articles this is more of a synthesis of the writings that ever existed, to then be seen in relation to what can be done in the current context.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Historical Concept of Liberal Democracy in Indonesia

Liberal democracy in Indonesia, temporally, lasted for approximately 9 years, starting from 1950 to 1959. The implementation of liberal democracy was based on the 1950 UUDS as Indonesia's legal-formal constitution which was implemented in accordance with the results of the Round Table Conference (KMB) agreement. Furthermore, the idea of liberal democracy came from two of Indonesia's founding fathers, namely Mohammad Hatta and Sutan Syahrir. According to both of them, the existence of political parties can create conditions for true democracy, namely from the people, for the people and for the people (Alfarizi, 2009).

Conceptually, liberal democracy is also known as parliamentary democracy considering that it has an important characteristic, namely that the prime minister (together with the president) serves (together) as head of state. The position of parliament, in a liberal democracy, has a very crucial role because parliament has a role as an extension of the people (directly) who participate in (practical) state politics.

Apart from that, the cabinet also has the right to criticize (directly) the government (cabinet) if it does not agree with the policies implemented by the government. Furthermore, in a liberal democracy, people's freedom to participate in politics or political individualism is highly upheld. The reason is, this democratic model seeks to reduce economic disparities and all people have the same status and rights. In a parliamentary democracy system, the cabinet and ministers are responsible to parliament. The president remains head of state, but not head of government. The voices of members of the DPR are usually loud, causing reactions even among the armed forces (Tashadi, 1999). Thus, it can be interpreted that liberal democracy is a system based on individual rights. Every citizen of the country is considered to be a party who has power regardless of the background (ethnicity, religion, or racial origin) of that individual.

In liberal democracy, there are two important concepts, namely contestation and participation. Contestation – in the form of opposition and/or debate, can be realized with the right to freedom of the press and forming parties. The culture of contestation in liberal democracy in Indonesia is very strong. Not surprisingly, there were cabinet changes until there were 7 cabinets in power in just 9 years of liberal democracy being in effect. Apart from contestation, there is also the concept of

participation. In this case, participation is realized through elections. The election must also be fair and can be participated by all citizens who have the right to vote (Dahl, 1987).

Apart from these two important concepts, liberal democracy in Indonesia also has other important characteristics that are important to pay attention to. These characteristics include, first, the existence of individual freedom/facilitation of individual freedom. This is shown indirectly in the sense of liberal democracy where one of the values of liberalism is individual freedom itself. If there is no individual freedom, then a system is very unsuitable if the label or word liberal is attached to it. One practice of channeling this freedom is by implementing it to certain political affiliations. Therefore, during the liberal democracy era, there were (very) many (political) parties that were established (Bibit, 1985). It doesn't stop there, in fact more than three parties based on the Islamic religion have been established, such as Nahdlatul Ulama, Masyumi, Indonesian Tarbiyah Movement, and the Indonesian Islamic Syarikat Party (Aulia, 2016). This is a necessity in a liberal democracy where individual freedom really must be facilitated in a liberal democracy.

Second, the limited power of the government/executive institutions. The limited power of the government is based on the idea that in a liberal democracy, government is not only controlled by one particular group. This is considered important in (especially) liberal democracies to create a check and balance mechanism that is implemented in government (Wijaya, 2014).

Third, all people can participate in politics (practical). Every individual in a liberal democratic system can participate in political activities regardless of religion, race or ethnic origin. The variety of parties that took part in the 1955 election as the first election in Indonesia was a reflection of the participation of various groups or classes of society. The reason is, the election participants at that time were truly diverse. In fact, there are also election participants who are individuals, not just parties. At that time, various parties such as the Indonesian Socialist Party (PSI) were also recorded. The Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), the Young Communist Force (Acoma), Murba, to R. Soedjono Prawirosoedarso who also enlivened the 1955 election (Feith, 1999). The first national elections in Indonesia were then widely assessed as a political process that approached democratic criteria. This was because, apart from the number of political parties contesting at that time being unlimited, it could also take place using direct, general, free, secret (LUBER) "principles and mechanisms", as well as reflecting pluralism and being a representation of the plurality of the Indonesian nation.

Fourth, elections as secret voting within a certain period. The next characteristic of liberal democracy is secret elections which are held within a certain period. In this concept of democracy, this is important because it acts as a path that must be taken by political participants to occupy government seats. Fifth, the government parliament is formed with a majority vote. In a liberal democracy, the government is headed by the prime minister. These prime ministers generally come from the party that succeeded in winning the majority of votes or won the election (Tempo, 2019).

The advantages of a liberal democratic system are that government power is easier to monitor because it is limited, differences of opinion can be managed because all parties are allowed to create their own parties. Meanwhile, for the disadvantages for the political sector, too many parties do not always have a good impact. Furthermore, another disadvantage is that party creation focuses more on how to maintain power. So, it does not focus on policy making, even though stability is important. The system ultimately failed because it was not in accordance with the culture of the Indonesian nation. The atmosphere that was created tended to be uncondusive because of the freedom to express all views and paradigms. If forced to continue to be implemented, it would clash with the original Indonesian culture that upholds politeness and ethics. Given that the liberal democratic system in Indonesia at that time was still weak, with a very strong feudalistic attitude.

In practice, liberal democracy in Indonesia runs with ineffective parliamentary performance. Such conditions give rise to demands for parliament and political parties which lead to the delegitimization of power/government. Furthermore, there was a lot of criticism and condemnation, which was not only leveled by "anti-democracy" figures. In fact, Moh. Hatta and Sutan Syahrir accused politicians and leaders of political parties of being people who fight for their own interests and the profits of their group, rather than prioritizing the interests of the people. However, they did not make parliamentary democracy the culprit of political decay and stagnation. This is different from Soekarno who placed parliamentary democracy or liberal democracy as a target. Soekarno was more critical of the system. The corruption of liberal democracy that was being implemented, in Soekarno's opinion, was the main cause of political chaos. So, the most urgent way to get out of this political crisis is to "bury" liberal democracy which in his view is not suitable to be practiced in Indonesia. Finally, Soekarno stated that parliamentary democracy could not be used for revolution (Wasino, 2007). Liberal democracy was then "closed" on July 5 1959 when Soekarno issued a Presidential Decree dissolving the Constituent Body and a return to the 1945 Constitution.

Historical Concept of Guided Democracy in Indonesia

The concept of a Guided Democracy system was first announced by President Soekarno at the opening of the constituent session on November 10 1956. Temporally, the guided democracy period lasted from 1957 to 1965, starting with the fall of parliamentary democracy or liberal democracy which was marked by the resignation of Ali Sastroamidjojo as prime minister. Normatively, guided democracy can be understood as a concept of popular democracy led by wisdom in representative deliberation which has as its core deliberation to reach consensus in mutual cooperation among all revolutionary progressive national forces (Saidurrahman & Arifiansyah, 2018).

The confirmation of the implementation of guided democracy began after the dissolution of the constituent body and the issuance of a presidential decree on July 5 1959 (Suarlin & Fatmawati, 2022). This presidential decree of July 5 1959 was delivered at an official event at the Merdeka Palace, where in it, Soekarno as President of the Republic of Indonesia announced the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly and the re-enactment of the 1945 Constitution within the framework of a democratic system referred to as Guided Democracy. The main background for the issuance of this decree was due to various political tensions that occurred after the 1955 General Election which made the political situation uncertain. This political chaos then, in Sukarno's view, put the country in a state of emergency.

This was also made worse by the Constituent Assembly experiencing deadlock in drafting a new constitution, so that the Indonesian state did not have a stable legal footing considering that Indonesia at that time was still enforcing the 1950 Provisional Constitution (UUDS). The implementation of guided democracy not only received a warm welcome. warm from the majority of the Indonesian people but also (large) support provided by other important elements of the country, such as the Supreme Court and especially the (ABRI) Army. With the implementation of guided democracy, the Djuanda Cabinet was dissolved and on July 9 1959, replaced by the Working Cabinet. In this cabinet, President Soekarno acted as prime minister, while Ir. Djuanda acted as first minister (Wasino, 2007).

Guided democracy has the advantage that guided democracy power is centralized in a leader or small group and can bring greater political stability, because decisions can be taken quickly and efficiently without having to go through a long and complicated process. In addition, in guided democracy, leaders or groups who are considered to understand the needs and aspirations of the

people have significant power in decision-making. This allows for fast and effective policies in responding to the needs of the community. While the disadvantage is that guided democracy can limit political freedoms, including freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of association. Criticism of the government is often suppressed and political opposition is limited.

In practice, guided democracy is a democratic system where all decisions and thoughts are centered on the state leader, which in this case is in the hands of Soekarno. Soekarno had the view that guided democracy could overcome the problem of national division, which was practically realized by reintroducing the 1945 presidential constitution in 1959 which was supported by all of society, both civil and military. Furthermore, Soekarno tried to develop awareness of national goals. In practical terms, Soekarno created a national ideology that expected all citizens to give loyal support to him. In this case, Pancasila was then complemented by a series of other "ideologies" such as MANIPOL-USDEK and NASAKOM (Ricklefs, 2017). Manipol-USdek itself consists of five important ideas, namely the 1945 Constitution, Indonesian-style socialism, Guided Democracy, Guided Economy, and Indonesian personality.

Soekarno also established two important principles in guided democracy (Soekarno, 1949), namely first, consensus, deliberation and representation. In this case, the Indonesian state is not one country for one person, not one country for one group, but the aim of establishing the Indonesian state is "all for all and one for all". Second, welfare and social justice, which means there will be no more poverty in independent Indonesia. These two principles were a bridge that Soekarno used as a tool to cross over from Western ideology - in the form of capitalism and imperialism, which had so far shackled the lives of the Indonesian people. Under these conditions, guided democracy practically has main characteristics vis a vis Western/liberal democracy.

In this case, the important practices for implementing guided democracy include first, emphasizing the role and function of political parties and parliament (DPR). During the Guided Democracy period, parliament no longer had real power. This is in line with the condition of political parties where various political parties can no longer express their ideas and desires for the groups they represent. This is because all political parties are obliged to express support for the president's ideas on all occasions and express their own ideas in a form that is in accordance with presidential doctrine (Wasino, 2007).

Second, weak social control which is the basis of human rights. During the guided democracy era, the president controlled the entire national political spectrum to support his political ideas by using various state institutions (DPA, DPR-GR, MPRS, and ABRI). Thus, it can be seen that the political configuration in the guided democracy era is authoritarian, centralized and centralized which makes social control very weak (Faizal, 2017). This practice is also supported by the existence of a formal legal product in the form of a Presidential Decree (Penpres) which is necessary to paralyze anything that is considered to be in conflict with government power. Through this mechanism, the People's Representative Council as a result of the 1955 general election, which consisted of the parties that won the general election, was dissolved. Several parties are thought to have been involved in uprisings throughout the year

1950s, like Masyumi and PSI, were also disbanded by force. In fact, in 1961 all political parties, except 9 parties which were considered to be supportive or controllable, were also dissolved (Wasino, 2007).

Third, strengthening the role of the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI). The political configuration in the era of guided democracy was characterized by a tug of war between the three main political forces, namely Soekarno, the Army and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), and the three of them simultaneously took advantage of each other. Soekarno needed the PKI to face the

strength of the Army which was determined to compete with it, the PKI needed Soekarno to get protection from the president against the Army, while the Army needed Soekarno to get legitimacy for its involvement in politics (Faizal, 2017).

The relationship between the PKI and Sukarno himself during the Guided Democracy era could be said to be a reciprocal relationship. The PKI took advantage of Soekarno's popularity to gain the masses. In May 1963, the MPRS appointed Soekarno president for life. This decision then received support from the PKI. Meanwhile, other elements of power in Guided Democracy, the TNI-Army, viewed the developments taking place between the PKI and Sukarno, with suspicion. Especially when other forces, such as the TNI-Air Force, received support from Soekarno. This was seen as an attempt to compete with the strength of the TNI-Army and divide the military in order to be ridiculed (Wasino, 2007).

A rift in the relationship between Sukarno and the military leaders finally emerged. The PKI exploited this situation to achieve its political goals. The radical militant attitude shown by the PKI through its increasing agitation and political pressures made the gap in hostility even wider. The conflict that occurred then reached its peak in mid-September 1965 and became the initial entry point to the end of guided democracy in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

The socio-political development of society that occurs in Indonesia is a mutually continuous process, one of which is the socio-political development in the liberal democracy period and the guided democracy period. The period known as liberal democracy lasted from 1950-1959. Even though, in this period, the Indonesian nation and state still had to struggle to maintain its initial foundations, in this period freedom was not only felt by state elites but also other parties who had hoped for a democratic life that could be felt by all components of the nation. Indonesia. The political aspect then becomes an important part in supporting democratic life. However, in this period it appears that the expected political stability has not been achieved. This can be seen from the political dynamics in the form of very rapid cabinet changes so that the opportunity to implement a policy in the cabinet does not run optimally.

Other problems also emerged in the period 1950-1959 so that the government considered that the condition of the country was no longer safe with the emergence of unrest in the regions, the press which was considered to be disturbing order and security through the news it spread and others which encouraged the emergence of the concept of a government system. Indonesia should use the concept of guided democracy which was later stated by Soekarno in 1958, and ultimately became known as the concept of guided democracy which lasted from 1959-1965. The socio-political situation during the guided democracy era showed that freedom to express opinions was limited by the government because regulations prohibited criticism of state authorities. These two democratic systems are actually a national consensus that has been confirmed through constitutional amendments which must then be followed by morality or enthusiasm to make it happen by state administrators, because the system and spirit of state administrators are equally important, even though in the process there are dynamics both positive and negative. What is important is that these forms of democracy must place the voice of the people, the interests of the people above all else so that in managing the country, attention to the people becomes the main thing. The study in this article has implications for the understanding of power, considering that democracy is one of the tools to gain power. in this case then, in the view of democracy (whatever its form) the highest power itself, does not need to be understood as monolithic and absolute in the sense of unlimited, because the highest power in the hands of the people is limited by the agreement that they

themselves determine together which is stated in the formulation of the constitution that they draft and ratify together, especially they establish the country concerned. This is what is called a social contract between citizens which is reflected in the constitution. The constitution is what limits and regulates how the sovereignty of the people is channeled, implemented and organized in state activities and daily government activities.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Data curation; Investigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

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