Asian Values in Indonesia?  
National and Regional Identities

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Indonesia has not been involved to a marked degree in the “Asian values” debate. The major reasons behind this can be found in the nature of that debate: it is concerned with issues of identity, citizenship, and cultural engineering. All three aspects of “Asian values” were previously the focus of government policies by the New Order regime, policies based on state centralism rather than international regionalism. Balinese examples of debates about “globalization” revealed the contradictions inherent within attempts by Indonesia’s New Order government to control values.

The concept of “Asian values” is easily dismissed as an excuse for authoritarian regimes, yet it still has meaning linked to notions of identity. Such notions of identity can be used to position people within communities, and within states, but at the same time identities have a logic and history of their own, beyond state engineering. Some of the elements that contributed to the idea of “Asian values” have been present in Indonesia, but in this particular case, “Asian values” plays a poor second to “Indonesian values”. By asking why this is so, we can use this absence to show the limits of transnational identity, and to demonstrate the problems that arise in state manipulations of “values”.

The existence of a continued discourse about “Asian values” means that its uses can tell us something about the forms of consciousness and the particular cultural policies that underlie regional interactions in Southeast Asia, with its ten states now forming one body, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Has ASEAN, for example, led to a reduction in nationalism? It would seem not, since even those states that are at the forefront of advocating “Asian values” often do so for reasons of national interest.
You would expect Indonesia, the largest ASEAN state, to have enthusiastically embraced the idea of “Asian values”. Indonesia was the country that, in 1955, gave birth to the idea of the “Third World” and the “Non-Aligned Movement” — conceptual predecessors to “Asian values”. President Soeharto was even head of the Non-Aligned Movement for a term. With Indonesia’s long history of attempting to formulate an essential set of values, its particular colonial experience, its ethnic mix, and its potential for social conflict, it provides important examples of cultural engineering. Indonesia is a paradigm, if not a paragon, of state attempts to regulate society through the manipulation of systems of values. Questioning the absence of Indonesian state espousal of common regional “Asian values” allows us to map more precisely the strategies and contingencies that govern the operations of this discourse. In this case my examples show the inherent contradictions when locally based discourses of “globalization” from the island of Bali are counterposed with Indonesian state ideology. Bali is one of the more successfully integrated parts of Indonesia, but with an international outlook due to the strength of its tourist industry.

Asian Values in Southeast Asia

In intellectual terms the concept of “Asian values” in itself has a degree of absurdity — the notion that peoples from Turkey to Japan to Aru have a common set of definable values does not bear too close a scrutiny. The idea that there is a common set of values emphasizing “order” and group rights above individual rights, with family and respect for authority ahead of self interest, should be seen as an ideology, that is, a set of ideas that serves particular interests. Yet, as Khoo Boo Teik (1999, p. 180) has shown, this ideology of “Asian values” is a meaningful expression of identity for at least some people — or at least it was in the 1990s, since Khoo comments that the concept may have less relevance after the economic collapse of 1997 and subsequent political upheavals.

National issues have been the prime motivation for participation in the idea of “Asian values”. Not only sceptical Westerners, but Asian “dissidents” have charged that espousing “Asian values” as an alternative to
Western liberalism is a convenient way to cover up suppression of human rights. That is, those who oppose "Asian values" see the term as a way for states to control their citizens by a denial of the fundamentals of civil society (see Tremwan 1997). Like any key term, "Asian values" can be used to oppose those constructed as "outsiders" to a discourse.

As Khoo (1999) shows, the leaders of Singapore and Malaysia have probably been the main Southeast Asian advocates of the idea. Both Singaporean and Malaysian leaders have used the terms of "Asian values" to oppose the West, advocating, as Khoo (ibid.) observes, that modernization does not mean Westernization. "Asian values" and its variants represents a form of a discourse of modernity, modernity which does not want to define itself in opposition to a "tradition", but which seeks to demote the status of the West as origin and arbiter of the modern.

Kelly (1998, p. 8) states as the basic premise of a collection of essays on "Asian" versions and constructions of "freedom":

"Asian" peoples fully participate in global modernity and its paradoxes of increasing liberty and increasing discipline, while differing from other regions of global modernity in ways that render contentious the appropriation of Western intellectual-cultural discourse.

Exactly the same issues arise in discussing "Asian values". The problem of difference within modernity is a difficult one, and both sides can easily return to the construction of essentialist "Others" — the East in the form we know as Orientalism, and its obverse, the West as constructed by Occidentalism. Occidentalism is often presented as a positive view of the West (ibid., p. 8), although in many aspects of the "Asian values" discourse, Occidentalism means rejection of the West as a source of moral or other corruption. In Southeast Asia in the 1970s this view came through government attempts to ban signs of "hippy" behaviour, through the cutting of long hair on men in Singapore, to proscribing certain types of clothing (signs about inappropriate "hippy" dress can still be found in some ports of entry, for example, Hat Yai airport in Southern Thailand). Identifying "hippies" as a problem was one of the steps to positing a form of alternative modernity to Western moral values. This in turn has remained one of the salient positive fea-
tures of “Asian values” (Khoo 1999). The dichotomy was still maintained during the Asian crisis, when Dr Mahathir identified the West as the cause of all problems, eliciting some sympathy for his residual anti-imperialism.

Using “Asian values” in Singapore and Malaysia means being part of the contention to which Kelly refers, just as does opposing “Asian values”. Both sides reveal “Asian values” to be part of a series of statements about history and the future, about common destinies, and about rights and citizenship — that is, about the nature of state and society in a rapidly transforming Southeast Asia. It is no accident that this discourse arose at a time when it was no longer enough to talk in terms of development, modernization, or the other terms that arose as part of the Cold War. In place of the regional organizations that were direct products of the Cold War’s discourses of “security”, mainly the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in this case, regional leaders have sought a common basis with which to link their interests. What does it mean to belong to the region? “Asian values” is part of an attempt to reorder the world in the later stages of the Cold War, and so ultimately it is part of a set of terms of which “globalization” is another key word. However, different contextualizations of “globalization” in Southeast Asia reveal contradictions in the creation of common values.

Region and “Race”

The “Asian values” version of Southeast Asian discourses of modernity articulates with institutions of citizenship in Malaysia and Singapore. In both societies “citizenship” has particular problems. The societies of both countries were created more by migration than aboriginality. Even the bumiputera or “sons of the soil” of Malaysia are for the most part descendants of people who came from elsewhere in the archipelago, principally Sumatra, Sulawesi, and Kalimantan. Both countries are very much “of the region”, in that they have directly arisen from regional linkages. Uniting a diverse population has always been an important goal in Indonesian nation-building, but its diversity is not constructed out of the same kind of migratory experience as its neighbours.
Recognizing the inherent difficulties built into the concept of “Asian values”, some of its adherents have come up with more refined formulations. Mahathir’s definition of “Asian values” confined its membership to East and Southeast Asia, while Lee Kuan Yew focused on “Confucianism” as the defining set of principles (Khoo 1999). Particular problems arise for Indonesians if “Asian values” were to be defined in terms of Confucianism. It is not just that Indonesia has a long history of anti-Chinese racism, coming out of colonial structures of state and economy, but this racism is a card to be played whenever problems arise, as the 1998 riots in Jakarta and elsewhere showed. No local politician interested in maintaining power would want to define the potential scapegoats of politics as the originators and bearers of the core values of their society.

The problem of Confucianism and a particularly Chinese basis for “Asian values” points to the inherent problems of identity construction. Such constructions must necessarily overlay other forms. Khoo’s analysis of the role of Malaysian and Singaporean “elite” discourses in shaping the discourse of “Asian values” pinpoints anti-colonial sentiment as the reason that “Asian values” was accepted as a term in Malaysian and Singaporean societies (ibid., p. 188). The sources he cites in support of this analysis see decolonization as an incomplete project, with the “Asian miracle”, based on local values, as a kind of closure. It is thus in the workings of colonial ideology and anti-colonial nationalism that we can describe the archaeology of “Asian values”.

It is a truism that colonialism was built upon racism. More specifically, the Dutch colonial system furthered racism socially in what is now Indonesia through the institutionalization of racial differences in law, heightening not only differences between Europeans and “natives”, but between Chinese and “natives”. In the racial basis of its legal framework, the colonial state created, in the words of C. Fasseur (1994, p. 54), “a state without citizens”. Building citizenship from the distorted forms of the colonial state has been an ongoing problem for post-colonial nations. Malaysia and Singapore both enshrined terms of “race” in their constitutions or in other legal frameworks, such as censuses; Indonesia has not. All Indonesian citizens are equal under the law; it is just that until re-
cent reforms, Chinese either were not citizens or were defined as a different type of citizen. And even the reforms of President Habibie are incomplete.

“Race” in modern thought has remained the key term in the quest for an essential identity. For Indonesians a national identity involved dissolving a local identity. Having Malay as a *lingua franca* meant a blurring of categories since “Malay” was a racial term. The racial uses were made common by British imperialists, for whom “Malay” described the peoples of island Southeast Asia. While “Asian” may have been a term loosely used in racial discourse, terms such as “Mongoloid” (meaning East Asian rather than covering all Asians) and “Malay” tended to come into play in what passed for scientific descriptions in the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the nineteenth century British uses of the term “Malay” were taken up by other English-speaking groups as a global term for those ethnic groups now covered by the Malaysian, Indonesian, and Filipino states. Eduardo F. Ugarte (1999) has demonstrated this most graphically with the example of how British civil servants from Malaya informed the American images of amok amongst Muslim Filipinos.

Something of an attempt to continue racial discourse as a realization of regional history can be found in the idea of MAPHILINDO, advanced in the regional politics of the 1960s for uniting these three countries because of their common backgrounds. MAPHILINDO did not get very far in the context of Confrontation, when Indonesia contested the very existence of Malaysia. In that context a “Greater Indonesia” or *Indonesia Raya* — a term which had arisen from the anti-colonialist struggle — was pitted against a *Melany Raya* or “Greater Malaya”. Both were claimed to be the natural expression of the Malay race (Milner 1992). Given that Soeharto, Lee, and Mahathir all had their political leadership formed during this period, none would have wanted to return to the conflict arising from the problem of which state is the legitimate vehicle of a greater “Malay” identity. They have preferred to keep such problems internal to the state.

Constructing Indonesian nationalism meant drawing on diverse elements. Ideologues such as Soekarno turned to Ernst Renan for their for-
mulations of nationalism and whose ideas were steeped in the discourse of race (see Young 1995). As Young has shown, Renan and German theorists of race saw it as combining common historical experience, literature, and language with the “genius” of a people united by blood. The language of Indonesian nationalism, like most forms of nationalism, involves the inevitable references to blood (as in the national anthem *Indonesia Raya*). Given, however, that the national language was a *lingua franca*, not “natural” to all Indonesians, other elements of national “spirit” or national “genius”, two other key terms in the series, had to be found.

For the ideologues of the nationalist organization Boedi Oetama, history formed one of those bases. Supomo (1979) and Reid (1979) have shown how the ancient kingdom of Majapahit formed the first important historical ground for the new-yet-old nation of Indonesia. Majapahit’s Sumatran-centred predecessor Sriwijaya was also introduced into the picture of the national past by intellectuals such as Muhammad Yamin and Mohammad Amir, the latter drawing directly on comparisons with the Germans (Reid 1979, p. 287).

Dutch scholars such as N.J. Krom had already registered this past as an aspect of “local genius”. It remained for those Indonesian intellectuals trained in Dutch historical scholarship, men like Hoesein Djajadiningrat and Raden Poerbatjaraka, to give nationalist life to the Dutch unearthing of the past, in creating the picture of an Indonesian nation or *bangsa*.

**Indonesian Citizenship**

How did the racial essence of “Indonesia” become identified with the nation? The link lies in the creation of the 1945 Constitution, which was intended as a provisional constitution and replaced in 1949, but to which Soekarno returned in 1959 in order to centralize his power. The 1945 Constitution was used as the charter of legitimation by Soeharto, who appears to have mistaken the selective use of the law for the rule of law. Formulating a constitutional definition of the basis of the state as “integralist”, the legal expert who constructed the 1945 Constitution,
R. Supomo, drew on German philosophical and legal traditions, especially Hegel’s national spirit. As Bourchier shows, “integralism” was an alternative to the liberal state based on individualism, or the socialist state based on class. “Integralism” saw society as a whole, in which law and social organization corresponded to national character (Bourchier 1997). In this, Supomo was following Javanese theorists such as Ki Hajar Dewantara, who had already argued for indigenous forms of democracy different from Western liberal notions, and based on a reified version of tradition, mainly Javanese. This alternative form of democracy stressed benevolent leadership (the basis of Soekarno’s “Guided Democracy”) and the putting of the group before the individual in order to achieve “order and tranquillity” (see especially Reeve 1985; Tsuchiya 1987). These principles are versions of what has been espoused under the rubric of “Asian values”.

The “integralist” idea was not at the forefront of Indonesian politics between the 1950s and 1970s because of its too obvious totalitarian colour, even though other aspects of this alternative to “Western democracy” were part of Guided Democracy. But “integralism” was revived in the early 1980s as the formal basis of national ideology, specifically emphasizing the familial principle as the basis of the state — also another of the favourite themes of Ki Hajar Dewantara (Bourchier 1997, pp. 163–64). The irony of this formulation in an increasingly nepotistic political environment was not lost on Indonesian wits, although a six-year gaol sentence loomed over anyone who made the joke in public.

When the New Order reconstructed Indonesian identity, one element was omitted. The “order and tranquillity” of the early nationalists was readily put forward under the neo-Javanism of the New Order. However, for writers such as Ki Hajar Dewantara, “order and tranquillity” came out of equality based on solidarity — sama rata sama rasa, in the expression made famous by the radical writer Mas Marco Kartodikromo (see Tsuchiya 1987, p. 212). One of the first attempts in the region to find common ground between Western Enlightenment thought and indigenous traditions was the collaboration of Raffles, his colleagues Marsden and Crawfurd, with Munshi Abdullah. They noted the link between sama rata as equality and the Malay/Indonesian term
for freedom, *merdeka* (Reid 1998, p. 151). Because *sama rata sama rasa* was continually used as a term for radical equality, it was associated with the left in Indonesia. As part of banning communism, the New Order attempted to suppress this term in national discourse, just as it discouraged calling the Revolution a "revolution". So in the New Order, "order" was not identified with liberty.

Van Langenberg (1986), probably the first to document the New Order's state ideology, identifies the close relationship between anti-communism and "development"-mindedness in the New Order. The "key words" he records are part of a complete story of what Indonesian society should be under the benevolent guidance of the state, and for at least another decade after Van Langenberg's documentation, the institutionalization of those key words continued apace through P4 and other programmes. That institutionalization went with systematic attempts to organize aspects of daily life, from village structures to migration to contraception to membership of government-run bodies (see Warren 1993).

The Soeharto government from the early 1980s onwards put its energies into the P4 programmes in workplaces, schools, and universities. These "civics" programmes were oriented towards a fit and proper explication of Pancasila, the official national ideology. A whole generation of Indonesians has now grown up with P4 as the basis of their education. Leigh (1991) and Parker (1992) have demonstrated how this educational programme operated under Soeharto's New Order. Education in "Morals of Pancasila" was firmly oriented towards state unity. As a form of knowledge, P4 aimed to be definitive, to close off alternative versions of identity, particularly local or provincial identity. It was organized as part of a top-down, centralized, and textbook-based set of practices oriented towards forms of subjectivity in which the individual or the local group were subordinated to the nation (Leigh 1991). The ideal citizen knew her role as wife and mother, and his role as a good religious servant of the state (Parker 1992).

As Leigh emphasizes, the New Order enactment of state ideology relied on a particular version of history in which anti-colonialism produced a "spirit" which was national (1991, p. 27). The "national strug-
gle" is the story of a people or *bangsa*, the Indonesian people. And here *bangsa* is easily elided with terms of race because of its particular history.

The lexicon of identity, or the discourse of being a person in Indonesia, was made synonymous with a set of statements and practices that defined participation in society. How this worked in relation to constructions of culture can be shown in some examples from Bali. Bali is not necessarily typical of the provinces of Indonesia. It could be said to be a "semi-periphery" in that it is not too close to the centre, Jakarta, but is important as a tourist show-piece of Indonesia, with Balinese cultural performances being considered as some of the high points of the Indonesian arts.

The national view in my first case is exemplified in an article by S. Budhisantoso from the University of Indonesia, in Jakarta, who was invited to contribute the national view from the centre to a discussion on the role of local culture in the nation. The article comes from a collection of essays on culture and development in Bali, and shows how national identity and modernity were to merge with provincial identity. The article is called “The Flowering of National Culture as an Approach to Take-off” ("Pengembangan Kebudayaan Nasional Menjelang Tinggal Landas"). The national planning agenda of the early 1990s, when the article appeared, was the encouraging of the second cycle of five five-year plans (*Pembangunan Jangka Panjang Tahapan* — the five-year plans are called *REPELITA*), in which the main topic was how to industrialize Indonesia. Budhisantoso looked to the basis in the 1945 Constitution for a cultural approach to industrialization, citing its Section 32 “The Government will advance Indonesian national culture”. In an exegesis of the section, the author explained the basis of a national culture that forms the basis of the new twenty-five-year cycle of industrial modernization:

- First, the national culture which we wish to develop must truly constitute a manifestation of the efforts and active reception of the people in the process of adapting to their environment, in the broadest sense.
- Secondly, this national culture must constitute a synthesis of the
apexes of regional cultures, so as to realize a national cultural configuration.

- Thirdly, this flourishing of national culture must be directed towards the progress of the age which will strengthen the unity and solidarity of the nation.
- Fourthly, not to close off the possibilities of absorbing elements of foreign culture which can make national culture flourish and enrich that culture, along with raising the standard of humanity amongst the Indonesian people.

These statements demonstrate continuity with the ideas of Indonesia’s founding fathers, such as Ki Hajar Dewantoro and Soekarno, although they are not mentioned by name, since such statements belong in the realm of timeless national identity. By strengthening this national identity, Indonesians will be made ready to receive the changes which are features of modern industrial societies, such as described by Western sociologists.

Wayan Geriya, at that time Dean of Udayana University’s Faculty of Letters, responded to this definition of development and culture by describing Bali’s role. He did so in terms of the features of Balinese culture with potential for development. This culture, according to him, has an “expressive” structure based on aesthetic-religious values and solidarity, and has adopted the configuration of “progressive” cultures, that is, cultures dominated by economics and technology. Specifically:

1. Balinese culture is a unique system with a clear identity;
2. Balinese culture has variations and high diversification according to desa, kala, patra (place, time and pattern — that is, context or conditions);
3. Balinese culture has roots and supporting capacity in strong traditional institutions;
4. Balinese culture is a living and functional culture which continues to flourish and be advanced to cultivate the harmony of man and God, man with his environment, and with other men; and
5. Balinese culture in its openness to foreign cultures exhibits features of flexibility, selectivity, and adaptability, as well as the capability of receiving foreign elements to make them belong to the wealth of its own culture without losing its own character.

(Geriya 1993, p. 93, emphasis in original)
Here and in other Balinese writings, the basis of Balinese identity is the village, particularly the *desa adat* or village entity conceived in traditional law (cf. Warren 1993). Other papers seek to relate features of Balinese culture to successfully managed development, mapping out relations to the environment and the roles of language, law, and education. Gde Suyatna, in a paper on village-based development, provides a hopeful analysis of development theories ("Modernization, Dependency, and World Systems"), in which he argues that the last of the three was a solution to the conflict between the first two. He does not mention the Marxist basis of World Systems Theory and does not directly demonstrate its relation to the topic of village development. The paper provides an argument for a combination of top-down and bottom-up development planning, utilizing what are posited as pre-existing value systems and social systems. As with the other analyses, Balinese culture, society, and values are conceived of as constants or given elements, a subset of the national values that control and channel change. The English-derived word *tradisi* is often used in this and other local discussions to define tradition. In the Balinese case *tradisi* is most often synonymous with the village essence of Balineseness, *desa adat*, which in turn is identified with culture — *kebudayaan* — or religion — *agama*. It should be recalled here that in modernization theory, "tradition" as the opposite to "modernity" is the thing that stopped or inhibited "take-off". Beyond this, "tradition" is only relevant as a category of Indonesian identity, to be defined in terms of distinctive regional costumes and art forms.

"Upgrading" features of regional culture to create a defined and manageable national culture was a major task of the New Order regime. Yampolsky (1995), in documenting this, notes that intentionality has not been at the heart of the process. Arguing against the view of Acciaioli (1985) that government policies were intended to weaken loyalties to ethnicity and to regional *adat*, and against the view of Foulcher (1990) that the government aimed to "incorporate and disempower" local cultures, Yampolsky saw the Department of Education and Culture as not setting out to systematically achieve these ends (1995, p. 714). However, he goes on to say that these were the likely effects of policy, whatever the intentions. This is a Foucauldian analysis in that it gives dis-
cursive structures precedence over intentions.

The Balinese examples cited above show that the effects need to be questioned as well. Instead of a weakening of *adat* as a definition of local identity, in the case of Bali it has been essentialized and strengthened (see Picard 1996). Yampolsky discerns a resilience in local cultural forms which undermine the New Order ideology, especially when backed by the critical interventions of Indonesian academics and officials such as Koentjaraningrat and Edi Sedyawati (Yampolsky 1995, p. 721). Fachry Ali, using Achenese examples saw the relationship between national and regional cultures as dynamic, one in which in the 1990s “the ground on which the state articulates its culture has changed” (1997, p. 195).

Post-Soeharto manifestations of regional and ethnic conflict make it clear that regional cultures were not “disempowered” in any real sense. Even though most of these conflicts are the result of direct intervention by the military or other key elements of the old New Order state, these instruments of the military or Soeharto’s circle inflame discourses of regionalism and opposition to “the Centre”. A discourse of national culture cannot negate or entirely subsume one of its key terms, “local culture”. The local and the national must always be held in tension, and that tension was an important element of the “divide and rule” nature of the New Order power game. What the state discourse of culture and citizenship did attempt to foreclose, however, was a role for “outsiders” in terms of national values. This has made it difficult to locate “Indonesian values” as a subset of “Asian values”.

Indonesian Nationalism and Its Outside

In order to create an “inside” to Indonesian culture, its formulators had to create an “outside”. Occidentalism has served this main purpose. In the case of New Order Indonesia, Occidentalism has been focused on forming an Indonesian “us” opposed to a Western “them”, and has not left much room for a wider “Asian” definition of that “us”. Picard (1990, 1996) has discussed this at great length in the case of Balinese culture, where tourism makes the “Other” a physical reality for Balinese. In so doing, tourism remakes Balinese culture (Picard 1996).
Maintaining Balinese anxiety about the negative effects of tourists as outsiders, a "threat" to purity of religion, reifies "Balinese culture". Picard (1996) draws on other studies to show this is also the case in other parts of Indonesia, notably Tana Toraja. Cultural values are constructed in this discourse as a device to filter negative effects from the outside, indirectly resolving the problem of how local culture can be part of a common Indonesian culture. As the Balinese versions of debate cited above showed, national ideology's success depended on continued economic success. When that was no longer there, the dependent terms of national culture and state control were repositioned as an opposition or a conflict to be resolved through change in the state.

But in all the examples Picard adduces, "tourist" is synonymous with "Westerner". There is, in the creation of an Indonesian "us", a blindness to Japanese or other "Asian" tourists. The category does not fit the observable reality. At a certain point in the late 1980s this problem was bypassed by a shift from talking about "modernization" (modernisasi) as the chief explanation of change, to a discourse about globalization or globalisasi. The terms of modernisasi are the terms of a particular kind of socio-economic change. This change followed the lines of "take-off" to a state equivalent to that of the industrialized West, and was a benevolent form of capitalism opposed to the other kinds of socio-economic change embodied in the terms of socialism and communism. When Indonesia eliminated communism, modernization seemed to be the only alternative.

James Siegel's study of texts from the Indonesian Revolution provides an important connecting idea here (1997, pp. 183–230). The enemy of the Revolution was constructed, Siegel argues, from the forms of fetishization particular to Indonesian modernity. In that fetishization the foreign is seductive and suspicious, disgorged through forms of violence. Siegel argues that there were two major shifts in the identification of the foreign. In the first it moved from being the Dutch to being Westerners in general. Although he does not say this explicitly, revolutionary anti-imperialism of the Soekarno era, the burning of Beatles and Elvis records, can be located here. The second shift is towards seeing the seductive foreign as communism (ibid., p. 225). Siegel
does not mention the problem of Chinese Indonesians as an alternative “Other” against whom anti-communist violence could be used with the sanction of the new regime in the mid-1960s to the late-1960s. The post-massacre fixation on “hippies” reclaimed the Other as Western foreigners, a third and even more anxious shift, and for much of the Soeharto period anti-Chinese sentiment was to be a public silence of which all were aware.

What happens when “hippies” no longer exist? Tourism never did really fit within the terms of modernization theory; it is not a form of productive or industrial capitalism allowing a neat transition equivalent to England’s style of industrial revolution. When tourists are also Asians the terms of modernisasi are even less relevant. During the late 1980s and early 1990s Balinese sought new forms of representation to make sense of their situation. Globalisasi became a useful term for Balinese to describe their island as a site of national and international capital, where contact with “the global” could bypass the agency of the state as Balinese dealt on a day-to-day level with tourists.

In recent Balinese uses of the term, globalisasi has not been concerned with finding a broader regional identity for Indonesia; it has been a means of opposing a Jakarta-based control of economy, language, and culture. Well before the economic crisis of 1997 this was apparent in debates about the past, the future, and national identity. The opposition and the recourse to terms of globalism appeared in forms of protest against tourist development (Supartha 1998). National identity was placed on the agenda in 1995 when Indonesia celebrated fifty years of independence.

The official version of the “Golden Anniversary (Tahun Mas)” celebration constructed each province as a local manifestation of national struggle. This was the version of history reproduced in state textbooks (see Leigh 1991) and for the occasion demonstrated in the sponsoring of advertisements on national television showing a locality-by-locality documentation of this struggle. Balinese, as with people from other parts of Indonesia, did not indicate much desire to be passive recipients of this official history. When the Bali Post newspaper opened its pages for readers’ letters on the topic of independence, they opened the floodgates.
Expressing pride in the progress that had been made in the fifty years since Soekarno and Hatta declared independence, the readers generally noted that development had not delivered the elimination of poverty or ignorance, and that the Revolution’s goal of equality had not been achieved. Pancasila was used by a number of the writers as a set of values to criticize the nature and course of development, and the problems of corruption and governance of the New Order state.

For example, A.A. Bagus Artha Negara of the suburb of Ubung Kaja in Denpasar (16 August 1995) observed that freedom should involve popular sovereignty, and politics should be the arena in which the people (rakyat) exercise that sovereignty. Instead, a small group were monopolizing power and blocking the achievement of equality. The merdeka or “freedom” which lay at the heart of the anti-colonial struggle had not been achieved. A number of other letter writers took up these themes and gave lengthy explications of how democracy should be achieved through alleviating poverty and eliminating corruption. Gst Ngr. Rai Sujaya of Peguyangan, Denpasar, observed (24 August 1995) that poverty and ignorance were also forms of colonialism. A number of the letter writers identified the need to change modes of political and economic action in accordance with participation in the “era of globalization” (era globalisasi). Such participation, they said, should lead to social justice and a different type of “development” than that offered by the government, “development initiated from the people, by the people and for the people” (Prakoso Kusprijatno of Denpasar, 26 August 1995). Here and in other letters, sama rata sama rasa, the ideal of radical equality, emerged. The thrust of many of the letters is in accordance with this theme: that globalization is the key term of the present age, requiring a return to the ideal of equality and freedom of the Revolution, but in order to achieve the kind of justice that the New Order had not delivered. “Asian values” was not a relevant term to bring into play, since it does not provide any way to directly critique the corruption and collusion which many of the writers were objecting to.

Like most totalitarian constructions, the New Order never reduced its citizens to the status of automatons. The letters of the Bali Post in 1995 are one example — from one of the wealthiest regions of Indo-
nesia — that people wanted to exercise their rights as citizens. Those children who had grown up on P4 and enjoyed “development” joyfully threw out its embodiment in the person of Soeharto. At the end of the twentieth century they are attempting to dismantle the elaborate apparatus of control that the state ideology was designed to serve.

All the elements of “Asian values” can be found in the way the New Order attempted to clarify and institutionalize “Indonesian values”. The ideals of family and authority were there, as was a construction of a Western “Other”. In the New Order, the curtailment of individual rights was the price that people were meant to pay for “development”.

Before Malaysia and Singapore had their rebuttal of Western liberalism formalized in “Asian values”, the Indonesian state had its own theorization of values, based on indigeneity. That theorization goes back to the early stages of nationalism, but it was given a more specific and refined form under the New Order. There was no room for non-indigenous, broader regional citizenship in this version of values. Thus transnational values were outside the space of citizenship constructed under the New Order, given that national values were so closely linked to the state. “Asian values” has not, so far, fitted into the same spaces of identity construction in Indonesia as it has in some other ASEAN states; there has been no room for it. We will have to wait and see whether the post-Soeharto reconstruction of the nation opens up greater possibilities for Indonesians to identify with the region as a phase of “globalization”.

NOTES

* My thanks also to Michele Ford for helping me to get some structure into this paper.

1. The P4 programme was a New Order programme to inculcate the population in “civics”, in the form of the New Order interpretation of the Pancasila, or the Five Principles of the Indonesian nation.

2. The letters mainly appeared around 17 August (the date of the declaration of independence), specifically from the 16th to the 30th of that month.

3. Note that this author, as with a number of other contributors to this discussion,
does not have a Balinese name, but from his name is probably Javanese. The majority of contributors were, however, Balinese, and not all from Denpasar, the capital.

REFERENCES


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