

**@rchipelago online**

THE INTERNET AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM IN INDONESIA

The doctoral research and preparation of this dissertation was supported largely by a two years WOTRO-DC fellowship (1 April 2003 to 31 March 2005) provided by the NWO (*Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek*)/WOTRO (*Stichting voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek van de Tropen*).



University of Twente  
The Netherlands

Lim, M. 2005.

@rchipelago online: *The Internet and Political Activism in Indonesia*

ISBN: 90-365-2229-3

Keywords: Internet, Indonesia, cyberspace, politics, activism.

Copyright © 2005. Merlyna Lim.

e-mail: [merlyn@bdg.centrin.net.id](mailto:merlyn@bdg.centrin.net.id) or [merlyna@gmail.com](mailto:merlyna@gmail.com)



Technology and Sustainable Development Group  
School of Business, Public Administration and Technology  
University of Twente, Enschede, the Netherlands

*All rights reserved. Subject to exceptions provided for by law, no part of this publication may be reproduced in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner. No part of this publication may be adapted in whole or in part without the prior written permission of the author.*

Cover design, setting and layout: Merlyna Lim

Printed in Bandung, Indonesia.

**@rchipelago online**  
**THE INTERNET AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM**  
**IN INDONESIA**

**PROEFSCHRIFT**

ter verkrijging van  
de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Twente,  
op gezag van de rector magnificus,  
prof. dr. W.H.M Zijm,  
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties  
in het openbaar te verdedigen  
op donderdag 1 september 2005 om 15.00 uur

door

Merlyna Lim  
geboren op 23 mei 1973  
te Bandung

**Dit proefschrift is goedgekeurd door de promotor en co-promotor:**

**prof. dr. N.G. Schulte Nordholt**  
**prof. dr. P. Spyer**

**Universiteit Twente**  
**Universiteit Leiden**

**Samenstelling promotiecommissie:**

<i>Voorzitter:</i>	<b>prof.dr. B.E. van Vucht Tijssen</b>	<b>Universiteit Twente</b>
<i>Secretaris:</i>	<b>prof.dr. B.E. van Vucht Tijssen</b>	<b>Universiteit Twente</b>
<i>Promotor(en):</i>	<b>prof.dr. N.G. Schulte Nordholt</b> <b>prof.dr. P. Spyer</b>	<b>Universiteit Twente</b> <b>Universiteit Leiden</b>
<i>Referent:</i>	<b>dr. J.D. Barker</b> <b>dr. P.P.C.C Verbeek</b>	<b>University of Toronto</b> <b>Universiteit Twente</b>
<i>Leden:</i>	<b>prof.dr. J.A.G.M. van Dijk</b> <b>prof.dr. M. Douglass</b> <b>prof.dr. A. Rip</b> <b>dr. J.H. de Wilde</b>	<b>Universiteit Twente</b> <b>University of Hawaii</b> <b>Universiteit Twente</b> <b>Universiteit Twente</b>



---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xix
<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 Research Statements	3
1.3 Research Significance	4
1.4 Research Methodology	5
1.4.1 Interviews	6
1.4.2 Participant observation	6
1.4.3 Content analysis	7
1.4.4 Analysis of linkages	8
1.4.5 Analysis of information flow	8
1.4.6 Review and synthesis of literature	9
1.5 Thesis Structure	9
<b>2. THE CONVIVIALITY OF THE INTERNET</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 Introduction	11
2.2 Utopian Versus Dystopian Visions of the Internet	13
2.2.1 The utopian vision	13
2.2.2 The dystopian vision	15
2.2.3 Technological deterministic underpinnings	16
2.3 Questions of Conviviality	18

2.4	Convivial Techno-Landscape: The Initial Idea and Creation of the Internet	19
2.4.1	<i>ARPAnet: “Anywhere, anytime, at zero cost”</i>	19
2.4.2	<i>Distributed network and packet switching</i>	21
2.4.3	<i>The Internet Protocol (IP)</i>	24
2.4.4	<i>Information flows</i>	25
2.4.5	<i>So, is the Internet convivial?</i>	26
2.5	Conclusions	28
<b>3.</b>	<b>CYBERACTIVISM</b>	<b>31</b>
3.1	Introduction	31
3.2	Current Work on Activism and the Internet	32
3.2.1	<i>Global or transnational tendencies</i>	33
3.2.2	<i>‘Spaces of flows’ and ‘spaces of places’</i>	33
3.3	The Internet and (Global) Network Society	34
3.3.1	<i>Global village vs. local identification</i>	35
3.3.2	<i>Communities in cyberspace</i>	37
3.3.3	<i>Identity in network society</i>	38
3.3.4	<i>(Post-)national identities in a global network society</i>	39
3.4	The Internet and Collective Action-Social Movement	40
3.4.1	<i>Theories of collective action and social movement — an overview</i>	40
3.4.2	<i>The Internet’s attributions for collective action and social movement</i>	43
3.4.3	<i>Identity filtering on the Internet</i>	44
3.4.4	<i>Cyber-diffusion of contentious politics</i>	46
3.4.5	<i>The linkages to ‘small media’</i>	46
3.5	Conclusions	47
<b>4.</b>	<b>WIRING INDONESIA</b>	
	DEVELOPING THE INTERNET UNDER THE PANOPTIC STATE	49
4.1	Introduction	49
4.2	The New Order	50
4.2.1	<i>Economy and ‘development’</i>	52
4.2.2	<i>Cultivating nationalist meta-narratives</i>	54
4.2.3	<i>Panopticon of surveillance and the ‘authorised party’</i>	56
4.2.4	<i>Controlling the media</i>	60
4.3	The Advent of the Internet	61
4.3.1	<i>State initiatives</i>	62



4.3.2	<i>The current state of Internet use in Indonesia</i>	62
4.4	<b>Early development of the Indonesian Internet</b>	65
4.4.1	<i>UINET and UNINET</i>	66
4.4.2	<i>IPTEKNET</i>	67
4.4.3	<i>ITB: AI3-NET</i>	68
4.4.4	<i>Hobbyists and proto Internet</i>	70
4.5	<b>Private Development: ISPs</b>	71
4.5.1	<i>The first ISPs</i>	72
4.5.2	<i>State-owned ISPs</i>	72
4.6	<b>Civil Society Driven Development: Warnet</b>	74
4.6.1	<i>Pioneering warnet</i>	75
4.6.2	<i>Socialising warnet</i>	76
4.6.3	<i>Warnet association</i>	77
4.6.4	<i>Onno Purbo and the community-based Internet network</i>	77
4.7	<b>Warnet – Up, Close and Personal</b>	79
4.7.1	<i>The physical sites of popular Internet access</i>	80
4.7.2	<i>Social network and social space</i>	82
4.7.3	<i>The dark side of the warnet</i>	85
4.7.4	<i>Resistance identities</i>	88
4.8	<b>Conclusions</b>	89
<b>5.</b>	<b>ELITES TO THE STREETS</b>	
	<b>GLOBAL CONNECTIONS &amp; LOCAL ACTIONS IN THE MAY 1998 REFORMASI</b>	91
5.1	<b>Introduction</b>	91
5.2	<i>Reformasi May 1998: the Question of the Role of the Internet</i>	94
5.3	<b>Pioneering the Political Use of the Internet</b>	97
5.3.1	<i>Early global Indonesian networks</i>	97
5.3.2	<i>Apakabar</i>	100
5.3.3	<i>George Aditjondro: Global individual resistance</i>	103
5.4	<b>The Internet and the ‘more traditional’ media</b>	104
5.4.1	<i>From mainstream to alternative media</i>	104
5.4.2	<i>Popularising the Internet</i>	106
5.5	<b>Cyber-home for the Opposition, the Left and the Forbidden</b>	107
5.5.1	<i>Megawati and the Internet</i>	108
5.5.2	<i>PRD online</i>	111
5.5.3	<i>The blazing news from PIJAR</i>	113
5.5.4	<i>The ‘left’ side of Indonesian cyberspace</i>	114

5.6	<b>On Reformasi: From Elites to the Streets</b>	116
5.6.1	<i>The journey of a message</i>	117
5.6.2	<i>Filtering the information</i>	121
5.6.3	<i>The weeks, days, hours and minutes leading to the 21 May 1998 reformasi</i>	122
5.7	<b>Analysis</b>	125
5.7.1	<i>Novelty and conviviality of the Internet</i>	125
5.7.2	<i>Intermodality</i>	127
5.7.3	<i>Transforming politics to political rumour</i>	128
5.7.4	<i>Identity filtering, frame alignment and enemy imaging</i>	129
5.7.5	<i>Meta-narratives formation</i>	130
5.8	<b>Conclusions</b>	131
<b>6.</b>	<b>LASKAR JIHAD ONLINE</b>	
	<b>GLOBAL AND NATIONAL META-NARRATIVES IN CYBERSPACE</b>	135
6.1	<b>Introduction</b>	135
6.2	<b>The Moluccan conflict</b>	136
6.2.1	<i>Current explanations about the Moluccan conflict</i>	139
6.2.2	<i>Current debates on the role of the Internet in the Moluccan conflict</i>	142
6.2.3	<i>Repositioning and scaling the debates</i>	145
6.3	<b>The Internet in the Moluccan Conflict</b>	146
6.3.1	<i>Religion and the Internet in the Moluccan conflict</i>	147
6.3.2	<i>Christian representatives</i>	148
6.3.3	<i>Muslim representatives</i>	150
6.4	<b>Laskar Jihad</b>	151
6.4.1	<i>Thalib and salafy jihadism</i>	153
6.4.2	<i>Sword and pen: FKAWJ and the use of media</i>	153
6.5	<b>Laskar Jihad on the Internet</b>	154
6.5.1	<i>Laskar Jihad Online</i>	155
6.5.2	<i>The argument: A fusion of nationalist and global jihad meta-narratives</i>	160
6.5.3	<i>Cyber-linkages</i>	162
6.6	<b>Beyond cyberspace: linkages to other media and physical space</b>	163
6.6.1	<i>Laskar Jihad's intermodality</i>	163
6.6.2	<i>Linkages to other media</i>	165
6.6.3	<i>Global ummah</i>	167
6.6.4	<i>The role of 'small' media in the battlefield</i>	168

---

6.7	Analysis	170
6.7.1	<i>Multiple identities</i>	170
6.7.2	<i>Social/political hierarchy, old and new</i>	171
6.7.3	<i>Simplification</i>	172
6.7.4	<i>Media intermodality</i>	172
6.7.5	<i>The Internet and 'die' for (political) religion</i>	173
6.8	Conclusions	173
<b>7.</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>175</b>
7.1	Introduction	175
7.2	Empirical Contributions	175
7.3	Contributions to the field	176
7.4	Methodological Implications	177
7.5	Theoretical Contributions	178
7.5.1	<i>Conviviality of the Internet as an 'affordance' for political activism</i>	179
7.5.2	<i>Intermodality: the linkages between the Internet and other networks</i>	180
7.5.3	<i>Identity on the Internet</i>	181
7.5.4	<i>Creating, reinventing and disseminating meta-narrative(s) in cyberspace</i>	183
7.5.5	<i>The Internet and the politics of rumour</i>	185
7.5.6	<i>The Internet-enabled collective activism as an urban phenomenon</i>	186
7.6	The Importance of 'Context'	187
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>191</b>
	<b>INDEX</b>	<b>213</b>
	<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>227</b>
	<b>SAMENVATTING</b>	<b>231</b>



---

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABO	Ambon Berdarah Online (Bloody Ambon Online)
AI3	Asian Internets Interconnection Initiatives
<i>AI3-NET</i>	<i>Asian Internets Interconnection Initiatives - Network</i>
AJI	Aliansi Jurnalis Independen (Alliance of Independent Journalists)
AMPNet	Amateur Packet Radio Network
APJII	Asosiasi Pengusaha Jasa Internet Indonesia (Indonesian Association of Internet Service Providers)
ARC	Amateur Radio Club
ARPA	Advanced Research Projects Agency
<i>ARPANET</i>	<i>Advanced Research Projects Agency Network</i>
ASIET	Action in Solidarity with Indonesia and East Timor
AWARI	Asosiasi Warnet Indonesia (Association of Internet Kiosks in Indonesia)
BBS	Bulletin Board System
BCA	Bank Central Asia
BKKBN	Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional (National Family Planning Coordinating Board)
BoNet	Bogor Internet
BPPT	Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi (National Agency for Assessment and Application of Technology)
BPS	Biro Pusat Statistik (Central Statistical Bureau)
CCDA	Crisis Centre Diocese of Ambon
CCF	Centre Culturel Français (French Cultural Centre)
CERN	Conseil Européen pour le Recherche Nucleaire (European Laboratory for Particle Physics)
CNRG	Computer Network Research Group
CSVI	Coördinatiegroep voor Steun aan Het Volksverzet in Indonesië (the People's Resistance in Indonesia)
DEE	Department of Electrical Engineering

<b>DI/TII</b>	<b>Darul Islam / Tentara Islam Indonesia (Darul Islam/Islamic Army of Indonesia)</b>
<b>DLM</b>	<b>Djangan Lupa Maluku (Don't Forget the Moluccas)</b>
<b>DLR</b>	<b>Deutschen Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt (Germany's Aeronautic and Space Centre)</b>
<b>DRN</b>	<b>Dewan Riset Nasional (National Research Council)</b>
<b>FKAWJ</b>	<b>Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah (Communications Forum of the Followers of the Sunnah)</b>
<b>FKM</b>	<b>Forum Kedaulatan Maluku (Moluccan Sovereignty Forum)</b>
<b>G30S</b>	<b>Gerakan Tiga Puluh September (Thirtieth of September Movement)</b>
<b>GDP</b>	<b>Gross Domestic Product</b>
<b>Gerwani</b>	<b>Gerakan Wanita Indonesia (Indonesian Women's Movement)</b>
<b>Golkar</b>	<b>Golongan Karya (Functional Groups)</b>
<b>GPM</b>	<b>Gereja Protestan Maluku (Protestant Church of the Moluccas)</b>
<b>ICMI</b>	<b>Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia (Association of Muslim Intellectual Indonesia)</b>
<b>ICT</b>	<b>Information and Communication Technology</b>
<b>IDS</b>	<b>Indonesian Development Studies</b>
<b>IETF</b>	<b>Internet Engineering Task Force</b>
<b>IGC</b>	<b>Institute of Global Communications</b>
<b>Indonet</b>	<b>Indo Internet</b>
<b>INDOZNET</b>	<b>Indonesia – Oztralia – Network</b>
<b>IPB</b>	<b>Institut Pertanian Bogor (Bogor Agricultural Institute)</b>
<b>IPS</b>	<b>Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial (Knowledge of Social Science)</b>
<b>IPTEKNET</b>	<b>Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Teknologi Network (Science and Technology Network)</b>
<b>ISP</b>	<b>Internet Service Provider</b>
<b>IT</b>	<b>Information Technology</b>
<b>ITB</b>	<b>Institut Teknologi Bandung (Institute of Technology Bandung)</b>
<b>ITS</b>	<b>Institut Teknologi Surabaya (Institute of Technology Surabaya)</b>
<b>ITU</b>	<b>International Telecommunications Union</b>
<b>JCSat</b>	<b>Japan Corporation Satellite</b>
<b>Kawitel</b>	<b>Kepala Wilayah Telekomunikasi (Chairman of Telecommunication Area)</b>
<b>KdP</b>	<b>Kabar dari Pijar (News from Pijar)</b>
<b>KdP-Net</b>	<b>Kabar dari Pijar Network (News from Pijar Network)</b>
<b>KITLV</b>	<b>Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies at Leiden</b>
<b>KNIL</b>	<b>Koninklijk Nederland-Indisch Leger (Dutch Netherlands-Indies Army)</b>

---

LAN	Local Area Network
LAPAN	Lembaga Penerbangan dan Antariksa Nasional (National Institute of Aeronautics and Space)
LBH	Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (Legal Aid Institute)
MP3	MPEG (Moving Picture Experts Group) Layer 3
Munindo	Munchen Indonesia
Visi N21	Visi Nusantara Abad 21 (the Vision of 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Archipelago)
NSF	National Science Foundation
<i>NSFNet</i>	<i>National Science Foundation Network</i>
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
ORARI	Organisasi Radio Amatir Indonesia (Indonesian Association of Amateur Radio)
P4	Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila (Assembly Decree on the Propagation and Implementation of Pancasila)
PAU	Pusat Antar Universitas (Inter-University Centre)
PDI	Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (Democratic Party of Indonesia)
PGP PK	Pretty Good Privacy Public Key
PIJAR	Pusat Informasi dan Jaringan Aksi untuk Reformasi (Centre of Information and Action Network for Reform)
PKI	Partai Komunis Indonesia (Indonesian Communist Party)
PMP	Pendidikan Moral Pancasila (Education in Morals of Pancasila)
Pointer	Pojok Internet (Internet Corner)
PPBI	Pusat Perjuangan Buruh Indonesia (Centre of Labour Struggle in Indonesia)
PPBI	Pusat Perjuangan Buruh Indonesia (Indonesian Centre of Labour Struggle)
PPP	Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party)
PRD	Partai Rakyat Demokrat (People's Democrat Party)
PSPB	Pendidikan Sejarah Perjuangan Bangsa (Education in the History of the National Struggles)
PT Telkom	PT Telekomunikasi Indonesia Tbk
PWI	Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia (Indonesian Journalist Association)
Radnet	Rahardjasa Internet
RMS	Republik Maluku Selatan (South Moluccan Republic)
RT	Rukun Tetangga (Household Unit)
RW	Rukun Warga (Neighbourhood Unit)
<i>RT/RW-Net</i>	<i>Rukun Tetangga / Rukun Warga Network (Household and Neighbourhood Network)</i>
SARA	Suku, Agama, Ras dan Antar golongan (Ethnicity, Religion, Race, Inter-group relations)

<b>SBSI</b>	<b>Serikat Buruh Sejahtera Indonesia (Indonesian Prosperity Trade Union)</b>
<b>Siskamling</b>	<b>Sistem Keamanan Lingkungan (Neighbourhood Security Watch)</b>
<b>SMID</b>	<b>Solidaritas Mahasiswa Indonesia untuk Demokrasi (Students in Solidarity for Democracy in Indonesia)</b>
<b>SMP</b>	<b>Sekolah Menengah Pertama (Junior High School)</b>
<b>STAID</b>	<b>Science and Technology Aids for Industrial Development</b>
<b>STN</b>	<b>Serikat Tani Nasional (National Peasant's Union)</b>
<b>TCP/IP</b>	<b>Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol</b>
<b>TCP</b>	<b><i>Transmission Control Protocol</i></b>
<b>IP</b>	<b><i>Internet Protocol</i></b>
<b>Telematika</b>	<b>Telekomunikasi dan Informatika (Telecommunications and Informatics)</b>
<b>Telkom</b>	<b>Telekomunikasi Indonesia (national telecom company)</b>
<b>TNI</b>	<b>Tentara Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Army)</b>
<b>TVRI</b>	<b>Televisi Republik Indonesia (Television of the Republic of Indonesia)</b>
<b>UGM</b>	<b>Universitas Gajah Mada (University of Gajah Mada)</b>
<b>UI</b>	<b>Universitas Indonesia (University of Indonesia)</b>
<b>UINET</b>	<b>University of Indonesia Network</b>
<b>UK-Net</b>	<b>United Kingdom Network</b>
<b>Unhas</b>	<b>Universitas Hasanuddin (University of Hasanuddin)</b>
<b>UNINET</b>	<b>Inter-UNiversity NETwork</b>
<b>Unpar</b>	<b>Universitas Parahyangan (University of Parahyangan)</b>
<b>URL</b>	<b>Uniform Resource Locator</b>
<b>UUCP</b>	<b>Unix-to-Unix Copy Protocol</b>
<b>W3C</b>	<b>World Wide Web Consortium</b>
<b>WALHI</b>	<b>Wahana Lingkungan Indonesia (Indonesian Environmental Organisation)</b>
<b>WAN</b>	<b>Wide Area Network</b>
<b>Warnet</b>	<b>Warung Internet (Internet café)</b>
<b>Wasantara</b>	<b>Wawasan Nusantara (Archipelagic Outlook)</b>
<b>W-Net</b>	<b><i>Wawasan Nusantara Network (Archipelagic Outlook Network)</i></b>
<b>WIDE</b>	<b>Widely Integrated Distributed Environment</b>
<b>WWW</b>	<b>World Wide Web</b>
<b>YLBHI</b>	<b>Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia (Indonesian Legal Aid Institute Foundation)</b>



---

## LIST OF FIGURES

<i>Figure 2.1 Centralised, Decentralised and Distributed Networks</i>	22
<i>Figure 2.2 The spectrum of system connectivity</i>	23
<i>Figure 4.1 ‘Tamud 1x24 jam wajib lapor’</i>	58
<i>Figure 4.2 Palapa Satellite Unifies Indonesia</i>	59
<i>Figure 4.3 Map of the ISP availability in Indonesia</i>	63
<i>Figure 4.4 Number of ISPs by city</i>	63
<i>Figure 4.5 Indonesian Internet subscribers and users</i>	64
<i>Figure 4.6 The traditional warung</i>	80
<i>Figure 4.7 The interior of warnet (JoyNet in Bandung)</i>	81
<i>Figure 5.1 Megawati Soekarnoputri@Internet</i>	110
<i>Figure 5.2 Homepage of PRD</i>	113
<i>Figure 6.1 Map of the Moluccas</i>	136
<i>Figure 6.2 The symbol of Laskar Jihad</i>	155
<i>Figure 6.3 Laskar Jihad Online snapshot</i>	156
<i>Figure 6.4 Examples of the pictures of burnt mosques and graffiti on the walls that insult Islam</i>	158
<i>Figure 6.5 Examples of children books with the jihad theme</i>	166



---

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Though as yet you may only have scanned the table of contents, read the conclusions, or skimmed the chapters, it should come as no surprise that I viewed the process of writing this dissertation as a complex, self-organising co-evolutionary organisational system created out of multilevel information and communications networks. Yet it was not until I completed the dissertation that I came to fully appreciate how extensive the network of support has been during the years I worked on this dissertation. A large number of colleagues, family, friends and institutions have shared in almost every aspect of its preparation from early conceptual discussions to the final nuances of production. Some of these contributions greatly influenced the dissertation book you now hold in your hands, leading me in direction I could not have anticipated at the outset.

In the process of making of this dissertation, I have accumulated the long list of intellectual (and other) debts. A full accounting of them would be interminable except for the fact that I realise some of my creditors would just as soon not be associated with the final product. Though I shall not implicate them here, I owe them nonetheless. My other creditors, having failed to disavow the final product in advance, will be named here and, it is to be hoped, implicated.

I am enormously grateful to Nico Schulte Nordholt, my *promotor*, a friend and sometimes 'a father', whose intelligence, generosity and support had sustained me through an occasionally difficult process of the writing dissertation. Not only I could not have written this dissertation without his input, I might not be up to survive my chaotic and unhealthy doctoral student's life without his help and support. I thank Patricia Spyer, my *co-promotor*, whose intellectual energy and ideas were a constant stimulus and a source of my intellectual excitement. What Patsy provided me with, in the process, was critical perspective, coherence, a sense of purpose, confidence and the will to get my dissertation done. Thanks also to Arie Rip, who read through several chapters and reminded me repeatedly what my argument was when I seemed to be getting lost in the details. Arie is

one of the smartest people I know and a consummate critic, prodding me always to keep it simple and get to the point. Readers will regret that I did not take his advice more often.

Some of my debts are to institutions. The preparation of this dissertation was supported, in part, by a grant from NWO/WOTRO (*Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek/Stichting voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek van de Tropen*). I am very honoured and deeply grateful to be a recipient of a two-year WOTRO-DC fellowship from NWO. The fellowship had significantly helped me to finish my research and my writing.

I greatly owe the Social *de*Construction of Technology (SCoT) Research Group in Bandung, Indonesia, the place where the very genesis of my academic path began. A special thanks goes to Joshua Barker. He always has a special place in my intellectual life. Beyond introducing me to the world of social research and inducing me to be a good social scientist, Joshua has helped me finding a true enjoyment in the world of research. I also thank my colleagues and friends in SCoT, Rini, Lenny and Anggie, for their companionship and support, and all stimulating (yet sometimes silly) discussions we had on our special table in Jalan Lombok and Cigadung. In particular I thank Rini for all of her exceptional assistance.

The institution that hosted me for a couple of years during my PhD study was the Technology and Development Group (TDG) (now is the Technology and Sustainable Development Group), at the University of Twente, Enschede. The big family of TDG had been tremendously supportive. I am particularly grateful to Margaret and Mike, Joy and Giles, Irna, Annemiek, Julia and Wendie, for their many kindnesses. Thanks also go to the Ph.D gang: Alafie, Anne-marije, Anuraj, Bas, Bhaskar, Joe, Noer, Pamerdi, Rupa, Sarah, Thong Chai and Zahabu. They have lightened my 'dark epoch' with jokes, teases and a knowledge that they (too) still have to struggle to finish their PhD dissertations. My deep appreciation goes to a special member of TDG, Cara Ella Bouwman, for helping me with the Dutch translation and, moreover, for being so attentive and caring.

At various stages in the laborious preparation of this dissertation, I had the privilege of making extended visits to institutions, conferences and seminars filled with large-spirited and sometimes hard-to-please colleagues. My good luck was that they so often made a project of straightening me out. They might not be satisfied with the final result, but I bet they can see their influence at work. I want to thank some institutions that provided me various small and big grants that enabled me to make these visit as well as to financially and academically survive my PhD years. These include: Centre for Advance Studies (CAS), Department of Sociology and Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) at National University of Singapore; Social Science Research Center (especially Robert Latham and Laura Forlano); Toda Foundation; Ford Foundation; Globalisation Research Centre (GRC), Department of Urban and Regional Planning (DURP) and Centre for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) at the University of Hawaii; Tunghai University; International Institute for Asian Studies

Netherlands; Centre for Southeast Asian Studies at the Ohio University at Athens (especially Elizabeth Collins); Open Society Institute; Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford; Henry Luce Foundation, East-West Centre; Asian Media and Information Centre Singapore, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung; Eugene Garfield Foundation; American Society of Information Science and Technology; Asia-Europe Foundation and Royal Dutch Academy of Science (KNAW).

At the National University of Singapore, I especially want to thank KC Ho, who has been supportive to my academic pursuit. With his generosity and kindness, KC had invited me to Singapore several times to participate in various stimulating academic gatherings. I also thank Rani and Indi who always toss some pleasant non-academic sparkles to my Singapore visits.

At the University of Hawaii, I am greatly indebted to Mike Douglass for supporting me in my research especially by involving me in his civic space project. I also owe thanks to Mike for access to the great Southeast Asian collection at the University of Hawaii Library and for making my stays in Hawaii convivial and intellectually rewarding. I also thank Jon Gosh from the CSEAS. The chapter 6 of this dissertation would definitely have been less fascinating were it not for the fact that Jon kindly invited me to come to Hawaii to attend the “Sectarian Conflict in East Indonesia” conference where I gained valuable insights about the Moluccan conflicts. Thanks also for the Hawaiian gang who made each of my Hawaii visit memorable.

One of some very valuable academic experiences was the 2003 Summer Doctoral Programme at the Oxford Internet Institute (OII). I thank Bill Dutton and Victoria Nash for giving me an opportunity to participate in this programme. Having many prominent scholars there to offer advice and criticism was a great privilege for me. Our daily seminars were intellectually bracing and full of fun, thanks in large part to the amusing crowd of PhD student participants.

I would not have had the leisure for reflection and writing had it not been for the generous invitation from Muthiah Alagappa, the Director of the East West Centre (EWC) Washington, to spend my fall and winter 2004 in Washington DC as a Henry Luce Foundation funded Southeast Asia fellow. The city's charm and centre's ideal combination of solitude and staffs that could not have been more helpful allowed me to finish a monograph that became the core of the Chapter 6 and part of the Conclusion Chapter of this dissertation. The astute insights of Muthiah mark this work in many ways. Thanks to Evelyn and Herman for making my stay in DC both intellectually and socially vigorous and to Jeremy and Megan for all their assistance and support. Thanks also to Mary Jo and Joe for magically turning the city to be ‘home’ for me.

Living in Enschede during my PhD study was an unforgettable experience. I thank many friends from BS-Twente, PPI-Enschede and ITC Fellowship for contributing to the greatness of my Enschede life. In particular I thank Maureen, Patrick, Andrew, the Pasaribu's (trio Rihard-Susy-Daniel) and the Pimentel's (Jonald, Flor, Jzyf, Belgie and Ijssel), for always being 'there' for me.

Being involved in musical activities made the best of my Enschede years. Thanks to Andrew, Tommy and Yosep for being my great music partners in both PPIE-MC and 4U Band. I thank Ajin, Arun, Ary, Coby, Rihard, Inneke, Tjitske and Tjeerd for all great music and spiritual adventures we had together with 4U Band. Thanks also go to Araz, Diana, David Njo, Rino and Wikan, for all memorable musical moments with PPIE-MC.

I also want to pronounce my sincere and very grateful non-cyberspatial thanks to so many friends in Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Japan, Canada, the United States, France, the United Kingdom, the UEA and ultimately in cyberspace. In particular I want to thank all *Beasiswa* moderators, Sudianto Aly, Ben (if), Benny (ar), John and Ruth Chambers, Ton and Jannie Heine, John MacDougall, Myrfa and Bruno, Rinovia, Sandra 68H, Stefanini, Upadi and Irene, Upik Djalins and Johannes Widodo, for their distant assistance and support.

I wish to thank my parents and my big family in Bandung and Manila, many of whom do not really understand what I do or why I do what I do, but love me just the same. I greatly appreciate their spiritual support, patience and great understanding.

Needless to say I have also relied on the loving forbearance of Michael 'Marco' Polo who had spent a gazillion hours to 'virtually' console me in our cyber blue-lake and had flown hundred thousands miles to comfort me in person. For his unfailing love and support, I owe him countless thanks.

For the done dissertation, all great life experiences and unfolded mysteries in the last three and half years, I greatly thank Someone above.

*Bandung, July 2005*

---

## INTRODUCTION

Whether we live in a Panoptic or democratic [Inter]Net ten years from now, depends, in no small measure, on what you and I know and do now.

Howard Rheingold, Afterword to *The Virtual Community* (1993: 310)

### 1.1 Background of the Study

The 1990s witnessed the beginning of an important revolution in information and communication technology (ICT). Within the period of 10 years, the Internet went from being the haven of computer experts, academics and researchers to a mainstream medium. Yet, today, more than ten years after Howard Rheingold (1993) delivered the statement cited above, scholars studying the political dimension of the Internet still have the same old debates; whether the Internet is democratic or Panoptic. Hypes and hopes, utopian and dystopian thoughts, cyber-optimists and cyber-pessimists, all subsist in the debates surrounding the political aspects of the Internet.

While a detailed review of the literature on the Internet and politics is beyond the scope of this dissertation (see Chapter 2 for a more detailed review), we can note that much of the early literature on the political aspects of the Internet is highly optimistic. This is rooted in the previous line of arguments, which portrays wider exposure to all forms of media, including newspapers and radio, as an inevitable accompaniment and contributor to progressive political development (Lerner, 1958; Schudson, 1989; Gamson, et al., 1992; Blumler, et al., 1992). The Internet, in this utopian line of argument, is deemed to have positive impacts on political participation, civil society and democracy (Hague and Loader, 1999; Locke, 1999; Kamarck and Nye, 2000). As will be reiterated in more details in Chapter 2, analyses of how the Internet can transform a political system include a wide array of arguments from modest alterations such as voting online (Mulgan, 1994; Allen, 1995; Freeman, 1997) to more ambitious ones such as the rise of direct democracy and a new public sphere (Dyson et al., 1994; Toffler and Toffler, 1994; Negroponte, 1995; Rheingold, 1995).

At the other extreme, the Internet, like the telescreen George Orwell envisioned in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), is seen to pose a threat to democracy through the ways in which governments and big business could use it to manipulate users and create identities with the state and with consumer products (Toffler, 1991; Fox, 1994; Barber, 1998). In this utopian line of argument, some scholars argue that the Internet could be a threat to democracy by demeaning political discourse (Gutstein, 1999; Moore, 1999; Wilhelm, 1999). Graham (2000), with his term 'premium networked space' including transport, telecommunications and other infrastructures customised to the needs of powerful users and their spaces, also casts the Internet as an apparatus that tends to widen the gap between the powerful and the powerless. Still others see violent 'communes of resistance' rising from within and threatening the very existence of civil society as they appropriate cyber technology and its informational flows for organising aggressive responses to perceived injustice under global capitalist hegemony (Barber, 1996; Castells, 1997).

The debate over the Internet, as a revolutionary facilitator of democracy or as a growing menace to civil society and democracy, has no resolution in the abstract. Insights into these issues can only be drawn from historical experiences rooted in specific local contexts. Flows of information, images and symbolic representations over the Internet are invariably mediated through local constellations of power, including both political structures and cultural practices, in ways that transformation electronic signals into potent social meanings that can only then become part of contestations to reshape the political landscape.

Rather than being constrained by the discourse over the relationships between the Internet and democracy, this dissertation tries to provide insights into the dynamics of Internet-politics relations by looking at how the Internet was used in transition period — within two different political circumstances: the late period of Suharto and the post-Suharto period — for political activism. Using Indonesia as a local site of the nexus struggles over the choice, use and transformation of the Internet, this dissertation attempts to show how the Internet interplays with power struggles, and how the creation and assertion of identity become a focal point of contests over power. Two case studies are examined that view these processes of localisation and identity formation. The first case study is the uses of the Internet in facilitating the May 1998 *reformasi*.<sup>1</sup> This study shows how the Internet was instrumental in facilitating political activism — political debates and dissemination of political information — that contributed to establishing collective action and popular social movement that led to the downfall of Suharto in May 1998. The second case study concerns the uses of the Internet by Laskar Jihad (Jihad Troopers), a radical militia group involved in the Moluccan conflict. This case shows how the Internet became a site for reviving of primordial, ethno-religious, and communal identities that then supported the collective act of violence.

---

<sup>1</sup> '*Reformasi*' (Indonesian) literally means reform. For a detailed explanation of the term '*reformasi*', see Chapter 5.



This dissertation shows how political activism on the Internet is linked to non-computer based activities. Using the Indonesian situation, this dissertation demonstrates that in studying Internet-society relations, one cannot stay only within the ethereal realm of cyberspace, nor isolate the Internet as a secluded space that is separated from any activities in a real world setting. A strict online/offline dichotomy is simply misleading, as online activities cannot be socially detached from offline activities. The existence of the chain of Internet cafés, *warnet*, in Indonesia clearly demonstrates that the Internet access point can be located in both online and offline realms. Social activities carried out in online realms of *warnet* can be resulted from activities in offline realm and vice versa. Further, in facilitating political activism, as the case studies will show, the Internet is not detached from the non-cyberspace realm but, rather, corresponds with it. In addition, this dissertation also demonstrates that while the Internet does change the global-local dynamics of political activism, the Internet does more than facilitate political activism on a global scale. The Internet also corresponds with the socio-political terrain of nation-states and other localities.

## 1.2 Research Statements

The overarching question in this dissertation is what are the dynamics of the relationships between the Internet and political activism. In assessing these relationships, this analysis rests on four major hypotheses. These hypotheses are meant to create a pathway of explanations from multi-perspective viewpoints to explore and explain how the technology of the Internet is related to politics, and social discontents and in particular to political activism and the mobilisation of collective actions and social movements.

The first hypothesis is that the unique characteristics of the Internet, its 'conviviality' (Illich, 1973), provide opportunities for the use of technology, particularly by less powerful segments of society, autonomous of the state or other dominant institutions. The Internet as a technology is not simply a background to political struggles, it is also an important space constructed to shape them and potentially provides opportunities to facilitate political activism that transforms individual agency into collective actions and/or social movements.

The second hypothesis is that, in a society in which most of the population is not yet connected to the Internet (such as Indonesia), the potential of the Internet on its own to facilitate political activism is very limited. The linkages between the Internet network and other media and non-media (social) networks are thus important to extend the impact and potential of the Internet beyond the computer screen. For the other media to play this linking role, in bringing the cyberworld of the Internet to ground level politics, they must also be liberated from the Panopticon of state surveillance. In this regard, the Internet can play a crucial role in creating openings for political reform that ripple through other media that had previously been effectively controlled by the political regime in power.

The third hypothesis is that the actual realisation of the potential of the Internet in facilitating political activism cannot be seized without commensurate social coalitions emerging through processes of 'identity formation', around a cause or politically-inspired imagination put forth as a common belief. Creating identities is a universal human experience and a fundamental source of meaning and social power. Collective identity formation is among the primary driving forces in contemporary world history and is a source of resistance to globalisation and the rise of network society (Castells, 1997), which in the current era can be manifested through the spread of information technologies, in particular the Internet.

The fourth hypothesis is that the Internet can be a lens to magnify collective actions and the narratives of resistance created by individuals and groups. Using the Internet, the magnified narratives can further be turned into meta-narratives<sup>2</sup> that are used generate an un-negotiable 'truth' about the position of a group in social, religious and, ultimately, political struggles that can be used to mobilise the collective power of those who portray themselves as victims, or among the oppressed, in need of radical political reform to overcome the adversities reified in the narratives.

### 1.3 Research Significance

The significance of this research is its analysis of the social impact of technology, the Internet, from a multidisciplinary perspective in a non-Western context, namely Indonesia. Its innovative aspects are, first, to link theories of collective actions and social movements with an inquiry into the contemporary political transformations in Indonesia from the perspective of the emergence of the Internet as a technology, medium and space for political activities.

Much of the debate about the Internet is concerned with how it promotes (Rheingold, 1993; Grossmann, 1995; Browning, 2002) or counters democratisation (Lyon, 1994, 2001; Gutstein, 1999), but few studies have addressed this debate in a situation of momentous political change and subsequent communal uprisings in a non-Western context and those that concentrate mainly on China (Kalathil and Boas, 2001; Tsui, 2002; Kluver and Qiu, 2003). Further, even fewer studies trace how information through the Internet is channelled into, and transforms, relations of power in a real world setting. Studies this issue so far are limited to a few cases, most notably the Zapatista movement in Chiapas Mexico (Cleaver, 1998; Ronfeldt et al., 1998) and the Falun Gong movement in China (Bell and Boas, 2003). Even in these studies, however, the actual links between

---

<sup>2</sup> For Lyotard (1979), a 'meta-narrative' is a big story, a story of mythic proportions that claims to account for, explain and subordinate all lesser, little, local narratives. Meta refers to overall, totalising. For this reason, Lyotard rejects any narrative that is assumed to be the ultimate universal narrative. Foucault (1972) associates the concept of meta-narrative with legitimacy as it can be used as a tool for social and political mobilisation against perceived antagonistic, hegemonic forces while also seeking to create its own hegemony.

online activism in cyberspace and real world activities are not clearly examined. The study here aims to reveal these linkages.

Second, the contributions in this study are innovative in adding a clear spatial dimension to the study of the Internet and society. Even though the term 'space' is used to describe the Internet — 'cyberspace' — actual spatial analyses are rare. In this study, attention is given to the importance of space (Lefebvre, 1991), in terms of both actual networks of flows of information over the Internet and the physical linkages between cyberspace, Internet cafés, other printed news media and, ultimately, collective actions and social movements in real territorial and spatial contexts. One of the examples of the importance of the spatial dimensions is the almost complete control over public space by Suharto (Kitley, 1994; Shoesmith, 1994; Lim, 2002a) which gave the appearance of Internet technology, and the spaces of the popular *warnet* (Internet cafés) an unprecedented historical role in socially mobilising students to participate in the end of his regime.

Third, this study is innovative in using sociological concepts of identity and identity formation as keys to understanding how the Internet can become a source of social mobilisation and empowerment not only through information flows but also through symbolic (often graphic) representations and ideological interpretations of that information. Of interest is to understand how identities can be transformed from those that legitimise existing political regimes to those that resist and even generate projects to overthrow them.

## 1.4 Research Methodology

This research was largely qualitative in nature. It has consisted of empirical analysis on the use of the Internet in political activism through field research in three main university cities, Bandung, Jakarta and Yogyakarta, in Indonesia. These cities were chosen mainly because they are some of the places where the Internet is most developed, with nearly half of the total Internet users in Indonesia.<sup>3</sup> Another reason was that in the case of May 1998 *reformasi*, it is clear that actions were started in these cities and student leaders from these cities played key roles in organising and mobilising the events. Meanwhile, in the case study of Laskar Jihad, while the conflict itself was located in the Moluccas, the central office of Laskar Jihad was located in Yogyakarta. Members of Laskar Jihad were mostly from the island of Java, and a significant number of student members came from these three cities. Beyond these three cities, empirical field research was also conducted in 'global Indonesian cyberspace'.

Using qualitative research, the research questions were examined through two case studies. The May 1998 student movement and Laskar Jihad were chosen to reveal an understanding of the relationships between the Internet, identity formation and collective

---

<sup>3</sup> Based on survey conducted by APJII, 2001.

action/social movements. The analysis of the case studies conducted in this research was multi-perspective and multi-level, which means that the researcher considers not only the voices of actors but also of relevant groups of rival actors and the interaction among them in multi-level space (local-national-global). Multiple sources of data were used in this study to meet the methodological need to validate the processes and to bring out details from the viewpoint of the participants (Yin, 1993, 1994). The sources of data used in this study were: interviews, participant observation, content analysis, cross-documentation and archival records.

Six types of research techniques were applied during the field research:

#### ***1.4.1 Interviews***

Interviews were conducted, first, to collect pieces of narrative of the history of the Internet in Indonesia. For this purpose, the interviews involved 34 actors who were related to the early history of the Internet in Indonesia. Large segments of these interviews were completed in 2000 as part of the author's involvement in the Societal Construction of Technology in Indonesian Context research project.<sup>4</sup>

The second aim was to collect basic information on the general uses of the Internet in Indonesia. For this purpose, interviews included 49 random Internet users and *warnet* operators mainly in *warnet* in Bandung, Jakarta, and Yogyakarta.

The third aim was to identify correlations between the collective identities of certain groups of Internet users, the use of the Internet by these groups and the real-world actions that occurred (e.g. May 1998 popular movement, Laskar Jihad street demonstration). For this purpose, interviews involved selected samples of Internet users that were related to the key organisations involved in the May 1998 *reformasi* movement and the Laskar Jihad movement. All of these interviews were done in an offline (face-to-face) mode and/or online (chatting, emailing) mode. In this research, open-ended interviews were used to extend the depth of data gathering (Yin, 1984).

#### ***1.4.2 Participant observation***

The participant observation conducted in the research was passive in the sense that the researcher was not actively involved in users' activities (online and offline), but instead followed the online and offline activities of targeted users intensively by physically attending *warnet* (Internet cafés) and 'virtually attending' the communities of selective users (mailing lists). The field-notes were written as narratives of observations, and the

---

<sup>4</sup> The Societal Construction of Technology in Indonesian Context research project was a joint research project between the University of Twente (UT) and the Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB). It ran from September 1998 to September 2001 and was coordinated by Dr. Joshua Barker, the principal researcher. Prior to her doctoral study, the author of this dissertation was involved in this research project, from June 1999, as a research assistant/junior researcher. The author was in charge of conducting and writing the Internet case study research report from January 2000 to June 2001.

texts of selective communications made by email in the mailing lists were recorded electronically.

The purpose of off-line participant observation was to collect general data on the characteristics of Internet users that come to the *warnet*, the types of activities that are held in the *warnet* and to understand how the spatiality and technological characteristics of *warnet* impacts, and is impacted, by the activities and personal characteristics of Internet users (as narrated in Chapter 4). For this purpose, the author visited a significant number of *warnet* in Bandung (33), Jakarta (18) and Yogyakarta (10).<sup>5</sup> Additional brief visits to 120 *warnet* in Bandung were made<sup>6</sup> to gain general information on: types of Internet connection, numbers of screens (computers), numbers of visitors, layout of rooms and types of seats.

The on-line participant observation was conducted, first, in the general Indonesian cyber-communities and, second, in selected Indonesian cyber-communities that were chosen based on the case studies. The first type of observation was meant to gather background data on how cyber-communities were used by Indonesian Internet users to communicate with each other and to differentiate the characteristics of these virtual communities from physical communities. The second set was conducted in order to understand how certain communities were formed within cyberspace, how the selected users used their cyber-communities to communicate and disseminate information and how the communications (dialogues) and the disseminated information were related to real-world actions (collective action and social movement). Some related communities (see Chapters 5 and 6) in cyberspace, in the form of mailing lists and web-based forums, were chosen for this purpose.

### **1.4.3 Content analysis**

Content analysis was conducted to analyse the content of websites and other kinds of Internet pages as well as the mailing lists of key organisations. Using many kinds of documentation and archival records, this research included content analysis of the textual and graphical data (for some examples, see Chapter 5 and 6) in order to corroborate evidence gathered from other sources (interviews and participant observations).

The important data used were the websites, Internet pages and mailing lists of:

- Key organisations that occurred during 1990s before the downfall of Suharto in May 1998 (*Apakabar*, *PIJAR*, *SiaR*, *PRD*, *Munindo*)
- Laskar Jihad
- Organisations or media linked to Laskar Jihad

---

<sup>5</sup> The author also visited 4 *warnet* in Denpasar in July 2002 as she happened to be there, although this city was not formally included as a site for research.

<sup>6</sup> Assisted by Surya Dwiarta, held from 1 August to 14 October 2002.

- The Moluccan conflict related organisations/media

#### 1.4.4 *Analysis of linkages*

An analysis was conducted of the linkages between cyber-activities (web-page groups, mailing lists, server managers) and real-world actions such as collective actions, social movements, political rallies and violence against other communities.

To understand the linkages between the online and offline activities (real-world actions), this study used documentation, archival records, interviews and direct observation. The documentation and archival records from all kinds of media (not only the Internet, but also newspapers/magazines, televisions and books) were used to understand the real-world actions that took place (e.g. student movement, Jihad actions).

In the case of the May 1998 *reformasi*, the author managed to directly observe:<sup>7</sup>

- Dialogues among activists in coordinating student actions, and
- Information dissemination processes in cyberspace, *warnet* and physical spaces; and how the information passed through physical spaces from cyberspace and *warnet*.

For the Laskar Jihad case study, direct observation was not possible for some of its activities such as violent engagements or training. However, the author managed to directly observe some less risky activities such as: fundraising activities done in the streets and information dissemination in physical spaces (places) such as mosques, universities and schools.

Another set of interviews was conducted in connection with the interviews conducted under Section 1.4.1 (interviews with Internet users). These interviewees were with those who participate in real-world actions. These interviews meant to identify the linkages between cyberspace and real-world actions.

#### 1.4.5 *Analysis of information flow*

The specific analysis of information flow covered the processes of information dissemination within cyberspace, between cyberspace and real space (e.g. *warnet*) and physical space, while the analysis of identity filtering mainly refers to processes that happen only within cyberspace. This latter analysis was conducted as an in-depth sub-case study, with one sub-case was chosen for each case study. In the case of May 1998 *reformasi*, the flow of information and identity filtering on 'Suharto's wealth' issue was chosen as this area of information was the most popular anti-Suharto one during the

---

<sup>7</sup> Some data on the case of the May 1998 *reformasi* were derived from the author's earlier research in January – June 1998, prior to her doctoral study, when the author was working on her Masters thesis entitled 'The emergence of cyberspace as a new paradigm in spatial conception architecture'.

*reformasi* era. Meanwhile, in the second case study, information about the ‘US-Jewish conspiracy’ was chosen as this information represents the strongest meta-narrative created that was related to the Moluccan conflict.

The analysis was completed by tracing the flow of information, including identifying the points that were connected to the flow. This tracing process can be conducted within cyberspace by using search-engines but can also be done offline using the archives of emails/websites that had been documented. The later method is useful in tracing the flow of information that no longer exists in cyberspace.

To analyse the identity filtering processes, the author employed a single theme and traced the flow of information that was based on that theme in one group and in its rival. By identifying each point of flow, the research can identify at which point the information is being filtered and what is the outcome of the filtering process by examining the messages that the information brings.

Examples of the tracing process of information dissemination, include:

- Type of information: Anti-Suharto info – the List of Suharto’s wealth (family and cronies)
- Original source of information: George Aditjondro, Location: Newcastle, Australia - *Email*
- Point of flow 1: Munindo homepage (Germany), Apakabar mailinglist (US / Indonesia), Pijar (Germany) – *Emails/web-pages*
- Point of flow 2: Individual websites: e.g. Luknanto’s (Indonesia), Indonesian mailing lists: e.g. Isnet, Parokinet – *Emails/web-pages*
- Point of flow 3: Warnet: e.g. Pointer-Net (Bandung)– *Emails/print-out from webpages/emails*
- Point of flow 4: Offices: e.g. PT. Ateja in Bandung – *faxed material*; Streets: e.g. newspaper sellers in Bandung – *photocopied version of web-pages*
- Point of flow 5. Taxis in Jakarta: e.g. Blue-bird taxi driver; Warung (kiosks) near Jakarta’s universities: e.g. one *warung* (kiosk) near University of Bung Hatta – *re-photocopied version*.

#### **1.4.6 Review and synthesis of literature**

The review and synthesis of literature was mainly carried out to establish the theoretical framework for this dissertation. This involved literature on the origin of Internet technology, Internet-politics relations, collective action and social movement theories, cyberactivism and network society.

### **1.5 Thesis Structure**

This thesis consists of seven chapters and is structured as follows:

Chapter One, "Introduction," contains the research background, research questions and hypothesis, research significance, research methodology and thesis structure.

Chapter Two, "Conviviality of the Internet," is the first theoretical part of this thesis; it provides a theoretical framework on the conviviality of the Internet based on its techno-landscape and socio-landscape and locates this on the debates of Internet-democratisation.

Chapter Three, "Cyberactivism," is the second theoretical part of this thesis; it consists of a literature analysis of the dynamics of the Internet-collective action relations and locates these within the broader discourse on globalisation and network society by emphasising identity formation.

Chapter Four, "The Internet and the New Order," provides a historical socio-political background of the Internet development in Indonesia. It chronologically details some important episodes in the history of the Internet in Indonesia in order to construct a larger picture in which to locate the case studies of this thesis.

Chapter Five, "From Elites to the Streets: Global Connections and Local Actions in the May 1998 *Reformasi*," is the first case study chapter. It provides narratives and analysis of the political uses of the Internet in facilitating collective action and popular social movement during the May 1998 *reformasi*.

Chapter Six, "Laskar Jihad Online: Global and National Meta-narratives in Cyberspace," is the second case study chapter. It provides narratives and analysis on Laskar Jihad's uses of the Internet in the Moluccan conflict.

Chapter Seven, "Conclusions," is the final chapter. It summarises the principal arguments of the foregoing chapters and provides conclusions that are drawn for: empirical contributions, methodological implications, contributions to the field, theoretical contributions of the dissertation, as well as the importance of 'context' in the dissertation.



---

## THE CONVIVIALITY OF THE INTERNET

### 2.1 Introduction

Is the Internet a socially neutral artefact? Does it or can it have politics? If so, what kind of politics? Is it likely to be democratic or more suited to authoritarian control? These questions have come to dominate much of the discourse on the Internet since its inception. The purposes of the discussion in this chapter are, first, to identify the singularities of the Internet that drive these debates and, second, to develop the position that while the Internet does have special characteristics that can facilitate a more democratic mode of politics, it does not necessarily do so. Subsequent chapters will show that the contexts where this is played out vary substantially in time and place.

The notion that technologies and their associated hardware have political qualities has been the most provocative idea in controversies about technology and society. This idea brings out a way to judge technologies not only by their impacts (negative and positive) and their contributions to efficiency and productivity, but also for the ways in which they embody particular forms of power and authority (Winner, 1980).

Based on his studies of the city, architecture and the history of technologies, Lewis Mumford (1964) makes a strong division of technologies by categorizing them into two political boxes, authoritarian and democratic. The first, he says, is “system centred, immensely powerful, but inherently unstable” and the other is “man centred, relatively weak, but resourceful and durable” (Mumford, 1964: 52).

With a similar line of argument, Langdon Winner (1980) in his article “Do Artefacts Have Politics?” vigorously argues that material artefacts are inherently political. His basic argument is that tangible artefacts — technology, the built environment and other material-spatial arrangements — always embody ‘social’ (power) relations. Following this argument, the moral question arises: what kind of material artifacts should one make, create and accept? Because in deciding to have — or as Winner (1980) puts it, ‘live in’ — specific material artefacts one has inevitably taken a political decision.

So, with this strong doctrine of an artefacts-politics relationship, once an artefact is determined and created, it has an inherent political nature. In this version, there is a

transfer of political intention from those who ‘design’ the artefact into an artefact itself. Then those who use the artefact will have a durable socio-political relationship that has been built into the artefact. Winner lucidly demonstrates this argument by presenting (albeit an over-simplified version of) the story of Robert Moses’ low bridges on Long Island (Winner, 1980) that deployed a specific form of technology to keep lower income Afro-Americans from having easy access to a new parkway.<sup>8</sup> While Winner (1980) does not categorise technologies into democratic and authoritarian, he agrees with the overall argument of Mumford (1964) that the technology is inherently political. Technological artefacts are political in the sense that when choices are made regarding an artefact, they also concurrently and usually inadvertently entail choices of associated political structures and strategies that are inherently political. Some of these structures may be compatible with democratic control and oversight; others may necessitate an authoritarian system (Winner, 1980).

Pulling this line of argument into the political nature of the Internet, the question that appears is in which box should the Internet be categorised, democratic or authoritarian? If the Internet is to be categorised as democratic, what is it about the Internet that can be so readily assumed to be inherently democratic? Does it have a natural inclination to be a tool for democracy? If so, how can one explain some of the undemocratic phenomena related to the use of the Internet? Are these merely external to the technology itself, or perhaps just the exceptions that prove the rule?

A stream of literature has emerged on these questions, in both scholarly and journalistic formats, that comments on the social meaning and effects of the Internet on people and society. In the following section, these visions of the Internet and social change are presented within the context of utopian and dystopian writings. In the end, it seems that neither utopian nor dystopian visions are able to contribute to the understanding of the complex relationship between the Internet and society. Rather, their principal contribution is to provoke historically-bound inquiries into actual contexts and experiences. In this light, this chapter then attempts to explain the political nature of the Internet and to conceptually explain the relationship between the Internet and democracy by exploring the characteristics and features of the Internet as well as social forms that embody the development of this artefact. In using the term ‘convivial’, this thesis argues that the socio-technical landscape of the Internet constructs an inherently compliant environment for democratic pursuit. However, this does not mean that the Internet cannot also be compliant for undemocratic actions. By being convivial, the Internet lends

---

<sup>8</sup> The story concerns low bridges over the parkways on Long Island. These overpasses are extraordinarily low, with about nine feet clearance. Winner (1980) argues that there is a political reason for these bridges being so low and why they were designed in such a way. In building his argument, Winner invites readers to consider the political stance of Robert Moses, the man behind the bridge project. Moses, in Winner’s view, built his overpasses according to specifications that would discourage the presence of buses on his parkway since buses were twelve feet tall. In those times, the transit system (buses) users were lower income groups of mostly black people (Winner, 1980: 123).

itself to an ambiguous state of affairs by opening more trajectories of possible uses among fractions of society, the state and the economy as a technology and medium in relationship with democracy.

## 2.2 Utopian Versus Dystopian Visions of the Internet

People, both scholars and non-scholars, have generally been very ambivalent about the potential future roles of new technologies, particularly the Internet, and their possible effect on human society. Overall, a tendency exists for polarisation between naïve enthusiasm and cynical resistance towards the use of information technology, computer networks, the Internet, and for related concepts such as ‘cyberspace’ and ‘the information highway’. Among social scientists, there has also been a palpable split between utopian and dystopian visions of the Internet. In fact, perhaps the most striking feature of the body of current literature on the Internet is the polarisation of the debate on almost every issue, especially in its association with politics, democracy and democratisation.

Each of the opposing clusters, according to Kling (1996a: 42), form a ‘genre discourse’, where each genre is shaped by a set of conventions that are delimited by the type of themes they are willing to examine. Evidence shows that in examining many of the descriptions of the use of current technologies, these descriptions are framed by specific genre conventions. As a consequence, the range of ideas that are examined and included becomes limited (Kling, 1996a). Kling (1996b) asserts that these genre conventions are presented as ‘epistemological envelopes’ that encapsulate all ‘truth’ about the Internet and wider society. However, many of these writings favour speculation about the future rather than the more empirical question of what is really happening in reality. The validation of the predispositions contained within each genre of discourses are therefore largely circular within the logic of the genre itself.

Fisher and Wright (2001) explicitly compared and contrasted the parallel utopian and dystopian prophecies in discourse surrounding the Internet, and concluded that the discussion has been “ideologically charged, filled as much with the hopes and fears of individual authors as with the reality of the medium’s effects” (p. 1). Jordan (1999), Levy (2001a) and Poster (2001) extend the discussion to suggest that the nature of the Internet itself is contradictory, paradoxical, being both liberating and dominating, empowering and fragmenting, universalising but non-totalising. Most writers, however, tend to theorise for one side of the polarised debate against the other, as described in the following sections.

### 2.2.1 *The utopian vision*

Where our existing information systems seek to choke the flow of information through taboos, costs, and restrictions, the new digital world celebrates the right of the individual to speak and be heard — one of the cornerstones behind...democracy. Where our existing political institutions are viewed as remote

and unresponsive, this online culture offers the means for individuals to have a genuine say in the decisions that affect their lives. Where conventional politics is suffused with ideology, the digital world is obsessed with facts. Where our current political system is irrational, awash in hypocritical, god-and-values talk, the Digital Nation points the way toward a more rational, less dogmatic approach to politics. The world's information is being liberated, and so, as a consequence, are we (Katz, 1985: 50).

As hyperbolically expanded in Jon Katz's statement above, among the most salient aspects of the utopian position is the implied notion that social problems can be solved by technological solutions (see Budge, 1996; Ward, 1997; Cox, 1999). In the context of democracy and democratisation, these solutions are often described in terms of technology's effects on communitarian and populist forms of democratic participation. The Internet is seen as being able to facilitate civic engagement by increasing the ease of communication among citizens and thus transform the political system to be more inclusive and democratic. Interpretations on how the Internet will transform the political system have ranged from humble alterations whereby citizens vote in elections and an increased number of policy referenda from their living rooms (Mulgan, 1994; Allen, 1995; Freeman, 1997) to more ambitious visions of the decline of intermediary institutions and the rise of direct democracy and a new public sphere for debate (Dyson et al., 1994; Toffler, 1994; Negroponte, 1995; Rheingold, 1996). Coleman (2001) suggests that the inherent interactivity of the Internet promises to open the political conversation to voices that have never been heard before. He states that "engagement, inclusion, public deliberation and civic reconnection" (Coleman, 2001)<sup>9</sup> are democratic opportunities presented by the Internet.

In an explicit counterpoint to *Nineteen Eighty-four*, which inspires many of the pessimistic arguments, Gilder (1989) says that Orwell (1949) is simply wrong. The distributive nature of the computer revolution can put powerful communications tools in the hands of all citizens, and thus marginalised or 'small' actors can trump the big ones. Utopians also believe that increased information technology penetration will make it more difficult for abusive, authoritarian and quasi-sovereign governments to maintain their legitimacy (Ganley and Ganley, 1987; Pool, 1990; Frederick, 1991; Ganley, 1992). Increasing communications networks are described as avenues to greater public awareness about, and participation in, public policy debates. Greater access to the new information technology will also permit greater popular knowledge about power struggles within government (Annis, 1990; Ash, 1990; Pool, 1990; Zimmer, 1990; Hanna and Boyson, 1991; Banks and Builder, 1992; O'Neill, 1993).

---

<sup>9</sup> Full quotations, partial quotations and attributive phrases that are originated from online sources, such as this quotation, are referred by citing the name of author and the year of publication only, without the page number.

This utopian position is allied with McLuhan's view that the communication medium is supreme in determining effects, as suggested in his famous phrase, "the medium is the message" (McLuhan, 1964). This view usually peddles the democratic potential of the Internet by referring to the actual design of the network. Through this network, that provides communicative interaction, democratic participation and a sense of community are facilitated (Reinghold, 1993).

Undeniably, high-speed networks can connect millions of people, providing communication links that no one thought possible a decade ago. Simply put, utopians posit that cyberspace will make it easier for people to communicate both politically and otherwise. Thus, following through with the Habermasian (1984, 1991) concept of a public sphere, utopians tend to argue that this interaction will bring out the communicative actions that can limit the subversion of deliberative democracy by the hands of authoritarian states or market-driven imperatives.

Utopian visions are full of tales created in order to stimulate hope about future possibilities. Technological utopianism does not usually refer to the actual technologies per se, but rather, to the 'use' of specific technologies that makes life 'enchanted and liberating' for many (Kling, 1996a: 42).

However, not all scholars are in accord with this utopian vision. The opposing view — the dystopian one — is also mushrooming, as presented in the following section.

### *2.2.2 The dystopian vision*

Power shifts focus, speed overcome space, orders become disordered, time moves standards, community loses centres, values change denomination as the settings of industrialised human agency are completely shaken (Luke and Toulouse, 1998: 125).

In contrast to the utopian vision that focuses on the effects of the Internet on society, the dystopian vision relies on an understanding of the phenomenon or experiences (see Slouka, 1995; Stoll, 1995; Barber, 1998). Rather than viewing the Internet merely as a tool, dystopians stress the potential of the medium to affect communication in such a way that it negatively alters the practices and spaces of communication that had previously nurtured democracy, as alluded to by Luke and Toulouse (1998) in the quotation above.

Many dystopians highlight a more negative vision where technology exacerbates human despair as individuals become increasingly controlled by what they fail to understand. Thus, at the other end of the spectrum from the utopian vision lies what is described as the "comparably dark" (Kling, 1996a) dystopianism which views technology as a tool or vehicle to aggravate misery in society. Technological dystopianism examines how certain technologies facilitate a social order that is "relentlessly harsh, destructive and miserable" (Kling, 1996a: 42).

Many of the arguments supporting dystopian positions refer to how the Internet transforms people and society so as to become more fragmented and isolated, thus leading to the deterioration of democracy. By relying on mediated communication instead

of face-to-face interactions, society is moving towards a deeper fragmentation (Barber, 1998). Along this line of argument, Birkerts (1996) argues that the computer networked communications tend to remove people from their natural world, as implied in his statement: "Immersed in an environment of invisible signals and operations, we find it as unthinkable to walk five miles to visit a friend as it was once unthinkable to speak across that distance through a wire" (Birkerts, 1996: 81). Winner (1996) echoes Birkerts' concern that people will experience increased alienation through their inclusion in computer networks. He also claims that in this network system, low-status workers will become highly regimented and tightly monitored and controlled through computerised control systems (Winner, 1996: 83).

While the utopians believe that the Internet will liberate relationships and engender community, dystopians tend to view Internet based relationships as shallow, impersonal and hostile. They argue that no real community can be created in cyberspace, only an illusion of one (Beninger, 1987; Heim, 1992; Stoll, 1995). In addition to the loss of strong bonds and the increase in isolation and alienation among members of society, many critics agree that the Internet will limit connections between central and peripheral actors in society (Castells, 1998; Luke, 1998; Soros, 1998).

Dystopians also argue that the influence of the Internet and other information technologies, particularly in regard to popular leverage on governments, is overestimated (Marvin, 1988; Carey, 1989; Neuman, 1996). They point out that both state-controlled and privately-held mass media can be used to serve up propaganda to the public and manipulate political values to enhance regime support and political legitimacy (Toffler, 1991; Fox, 1994; Barber, 1998).

Some political scientists such as Barber (1996) state that the advanced technology of the Internet may give the appearance of greater access to 'news', but news itself is too often corrupted into 'infotainment'. Further, the Internet may buttress totalitarianism and democracy, the centripetal and the centrifugal, or, as a more concrete example, the spinning apart of the radical conservatism of 'Jihads' and the homogenising cosmopolitanism of 'McWorld' (Barber, 1996). Meanwhile, Arquilla and Rondfelt (1993) argue that, far from favouring democracy or totalitarianism, the Internet may make possible yet more advanced, more opposing and further differentiated forms of both.

### *2.2.3 Technological deterministic underpinnings*

Both the utopian and dystopian views provide good insights into the multiple intersections of the Internet and politics. However, both of them view technology and social change in a linear, co-variant relationship, and so tend to simplify the complexity of the technology-society relationship. Thus, they are limited in what they can offer in terms of the social realities about the Internet.

Both visions are basically driven by technological deterministic explanations. While the projections can be either negative or positive, technological determinists portray technology as an exogenous and autonomous development that compels and

determines social interactions and organisations (Williams and Edge, 1996). Technology is seen as the fundamental condition underlying the pattern of social organisation.

Technological determinists interpret technology, and general communication technologies, especially the Internet, in particular as the basis of society in the past, the present and even the future. In its more recent airing, technological determinism has been commonly associated with futuristic commentators regarding what they refer to as 'the microelectronic revolution' (e.g. Large, 1980). In its most extreme form, technological determinism sees the entire form of society as being determined by technology. New technologies transform society at every level, including institutions, social interactions and individuals. For example, Christian Evans declared that the computer would transform "world society at all levels" (Evan, 1979, cited in Robins and Webster, 1989: 42). At the very least, a wide range of social and cultural phenomena are seen as being shaped by technology. 'Human factors' and social arrangements are seen as secondary.

The rejection of technological determinism has spawned a range of approaches for analyzing the social forces that influence technology, including the social shaping of technology (MacKenzie and Wacjman, 1985), social construction of technology (Pinch and Bijker, 1987) and constructivist studies of technology. Social shaping is a generic label for approaches that are committed to opening the black box of technology for sociological analysis (MacKenzie and Wacjman, 1985; Bijker and Law, 1992). This suggests that the capabilities of a technology are equivalent to the political circumstances of its production and the resulting material form reflects the circumstances of its development.

However, the social shaping approach has been criticised as being partial (Bijker, 1995), in that there is little room to consider the obvious effects of technology on society. Recent work by Bijker integrates both social shaping and the 'impacts' approach into what he terms 'socio-technical ensembles'. A further concern is with the need to go beyond the circumstances of how technology is produced and understand how people conceive the technology, their knowledge of it, their attitude towards it, and how they choose to use it.

In light of these critical perspectives on technology and society, this chapter argues that understanding both the democratic potential and the impacts of the Internet requires going beyond the binary oppositions of utopian/dystopian and technological determinism/reinforcement. The social impacts of the Internet, or 'change' in society, are the result of the organic interaction between the technology of the Internet and social, political and cultural structures and relationships. Thus, in order to understand the outcomes of Internet-society interactions, an understanding is needed of the social features embedded in the technical landscape of the Internet such as the social actors involved in the process of creating, developing, re-innovating and socialising this technology as well as the complexities of the socio-political-cultural landscape where the Internet touches society.

### 2.3 Questions of Conviviality

The idea of 'conviviality' is appropriate when beginning an inquiry into Internet-society interplay. Ivan Illich (1973), in his book *Tools for Conviviality*, employs this term to argue against a society that endorses economic growth, political centralisation and unlimited technology. Tools, according to him, "are intrinsic to social relationships" (p. 21).

An individual relates himself in action to his society through the use of tools that he actively masters, or by which he is passively acted upon. To the degree that he masters his tools, he can invest the world with his meaning; to the degree that he is mastered by his tools, the shape of the tool determines his own self-image. Convivial tools are those which give each person who uses them the greatest opportunity to enrich the environment with the fruits of his or her vision. Industrial tools deny this possibility to those who use them and they allow their designers to determine the meaning and expectations of others. Most tools today cannot be used in a convivial fashion (Illich, 1973: 21).

Illich (1973) argues that 'convivial' appropriately defines a society that prefers to strive for the maximisation of the individual's creativity, imagination and energy rather than for the maximisation of outputs, which usually leads to an industrial mode of production. In a convivial environment, the emphasis is the opposite of shaping and squeezing people through a standardised process. Conviviality aims to reach out to each person's diversity, and make the most of their interest, energy and imagination. For example, a learner's primary motive in a convivial environment is not to gain a higher social status through the acquisition of an education degree. Rather, learning takes place because of the desire to know more about the world and to enrich a person's environment with personal meaning.

While Illich is mostly concerned about the making of technologies that can be tools for conviviality, and where the ultimate goal is the convivial society, this chapter draws on this idea in an attempt to verify whether the Internet is, or is not, a tool for conviviality. Conviviality is investigated as an intrinsic quality of the Internet technology, rather than as a goal to pursue. The discussion does not try to make a causal link between the Internet and convivial society. In other words, a convivial technology does not necessarily lead to a convivial society.



## 2.4 Convivial Techno-Landscape: The Initial Idea and Creation of the Internet

This section will provide a detailed analysis of how the Internet has come about, based on a story that unfolds as a kind of chronological topography. In focusing on the technological makeup of the Internet, the physical and conceptual production of the Internet is analysed. The discussion is focused on the technological basis of the Internet as a result of innovations in hardware and software, which basically are essentially rooted in the use of a distributed network and the creation of the Internet Protocol (IP), as well as the social objectives embedded in these technical processes.

### 2.4.1 ARPAnet: “Anywhere, anytime, at zero cost”

The genesis of the Internet lies in power relationships embedded in a set of national security and institutional concerns. What is today called the Internet is actually the successor to ARPAnet, a communication network project initially sponsored by the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) of the US Department of Defence (Abbate, 1996; Cerf et al., 1997). In the mid 1960s, during the Cold War, the need was apparent for a nuclear-bomb-proof communications system. The concept sounds simple and it was devised to link computers together throughout the country. In theory, with such a system, even if large sections of the country were nuked then messages would somehow still get through. Thus, in the beginning, the ARPAnet was projected as no more than an emergency military communications system.

In the early development of Internet technology, its creators and early users shared a similar ambition to build a network infrastructure to hook all the computers in the world together so that as yet unknown applications could be invented to run on the network. The players, whether designers, users or operators, shared the same goal which was to create the ideal electronic communications system as outlined by Paul Baran<sup>10</sup> (1964) from RAND Corporation.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> An electrical engineer by training, Paul Baran worked for Hughes Aircraft Company's systems group before joining RAND in 1959. While working at RAND on a scheme for the US telecommunications infrastructure to survive a ‘first strike’, Baran conceived of the Internet and digital packet switching, the Internet's underlying data communications technology. His concepts are still employed today, but the terms are different. His seminal work first appeared in a series of RAND studies published between 1960 and 1962 and then in the tome “On Distributed Communications”, published in 1964.

<sup>11</sup> The RAND Corporation is a US ‘think tank’ type of organisation first formed to offer research and analysis to the US military, but which has since expanded to work with other government and commercial organisations. The corporation's name is a contraction of the phrase ‘research and development’. RAND, in Santa Monica, California, is the corporation where the Internet originated.

It should effectively allow the illusion that those in communication with one another are all within the same soundproofed room — and that the door is locked. Almost by definition, all electrical communications systems will fall short of meeting these goals, the shortcomings we are content to live with being determined on the basis of intended application and price. Present-day networks are designed to do one particular set of tasks well. In the future, we shall make even greater demands upon our networks and shall consider new ways of building communications networks taking advantage of the newly emerging computer-based technology (Baran, 1964).

From Baran's statement that "an ideal electrical communications system can be defined as one that permits any person or machine to reliably and instantaneously communicate with any combination of other people or machines, *anywhere, anytime, and at zero cost*" (1964, italics added), it is clear that the Internet, initially, was projected to be a low-cost as well as ubiquitous technology. At the same time, the same statement also implies an ambition to conquer the boundary of space, as it was imagined to be the technology that could unite people by "effectively allow[ing] the illusion that those in communication with one another are all within the same soundproofed room — and that the door is locked" (Baran, 1964).

Let us consider one way we might go about building a new system to meet the requirements of the future. We shall attempt to start from scratch and ignore the traditional approach of existing communications systems. We shall first focus upon those requirements — particularly military — not being fully satisfied by today's systems (Baran, 1964).

From the onset, the Internet was intended to be novel, a new technology. Baran's statement about "start from scratch and ignore the traditional approach of existing communication systems' might be overstated as the embryo of the Internet cannot be completely separated from previous communication technology, namely the telephone. However, it is true that the logic of the Internet does not follow the logic of the telephone or any other previous communication systems (this is apparent in its communications network, which is further explained in Section 2.4.2.). The Internet as a technology is very much rooted in the computer system. At the same time, however, it acts as a 'communications system' beyond the computer. This combination proves to be very powerful and, moreover, it was suited to the needs of military, who had ordered this technology in the first place.

At first, ARPAnet linked only government 'think thanks' based at a few universities (Abbate, 1999). Subsequently, ARPAnet computers were installed at every university in the United States that had defence-related funding. Gradually, the Internet went from a military pipeline to a communications tool for scientists. As more academics came online, the administration of the system transferred from ARPA to the National Science Foundation (NSF) (Abbate, 1999). Today, the NSF still provides a subsidy for the

backbone of the Internet, but the subsidy is being restructured and the Internet is increasingly privately funded, and there is growing commercialisation.

Currently, the Internet has no centralised authority. However, there are several entities that 'oversee' the system and the protocols involved. Governance of the Internet is handled by the Internet Society, which is a voluntary organisation. The Internet Society's Internet Architecture Board is responsible for technical management and the direction of the Internet such as assigning unique 32 bit addresses to each host computer on the Internet. The Society, has an Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), a vehicle for users to express concerns, forms working groups to study issues such as standards, and provides reports to the Internet Architecture Board. Funding for the Internet is composite, with NSF funding NSFnet, one of the major backbones of the Internet. Shared cost agreements are worked out between host sites for interconnections.

#### *2.4.2 Distributed network and packet switching*

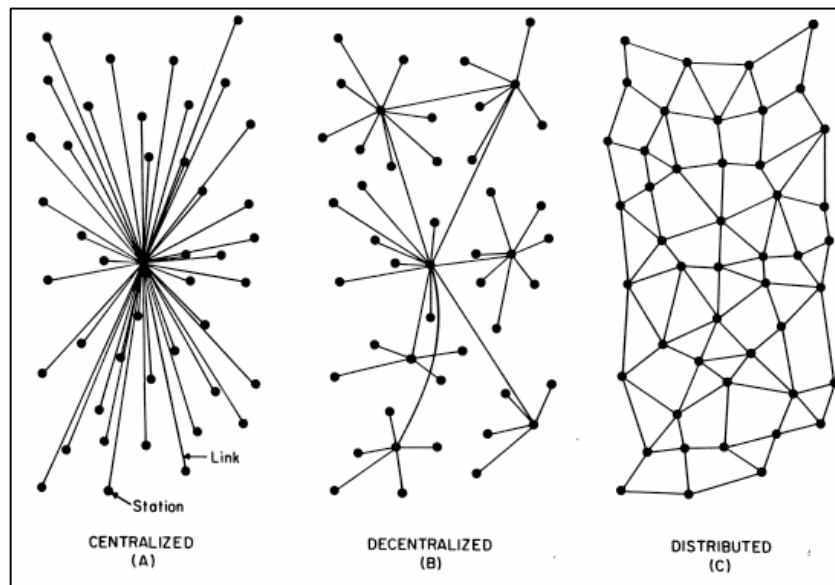
The Internet is a network of networks. It is a real time international computer network. This means there are a lot of smaller, essentially autonomous nets that are linked in some way to make up the whole system.

What does network mean? In computer science, the term 'network' refers to a situation where two or more computers are linked together in such a way that they can pass information between them. The simplest form of this kind of network is probably two computers that are linked with a lap-link cable where one (the master computer) can transfer some data to or from another (the slave one). However, the meaning of the term 'computer network' usually refers to two or more computers exchanging information via an electronic medium (such as a telephone line).

There are two basic types of computer network, which are usually called as 'batch' and 'real-time'. In a real-time network such as the Internet, the computers involved are permanently connected together and pass information among them as and when needed. In a batch network, the computers call each other up (usually by phone) at regular intervals (e.g. once a day) and swap all the traffic that has been accumulated since their last calls. The latter system was popular in 1980s with the emergence of the Bulletin Board System (BBS) and Fidonet, both were popular in Indonesia in the early 1990s (Barker et al., 2001).

Real-time networks can be divided into two types: local area networks (LANs) and wide area networks (WANs). The first refers to computers in the same building or adjoining buildings linked by cables. The latter involves computers that are too far apart to be able to run a wire between them. These computers could be on the other side of the city or even the other side of the world. Modems are used in this type of network to send data over long distances. The best known of this type of network is the Internet.

Besides being a real-time network, the Internet today is also a distributed network. This type of network architecture was developed as an alternative to the earlier centralised and decentralised types of network (see Figure 2.1).



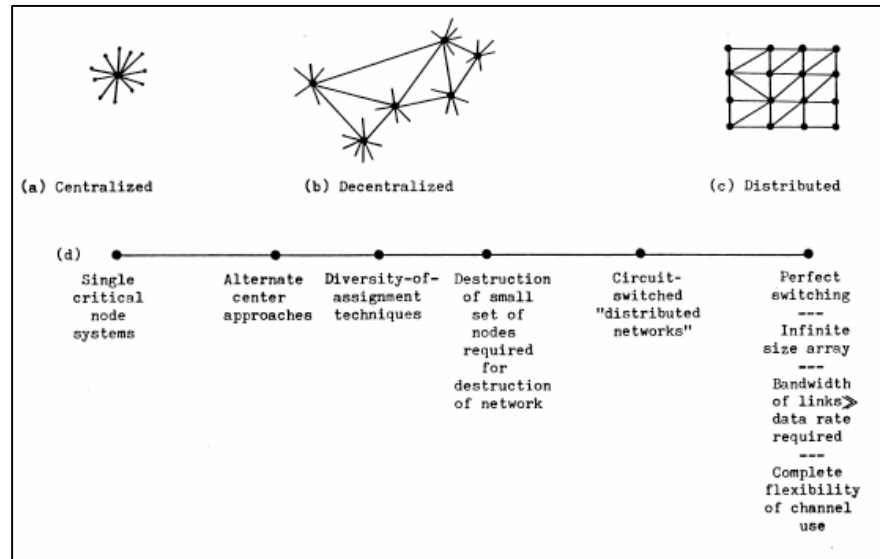
*Figure 2.1 Centralised, Decentralised and Distributed Networks*  
*Source: Baran, 1964*

As previously stated, the major concern behind the initial development of the Internet technology was its resilience and survival against an enemy attack. Thus the major consideration in the synthesis of this communication network was to find ways to keep several hundred major communications stations talking to each other after an enemy attack. As a criterion of survivability, it was decided to use the percentage of stations both surviving the physical attack and remaining in electrical connection with the largest single group of surviving stations. This criterion was chosen as a conservative measure of the ability of the surviving stations to operate together as a coherent entity after an attack. This indicates that small groups of stations isolated from the single largest group are considered to be ineffective (Baran, 1964).

Although various networks can be envisaged, all can be seen as collapsing into two components: centralised (star) and distributed (grid or mesh) (see Fig. 2.1). In this situation, the centralised network is clearly vulnerable, as the destruction of the single central node would destroy communication among all the end stations. The form of communication networks in the early 1960s, as in telephone networks, was still hierarchical, there were a mixture of star and mesh components in which a set of stars connected in the form of a larger star with an additional link forming a loop (Baran, 1967). This is what is called a decentralised network, where complete reliance upon a single point is not always required. However, even with this system, in the event of emergency, such as a natural disaster or an “enemy attack” (Baran, 1990: 195), damage to a central switching station could destroy a large portion of the network, if not all of it.

The strategy therefore was to eliminate this point of vulnerability: the central switching stations. Having no central switching station, every node would be directly

attached not to just one switching station but simultaneously to several other nodes. Therefore, damage to one of these nodes would not result in a severe breakdown in communications. Theoretically, in the event of damage a message could still get to its destination via another node. In this case, each node would be able to make its own intelligent decision about how to route the message through the network. The spectrum of connectivity in a distributed system is much higher than in other types of networks (see Figure 2.2).



**Figure 2.2** *The spectrum of system connectivity*

*Source: Baran, 1964*

The outcomes of this logic were two important innovations: a distributed communications network and packet-switching technology. The term ‘distributed network’ is best used to “delineate those communication networks based on connecting each station to *all* adjacent stations, rather than to just a few switching points, as in a centralised network” (Baran, 1964). This term is used as “delineating that portion of the spectrum of networks having a mode decentralised configuration than those which exist as a single, inseparable entity” (Baran, 1964). In contrast to the star-like systems, in this mesh-like system, each node (computer) would be linked to several other adjacent nodes and each of them could function autonomously both as a router and a final destination point (Baran, 1990: 195). The packet switching technology is required to route messages via other nodes to their final destinations.

Both innovations, distributed networks and packet switching, are basic to the creation of today’s Internet. They enable the Internet to be a distributed architecture system, meaning that, in this system, different parts of the eventual bundle of information content and related services desired by users may be supplied by various Internet nodes, operated by different people or entities. This system also allows the distribution of information across multiple locations. The combination of these two innovations

provided the conceptual framework for a very 'robust' communications network (Baran, 1990: 195).

### ***2.4.3 The Internet Protocol (IP)***

Having understood the basic architecture of the network of the Internet, a further step is necessary to understand how nodes within this network are connected to each other. How did the Internet arise in the first place? As a network, the Internet exists only because a very large number of individual computer networks voluntarily adopted a new language, the 'Internet Protocols', consisting of a series of technical rules governing the way that messages are to be formatted and routed from one machine to another, allowing those networks to communicate with one another. No sovereign authority with the power to compel obedience among its subjects promulgated those rules, no treaty decreed that a specific set of such standards must be used in order to link the diverse individual networks together into a single global web.

Rather, under the banner of 'rough consensus and working code', groups such as the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)<sup>12</sup> and the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C),<sup>13</sup> unofficial and unsanctioned collections of interested volunteers, published proposed communication standards that became the 'law of the net', only because large numbers of individual system administrators voluntarily adopted the proposed rules. Each individual network remains free to impose its own technical standards on its users — for example, the Microsoft Network uses different communications principles for intra-network communication than does America Online, or Counsel Connect, or any university local area network — subject to the overriding mandate that if it wants to enable communication with other similarly-situated networks, it must adopt the basic communication protocols that those other networks have adopted.

---

<sup>12</sup> The Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) is "a large open international community of network designers, operators, vendors, and researchers concerned with the evolution of the Internet architecture and the smooth operation of the Internet. It is open to any interested individual" (IETF, 2003).

<sup>13</sup> The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) was founded by Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the web, in October 1994 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Laboratory for Computer Science in collaboration with CERN, Conseil Européen pour le Recherche Nucléaire (European Laboratory for Particle Physics), where the Web originated, with support from DARPA and the European Commission. By promoting interoperability and encouraging an open forum for discussion, W3C is committed to leading the technical evolution of the Web. W3C's long term goals for the Web are universal access (making the Web accessible to all by promoting technologies that take into account the vast differences in culture, languages, education, ability, material resources, access devices and the physical limitations of users on all continents), a Semantic Web (developing a software environment that permits each user to make the best use of the resources available on the Web) and a Web of Trust (guiding the Web's development with careful consideration of the novel legal, commercial and social issues raised by this technology) (W3C, 2003).

What is an Internet Protocol (IP)? The Internet protocol suite is the set of protocols<sup>14</sup> that implement the protocol stack<sup>15</sup> on which the Internet runs. It is often called the TCP/IP, after two of the many protocols that make up the suite: the Transmission Control Protocol (TCP) and the Internet Protocol (IP), which were the first two to be defined (see RFC1122, 1989). As a network of millions of computers, the Internet could get a little complicated if lots of computers tried to ‘talk’ to each other. To solve this problem, each computer on the Internet has an address. This address is called the IP address. It allows one computer to identify and ‘talk’ to another computer across the world. An IP address basically contains two important pieces of information: where the computer is located and what kind of network it is on. When a computer wants to send information to another computer, it puts a label on the message containing the IP address of the computer for which the information is intended.

The information then gets passed through a chain of computers on the Internet. When a computer receives a packet of information it looks at the label and sends it on in the direction of where the IP address is located. The information eventually makes its way to the computer with the correct IP address. With an IP address, the distance between computers no longer matters. Any computer with an IP address, wherever it is located, can be connected to millions of other computers through the Internet network. Thus it can be said that the Internet is an open architecture, meaning that one computer system can connect to others simply by adhering to the TCP/IP standards. The users do not have to use the same hardware or software as the system with which they wish to communicate, or even to know the nature of the hardware and software in the other system. Users do not even have to have any names to get hooked onto the Internet, as long as they have an IP address. This thus relates to the issue of anonymity in the Internet.

The IP is an oxymoron technology. While it eliminates the geographical boundaries by enabling computers to ‘talk’ to each other regardless of their physical location, the IP also marks the physical location of each computer in the world. In other word, IP embeds the computer in its physical location while networked globally.

#### ***2.4.4 Information flows***

Understanding the two basic features of the Internet, the technical landscape of the network and protocols, some questions arise: How does data move over the Internet? Does the data sent from one computer to another travel directly from one point to another? Does it travel in a single continuous stream?

---

<sup>14</sup> In networking, a communications protocol or a network protocol is the specification of a set of rules for a particular type of communication.

<sup>15</sup> Different protocols often describe different aspects of a single communication; taken together, these form a ‘protocol stack’. The terms ‘protocol’ and ‘protocol stack’ also refer to the software that implements a protocol (Wikipedia, 2005).

The answer to the latter two questions is 'no'. The Internet is an open flow system, meaning that information can flow across the Internet via any open route. There is no restriction on how information should be routed. In fact, it does not have to follow a fixed route at all.

As previously explained, the distributed network system and data packet switching enables a node to decide the route it wants to direct a message through. However, the packet switching does not deliver a message as a single bundle. With packet-switching, messages are segmented into smaller packages, which are combined with delivery information. Thus, in the case of sending an email, all the data making up one email is broken up into separate data packets. The IP component of TCP/IP labels each packet with the unique Internet address of the receiver, or the IP address of the receiving computer. These packets travel different routes (imagine that each can travel on any line in the mesh distributed network in Figure 2.1.). Some arrive sooner than others and so the TCP side of TCP/IP assigns a sequence number to each packet. These sequence numbers will tell the TCP/IP in the receiving computer how to reassemble the packets once it receives them all. Miraculously, this complicated TCP/IP process takes place in a matter of milliseconds. With such a speed, it is possible for different nodes in the Internet network to communicate synchronously, such as in the case of chatting. This is called a real-time system where information can be sent and received without any time restriction.

All of these features make up a communications architecture based on three principles on which the Internet still operates today: a decentralised network structure, distributed network, and redundancy of functions in the network to minimise the risk of being disconnected. These features embody the key military needs for the survivability of the system: flexibility, absence of a command centre, and maximum autonomy of each node. These features shape the Internet into a robust technology.

#### *2.4.5 So, is the Internet convivial?*

In placing the question of conviviality within the constellations of social power, for technology to be convivial means that it has to have features that are suited to the empowering of society in a way that makes it hard for a small number of people to control flows and content of information, knowledge and ideological or symbolic representations. How does the Internet fit this quality? There are four characteristics of the Internet that 'theoretically' contribute to 'conviviality': convergence, low cost/cheap, broad availability, and resilience against control and/or censorship.

The Internet is a 'convergence' of various forms of media and communication technologies. It can be modelled similar to print, to broadcasting, to telephony, to ordinary carriers or to an amalgam of all. As a distributed network, the Internet has many advantages if compared with previous media. The Internet not only facilitates one-to-one communications (as with telephone and telegraph) or one-to-many communications (as newspapers and television), the Internet can also facilitate many-to-many communications.



All of this convergence can be achieved at relatively 'low or cheap cost'. The Internet has become a cheap technology, generally cheaper than the telephone. Indeed, as explained in previously (see Section 2.4.1), the Internet was designed to be a low-cost (or zero cost) technology and widely distributed. This initial principle essentially influences how the technology has developed. It is cheap and easy to publish material on the Internet, through the web or just by circulating emails. It can be done without editorial control and can be widely circulated. The closest approximation to this perhaps is printing and distributing leaflets. However, the potential area of circulation of this method is much less wide than with the Internet.

Through the availability of Internet café and other public access points, the Internet is now 'broadly available' not only in developed countries but also in developing countries such as Indonesia. As it is possible both technically and economically for small groups of individuals — civil society or private enterprises — to develop this technology, the Internet has grown faster than any other media and/or ICT.<sup>16</sup> Today, the Internet already offers the cheapest means of communication and true global reach, to even the smallest organisation, anywhere where there is telephone communication.

Meanwhile, the anarchic characteristic of the technology, that was originally designed by the United States Department of Defense to survive a nuclear war (Abbate, 1999; Cerf et al., 1997), makes it 'difficult to be controlled or censored'. As explained in Section 2.4.2, the Internet is a real-time distributed network of networks and is not hierarchical. A node in a small village in Indonesia is the equal of a node in the centre of world power, Washington DC, for example. Censorship, surveillance and disruption of the Internet can and does occur but there are limits. A firewall can be set up, regular filtering can be done, but messages will always find their way through if the sender is savvy and determined to find alternative routes. The fact that the Internet is a distributed network needs to be kept in mind. As long as a computer can be connected to the Internet (with an IP address), there will always a way to share or to obtain data. Further, the sheer volume of information flooding the Internet in open networks rather than hierarchically controlled forms, limits any attempts to practice surveillance and censorship over it.

To summarise, the Internet is a technology that has the following features: convergence (one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many communications), broad availability, low cost, and resilience to control and censorship. Based on these features, the Internet as a technology — "a configuration that works" (Rip and Kemp, 1998) and a system that fulfils sociotechnical function — can theoretically be called a 'convivial medium'. However, the Internet is not the only convivial medium. There are some other previous convivial media. Most of the features of convivial media mentioned here can be found in previous media like the postal system, telegraph and telephone. In contrast, broadcast television is one of the least convivial media, just like other one-to-many media.

---

<sup>16</sup> It took less than seven years for the Internet to penetrate into 30 % of US households. By comparison, the telephone took 38 years, television took 17 years, and personal computers took 13 years (Hackbart, 1999: 1).

In this kind of media, while it is easy and cheap to get information (view the TV, listen the radio, read the newspaper), it is expensive, technically challenging, and high skill intensive to get be a broadcaster or information provider (writer).

Based on its features, the Internet, as a convivial medium, provides an 'affordance' (Gibson, 1979)<sup>17</sup> for individual and groups to use it without being controlled by the dominant actor in power. The term affordance used here refers to the Internet's 'suggested' use rather than its 'determined' use. Affordances might be understood as "cues for action" that can emerge and continue to "act as frames" (DiMaggio, 1997) which may frame the way people, individually and collectively, use the Internet. The affordance structure is in the situation and frames possibilities for action while not determining them. As an affordance of support for individuals and groups, the features of the Internet are not just abstract physical properties. The Internet's affordance refers to the fundamental features (properties) that can determine how this technology could possibly used. Yet, as affordances suggest directions for action, they might work differently for different actors.

## 2.5 Conclusions

'Conviviality' is a state of being; it is not a state of doing. The Internet is a convivial technology or medium because it is not a technology that gives unlimited opportunities for domination by a small number of elites (Illich, 1973). The Internet provides an 'affordance' for less dominant actors to use this technology without being controlled by the dominant actors. As mentioned previously, it is more convivial than earlier media and ICTs. It does not, however, lend itself to always being used in a democratic way or by those who struggle for democracy. In a very simple argument, being a convivial artefact means that it offers a more conducive ambience to be easier to be used for democratic pursuit than a less convivial artefact. However, at the same time, it is also more prone to anarchic anti-democratic and even anti-systemic pursuits than less convivial artefacts.

Two words that perhaps best describe the traits of the Internet as a convivial technology are freedom and autonomy. The Internet allows itself to be used by someone with a degree of freedom and autonomy that hardly existed in previous media or ICTs. However, there is nothing inherent in an artefact that automatically realises its potential for conviviality. While the Internet, due to its design, lends itself more easily to convivial uses than do other media technologies, the real key of a tool's potential for conviviality is

---

<sup>17</sup> The notion of 'affordance' was used by Gibson (1979) in his study of how animals perceive their environment and act on it. According to Gibson (1979: 127), "The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill... it something that refers to both the environment and the animal in a way that no existing term does. It implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment [...] If a terrestrial surface is nearly horizontal (instead of slanted), nearly flat (instead of convex or concave) and sufficiently extended (relative to the size of the animal) and if its substance is rigid (relative to the weight of animal), then the surface affords support." In other words, affordances have functional as well as relational aspects.

in the social arrangements people create around its use. And even if an individual or a group can establish convivial social arrangements around its use, the dynamics of technology-society relations through time make outcomes of the use are open-ended, and not necessarily a more convivial or democratic society through time. In other words, the terrain of conviviality is also one of contestations, and in the case of the Internet, its convivial tendencies are such that it allows openings for diverse forms of contestations that, in turn, affect political landscapes in complex, often unexpected, ways.

Returning to the discourse on the political potential of the Internet set out at the start, the logic behind the initial idea and creation of the Internet gives rise to both utopian and dystopian outlooks. Both extremes and shades between logics follow precisely from the state of conviviality. In being convivial, it is open to uses and contestations that can be simultaneously both democratic and hegemonically controlling. Which 'forces' will win the day is not defined by *ex ante* declarations, but instead will unfold in the processes of mediating conviviality through changing social, political and economic institutions and relations in society.

By presenting the Internet as a convivial technology and medium, this chapter posits that this is only half of the story in examining the relationship of the Internet and politics. Comprehensive analyses, through empirical case studies of how society, both individually and collectively, directly and indirectly, uses the convivial technology of the Internet is needed to complete 'the missing half'.

From this viewpoint, following Frances Stewart (1978), this chapter emphasises the need to make an important distinction between 'the available technology' and 'the actual technology in use'. The available technology is based on the set of all those hardware and software innovations called the Internet that have evolved historically and are known to the world. The actual technology in use is a subset, that is, a part of the former, which, at any moment in time, is determined by the nature of the availability of technologies and the choices made among those available. Further, mediations through social relations make contextualisation in real time and place all the more important in tracking any political tendencies of the technology. Although the technical inventions of the Internet — its conviviality — may reflect a significant degree of autonomy and freedom, the technology itself, in the sense of the actual technology in use, has always been integrally embedded in power relations circumscribed by dominant socio-political-economic institutions and the values that are compatible with the dominant social paradigm.



---

## CYBERACTIVISM

### 3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter has assessed competing insights into the complex relationship between the Internet and democracy by exploring the characteristics and features of the Internet as well as the social forms that embody the development of its technology. The term ‘conviviality’ was used to argue that the technical landscape of the Internet constructs an inherently compliant democratic environment for creating knowledge and sharing ideas and information. This chapter delves more deeply into the question of conviviality by linking the Internet with the phenomenon of cyberactivism. In so doing, it also argues that by being convivial, the Internet lends itself to an ambiguous state of affairs by opening more trajectories not only toward democracy but also towards the possibility of irreconcilably divisive anti-democratic (cyber-)communities from within society at the other extreme.

Following on from the previous discussion, the focus here is on the question of how societies mobilise or form ‘communities’ around the new technology of the Internet, with the aim of elucidating the relationships between the Internet and political activism, or ‘cyberactivism’. Cyberactivism is a means by which advanced information and communication technologies — e-mail, list-serves and the WWW (World Wide Web) of the Internet — are used by groups to communicate with large audiences, galvanising individuals around a specific issue or set of issues in an attempt to build solidarity towards meaningful collective actions. Further, this chapter also looks at how these communities take on political life due to several key forces, a principal one being resistance to the real and perceived ‘hegemonic’ tendencies of globalisation. This presents a paradox in that as the world becomes increasingly subject to the hegemonic forces of globalisation, it also becomes more diverse in its responses and outcomes.

The dynamics of the Internet and political activism present a number of tensions that shift their locus in time and space in a manner that is neither linear nor predictable in its outcomes. This chapter attempts to show how one might understand these tensions or contradictions, and this will be illustrated in narratives of real world experiences in subsequent chapters (Chapters 4, 5 and 6). In other words, it aims to give a framework and provide key concepts for understanding how the Internet enhances the possibilities

and opportunities for collective action. Furthermore, this chapter also tries to explain how the interplay between the Internet and society is such that collective political activism, while potentially unleashed, requires local real world references that can only be partially manipulated through more abstract identity formation. Of importance is the realisation that to facilitate inclusive collective action that involves more than just elites, Internet use needs to be extended beyond the online network by linking it to the use of other media and social networks.

To elucidate these purposes, the following sections triangulate the discussion by, first, assessing current work on activism and the Internet; second, locating the Internet in a global network society; and third, viewing the interface between the Internet and collective action.

### **3.2 Current Work on Activism and the Internet**

Current practices in cyberspace bear witness to the flourishing activism ranging from persuasive to confrontational and individual to collective undertakings. Various forms of activism, both political and non-political, have now become integrated into the exchanges within and among social networks through the Internet. Castells (2001) notes that the Internet fits well with the structural aspects of the network society that emerged in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. As the Internet is adopted in various social spheres, the technology is reconstructed according to network logics combined with historically formed and emergent values as expressed through power relations in society.

The term 'activism and the Internet' describes a broad area of research that has innumerable questions to explore. Currently, there is a vast array of literature available on the relationship between the Internet and social change. The authors' positions range from utopian to dystopian visions (see Chapter 2). Some of this research is specifically on social activism — collective action and social movement — and the Internet, which is the subject of interest here.

The position developed below is that the Internet does change the global-local dynamics of social activism, and does help a new form of social activism to emerge. It argues that the Internet has the potential to strengthen global dimensions — spatial and institutional networks — of social activism, thus implying a challenge to state-centrist international relations theory. It also challenges the idea that collective action and social movements can only proceed under a single organisation rather than through a network of organisations.

At the same time it argues that the nation-state does not become obsolete. The socio-political terrains of nation-states and other localities are still part of Internet based and Internet driven social activism. Some elements, such as police powers, might actually increase in strength while others, such as the capacity to control communications in an Internet age, weaken. In this sense, the nation-state is transformed rather than dissolved under globalisation processes.

### ***3.2.1 Global or transnational tendencies***

A considerable amount of scholarly work focuses on the emergence of a new form of global or transnational movement/collective action as a direct result of the use of the Internet technology that enables people to create mutual solidarity and form collective identity — global resistance — without requiring geographical proximity. Scholars claim that building mutual solidarity increasingly takes place in global and transnational settings, involving the crossing of geographical and cultural borders. Almost all such studies emphasise the dissolution of physical/territorial borders and the ‘global-ness’ of activism, alternatively calling them global/transnational social movements, global/transnational network, global solidarity, or simply global identity.

Most of these studies on activism and the Internet are either about how the Internet is used by groups operating in one locality to reach out and link with ‘global’ allies (see Cleaver, 1996; Gomez, 1997) or about how geographically dispersed groups or group members manage to organise collective social actions (see Bonchek, 1995; Sachs, 1995; Gurak, 1997). There are some attempts to study the use of the Internet for these purposes at the national level, such as on the Zapatista movement in Mexico. However, such studies are rare and they still very much emphasise the global scale of Internet-based movements. Further, in the case of the Zapatistas, the researchers still focus primarily on the role of global actors instead of local actors.

In referring to the globalisation of human interaction, Melucci (1994: 111) observes that today “[t]he geographical localisation of a problem is of secondary importance compared with its symbolic impact on the planetary system”. The most fundamental statement that stems from this quote is that the world is experiencing a high rate and level of “time-space compression” (Harvey, 1989). Yet, this chapter suggests that time and space are not losing relevance but rather that the relationship between them is reconfigured as time ‘annihilates’ space and as spatial spheres become increasingly imbricated. New media and communication technologies, particularly the Internet, do not pull the world together to exist in only one global sphere. This technology does encourage the world’s societies to be networked globally, sub-globally or transnationally but without eradicating national, sub-national and other smaller spatial spheres.

### ***3.2.2 ‘Spaces of flows’ and ‘spaces of places’***

A useful point of departure in understanding changes in the forms and conditions of collective actions with the rapid rise in the use of the Internet is to look at how the actuality of time-space compression is reflected in the extension of network forms of interaction as the “new social morphology” of society (Castells, 1996: 469). In this regard, Castells (1996: 428) sketches a picture of a “structural schizophrenia” dividing the world into those who are connected to the network (in the “space of flows”) and those who are not connected (who live in the “space of places”).

Contrary to Castells' view, this chapter argues that those who live in the space of places are not just disconnected from the space of flows. In fact, while an issue that generates resistance may be located in the space of flows, the actualisation of resistance itself is typically rooted in the space of places or, perhaps more accurately, at the junction between flows and places. This is reflected in the emergence of alternative space of flows that connects the network of flows and the network of places, rather than disconnecting them.

Many studies on the Internet and activism refer only to the online realm of Internet-driven collective action and tend to isolate the Internet from other types of media. The researchers of these studies generally execute their research by either interviewing members of online groups or by examining the discourse on the Internet. These two approaches have yet to be used in combination. In addition, while some studies include investigations as to whether a pursued campaign is successful based on some criteria, no efforts have been made to examine the ways in which social activist groups' or individuals' uses of the Internet impact on social mobilisation locally in a given physical setting. Thus, in line with the purpose of the two case studies in this dissertation, which is to fill some of this gap, this chapter argues that in order to understand the role played by the Internet in social activism, research needs to go beyond the online realm and beyond an isolated Internet network. As Miller and Slater (2000: 7) explain, "The notion of cyberspace as a place apart from offline life would lead us to expect to observe a process in which participants are abstracted and distanced from local and embodied social relations...we found utterly the opposite." This amounts to a plea for not detaching the online realm from the offline one.

To restate the main point, in the context of cyberactivism, the Internet is not replacing traditional methods of protest, yet it is certainly bolstering and at times even altering the processes of collective activism. The Internet cannot and will not replace the importance of cultural and interpersonal linkages for the sustained activism of protest across geographical boundaries, globally and locally. It can, however, facilitate activism in new forms towards new ends.

### **3.3 The Internet and (Global) Network Society**

The theme of collective action through the Internet cannot avoid entering a discussion on the network society. In modern society, Castells (1996) argues, networks are pervasive, all embracing and have become "substantial units" of society. Van Dijk modifies this view by stating that networks "are becoming the prime mode of organisation and among the most important structures of modern society shaping network society as one of its potential indications alongside with the information society" (van Dijk, 2001: 1). Echoing van Dijk (1999a, 1999b, 2001), while admitting the importance of networks, this chapter acknowledges that modern society still consists of individuals as well as single groups and organisations, although these are increasingly configured and linked in social and media networks. This is based on the conviction that even while a network society may introduce



the culture of cyber-virtuality, it does not totally disembodiment social relationships.<sup>18</sup> To elaborate on this point, the remainder of this section places discussions on communities, identities and nation-state (citizenship) within the local-global nexus of network society.

### *3.3.1 Global village vs. local identification*

Inspired by Marshall McLuhan's term, "global village" (1964), many scholars claim that in contemporary society, called 'the network society' or 'the information society', the Internet is presented as having a significant global transformative potential. The Internet and other communication technologies are perceived of as generating a new industrial revolution that is based on information (Bangeman, 1994). This new industrial revolution, which is called the information revolution or 'the information highway', is in turn based on a 'global information infrastructure'.<sup>19</sup>

In the same way as oral culture was changed by the revolutionary invention and spread of the printing press — with consequences for the church, the state and democracy — so many expect the replacement of print by electronic culture to be far-reaching. The Internet allows quicker access to more information, spanning space, and in almost no time, carrying text, graphics, images, music and sound, across national boundaries and around the globe. In doing so, it contributes profoundly to the shrinking of time and space of globalisation processes, facilitating more ready communication between geographically distant individuals and cultures. The Internet thus is perceived to be an instrument for transforming the world into a potentially monolithic one, with a global culture, global community, global language, global civil society and many other 'global' relations.

This chapter suggests a rather more complex picture than merely a globalising or homogenising effect of the Internet. While it is accepted that the Internet enables people to communicate and form global communities beyond geographical boundaries, virtual or Internet based communities do not only result in the replacement of traditional types of communities. In other words, communities of electronic associations are part of the real world of individuals' identities, even though for some people, they do replace the kind of routine, daily, interactions that they engage in with co-present others. What such communities clearly do, for the growing number of people involved in them, is to complement (as opposed to replace) 'real', traditional, face-to-face, social life.

---

<sup>18</sup> In opposed to Castells' (1998) statement that "the network society disembodies social relationships, introducing the culture of real virtuality" (p. 349).

<sup>19</sup> As quoted in Al Gore's speech in the mid 1990s: "[A] planetary information network that transmits messages and images with the speed of light from the largest city to the smallest village on every continent... The global information infrastructure will circle the globe with information superhighways on which all people can travel... These highways ... will allow us to share information, to connect and to communicate as a global community. From these connections we will derive robust and sustainable economic progress, strong democracies, better solutions to global and local environmental challenges, improved health care and — ultimately — a greater sense of stewardship of our small planet" (Al Gore, Speech to ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference, Buenos Aires, 21 March 1994).

Thus, far from homogenising or obliterating diverse or minority cultures, the Internet, in many ways sustains and reinforces them. In fact, the Internet can provide a platform for local cultures. Rather than be confined or restricted to localities, local cultures are now accessible around the world. The process is far from one of homogenisation. Diversity is sustained and broadcasted more widely. The Internet, while it has a clear global tendency, is always anchored in certain localities. Context does matter.

The work of Danny Miller and Don Slater (2000) on the Internet in Trinidad is a good example to illustrate this localisation process. They argue that place, in their case is Trinidad, is a clear anchor for Trinidadian use of the Internet. In other words, to understand the Internet in Trinidad, one needs to understand Trinidadian society. The Internet is used as a medium for a highly specific Trinidadian form of chat and to reach out from Trinidad. Miller and Slater (2000: 88) describe the Internet chatroom 'de Rumshop Lime':

The names of these chat rooms — de Rumshop Lime, de Trini Lime — evoke central aspects of Trinidadian culture. The 'lime' especially evokes the street corner, where males traditionally exchanged innuendo and banter with passing females and aimed to hear about whatever was happening ... The rumshop is a local, down-market drinking place, in the old days dominated by dominoes and rum, today often filled with ear-splitting music and Carib beer, another favourite place to lime... The term 'lime' is regarded as quintessentially Trini —both peculiar to the place and definitive of its people — and was regularly cited as the Trini pleasure they most wanted to recover on or through the Internet. In fact, 'liming' was the word generally used to describe chatting online and other non-serious uses of the internet, as it would describe any similar hanging out. The Internet comes to be seen simply as liming extended to just another social space.

Far from homogenising, the Internet provides the local culture of Trinidad with a place on the global stage. It allows social relations to become disembedded, lifted from the local and stretched around the world, facilitating new forms of interaction and bringing people together.

Miller and Slater (2000) argue that cyberspace identities are not separated from real-world Trinidad, but that the Internet is a new medium for realising and reinforcing the senses of Trini-ness. They further argue that, through the new medium, some very specifically Trinidadian cultural traits are practiced and made available in and beyond the Trinidadian diasporas. The Internet in this context seems not to be a medium for one-way cultural imperialism, but rather a facilitator of new flows, reinforcing senses of national and local identity and augmenting and giving a platform to local culture.

### 3.3.2 *Communities in cyberspace*

With the growth of Internet use, in network society, communities are assumed to be transformed into global virtual communities as described by Howard Rheingold. Rheingold (1993) defines virtual communities as social aggregations that emerge from the Internet when enough people carry on public discussions long enough and with sufficient human feeling to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace. In most cases, a virtual community is based on an imagined, new post-national community sustained by the Internet and by self-consciously deployed Internet applications. Cyberspace is seen to be able to facilitate communities that are not necessarily physically or nationally bound and which transcend the sacred boundaries of home and nation (Morley, 1999). The idea of the new, imagined virtual communities of the Internet actually has some interesting affinities with, as well as divergences from, the imagined communities of modern nationalism that Benedict Anderson (1991) analysed in his influential study, *Imagined Communities*.

In contrast to Rheingold's virtual community, Anderson's imagined communities are not imaginary, fictive or unrelated to material, real world conditions. Quite the contrary: the shared identity of an imagined community expressed in a common language and medium of communication is what holds nationalism together, authorising and validating the political and economic power of a state. Nationalisms were formed through the ability to achieve identity across distances while accommodating internal diversity. Nationalism, which Anderson sees as born with the sense of difference and continuity in New World states, imagines the simultaneity of old and new across geographical boundaries. The identity of difference created by the nation-state is sustained by the communication technologies of the time.

The parallels to imagined global, cyber-communities are clear: as print helped to produce the imagined communities of nationalism, the Internet generates a new community seen as post-national. Books and newspapers, formerly at the nexus of national economies and identities, were the first mass market commodities in capitalism (Anderson, 1991). The convergence of the computing and telecommunications underlying the Internet is the contemporary, international technology for global identities. In the same way that the New World nations imagined themselves to be communities parallel and comparable to those in Europe (Anderson, 1991), proponents of the global community of cyberspace see themselves in a community parallel and comparable to the old communities of nations, ethnicities, religions and geographical cities, but transcending the limitations of these communities with a new technology that makes place, time and local governments irrelevant.

The imagined post-national "nation of cyberspace" (Barlow, 1996) is, in many ways, an extension of the logic of imagined communities. But, as will be shown in the next section, the role of nation states is not over. The virtual community is embedded in the

political economy of the global informational cities (Sassen, 1998), which are under the logic of the nation-state.

### *3.3.3 Identity in network society*

Discourses on community formation in a network society call into question the processes of construction of identity for social actors. This becomes a concern since the notion of identity is at the heart of social activism, with social demands and the desire for social changes. Castells (1997) argues that, in contemporary times, identities are the sources of a rise of the network society, which is paralleled by the spread of information technologies. Identities are also a galvanising force in individual and collective resistance to globalisation. Collective identity formation — identity shared among individuals — is a primary driving force in the contemporary world (Castells, 1997). Castells (1997: 8) offers three principal forms of collective identity:

- ‘resistance identity’ generated by those who are in positions/conditions of being devalued and/or stigmatised by the logic of domination,
- ‘project identity’ which appears when people build a new identity that redefines their position in society and, in so doing, seek to actively engage in the project of transforming social structures, and
- ‘legitimising identity’ introduced by dominant institutions in society to extend and rationalise their domination.

Resistance identities play a critical role in fostering the rise of civil society against oppressive states and the hegemonic tendencies of global corporate capitalism and may thus be the most important type of identity underlying social activism in a society. These identities become the moral fabric that unites people into communities of “collective resistance against otherwise unbearable oppression” (Castells, 1997: 9).

Identity coalitions can also further develop into projects that seek to change the course of history by using collective will as a power base to, for example, overthrow existing regimes or create alternative communes at the margins of society and territorial spaces. Although often arising from resistance identities against the state, the sustenance of civil society ultimately requires the regulatory powers of the state. In this sense, resistance or project identities must transform into the legitimising identities of a new status quo that can bring together the ‘apparatuses’ that are deeply rooted among people and prolong the routines of state-civil society relations.

One of the ways to build resistance identities and try to move on to projects is through meta-narratives. The Internet is particularly suited to transcendent meta-narratives. However, these meta-narratives are predestined to fail because they falsify lived experiences and, in fact, context — locality and local smaller narratives — does matter.

### ***3.3.4 (Post-)national identities in a global network society***

The move towards a network society creates interesting opportunities for governments previously used to dealing with hierarchies of local solidarities. With modern communications, especially the Internet, communities are no longer local, all encompassing and stable. Instead, people have multiple, shifting sets of glocalised (globalised and localised) ties. The local becomes only one kind of 'special interest'. Even more than in the past, the social mobilisation of collective action will be apt to develop over non-territorial issues, be it shared affinities such as environmentalism, anti-globalisation, Christianity or Islam, or shared material interests.

One of the major transformations emphasised in the discourse on identities and communities in the 'information age' is the dissolution of national identities, or, alternatively, the rejection of nationalism. Collective identities are increasingly becoming 'post-national', a phenomenon that has emerged as an alternative form for the organisation of global traffic in resources, images and ideas, and which implies that nation-states have become obsolete (Appadurai, 1996). This idea is particularly strongly emphasised when discussing the rise of global religious fundamentalism. Friedman (1994: 100) argues that fundamentalism's 'shifting hegemony' provides alternative visions of the global situation to form a single world culture that transcends the nation.

However, the emergence of post-national (e.g. transnational or global) communities and identities in a network society does not necessarily lead to the obsolescence of national identity and nation-states. Post-national identity is not a matter of removing national differences but rather of "constituting a discursive device which represent difference as ... identity" (Hall 1992: 297). In the case of religious fundamentalism, as well as other types of fundamentalism, identity can also recognise the national nature of communities while, at the same time, project them beyond the nation. In this regard, the common generalisation of religious fundamentalism being oppositional to the nation-state is misleading. Rather, in a network society, post-national types of identity, including fundamentalism, are fluid and can take various forms depending on social-political-historical contexts, moving from being nationalist to challenging nationalism or to a mixture of both. More specifically, at the current juncture in history when the nation-state is still the basic unit of territorial power and popular identity, seizing the nation-state and placing it under the aegis of post-national identity can be viewed as a practical approach towards ideologically as well as politically assembling the building blocks for global communities with that identity.

Locating this discourse within the discussion on the narrow type of network society, in the Internet based society — cyberspace — the Internet has been argued to be a medium of possibility where the individual can go beyond his or her social self (Turkle, 1996; Hjarvard, 2002). It also blurs the boundaries between the spaces in which those who are connected exist (Freeman, 1999). However, this does not imply that the Internet is detached from the realities of the social world; rather, existing local and global power

relations are extended into this new space rather than simply being displaced from the physical one.

Cyberspace is simply another zone in which real world events are carried out in a manner that is connected to the corporality of its users. This also implies that the existence and power relations of nation-states persist in cyberspace; although cyberspace offers more flexible boundaries for social identities to be amalgamated. An individual can choose with which boundary to associate: as a citizen of one nation-state, a global citizen of a Coca-Cola world, a member of Islamic *ummah* and/or other groups without any restriction imposed by any of these groups.

Through the mechanisms discussed above, all identities can co-mingle and overlap, and individuals can reduce the cognitive dissonances among them through such devices as meta-narratives that offer ways to reconcile and explain them all as being part of a larger historical struggle of a collectivistic of people. To make sense of the possible drawbacks and potentials of Internet use, and to discuss the roles these potentials may play in political activism, this chapter will draw on the collective action concept and theories as explained in the next section.

### **3.4 The Internet and Collective Action-Social Movement**

Melucci (1996: 20) defines collective action as “... a set of social practices involving simultaneously a number of individual and groups, implying a social field of relationships and the capacity of the people involved in making sense of what they are doing”. This definition emphasises three major questions in describing and explaining collective action. First, it emphasises the morphological character of collective action and gives room for the proposition of finding similar structures and patterns not only across geographical borders but also across time. Second, it highlights the relevance of the type of social relationships and third, it asks for an inquiry into the process of how people make sense of what they do together.

Can the Internet generate or support collective action and social movement? To better understand the relationship between Internet and collective action and/or social movement, the following section will briefly describe current theories of collective action and social movement, and demonstrate how collective identity has emerged from this literature. It is followed by further explanations on the dynamics of Internet-collective action relationships.

#### ***3.4.1 Theories of collective action and social movement — an overview***

Prior to the 1970s, collective action was mostly analysed as part of a concept known as collective behaviour (Buechler, 2000:3). According to theories of that time, collective actions occur due to sudden increases in grievances generated by social change. Three major theories dominated this early stage of collective action research: symbolic-interactionist, structural-functionalist and relative deprivation (Buechler, 2000).

In the 1970s and the early 1980s, resource mobilisation theory (MacCarthy and Zald, 1979; Kerbo, 1982; Ferree, 1992) was the most influential approach in explaining more or less successful collective action and social movements. In contrast to earlier theories, resource mobilisation theorists regard collective action and social movement actors as strategising their behaviour on a rational basis. Briefly summarised, this theory argues that the key obstacle to be overcome in order to be able to act collectively is the lack of financial and personal resources.

Despite the insights gained in terms of the properties of an organisation required for successful collective action, and the emphasis on group influences, resource mobilisation theory nonetheless applies an individualistic perspective. It neglects the existence of collective entities and socially constructed meaning as important social conditions for collective action, as well as the emotional and affective background to individual decision-making and action. For this reason it fails to answer the question as to how social meaning is constructed and how it works as a driving force for action (for a more extensive critique see: Kelly and Breinlinger, 1996; Melucci, 1996).

In reaction to this critique, alternative approaches such as the new social movement theory have been developed in order to provide a socio-psychological basis to explain the social construction of interests within a collectivity. Rather than centring on economic or materially driven grievances, this theory associates actions with belief systems that revolve around a set of values and symbols that are specific to the group (Snow et al., 1986; Johnston et al., 1994). To take into account the significance of the processes through which people attribute meanings to events and interpret situations and the role that collective action groups play in this regard, collective action theorists have developed the concept of collective identity and frame alignment.

The concept of collective identity refers to its formation as a central element in mobilising successful collective action through participants integrating this new identity into their everyday lives (Klandermans, 1991). This concept helps to explain why a person would want to join a movement when he or she is not economically dissatisfied. It is built through shared definitions of the situation by its members, as well as interactions and negotiations among members (Melucci, 1989, 1994, 1996; Gamson, 1992, 1995; Taylor and Whittier, 1992). Shared definitions refer to normative definitions of reality, what the group defines as right and wrong. They have a cognitive element that links the person to the cause. These definitions help a person to link his or her beliefs to the same belief of larger groups, and therefore attaches the individual to the group. Melucci (1996) further argues that these cognitive definitions must correlate with larger groups and society in which the group is situated as cognitive definitions reflects what a group feels about itself, as well as the actions in which they participate.

Frame alignment (Snow et al., 1986) refers to the linkage of a person's and a movement group's interpretative orientations such that some set of personal interests, values and beliefs and a group's activities, and goals and ideology are congruent and complementary. According to Snow et al. (1986: 464), "frame alignment is a necessary condition for movement participation", because if an individual disagrees with a

movement's interpretation of past phenomena and future actions, he or she will not participate. The term 'frame' is borrowed from Goffman (1974) to denote the schemata of interpretations that enable people to locate, perceive, identify and label occurrences within their life space and society at large. By rendering events or occurrences meaningful, frames function to organise experience and guide action, whether personal or collective.<sup>20</sup>

In order to fully understand how collective actions are formed and how they grow, several theories need to be brought together to see their complementarities. Resource mobilisation theory suggests that the Internet should have a great impact on the rise of collective actions; whereas the new social movements theory explains the structural conditions that generate social grievances in people that lead them to partake in collective actions. The crucial mechanism in the case of the latter theory is finding a collective identity that is applicable to a set of individuals. If a collective identity cannot be discovered, collective action growth is highly unlikely to reach fruition.

In discussing collective action and social movement theories, related to the case studies in this dissertation, the concepts of 'contentious politics' and 'diffusion' are important. Sidney Tarrow (1998) defines contentious politics as taking place when ordinary people, often in league with more influential citizens, join forces to confront elites, authorities or opponents. A social movement is then an organised and sustained instance of contentious politics. Contention begins "when people collectively make claims on other people, claims which if realised would affect those others' interests" (McAdam et al., 1996: 17) and usually establishes a dichotomy of insider and outsider, challengers and elites, civil society and the state (Tarrow, 1998).

Diffusion as used in collective action and social movement theories refers to the diffusion of ideas and information. While many definitions have been offered, the following simple version by Michaelson (quoted in Giugni, 1998: 95) works well: diffusion is "the process by which an innovation (any new idea, activity or technology) spreads through the population".

Based on this preliminary review of the collective action and social movement theories, the subsequent sections look at the potential of the Internet in supporting or

---

<sup>20</sup> Four types of frame alignment processes are identified (Snow et al., 1986). First, frame bridging, which refers to the linkage of ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem. This bridging is effected by organisation outreach through interpersonal or inter-group networks, the media, the telephone, direct mail and in recent years also through Internet applications such as electronic mail, mailing lists and websites. Second, frame amplification, which refers to the clarification and invigoration of an interpretative frame that bears on a particular issue, problem or set of events. Third, frame extension, which refers to the expansion of the boundaries of a movement's primary framework so as to encompass interests or points of view that are incidental to its primary objectives but of considerable salience to potential adherents. Fourth, frame transformation, which refers to the redefinition of activities or events that are already meaningful from the standpoint of some primary framework, in terms of another framework. As a result, these activities or events are thus seen by the potential participants to be something different from that previously perceived.



generating collective action from the perspective of collective action and social movement theories.

### ***3.4.2 The Internet's attributions for collective action and social movement***

In reference to resource mobilisation theory, Freeman (1979) notes that the means of communication is a key source of collective action and social movement. In this sense, the relatively cheap access and broad availability of the Internet (see Chapter 2) could be considered as making it a vital resource for the emergence of collective action and social movement. However, whether this is the case, and which movement organisations benefit, needs to be examined. Internet use may benefit organisations or groups that have greater access to resources, including time and money, which they can invest in using the Internet. Mobilisation through the Internet is thus more likely to be successful for collective action when the potential participants have access to the Internet, such as students, rather than farmers.

The Internet can also contribute to adding resources if its use results in additional people contributing their resources (time, skills or money) towards achieving collective goals. However, as shown in Chapter 5, this does not mean that the identities formed in cyberspace are limited to elites. Rather, the problem then becomes one of creating further linkages to other classes through other media interfacing with the Internet.

Developing and practicing collective identity online may be harder for organisations or groups that mobilise around complex issues or causes. Organisations or groups that organise around issues or causes that are widely supported in society will more likely be able to develop online collective activism as they require low mutual trust among participants (Diani, 2000: 397). If higher levels of trust and collective identification are required, then face-to-face interactions are more important (Diani, 2000: 397). Networks of organisations or groups that have already been established offline are easier to establish as online networks.

Meanwhile, analysis is also needed on the question as to how the uses of the Internet can result in various means of communication and different ways to communicate, which can prompt individuals to become mobilised or, on the contrary, inhibit them from being mobilised. In this context, how does the Internet differ from other forms of mediated communication, or what are called the 'more traditional' media?

The more traditional media have a one-way character in communication and a relatively clear distinction between the producers and receivers of information. In this relationship, it is impossible for the receiver to have direct influence on what kind of information received, how it is received and when it is received. The Internet, as Slevin (2000: 74) argues, blurs this dichotomy, as the Internet users can be both producers and receivers. Through the use of the Internet, the potential of collective movements to reach an audience in a more direct fashion is thus increased. Compared to the more traditional media, the Internet also reduces the time lag between events and the reception of information about them. The information distributed through the Internet is also

relatively more difficult to censor compared with that distributed through the more traditional media.

These attributes are expected to facilitate identity formation, especially through frame alignment processes. Yet, several points call for further attention. For a movement frame to be successful it needs to resonate with the social mentalities of a culture and strike a chord with the everyday experiences of the targets for mobilisation (Snow and Benford, 1988). The Internet could make this possible as it enables people in distant places to communicate directly and make everyday experiences available to each other. However, not all issues can easily be framed in cyberspace so that they resonate with everyday experiences. In this regard, while considering Diani's (2001) suggestion that the Internet is making a shared place less relevant as a precondition for social activism emergence, the importance of shared place should not be overlooked. That Tilly's (1978) argument that "catnets", situations where people share an identity as well as physical space are more likely to foster collective action, may still retain its validity.

### *3.4.3 Identity filtering on the Internet*

In the field of human psychology, it is widely believed that people have a tendency to avoid conflict and to reduce dissonance in their mental processing of information. The theory of "selective exposure" states that people would prefer to be exposed to information that is supportive of their opinions and beliefs rather than to unsupportive information which would awaken dissonance (Erikson, 1975). To avoid dissonance, when people are assessing issues, they tend to accept supportive communications and disregard unsupportive communications. This is particularly the case when information counters a self-image or identity of a person. This human phenomenon goes a long way to explain why identity coalitions persist over time even in the face of mounting dissonance between a belief system and the real world. It also suggests that break points, with sudden shifts in activism, can occur when this discord between ideology and actual experience becomes too large.

As mentioned previously, identity formation is a social phenomenon. That is, it evolves through association with others. Avoidance of dissonance thus also has a socially collective dynamic that relies, in part, on the formation of networks that filter out dissonance while emboldening favoured identity markers. The Internet, assumed to be free of state regulation, is eminently suited to building such networks in a rapid, spatially extensive manner that can send images, icons and 'new truths' around the world in the blink of an eye.

People look for consistency among their own experiences and memories and turn to others for comparison and confirmation. In social psychology, this is termed "cognitive consistency" (Norton, 1983). What if there is some inconsistency between one's own experiences (and the beliefs that interpret them) and those reported by others? Or what if inconsistency exists among a person's own experiences, beliefs or actions? In both cases, many social psychologists believe, that a person would restore cognitive consistency by re-

interpreting the situation to minimise any actual inconsistency. As stated earlier, this is because people try to reduce an unpleasant internal state, the cognitive dissonance that is set up by any perceived inconsistency among various features of knowledge, feelings and behaviour (Festinger, 1957).

This phenomenon is in line with the concept of frame alignment in collective action theory and it is potentially magnified to a very high level when using the Internet. In cyberspace, there are always quantum magnitudes of digital bytes of information available to an Internet user at any given moment. This presents a panoply of potentially overwhelming flows of 'facts', images and representations of 'truth' and ideas to encounter, process and rationalise. While it is impossible to access all the information existing in cyberspace, the Internet technology itself makes it possible to filter the information, be it automatic email-based filtering, or manual filtering. The major concern of this discussion is not the filtering processes done by individuals but that which is done by a group or organisation in order to create or maintain certain identities using the Internet and other forms of media linked to it.

An understanding of dissonance theory also signals that the information that flows within the Internet is not neutral. This information is moulded to be in line with the identity of its creators or disseminators in order to avoid dissonance while constructing and promoting what appears to be a consistent bundle of truths. Before it is delivered and passed from one to another, whoever is in charge of delivering it has already filtered this information. For example, before it comes to the screen of the mailing list members, the information has been filtered by the moderator.

In combining all of these insights as a way forward in examining the content of the flows of information in cyberspace, the idea of 'identity filtering' is proposed as a way to understand how messages and symbols are received and interpreted by society through global-local dynamics and the Internet. Identity filtering is a term coined here to indicate a process through which information — in the form of graphics as well as words and other symbolic configurations of the 1 and 0 electronic pulses of the internet — is channelled through meanings, beliefs, accepted values and social institutions to enhance existing or build new identities. This can occur even in the context of information that is contrary to the beliefs underpinning an identity. Identity filtering is thus a process of simultaneously avoiding cognitive dissonance, by disregarding unfavourable information, while knitting together information that can be interpreted as being consistent with, and in support of, aggrandising a given identity.

In this process of identity filtering, 'truth' is inseparable from identity and becomes part of the contest for power among various identity groups. In the socialising processes surrounding identity formation, those entrenched in one identity see the views espoused by their leaders as being unassailable while, at the same time, they disparage the beliefs of others as fabrications and lies. In the extreme, truth becomes absolute, without nuance and is non-negotiable, leading to differences that become irresolvable without the use of force. If it can be said that truth is power, it is also true that power is truth and that the Internet, through its ability to assist an individual or group in sending, filtering and

framing information, symbols and news as truth, is playing a critical role in identity formation and filtering.

#### *3.4.4 Cyber-diffusion of contentious politics*

Research on the diffusion of contention stresses the importance of intervening social cultural conditions for the spread of collective protest through a population (McAdam and Rucht, 1993; Giugni, 1998). Cultural linkages rooted in strong personal interpersonal networks are considered essential both to the diffusion of protest between ideologically similar movements within a single country (Klandermans, 1990) and to the cross-national diffusion of movement strategies and ideas.

In this context, the Internet seems to fall into the category of impersonal channels; and thus it may potentially reduce the relevance of cultural connections or interpersonal networks in the spread of contention. In addition, because of the distributive nature of the Internet, the process of Internet-carried contention may be less contained or constrained by activist-led movements; and thus it may be unleashed into a type of electronic riot that could possibly link to real world spillovers. Regardless of the form that this contention may take, Internet-inspired protest seems destined to be influenced by domestic (local) and global political conditions, just as it has the potential to influence the latter. The Internet contributes to the globalisation of contentious local activity and, at the same time, brings global issues to the local network.

The Internet can also reduce barriers of place that slow or hinder the diffusion of information. Through the process of cyber-diffusion, for example, groups as remote as the Zapatista rebels in Chiapas, Mexico, can attract global supporters to their cause (Arquilla and Rondfelt, 1993; Rondfelt et al., 1998; Schulz 1998). Such experiences suggest that the “easy riding on the Internet” has provided individuals and groups with a greater capacity to contribute to a contentious collective action (Tarrow, 1998: 233).

#### *3.4.5 The linkages to ‘small media’*

While recognising the potential of the Internet in to facilitate collective action, it should be realised that its online potential is limited, especially in countries where Internet users are sparse. The online network is not enough. It needs, and actually cannot avoid, being combined with other media networks and social networks. After all, in the network society, relationships are increasingly realised by a combination of social and media networks. The combination of social and media networks will create a very strong infrastructure for society (van Dijk, 2001: 11).

In the case of diffusion of contention politics, where ordinary citizens are targeted for mobilisation — to join forces with the elites — it is thus important to see what media can actually diffuse issues or ideas more to the population. In the case of a democratic society, the Internet network may be combined with the mass media. In a repressive society, where an authoritarian government controls mass media or mainstream media, to spread information to a wider population the Internet should create linkages with ‘small

media' (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Mohammadi, 1994). Small media can be interpreted as "a popular rubric for various kinds of mediated alternatives to state-run broadcasting systems" (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Mohammadi, 1994: 20), sometimes also called, "the people's voice" (Jankowski et al., 1992). Small media cover "the wide stock of mediated cultural resources in different settings that can be utilised to conscientise, politicise and mobilise popular revolution movements" (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Mohammadi, 1994: 21-22). They can include, pamphlets, video cassettes, audio cassettes and recently also include short-message texts (cellular phone based).

The combination of the Internet network, small media and traditional networks increases the ability to produce and disseminate information and thus also widens the potentially mobilised audiences. This combination is useful especially in situations that reflect strong states with elaborate coercive, powerful and centrally controlled mass media, with almost no possibilities for alternative political mobilisation. Subsequent chapters will show how such networks have appeared in Indonesia and have been vital in mobilising significant segments of society for political activism.

### 3.5 Conclusions

The Internet is part of a technological artefact that appears to be more than "a functional instrument"; when functioning, it appears "to be present for human beings in a specific way" (Verbeek, 2005: 172). Echoing Verbeek (2005: 172) who locates technological artefacts in the relations between humans and the world, the Internet can be situated between social activists (individuals and groups) and the world. The Internet actively shapes "these relations by transforming both experience and action" (p. 172). By doing so, the Internet coshapes both the way social activists are present in their world (global, national and local) and the world is present for these social activists.<sup>21</sup>

By locating discussion of the Internet and social activism in the context of the global network society, this chapter suggests that the Internet does change the global-local dynamics of social activism, and acknowledges the global dimension of spatial and network of social activism. However, it also argues that, in these dynamics, the socio-political terrains of nation-states and other localities do not become archaic or anachronistic. Although concepts of communities and identities are changed within the dynamics of network society, the emerging communities are not necessarily detached from real world communities, and identities formed are not alien to but rather are based on existing identities in the real world.

---

<sup>21</sup> This paragraph very much refers to the argument of Peter-Paul Verbeek (2005: 172) which states that technological artifacts "hide themselves in the relations between humans and world, and from their 'withdrawn position' they actively shape these relations by transforming both experience and actions. The way they do so involves amplification, reduction, invitation and inhibition. In this way, they coshape both the way human beings are present in their world and the world is present for human beings."

By examining closely the relationship between the Internet and collective action, based on collective action and social movement theory, this chapter concludes that the Internet does indeed have great potential to support, facilitate and even generate collective action. However, it is argued that the Internet cannot and will not replace the importance of traditional cultural and interpersonal linkages of for collective actions; while does bolster and even alter the processes of collective activism.

Lastly, this chapter also argues that in order to generate collective action that includes ordinary citizens as well as the elites, as in the case of broad social movements for political reform, the diffusion of ideas/information should reach beyond the online realm of the Internet. Thus the linkages between the Internet and other media, particularly small media and social (traditional) networks, are critical in translating the electronic messages of the Internet into real world social action. Chapters 4 to 6 detail how this was accomplished through intermodal media linkages at different moments of social mobilisation and political contestation.

---

## WIRING INDONESIA

### DEVELOPING THE INTERNET UNDER THE PANOPTIC STATE

#### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to lay the historical foundations of the advent of the Internet in Indonesia as it emerged amidst the culture and politics of the New Order and within the culture and politics of Indonesian media. As a precursor to the account of the development of the Internet in Indonesia it provides the context for the case studies on the Internet and political activism leading to collective action and social movement in the transition period from Suharto to a post-Suharto era that will be elaborated in Chapters 5 and 6.

To understand the societal construction of the Internet in Indonesia, it is necessary to place it within the context of the social, political, economic and cultural characteristics of Indonesia's New Order. The political economic history of this period shaped the meanings associated with Internet technology and the paths that its progression followed. Subsequently, the New Order was shaped and altered by this technology (Barker et al., 2001).

To explicate this earlier period of historical interplay between society and technology, this chapter will provide a general background to the New Order regime followed by key insights into the New Order's ability to control public and media space through its own ideology of national identity and the deployment of police and surveillance practices. An understanding of the New Order's control and surveillance practices is essential to fully grasp why in the later years of the New Order, the availability of 'space' for political discussions on the Internet was both significant and momentous.

The discussion about the New Order is followed by a detailed historical account of the development of the Internet. The history of the Internet in Indonesia shows a contrast to the history of earlier media and communications technologies in Indonesia. The political landscape during the period of its development and the characteristics of the technology, allowed the Internet some spaces for a much more 'democratic' development. The historical account will show that the Indonesian Internet development followed a 'bottom up' pattern in which much of the activity was 'on stage', contrary to the

development of the satellite system with a 'top down' pattern in which 'off stage' practices were extremely important (Barker et al., 2001: 212). The history will also show that the Internet in Indonesia is dependent on the prior 'regime' only in 'technological'<sup>22</sup> and not in 'societal' terms (Barker et al., 2001). In a societal sense, it is thus 'revolutionary' since it involves a whole new set of actors, only few of whom were dominant in the previous technological regimes such as telephony.

To fully understand the Indonesian Internet one has to understand the social dynamics of the smallest but most popular Internet access points, the Internet cafés called *warnet*, which will be described in detail in the last part of this chapter. From this detailed description, it will be shown that the *warnet* is not only a point of Internet access but is also a result of a technical, social and cultural transformation and localisation of Internet technology. An understanding of the social dynamics of the *warnet* is important to fully grasp the socio-political uses of the Internet in transition period as will be described in later chapters.

## 4.2 The New Order

"I always try to carry out the trust from the people, serve the people, I do whatever I can do for people, for the sake of my dedication to the people." (President Suharto, a speech at the Mother's Day Celebration at Mojosari district, Mojokerto – East Java, on 22 December 1997)<sup>23</sup>

The New Order was "the authoritarian<sup>24</sup> form of government which [ruled] Indonesia since 1966" (Liddle, 1996: 3). It began in 1965-1966 with Major General Suharto's rise to power along with a military coup portrayed by its leaders as saving the country from communism. Following the coup, the Indonesian Communist Party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*, PKI) was discredited and dissolved by the new regime. To commemorate the alleged 'betrayal' by PKI, Suharto named the event that enabled him rise to power as G30S, "The Thirtieth of September Movement" (*Gerakan Tiga puluh September*). Over

---

<sup>22</sup> The concept of a 'technological regime' was first introduced by Nelson and Winter (1977) as a theoretical framework to interpret the variety of innovative processes observed across industrial sectors, and they distinguished the science-based and cumulative regimes. The interaction systems in which technical developments take place are characterised by particular rules. These rules vary in form and content. Some are related to the design of a technology, others to its use, others again to divisions of labour and roles. Some rules are explicitly laid down; others are implicit and will be followed by actors on the basis of habits or tacit knowledge. Rules can also be embodied, for example in production apparatus. The totality of the relevant rules makes up the 'technological regime' of a technology (Nelson and Winter, 1977; Disco, Rip and Van der Meulen, 1992; Rip and Kemp, 1998; Van de Poel, 1998).

<sup>23</sup> *Saya selalu berusaha untuk memenuhi kepercayaan dari rakyat, mengabdikan kepada rakyat, apa yang saya bisa lakukan kepada rakyat, demi pengabdian kepada rakyat.*

<sup>24</sup> Dhakidae (2003) argues that Suharto's New Order regime is more appropriately defined as a neo-fascist military regime. This identification is based on the political characteristics of the New Order, i.e. a (Suharto's) charismatic form of politics and the strong role for ideology.



the thirty years following the G30S event (sometimes also called G30S/PKI 1965 event), Indonesian public discourse was shaped by the production and reproduction of rumours<sup>25</sup> and mythologies about the PKI's betrayal and Suharto's counteraction to save and redirect the nation.<sup>26</sup>

To emphasise the discontinuity with the failed and discredited policies of the Sukarno era — what the new regime called the Old Order — Suharto's government called itself the New Order. “The shift from Sukarno to Suharto signified Indonesian's change away from a nation held together by a charismatic leader [with intense political discourses] to a nation held by a political, military and ideological regime” (Barker et al., 2001: 98) which effectively barred political activism and even political debates in the name of restoring order and stability.

To define national identity, rather than imposing cultural and ideological homogeneity, Suharto revived the Sukarno-era concept of Pancasila<sup>27</sup> as the national ideology. Suharto's approach to political conflict did not reject the use of coercion but supplemented it with the rhetoric of ‘consultation and consensus’ (*musyawarah dan mufakat*) which, like Pancasila, also had its roots in the Sukarno and Japanese eras.

In the early years of his presidency, Suharto chose to socialise the fear of communism. In later years as the regime became stronger, he propagated ‘national unity’

---

<sup>25</sup> Before and after the G30S/PKI 1965 event, there were many rumours that shaped the Indonesian politics of that time. Among these were rumours about the ‘General's Council’ that contributed to the heightening of tension in Indonesian politics and served to stimulate mistrust between President Sukarno and certain generals. In addition, rumours of Chinese arms shipments to Indonesia were rife and served to boost the story of a Communist (Chinese) sponsored coup (Heryanto, 199:152). After 30 September 1965, wildly exaggerated tales of PKI massacres were circulated, while the army and police claimed to have discovered PKI ‘hit-lists’ of prominent leaders, and detailed plans “to commit a variety of depraved acts” (Robinson, 1984: 133-134). This campaign relied heavily on photographs and explicit descriptions of the corpses of the murdered generals, who allegedly had been castrated by the pro-PKI women's movement Gerwani before their mutilated corpses were dropped down a well at *Lubang Buaya* (Crocodile Hole) (Anderson, 1987).

<sup>26</sup> Beside the story that was propagated by the New Order claiming that the PKI was behind the killing of six army generals and one officer, there are four interpretations offered by some scholars. The first one alleges that the killing was a result of internal intrigues in the army (Anderson and McVey, 1971). The second claims that the killing was part of Sukarno's scenario for removing the opposition of some high-ranking army generals (Hughes, 1968; Dake, 2002). The significant role of Suharto in the assassination is stressed in the third interpretation (Wertheim, 1979; Latief, 2000). The last interpretation refers to the involvement of foreign agencies (British and American) to eradicate communism in Indonesia (Scott, 1975, 1985b; Robinson, 1984). In the last version, Suharto was accused of cooperating with these agencies in order to pursue his ambition to be the leader of the country. While differing in detail, all scholars agree that assuming PKI members were collectively responsible for the series of elitist and military manipulations and struggles over central power in the late 1965 was absurd.

<sup>27</sup> Pancasila, derived from Sanskrit words, literally means Five Principles (Panca = Five, Sila = Principle). It is a set of loosely defined principles, namely Belief in the Oneness of God, Humanity, National Unity, Democracy and Social Justice, and was created by Sukarno. After the 1965 coup, the New Order claimed Pancasila to be the only accepted state ideology and held a monopoly for its interpretation. In fact, the day Suharto took control of the Army following the G30S affair, 1 October 1965, was commemorated as *Hari Kesaktian Pancasila* (The Day of Pancasila's Supremacy).

(*persatuan nasional*) and ‘development’ (*pembangunan*) as national ideographs. These ideographs became the basis for how the state worked on and solved problems that occurred within society. They also influenced how the New Order formed policies, especially in economics and politics. These ideographs were invested with a “mantra like” status (van Langenberg, 1986) in concert with the Indonesian national ideology, Pancasila. The banner of economic ‘development’ was raised to push forward a belief that the government would overcome poverty and backwardness in the nation. The word ‘development’ was repeatedly used by government representatives to suggest that citizens should be devoted to a national programme of material betterment guided by the state (van Langenberg, 1990). The ‘development’ led by the New Order “focused primarily on the creation and improvement of the infrastructure for industrialisation” manifested in the erection of various physical buildings” (Heryanto, 1998: 22-23).<sup>28</sup> However, the same word *pembangunan* was also used for non-material development, such as in ‘*pembangunan manusia Indonesia seutuhnya*’ (‘development to achieve a complete Indonesian human being’).<sup>29</sup>

The command to ‘reinforce Pancasila in every segment of life’<sup>30</sup>, which automatically included the reinforcement of ‘national unity’, was issued over and over again in the President’s and other public figures’ speeches. A new social contract was forged in which the government promised ‘development’ while, in the name of national unity, it used its police and regulatory powers to quash all political dissent (Douglass, 1994). To elucidate on how the New Order used Pancasila and these ideographs to maintain the legitimacy of the regime, the following section will explore the New Order’s economic ‘development’ approach, and how the New Order cultivated meta-narratives, controlled public spaces as well as everyday spaces of life, and controlled all forms of media.

#### 4.2.1 Economy and ‘development’

Besides the rejection of leftism, another stark contrast between the Sukarno and Suharto eras was economic policy. Indonesia’s ailing economy, after its war of Independence

---

<sup>28</sup> Heryanto (1988) examines the changing meaning of ‘development’ in Indonesia from the beginning of the nationalist movement through the Suharto years. ‘Development’ (in Indonesian, ‘*pembangunan*’) was initially connected with the early ideas of nationalism, especially during the late 1930s. “The meaning of *pembangunan* and *membangunkan* [the verb form of the word] at that time can perhaps best be understood as equivalent to ‘building’ [as] in ‘nation-building’ and ‘character-building’ which became popular expressions in subsequent periods” (p. 9). ‘*Pembangunan*’ under Sukarno was primarily a symbolic gesture meant to consolidate a nation-state against the external forces of the world-system. Conversely, under Suharto, it meant economic development in line with the external forces of the world-system.

<sup>29</sup> Schulte Nordholt (1987) argues that the term ‘development’ — ‘*pembangunan*’ (Indonesian) — used in the context of Indonesian politics actually refers to the ‘construction on command’ (building) or ‘*opbouw*’ (in Dutch). The word that has the actual meaning of ‘development’ as used in English, or ‘*ontwikkeling*’ in Dutch, is *perkembangan* (Indonesian).

<sup>30</sup> *Menegakkan azas-azas Pancasila dalam sendi-sendi kehidupan.*

against the Dutch and in the face of separatist conflicts, grew worse as Sukarno ignored the recommendations of technocrats and foreign aid donors, eyed overseas expansion and built ambitious public monuments and government buildings at home. Suharto, on the other hand, initiated a generally orderly process of economic development and embraced large infusions of foreign aid and investment in natural resource extraction (Schulte Nordholt, 1995). Besides embracing foreign aid, Suharto was also able to secure financial aid from major Chinese capitalists (*cukong*) to support his power base, which enabled him to create impressive economic growth (7 per cent annual average over a period of thirty years) (Schulte Nordholt, 2002: 144).

To build a stronghold of his regime, Suharto was able to deploy the three pillars of the state: the armed forces, the bureaucracy (*Golkar* or *Golongan Karya*, Suharto's party) and the technocrats (Schulte Nordholt, 2002). In securing the economy, Suharto worked closely with technocrats. The first group of the New Order technocrats, also known as the 'Berkeley Mafia',<sup>31</sup> saw the best prospects for 'development' (economic growth) as being through liberalisation, centralised planning and foreign borrowing. In the early period of the New Order (mid 1960s-1970s), these economists dominated all the government departments associated with the economy and development planning (Barker et al., 2001).

After the New Order successfully countered the rampant inflation and financial collapse of the Sukarno era, the technocrats gained credibility in the domain of financial and fiscal policy. As oil revenues grew in the 1970s, following the formation of OPEC in 1973, the government sought to build Indonesia's industrial base by investing in basic industries and maintaining trade barriers to protect domestic producers from foreign competition. During this oil boom period, in 1976 the government launched a communication satellite, *Palapa*, and Indonesia became the fourth nation in the world to own its own satellite.

In the mid-1980s, oil tax revenues declined dramatically and this cut sharply into the large-scale projects that had come to define 'development' under the New Order. The technocrats addressed this problem by trying to encourage a diversification in the economy through a greater focus on industrialisation and commercial agriculture. For the first time, Indonesia began to create conditions to attract high levels of direct foreign investment in labour-intensive manufacturing and assembly, most of which focussed on the metropolitan regions of Jakarta and Bandung (Douglass, 1997).

The power of the technocrats in government eroded throughout the 1980s. A group of planners and policymakers who were called 'the technologous' (*teknolog*) (Barker et al., 2001) took power and influence. As opposed to the technocrats' evolutionary view of development, led by Habibie, the long time Minister of Science and Technology and eventually Vice-President and Suharto's immediate successor to

---

<sup>31</sup> This refers to a team of economists from the Faculty of Economics at the University of Indonesia who was very influential during the 1960s. Three of the five members had received doctorates from the University of California at Berkeley.

president, these 'technologous' promoted an economic philosophy of 'leapfrogging' intervening stages of development on the way to creating an industrial society. National investment thus heavily focused on strategic industries such as aerospace, telecommunications and shipbuilding. Habibie persistently worked on this leapfrogging vision, successfully establishing his control over ten strategic industries. Meanwhile, as oil prices plummeted in the mid-1980s, the World Bank and other international lenders promoted 'public-private partnerships' as their preferred way to prevent the state from becoming over indebted at a time when oil revenues were low, pushing for the greater privatisation of state industries. In the late 1980s, Suharto chose to follow this stream by starting a wave of privatisation. This privatisation led to the rise of an even larger Suharto crony business empire since virtually all the major private companies established partnerships with Suharto's children and/or his business allies.

By the 1990s, there were two centres of power: Habibie's empire of 'national' industries and Suharto crony empire of private businesses. This created an internal conflict within the New Order. Habibie's economic interests made the armed forces feel subordinate to civilian rule. Cronyism and corruption involving Suharto's family and cronies disappointed the technocrats. In the early 1990s, some latent opposition to the increasingly corrupt regime emerged (some examples are given in Chapter 5). The internal divisions in the regime began to be significant in Indonesian political life when the Asian financial crisis hit Indonesia in 1997 and 1998. Students, with the media, press and other disaffected parties, put the blame for Indonesia's crisis unerringly on Suharto and his regime (see Chapter 5).

#### *4.2.2 Cultivating nationalist meta-narratives*

In the post-independence Sukarno and Suharto regimes, the state apparatus was consciously used for decades to create meta-narratives that legitimised regime uses of power. People were fed these meta-narratives through the government's (particularly the President's) speeches, media propaganda and reading materials used in schools and enforced by the Ministry of Information, police and other forms of social regulation. Society's knowledge of history was thus largely based on narratives or story-like linear sequencing of events as told by the state without alternative sources of verification or critical thought.

For Sukarno, the creation of nationalist meta-narratives was necessary for constructing an Indonesian nation out of a Dutch administrative territorial framework. While the majority of the inhabitants of the Indies were Muslims and the languages and customary laws (*adat*) of these regions did share many general characteristics that came with the Malay language that had gradually become accepted as the general language of commercial intercourse among the islands and of religious communication (Cribb, 1992: 200), it is very clear that there was no common sense of identity or of a unifying historical memory throughout the Dutch-controlled Indies (Christie, 1996). None of the precolonial states had exercised authority over more than a fraction of the archipelago. Even though

Islam was the dominant religion — although this was not the case in some eastern parts of Indonesia such as North Sulawesi and the Moluccas — there were some substantial differences in the interpretations of Islam and localised acculturations that had taken root in the various areas of the vast colony.

Meanwhile, although there was some resistance to Dutch authority throughout the Indies, the revolts — Pattimura in Saparua Moluccas (1817), Diponegoro in Central Java (1825-1830), the Banten revolt (1888), Tuanku Imam Bonjol in Minahasa (1821-1837) and revolts in other places — can only retrospectively be described as manifestations of Indonesian nationalism (see Kartodirjo, 1966; Carey, 1981). These local struggles, in fact, were basically domestic resistance movements defending the rights of local states and the indigenous religion, and not pan-nationalist movements. The meta-narrative of Sukarno knitted these pieces together to create the myth of nationalism in order to justify his policy of *'konfrontasi'*, or confrontation with all other nearby states and so-called separatist movements that inhibited the building and territorial expansion of the Indonesian nation-state.

Suharto's New Order continued promoting the nationalist meta-narrative à la Sukarno. Added to this, Suharto also cultivated 'nationalist-developmental' meta-narratives with himself as the centre point, the 'father of development', a Javanese-style father taking care of his big family, Indonesia. His appearances on television launching so many 'developmental' events all over the country, and the giant billboards of 'the smiling general' (as his biographer called him) located in many public spaces, were among Suharto's tools in cultivating his nationalist-developmental metanarratives.

Suharto also created a 'list of acts of betrayal to the national unity' including all kinds of political movements that ideologically could endanger the stability of the regime. On this list were communist-related movements such as PKI Madiun 1948, and in particular G30S/PKI 1965, Islamic fundamentalist movements such as DI/TII (*Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia*, Darul Islam/Islamic Army of Indonesia) and Kartosuwiryo, and all secessionist/self-determination type of movements such as RMS (*Republik Maluku Selatan*, the South Moluccan Republic) in the Moluccas. Detailed stories of events were included in history textbooks, as well as in textbooks on related subjects, used from elementary school upwards. Thus, a fifth-grade Indonesian student would be able to name six generals and one officer victimised by Aidit, who was portrayed as an evil communist leader, and other PKI members and to retell the chronological story of how Suharto came forward as a hero and delivered Indonesian from a PKI blood bath. And, as a ninth-grade student, an Indonesian teenager, would portray Dr. Soumokil, the leader of RMS, as a traitor and provocateur who had betrayed the country by proclaiming the RMS in 1950. Separatist movements of all kinds were always depicted as totally wrong, evil, an act of betrayal against Pancasila and national unity. The famous motto of the New Order "united we are strong, separated we are collapsed" (*bersatu kita teguh, bercerai kita runtuh*) was firmly planted in Indonesian children's minds; first-grade students would be commonly asked to write this motto repeatedly over one full page in the 'beautiful writing' (*menulis halus*) class.

In order to de-legitimize the Sukarno regime, Suharto, with his politics of 'Otherness', promoted the anti-PKI meta-narrative, with PKI as the 'Other'. Suharto's version of events in 1965-1966 was repeatedly propagated in books, films and speeches to the point that a person began to think that it must be a commonly accepted truth. Aside from the government's dissemination of books on G30S/PKI, a four-hour movie was made in 1983 to provide a visual version of the 'PKI's treason'. The movie was shown in theatres and on television on every September 30 since 1983. Schoolchildren watched the film each year. Suharto's New Order declared that the communists had betrayed the state ideology, Pancasila, and that Sukarno was complicit in their betrayal. In this context, communism was misleadingly defined as atheism, an act of betraying the first principle of Pancasila: 'Believe in the Oneness God'. Then, in the name of the first principle of Pancasila, the New Order declared that it was compulsory for every Indonesian citizen to have a religion based on the state's accepted five religions (Islam, Christian/Catholic, Hindu, Buddhism and mysticism). With this state order, and the fear of being branded as 'communist', religion thus became an important form of identity in Indonesia.

However, in terms of religion, as with his predecessor, President Suharto viewed Islam, the religion of the majority, as a principal source of identity projects that could effectively challenge his rule, and much of the political effort of the New Order was aimed at containing Islam and capturing its identity for state purposes. Following the practices of Sukarno, Suharto kept a Ministry of Religious Affairs mainly to control Islam, to create an allegedly 'modern, tolerant and a-political' Indonesian Islam by publishing Islamic *da'wah* (educational and legal literature acceptable to the state), governing the development of Islamic discourse produced by Muslim subjects and institutions, and establishing the so called 'legal' Islamic institutions, all of which were based on the state Pancasila ideology of unity with diversity (not Islamic *shari'a*). The Ministry of Religious Affairs published an official translation and commentary on the Koran and kept an eye on the non-official ones. Another form of marginalisation was to force Muslim parties to unite under one party, PPP (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, the United Development Party), which for decades gave support only to the rule of Suharto.

#### ***4.2.3 Panopticon of surveillance and the 'authorised party'***

Suharto built a 'Panopticon'<sup>32</sup> of constant surveillance over national territorial space. In constructing a national system of surveillance, the Suharto regime magnified its control through the fear of its capacity to identify anyone complicit with anti-government actions, and it did so in a manner that was greater than its actual capacity to physically enforce its

---

<sup>32</sup> Foucault (1979), in his book *Discipline and Punish*, applied the Panopticon as a metaphor for the oppression of the individual by the state in modern society. Foucault observed that control no longer required physical domination over the body, but could be achieved through isolation and the constant possibility of surveillance. He wrote that, in modern society, our spaces are organised "like so many cages, so many theatres, in which each actor is alone, perfectly individualised and constantly visible" (Foucault, 1979: 200).

rule (Lim, 2002a). Public spaces were mostly for by the purpose of creating spaces for activities symbolically in support of his regime. While one could almost always use these spaces for apolitical activities at any time, the uses of these spaces were restricted to state-approved functions. Without public spaces with freedom of assembly, the public sphere was critically limited to state actors and their supporters.

Suharto's success in creating regime-laden identities was manifested in the general lack of awareness among people that they were being controlled and manipulated. For more than three decades most people did not mind when the plazas, squares and parks were used for national ceremonies (e.g. the flag ceremony on Monday morning) or for regimented national physical exercise (*senam kesegaran jasmani*) on Friday mornings and mass jogging on Sunday mornings. Indonesians went on to the street to participate in state-sponsored weekly athletic events and did it without any feeling of being controlled or manipulated (Lim, 2002a). Sometimes, those engaged in the exercise programmes would wear identical athletic clothing — not unlike prisoners in an exercise yard — as symbolic evidence of loyalty to the nation and the ruling regime, while the government created the image that it really took care of its people by providing such spaces. The sponsored routines filled up public spaces and people were sucked into participating in them with the result that they became increasingly apolitical without any awareness of being de-politicised.

For more than 30 years the government was able to legitimate itself through such identity promotion in, and control of, public spaces. There was no space that was 'civic' in the sense of being available to civil society at an arms distance from the state. Rather, all activities that happened in public spaces in Indonesia were required to be known and permitted by the state. To hold social occasions, religious meetings, sport events, cultural and art events, let alone political debates, required a stamped letter stating that the 'authorised party' permitted the activity. The terminology of '*pihak yang berwajib*' (the 'authorised party') used by the government did not specifically identify who this party or person was. Of course the so-called authorised party could usually be bribed and at times there were authorised parties who would let people do whatever they wanted as long as they were recognisable. Nevertheless, with the knowledge that 'the authorised party' could be in any place and any time, and just might be observing people's actions, like the invisible guard at the Panopticon, this encouraged people to engage in self-censorship and self-discipline and not challenge the regime (Lim, 2002a).

A particularly ominous form of the use of the term 'authorised party' was the posting in every neighbourhood, street and alley of small signboards with the phrase: 'All guests who stay for more than 24 hours should be reported' (to the authorised party) ('*Tamu 1x24 jam wajib lapor*') (Figure 4.1). This plain signboard was much more powerful than it appears to be. Much simpler and cheaper than the surveillance cameras mounted by many Western governments, it successfully controlled people without any overt feeling of being controlled (Lim, 2002a). Although people might not have actually reported their guests, they accepted the idea that the government had the right to ask

them to do so and that it was the right thing to do. They were also encouraged by such signs to feel suspicious of ‘strangers’ in their neighbourhood.



*Figure 4.1 ‘TamU 1x24 jam wajib lapor’*

*Source: Author’s photo, 2002*

Interestingly, as argued by Barker (1999), New Order’s surveillance worked on territoriality by hiding it and segmenting it. It confined territoriality by creating smaller domains within which it was allowed to operate. It sought “to establish mechanisms for bringing these discrete domains into a larger [system], thus making them of service to the state in the process” (Barker, 1999: 126), as demonstrated in the use of the above mentioned small neighbourhood signs, as well as:

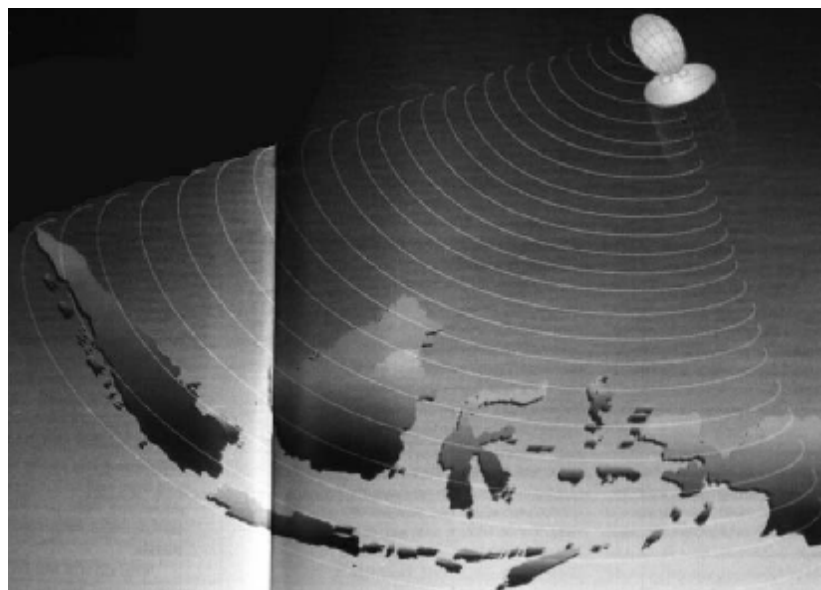
- the *Rukun Tetangga* (RT) system, and
- *Siskamling*, *Sistem Keamanan Lingkungan* (neighbourhood security watch)

Both the above examples are based on a Japanese method of getting people to spy on their neighbours. In the RT system, the state appoints a *Ketua RT* (leader) for every neighbourhood block, a *Ketua RW* (*Rukun Warga*) for several RT, a *Lurah* (chair of a village) for several RW and so on up to the top level. Within this system, no one can say where the state stops because it is composed of layers of organisations that are not officially state functions but nonetheless report to the state, right down to the neighbourhood block level. The *siskamling* system was the New Order government’s attempt to impose state control over local security practices, especially in urban settings, by taking them out of the hands of organised private gangs (Barker, 1999: 123, 2001: 24). The *siskamling* functioned to segment and categorise urban spaces, to assign them particular types of security personnel and to bring them under the control of the state



(Barker, 1999: 126). It was established in the domain of voluntary security and aimed to establish a system for centralised monitoring and control (Barker, 2001: 26).

Far above the small neighbourhood sign soared an even more powerful eye of the New Order Panopticon. It was the 'Palapa'<sup>33</sup> satellite (Figure 4.2.), images of which were used from elementary school upward (mainly in 1977 and 1984 curriculum) to symbolise the unification of Indonesia under the all seeing communications satellite (Lim, 2002a).<sup>34</sup> When Suharto pushed the button to launch this satellite in July 1976, he declared it as the day of national unity and made an explicit parallel between the satellite and himself as the unifier of the 13,677 islands.<sup>35</sup>



*Figure 4.2 Palapa Satellite Unifies Indonesia*

*Source: Telecom Indonesia's archive (as cited in Telkom, 1996: 204-205)*

The Palapa was much more than simply technological prestige. It was celebrated as an exemplary achievement of nationalist ideals (Barker, 2004). It was a provocative

---

<sup>33</sup> Palapa, a name signifying national unity, was chosen by Suharto in July 1975. This name symbolises the fulfillment of a vow for unity first expressed by Gajah Mada, a revered national hero of the 14<sup>th</sup> century who served a Prime Minister of the Majapahit Kingdom. He had vowed not to partake of Palapa, a national delicacy, until the goal of national unity was achieved.

<sup>34</sup> The image was very familiar to many Indonesians who were educated under the New Order regime. It was printed in many school textbooks, mainly for elementary and middle schools, embedded in any related subjects such as general knowledge of social science (*Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial, IPS*), Morals of Pancasila (*Pendidikan Moral Pancasila, PMP*), History of the National Struggles (*Pendidikan Sejarah Perjuangan Bangsa, PSPB*), geography and history.

<sup>35</sup> This was one of the New Order's official numbers, and the most common one used for the total number of islands in Indonesia. Some documents gave different numbers such as 13,000, 14,000, 16,000 or even 17,000. Similar to the picture of Palapa, this number was also mentioned repeatedly in many textbooks on related subjects (see previous footnote). Students in their fourth or fifth grades were able to recall this number.

symbol of national identity and cultural integration that “allowed the government to more emphatically reach and mark the perimeters of national culture space, to link the boundaries of the far-flung archipelago to the centre, and to each other enabling Indonesians throughout the nation to being able more effectively to ‘imagine their community’” (Kitley 1994: 104). By filling the minds of people with the image of unification, the state was actually ‘panopticonising’ society by symbolically allying the image of a satellite with surveillance capabilities to nationhood and national identity (Lim, 2002a).

#### 4.2.4 *Controlling the media*

The New Order’s control and surveillance also extended to media space. The practices of media control were, most of the time, entangled with culture and politics. The media in Indonesia covers the press, television, radio and film and later included the Internet and related forms of digital communications.<sup>36</sup> Under the New Order, the media were legally and institutionally controlled by the Department of Information, a department that finally disappeared in October 1999 when President Abdurahman Wahid closed it down.

The New Order explicitly made use of the media as vehicles for the creation of a ‘national culture’ that would allow uncontested implementation of its development policies and, more pervasively, its authoritarian rule. There were guidelines on what to say, what not to say and who could speak through which media. All media practices had to adhere to the state ideology of the Pancasila. Beginning in 1978, courses on Pancasila, called P4 (*Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengamalan Pancasila*, Assembly Decree on the Propagation and Implementation of Pancasila), were mandatory for various groups of society, such as students and civil servants, and including those working in public television and radio. The acronym SARA<sup>37</sup> — *suku* (ethnicity), *agama* (religion), *ras* (race) and *antar golongan* (class or inter-group social relations) — listed prohibited subjects, to which could be added any less than adulatory references to the president and his family. By implementing guidelines that referred to Pancasila and SARA, the New Order could effectively control the public interpretation of all socio-political conflict, and have ideologies and identities seen as endangering the regime’s stability *cum* ‘national unity’ — such as the left/communism, Chinese, fundamentalist Islam and the West (Heryanto, 1998) — barred and excluded from public discourses.

---

<sup>36</sup> As outlined in the Media Bill drafted under Habibie’s Reform Cabinet.

<sup>37</sup> SARA is a loosely defined term with negative connotations, it was frequently used by the regime to describe conflicts which are deemed to threaten ‘national unity’ or ‘stability’ and was at odds with the state ideology of *Pancasila* and the concept of ‘unity in diversity’. The government, especially under Suharto, had always been extremely cautious of the danger of disruptive ethnic (*suku*), religious (*agama*), race (*ras*) - meaning Chinese-related issues, or class (*antar-golongan*) conflicts. Incitement to participate in such conflicts is considered a subversive activity and liable to severe punishment. However, ethnic divides were also played upon by the regime as a means of maintaining its authority (Sumartana, 2003).

The New Order's control strategies differed from one medium to another. Overall, the media laws were created with vague language and broad meaning and thus could be flexibly used to ban media for no clear reasons. For the press, Press Law Number 21 of 1982, for example, specified the duty of the press to be one of "strengthening national unity and cohesion, deepening national responsibility and discipline, helping to raise the intelligence of the nation and invigorating people's participation in development". According to the Minister of Information, Harmoko, a publishing enterprise license would be withdrawn 'only' 'when the press is not in line with the philosophy of the nation and the state', which covers unlimited possibilities deemed to be 'not in line'. This conditional threat led to a form of self-censorship on the part of editors and publishers as they tested the limits of the government's sensitivity and retribution.

For most of the New Order era, the media appeared to be overwhelmingly controlled by the government through layers of formal and informal censorship processes, and increasingly through ownership, which resulted in a very small space for overt political dissidence (Hill and Sen, 2000b). Occasionally, at times of political disturbance, some of the more politically outspoken journalists, reporters and film-makers would surface briefly and this led to a few bans. However, while the government might be able to control how news was produced, it could not totally control how people culturally and politically participated in 'using' the media.

In the last years of the New Order, the government was losing control over media products in general sense due to changes in media technologies and economies (see closing paragraphs of Section 4.2.2). It was in this situation, the Internet arrived in Indonesia and started to develop apart from state sponsorship. Unlike other media, the nature of this technology had not been anticipated in the mechanisms of state control.

### 4.3 The Advent of the Internet

The Internet network in Indonesia started to develop in the mid-1990s, but the history of computer networking in the country goes back even further. As elsewhere, the academic and scientific sectors were early leaders in networking, and they became the forerunners in Internet development in Indonesia. How non-state actors and the private (commercial) sector worked in developing the Internet is chronologically described in later sections.

The following narrative on the history of Internet development in Indonesia refers more to infrastructure development rather than to content development. Content development in Indonesia only started later in 1998, although as early as the late 1980s Indonesian students abroad were already starting building some Internet communities. Details about these early Indonesian communities, especially those related to politics, will be discussed later in Chapter 5.

As the Internet in Indonesia has been largely developed by non-state actors, the narrated history here does not include details of formal state projects in developing the Internet. However, it does include some state-related initiatives such as IPTEKNET (see Section 4.4.2) and W-Net (see Section 4.5.2). To elucidate the (failed) attempts by the

state, Section 4.3.1 presents a brief story of the state's Internet building efforts, followed by a review of key statistics on current Internet usage in Indonesia.

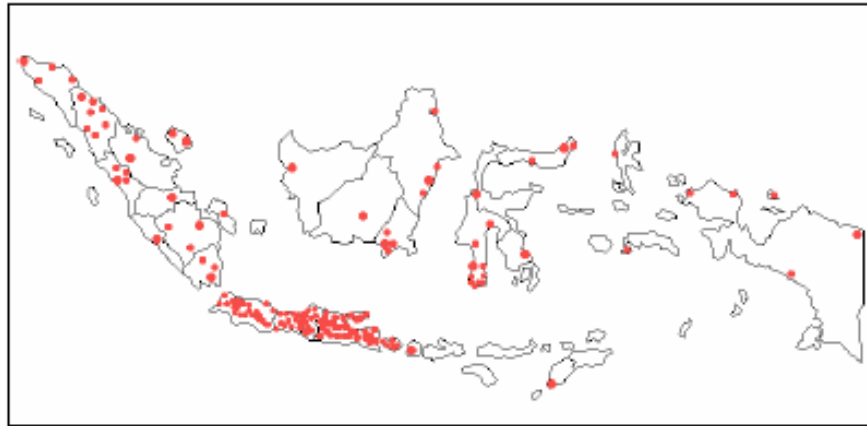
#### **4.3.1 State initiatives**

From its outset, the New Order government was very active in planning telecommunications infrastructure (through the Department of Communications) and in controlling the media (through the Department of Information). As a consequence, many people had expected that the government would intervene in the Internet development, for example, to prevent the emergence of a digital divide or the 'harmful' effects of globalisation, and to ensure that Indonesia's information society would grow quickly. However, history tells a different story. The first serious attempt by the government at establishing a national agenda for Internet development was known as *Visi N21 - Visi Nusantara-21* (Vision of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Archipelago), which only started in 1996. Initiated by Jonathan Parapak, a long-time head of the state-owned telecommunications company Indosat, N21 was meant to create a mission statement along the lines of America's National Information Infrastructure. Parapak's hope was that such a mission would coordinate the activities of diverse actors while providing an overall rubric for seeking loans from the World Bank. Although a mission statement was dutifully generated, it led nowhere, and with the economic crisis beginning in 1997, World Bank funding was directed elsewhere.

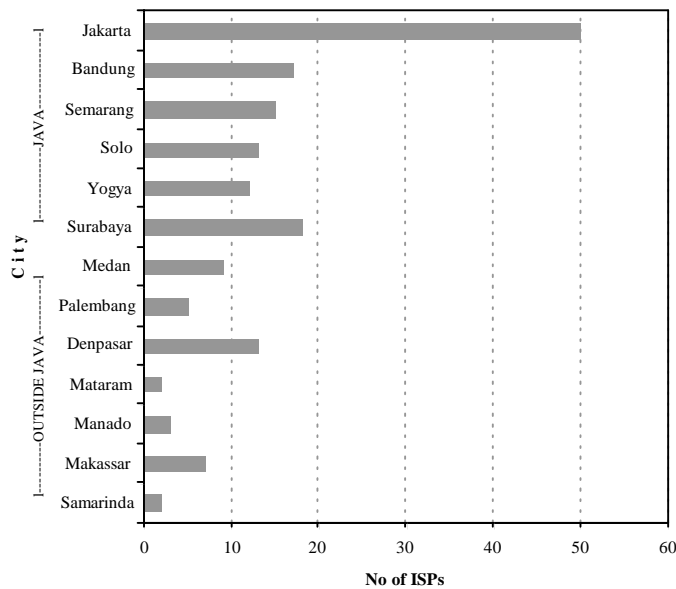
The second attempt by the government to intervene in this sector, during the post-Suharto era, was through the establishment of a *Tim Telematika Indonesia* (Indonesian Telematics Team), headed by the then Vice-President, Megawati Soekarnoputri, and including experts as well as ministers from relevant departments. This team was meant to co-ordinate the development of infrastructure, applications and human resources. However, its ineffectiveness eventually led the President to call for its dissolution.

#### **4.3.2 The current state of Internet use in Indonesia**

The outcome of the lacklustre government investment in Internet development was a highly spatially concentrated pattern of Internet access. In many rural areas ISP (Internet Service Provider) service is generally unavailable. Internet users must access ISPs through long distance calls to a provincial town; but even when telephone lines are available, they are sometimes of poor quality. ISP service outside of Java, Bali and Sumatra is also limited in major cities due to the low number of subscribers in these areas (see Figures 4.3 and 4.4)



**Figure 4.3 Map of the ISP availability in Indonesia**  
Source: Castle Asia (2002) in The Asia Foundation (2002)

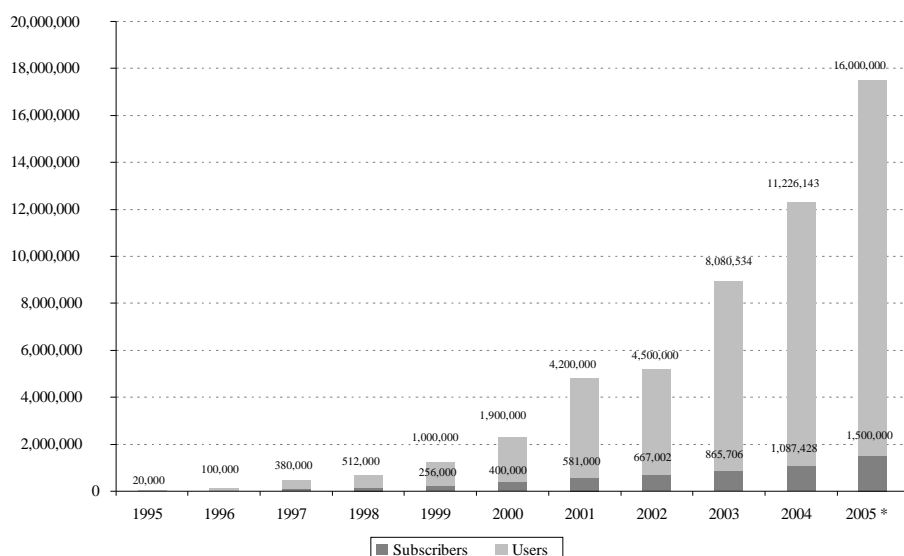


**Figure 4.4 Number of ISPs by city**  
Source: Castle Asia (2002) in The Asia Foundation (2002)

From Figures 4.3 and 4.4, it is evident that ISP services are highly concentrated around Jakarta. Other major cities on Java (Surabaya, Bandung, Semarang, Yogyakarta and Solo) line up relatively far behind Jakarta. Denpasar (Bali), followed by Medan (Sumatera) and Makassar (Sulawesi), are catching up behind the Java cities. Bali's high level of international tourism and Medan's strong linkages with Malaysia and Singapore

might explain these exceptional situations, while Makassar has always been exceptional in technological development.<sup>38</sup>

An accurate total number of Internet users in Indonesia is difficult to establish.<sup>39</sup> There are no data prior to 1995; however, it is estimated that by the end of 1995 there were 15,000-20,000 Internet users in Indonesia. By the middle of 1996, with the launch of 15 commercial ISPs, there 40,000 subscribers were documented, but there are no figures on the actual numbers of Internet users. As Indonesia was hit by the Asia financial crisis, the growth in ISP subscription numbers decelerated and the number of subscribers remained around 85,000 from mid-1997 to mid-1998. By the end of 1998, the Indonesian Association of Internet Service Providers (APJII, Asosiasi Pengusaha Jasa Internet Indonesia) started to record user growth. As shown in Figure 4.5, APJII estimated that there were 134,000 subscribers and 512,000 users by the end of 1998.



**Figure 4.5 Indonesian Internet subscribers and users**

Sources: ITU, 2001, 2002b; APJII, 2005 (\* = prediction)

Since then, while the number of ISP subscribers has only grown sluggishly, the number of Internet users has increased considerably every year, except in 2002. By the end of 2004, there were more than 11 millions estimated users and APJII predicted that there would be

<sup>38</sup> This may be related to the fact that Habibie, the third President, hailed from this area. Habibie is called '*putra daerah*' (the native son) of Makassar and is known for his 'Makassar connections', (a tendency to do business and politics only with people from Makassar). Arguably, along with his interests in IT, Habibie might have supported IT development in this city.

<sup>39</sup> While the Indonesian Central Statistic Bureau (BPS, *Biro Pusat Statistik*), publishes annual figures on telephone uses and other telecommunications means, no Internet data have ever been established.

16 millions Internet users one year later. Even with such growth, Internet users amounted to less than 10% of the country's 213 million inhabitants.<sup>40</sup>

Prospects for ISP subscription growth are limited by the existing economic, technological and educational structure of the country. In 2002, only 7.75 million people, or 3.5% of the total population, were connected to a fixed telephone service, and the number of personal computer installations was only 2.5 million, or only 1 computer per 100 people (ITU, 2002b). From Figure 4.5, it is clear that most Internet users are not Internet subscribers. This indicates that most users access the Internet not from home but from work, school or an Internet café (*warnet*). There are no reliable statistics available on how many *warnet* are available in Indonesia or how many people actually access the Internet from them. However, it is clear that the growth of *warnet* has been phenomenal, much faster than the rise in subscriptions. For example, in Yogyakarta, there were 3 *warnet* at the end of 1996 and at least 31 by mid-2000 (Hill and Sen, 2002: 170). By the end of 2000, the industry estimated that there were 1,500 *warnet* operating in cities and towns across Indonesia (Indonesia Cyber Industry and Market Research and Analysis Team, 2001: 16), and in 2001 the number increased to 2,500 (Mengko, 2001).

These data show that the Internet in Indonesia has grown tremendously over the last eight years despite the limited government involvement. However, the data only show part of the overall story of the development of the Internet in Indonesia as will be discussed in the following sections.

#### 4.4 Early development of the Indonesian Internet<sup>41</sup>

The very early development of the Internet in Indonesia mostly involved non-commercial entities such as research groups and hobby groups. The most important research groups were: Joseph Luhukay at the University of Indonesia (UI) who pioneered the University of Indonesia Network (UINET) and the Inter-UNiversity NETWORK (UNINET); the National Research Council (DRN), led by Habibie, which developed a government research network called IPTEKNET (Science and Technology Network, *Ilmu Pengetahuan dan Teknologi Network*); and Onno Purbo at the Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB), who worked on a university network called AI3-NET (Asian Internets Interconnection Initiatives-Network). The hobbyists included people involved in developing proto-

---

<sup>40</sup> According to BPS, the total population of Indonesia in 2003 was 213,722,300, with a 1.5 per cent population growth per year.

<sup>41</sup> Much of the text in Sections 4.4 and 4.5 is based on the Internet case study research undertaken as part of the "Social Construction of Technology in Indonesian context" project. In this research project, the author acted as a junior researcher and was in charge of conducting the Internet case study research (see footnote #4).

technologies for the Indonesian Internet, which are the Bulletin Board System (BBS)<sup>42</sup> and the amateur packet radio.<sup>43</sup>

#### 4.4.1 UINET and UNINET

The first Indonesian connection to the 'Internet' was established in 1983 by Joseph Luhukay at the Department of Computer Science, University of Indonesia (UI), Jakarta, when he set up the first UUCP<sup>44</sup> link in the university to connect to the UUNet in the United States. From this first connection, Luhukay built the UINET, a network within the campus, and formally joined UUNet a year later. UUNet was a precursor of today's Internet. When UINET joined the UUNet in 1984, Indonesia became the first nation in Asia to be connected to the global Internet.

Luhukay had been introduced to Internet technology while doing research on the ARPANET in the United States. His choice of UUCP application, rather than TCP/IP, was influenced by his research experience abroad. Working in one of ARPANET networked computer laboratories gave Luhukay the unforgettably enjoyable experience of 'being networked', as clearly shown in his statement of 1997: "It [has been] approximately twenty years since the laboratory where I and my colleagues cheered and screamed as we were able to exchange messages with other universities on the west coast of the United States" (Luhukay, 1997). This experience influenced his outlook towards the technology of the Internet and induced him to develop the similar network in Indonesia.

His foreign experience also helped him to get US\$ 350,000 from the World Bank to fund an extension of the project in 1993. The project, UNINET, was meant to interconnect major universities in Indonesia, namely, UI, ITB, Bogor Agricultural Institute (IPB), Institute of Technology Surabaya (ITS), University of Gajah Mada (UGM) and University of Hasanuddin (UnHas).<sup>45</sup> Ideally, these major universities would be ready to be connected to the UNINET. UNINET would just have to give them free bandwidth and not have to take care of internal university infrastructures. However, none of these

---

<sup>42</sup> BBS is "a computer and associated software package which typically provides an electronic message database where people can log in and leave messages" (The Free On-line Dictionary of Computing, 2005).

<sup>43</sup> Amateur packet radio is defined as "the use of packet radio by amateurs to communicate between computers". Packet radio is "a complete amateur radio computer network with relays, mailboxes and other special nodes" (The Free On-line Dictionary of Computing, 2005).

<sup>44</sup> The Unix-to-Unix-Copy Protocol, or UUCP, is simpler than TCP/IP (see Chapter 2) and is the email and news programme developed in UNIX. It was created in 1976 by Mike Lesk at AT&T Bell Labs as part of a research project. UUCP later became the general name given to a network of mostly Unix computers. There are different names for it in different parts of the World. In North America it is often known as Usenet, in Europe as EUnet and in the UK as UKnet. It is largely a store-and-forward network, where a mail item is passed from machine to machine, often using dial-up lines (Meredith, 1999).

<sup>45</sup> As previously mentioned, Makassar is always exceptional in IT development — arguably because of its link to Habibie. In the case of UNINET, Makassar's public university, UnHas is also exceptional as it was the only university outside Java as well as the only university outside the big-five (UI, ITB, IPB, ITS and UGM) to be connected to the network.



universities had the capacity either to provide an infrastructure for networking or to maintain the connection. More problematically, to be connected to the Internet (UUNet) required costly long distance dial-up connections. The project that initially aspired to build multi universities connections to the Internet turned out to be an Internet network for UI alone, UINET, instead of UNINET. Nevertheless, a network between these universities was built, which allowed them to begin to communicate with each other within a wide area network (Barker et al., 2001).

Since the UNINET linked to UUNet by a UUCP connection using a 'store and forward' system, it had to dial in to UUNet in the United States using international long-distance connections to both send (store) and receive (forward) messages. For this connection, UNINET had a special arrangement with the state-owned telecommunication company, Indosat.<sup>46</sup> Indosat supported UNINET by allowing a discounted price for the connection, but it was still very expensive.<sup>47</sup> This inter-university network was phased out as the funding, mostly used for long distance connection fees, ran out (Barker et al., 2001), but the UINET remained.

#### 4.4.2 IPTEKNET

The idea of developing IPTEKNET was originated by Indonesia's technology *czar*, Baharudin Jusuf Habibie,<sup>48</sup> in 1986 after he attended a conference in the United States where he learned about the research networks modelled on NSFNET (National Science Foundation Network). Such a model fitted well his ambition to promote Indonesia's high-tech sector. This idea started to be translated into a project proposal in 1989.<sup>49</sup> In 1991, to get IPTEKNET started, Habibie used his position as Chair of the National Research Council (DRN) to allocate World Bank funding to the project.<sup>50</sup>

From 1991 to 1994, IPTEKNET was not connected to the Internet only connected local nodes. In 1994, the first connection to the Internet was made through DLR<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> D. Tjahjono, personal interviews by email, April-May 2001.

<sup>47</sup> At that time, the fee to send or receive just 2 Kb UUCP data was 3,500 Indonesian rupees, equivalent to US\$ 2.00.

<sup>48</sup> B. J. Habibie, a man who enjoyed President Suharto's patronage for more than twenty years, was Minister of Research, Science and Technology from 1978 to 1997. As Minister, Habibie appointed himself as the Chairman of the Indonesia National Research Council (DRN, *Dewan Riset Nasional*) as well as Chairman of the National Agency for Assessment and Application of Technology (BPPT, *Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi*). He was then appointed Vice-President of Indonesia and became interim President when Suharto was ousted in May 1998.

<sup>49</sup> Firman Siregar, a member of Habibie's staff at BPPT, translated Habibie's idea into implementation.

<sup>50</sup> Habibie allocated money from STAID (Science and Technology Aids for Industrial Development) programme. STAID was actually inappropriate for this project. This programme usually funds science or technological research projects that focus on supporting industrial development. However, as the chair of National Research Council, Habibie had the authority to allocate the budget to any type of research (Barker et al., 2001).

<sup>51</sup> Based on Onno W. Purbo's email with the subjectline: "Awal Sejarah Internet Indonesia", posted in [mastel-e-commerce@yahoogroups.com](mailto:mastel-e-commerce@yahoogroups.com), on 28 March 2001, at 07:38:09 a.m. GMT+07.

(*Deutschen Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt*, the Germany's Aeronautic and Space Centre) where Habibie had personal connections (Barker et al., 2001). In 1995, IPTEKNET was launched for limited public use. Running at 14.4 Kbps on a leased line, the Internet connection was made through GlobalOne in the United States. Bandwidths and connections were given freely to any research institute or university that wanted to be connected to IPTEKNET. However, partners had to provide the equipment and infrastructure by themselves. Most of the universities, with the exception of some major ones, failed to get a connection because their campus infrastructure was not ready for such technology, and they did not have sufficient funding for this. Although IPTEKNET succeeded in linking together Indonesia's largest universities, a lack of funding prevented planned developments to extend it to a second tier of institutions (Barker et al., 2001).

#### 4.4.3 ITB: AI3-NET

At Indonesia's oldest technical university, the Institute of Technology Bandung (ITB), efforts to establish a campus Internet network were rather informal. While a formal proposal to the Institute's Board failed to attract any funding (Barker et al., 2001), individual initiatives to develop Internet applications within the campus of ITB sprang up.

Groups in departments, such as student associations and hobby groups, launched various initiatives to make an Internet connection possible,<sup>52</sup> mostly focusing on the use of packet radio technology.<sup>53</sup> These activities did not deliver any significant result until 1993 when an Amateur Radio Club (ARC) member Suryono Adisoemarta,<sup>54</sup> who had just graduated from the University of Texas at Austin, successfully made the first 9.6 Kbps Internet connection using radio modem – the radio packet network – to IPTEKNET. In 1993, Onno Purbo, the founder of ARC, also came back to Indonesia after finishing his Ph.D. in Canada. With some ARC members he established a new hobby group focusing on a computer network named CNRG (Computer Network Research Group).<sup>55</sup> CNRG and Onno Purbo later became the most influential actors in the history of Internet development in Indonesia (Lim, 2003a).

---

<sup>52</sup> A. Agustian, personal interview, 6 October 2000.

<sup>53</sup> An ITB senior professor, Iskandar Alisyahbana, and his team commenced some experiments to build high-speed packet radio prototypes (Purbo, 1993: 4). A group of staff of the Department of Electrical Engineering (DEE) tried to develop low-speed packet radio prototypes. The Computer Centre of ITB worked on TCP/IP based campus wide network with possible connection over the radio. The ITB Inter-University Centre (PAU, *Pusat Antar Universitas*), Microelectronics division, conducted a research on an TCP/IP based IC design centre. And the members of the Amateur Radio Club (mostly students) kept working on the hardware prototypes for low-end users (Purbo, 1993: 5).

<sup>54</sup> When he was a student at the University of Texas at Austin, Adisoemarta set up the first Austin Amateur TCP/IP to Internet gateway, located in the Chemical and Petroleum Engineering building. This allowed the Austin TCP/IP community to exchange emails and files with amateurs in other TCP/IP networks around the world. It even allowed direct access to the Internet using amateur radio (UTARC, 2003).

<sup>55</sup> Based on Onno W. Purbo's email with a subject: "Awal Sejarah Internet Indonesia", posted in [mastel-e-commerce@yahoogroups.com](mailto:mastel-e-commerce@yahoogroups.com), on 28 March 2001, at 07:38:09 a.m. GMT+07.

Purbo and CNRG used what they called a ‘guerrilla’ strategy — a term used to describe the strategy of Indonesian fighters in the Independence war — in developing the Internet network.<sup>56</sup> Essentially this meant that they worked without much institutional support from above. CNRG’s main goal was to establish a secure connection to the global Internet. Purbo tried to establish such a connection to a node in Canada, where he had done his Ph.D, but ITB’s lack of infrastructure made it impossible (Purbo, 1996). Offers from other institutions such as UNINET and IPTEKNET were more likely alternatives, but they required a long-distance connection to Jakarta and dial-up would be too expensive (Purbo, 1996; Barker et al., 2001). CNRG’s solution was to use a packet radio link via LAPAN to IPTEKNET in Jakarta. CNRG’s choice to use radio was greatly influenced by the fact that many of the group’s members were also members of ITB’s Amateur Radio Club (ARC). The trouble with radio, however, was that it was very slow. Through a series of proposals and lobbying — often using ITB’s alumni network — they managed to get two other connections: one to IPTEKNET in mid-1994 via a leased-line donated by Telkom,<sup>57</sup> the other, a satellite connection to Japan in 1996, donated as part of the Asian Internet Infrastructure Initiative (AI3).

The leased-line connection to IPTEKNET enabled the ITB campus network to expand rapidly. From the Department of Electrical Engineering (DEE) administrative building, it expanded to other ITB buildings. One notable effort was the Yellow Cable Project of the DEE that wired almost half the campus.<sup>58</sup> However, the connection from IPTEKNET was slow, only 14.4 Kbps, and unstable.

An adequate Internet connection was achieved in 1996 when ITB obtained 1.5 Mbps (increased to 2 Mbps in 2000) ‘free’ bandwidth from the Japan Satellite Corporation (JSat) after being selected as a partner in the Widely Integrated Distributed Environment (WIDE) AI3 project.<sup>59</sup> This was quite an exciting moment for ITB. In being selected, ITB had competed with other research and academic institutions such as UI and BPPT. Being convinced that ITB had independently built a community network on its campus, and believing that ITB would function well as a hub for other Indonesian universities to connect to the Internet, Jun Murai<sup>60</sup> and Suguru Yamaguchi<sup>61</sup> from WIDE deliberately chose ITB to be the only partner in Indonesia.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> O. Purbo, personal interview, 12 November 2000; Z. Zamfarra, personal interview, 11 October 2000.

<sup>57</sup> One of the many ITB graduates who had been a great help to ITB was Suryatin Setiawan. He had graduated from the Department of Electronic Engineering and he was, at times, the chairman of the Research Centre on Information Technology at PT. Telkom.

<sup>58</sup> The Yellow Cable Project was initiated by Albarda, a lecturer of DEE, with the approval of and funding from the chair of DEE (Albarda, personal interview, 6 October 2000; A. Agustian, personal interview, 6 October 2000).

<sup>59</sup> Besides ITB, there were the Asian Institute of Technology (Thailand), Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Hong Kong), Temasek Polytechnic (Singapore), University Sains Malaysia, Advanced Science and Technology Institute (Philippines), Institute of Information Technology (Vietnam) and the University of Colombo (Sri Lanka).

<sup>60</sup> Jun Murai was pioneering the use of the Internet for the education world in Japan.

Having gone through various processes, and invested US\$ 50,000 to get this free bandwidth on an earth station, ISP licence and satellite operator licence, ITB was connected to the JCSat 3 (JSat owned satellite) and launched the network called AI3-Net. With the AI3 connection, Purbo began to see the possibility for a campus-wide network. With no funding available to interconnect all the Institute's buildings and trumpeting the spirit of 'mutual cooperation' (*gotong royong*), Purbo used lectures and word-of-mouth to get people interested. When they asked to be connected, CNRG would them through donation of some hardware (cables, etc.). This worked well and, in 1997, ITB became the first campus in Indonesia to be fully wired (Barker et al., 2001).

Having successfully wired the campus, Purbo continued to work on his broader vision: building a national educational network. Actively giving lectures and having his students (CNRG members) spread his words, Purbo successfully attracted many universities to get connected to the Internet through ITB. CNRG's experiments in developing cheap alternatives to connect to the Internet enabled ITB to offer minimum cost connection for these universities. They did not have to dial-up directly to AI3 Japan because they could link via ITB using packet radio connection, which was much cheaper than long-distance dial-up connections. In 2001, there were already 27 universities going online through the AI3Net network.

#### ***4.4.4 Hobbyists and proto Internet***

There were two kinds of hobby groups that played key roles in the early stage of the Internet development in Indonesia. The first being the group of people who were computer savvy, usually from the middle to upper classes and had had chances to witness the computer/IT development abroad. The second group consisted of those whose hobby was amateur radio. They came from a wide range of social classes, from lower to upper classes.

Bulletin Board System (BBS) was introduced to Indonesia in the early 1980s with the coming of BBS software and this technology became popular among the elite group of computer savvy people in Jakarta. The arrival of some foreigners — among them an

<sup>61</sup> Suguru Yamaguchi was the chair of AI3 Japan at that time (1996).

<sup>62</sup> Onno Purbo stated that other institutions such as UI and BPPT sent their representatives to Japan to do some lobbying in order to be selected as a partner. ITB, however, did not send a representative at all. Purbo believed that it was his personal correspondence with Jun Murai and Suguru Yamaguchi that enabled ITB to be selected as a partner. Purbo claimed that what he and CNRG did in developing the Internet community in ITB had greatly impressed Murai and Suguru (O. Purbo, personal interview, 12 November 2000). Other sources from ITB (A. Agustian, personal interview, 6 October 2000; Albarda, personal interview, 6 October 2000; I. Ahmad, personal interview, 8 October 2000) though, stated that the partnership with AI3 was made possible by a collective effort of ITB that involved various communications, actions and approaches made by the ITB community. Without singling out Purbo's effort, these sources said that Purbo's effort was just one of many efforts made by ITB.

American named Jim Filgo<sup>63</sup> — who brought the new applications, was a major driver for BBS gaining popularity among the local computer community (Hertadi, 1995). Collaboration between a foreigner and a local businessperson was effective in socialising a technology. From the mid-1980s until the early 1990s, many BBS centres emerged in Jakarta and Bandung (Bemonet, 2000). Users were inevitably part of the elite because of the need for costly equipment and a phone line.

In its development, BBS had gone up and down, since this technology very much relied on telephone access. In 1993, with the coming of BBS software that included an emailing programme (brought by a Dutch man) and interconnections between different BBS's interest peaked (Hertadi, 1995). The BBS community expanded significantly. The birth of ISP in 1994 subsequently shifted the BBS community towards the Internet.

Amateur packet radio was introduced to amateur radio users in 1987 by a senior member of the Indonesian Amateur Radio Association (ORARI) named Soebiakto (HamNet, 2000). By combining amateur radio with a computer, this technology allowed text-communication through the airwaves. Using two amateur radio stations owned by ORARI in Jakarta, amateur radio users established a BBS amateur packet radio. From one-way communication (single user/tasking), that enabled the central BBS to send announcements to all its members' computers, it developed two-way communications (multi users/tasking), that allowed members to send messages to a central relay connection (HamNet, 2000). In its development, the users often improved a technology using local or used components in order to make it work better. This character appeared as an inherited feature from amateur radio use during the Independence war. In the early 1990s, the amateur packet radio BBS started to be available for telephone modems and, in 1994, the largest BBS amateur packet radio joined the existing common telephone modem BBS to create a wider amateur radio BBS network (HamNet, 2000). Through the efforts of Purbo, in 1997, the Amateur Packet Radio Network (AMPNet) was created, which simultaneously moved the amateur packet radio from BBS to the Internet. The amateur packet radio Internet community still exists but is no longer expanding. Nonetheless, Purbo's groups at ITB — ARC and CNRG — continue to socialise packet radio as a cost-effective means for universities and high schools to connect to the Internet.

#### 4.5 Private Development: ISPs

While the Internet grew in Indonesia through research and academic networks as well as among hobbyists (BBS and amateur radio), in the United States this technology started to become commercialised with the establishment of the Commercial Internet Exchange in 1995. The first dial-up Internet Service Providers, CompuServe, American Online and

---

<sup>63</sup> Jim Filgo was an international consultant who worked for BKKBN (*Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Nasional*, National Family Planning Coordinating Board). He lived in Pondok Labu Area, Jakarta.

Prodigy, started their businesses that year. Following this trend, in Indonesia the commercial Internet also came into being, mainly established by the 'Habibie kids', a generation of foreign and locally trained engineers who benefited from Habibie's grand vision of a high-tech Indonesia.

#### *4.5.1 The first ISPs*

PT Indo Internet (Indonet), the very first commercial ISP, was established in September 1994 in Jakarta by Sanjaya, an engineer who had worked at IBM (Infokom, 2000). This was based on a strong business alliance that included both state-owned telecommunications companies (Telkom and Indosat) and one of the President Suharto foundations, the Supersemar Foundation. With this strategic alliance, and the absence of any guidelines about ISP licensing, Indonet could negotiate to get permission to operate. Becoming the first player in the commercial playground, Indonet was well positioned to be a 'tool' for the Suharto-Telkom-Indosat coalition to monopolise Indonesia's ISP business. For the first two years of its operation, this strategy worked well. However Indonet's market share then declined significantly once ISP licenses became more freely available in 1996-1997 (Barker et al., 2001).

The second ISP in Indonesia was PT Rahardjasa Internet (Radnet), which launched its services in Jakarta in May 1995. The three principals of Radnet actually established their company in July 1994, before Indonet. However, they immediately "encountered obstacles due to government confusion over precisely which department had authority over the Internet and what procedures had to be followed before ISPs could legally commence offering services to the public" (Hill and Sen, 1997: 73). Despite the slow start caused by political manoeuvrings, in the long run Radnet managed to build a larger subscriber base than its rival, Indonet (Barker et al., 2001).

Melsa-i-Net, the third ISP, was launched in Bandung by Rully Harbani, a BBS hobbyist and an electrical engineering student at ITB. Initially, Harbani set up this company as a small commercial Internet email exchange and BBS. Later, in 1995, with financial backing from his family, he developed it into an ISP. Harbani cooperated with two of his ITB friends in running the business, and all three were known as smart students from high-class backgrounds. Unlike the two first ISPs, Melsa-i-Net was started by the younger generation. It was one of the first of many such companies started by smart young technophiles with financial help from their parents, a large investor, or from a rich youngster supporting his or her smart 'techy' friends. Such alliances provided the model for many later ISPs and small dotcoms that emerged during 1997-2000 (Barker et al., 2001).

#### *4.5.2 State-owned ISPs*

Latecomers in the ISP business tended to be owned and operated by state-owned companies. In the early 1996, the national postal service, PT Pos Indonesia, set up W-Net (*Wasantara* Network) as part of the National Information Infrastructure outlined in the

Nusantara-21 national project. It offered Internet services initially in the high-volume provinces and eventually spread throughout the country, with local nodes in every provincial capital and other major cities. By doing so, W-Net became the largest network of all the ISPs. Despite the size of its network, W-Net was notorious for its poor connections and limited access lines.<sup>64</sup>

Indosat, a national telecommunications service provider, launched IndosatNet in 1996. It offered an adequate number of access lines and a relatively speedy connection compared to other ISPs. Using its telecommunications business network, Indosat was successful in capturing corporate subscribers. In order to maintain their relationship with this company, Indosat's partners and clients tend to use this ISP. Technically and socially stronger than other ISPs, in just two years Indosat had become the dominant ISP in Indonesia.

The national telecommunications company, PT Telkom (PT Telekomunikasi Indonesia Tbk), finally jumped into the business in 1998 by setting up the Telkomnet. Built on Telkom's monopoly as the domestic telephone provider, besides an ordinary Internet subscription, Telkomnet also offered an Internet connection as part of a fixed telephone service called TelkomNet Instant. Unlike a regular connection, users did not have to subscribe to TelkomNet Instant to be able to use its connection. To be connected to the Internet using TelkomNet, a user just had to dial a special number '080989999' and login with a generic user name, 'telkomnet@instan', and password, 'telkom'. A connection fee was included in the monthly telephone bill. By piggybacking its service, TelkomNet successfully drew subscribers away from other ISPs.

By opening up the Internet commercially, by the end of 1995 there were some 16 ISPs, including 5 commercial ISPs in addition to the research/university ISPs, 20,000 users and 640 Kbps of international Internet connectivity (Soegijoko et al., 1996). By May 1996, the number of licensed ISPs increased to 22 (Hill and Sen, 1997: 73). These ISPs formed an association, APJII, through which the government could negotiate with the industry. By the end of 1996, about 25,000 of the 100,000 estimated Internet users in Indonesia were using commercial providers (ITU, 2002a: 10). Many believed that the actual number of Internet users was much higher since each account could be used collectively. From 1996 to 2000 the number of ISPs mushroomed. At the beginning of 2001, there were some 150 licensed ISPs, of which about 60 were actually providing a service and over 150 Mbps of international bandwidth (ITU, 2002a: 10). In 2002, the

---

<sup>64</sup> There was a story about someone who lived in Tarakan (East Kalimantan) who wanted to get connected to the Internet and found out that the only ISP available in Tarakan was just W-Net. He came to the impressively colourful W-Net branch office located at the Tarakan post office to register. He filled out the registration form, and afterwards he was told that he would be called to know about the status of his subscription. Not long after his visit to that office, he got a call saying that his registration was rejected since there were already too many subscribers. Later he found out that the reason behind this rejection was that Tarakan W-Net only had two telephone lines (based on SK's story, sent in [Genetika@yahoogroups.com](mailto:Genetika@yahoogroups.com) mailing list on 5 April 2001, 06:24 p.m. GMT+07). Ironically, Tarakan is just 30 minutes away from Malaysia where the Internet access is much speedier.

Internet traffic increased to 670 Mbps of bandwidth, and 179 licensed ISPs although only 68 were active (P3TIE, 2002: 12).

Despite the large number of ISPs, the market was dominated by a handful of companies. The largest pay-for-use ISP was Telkomnet with just over 100,000 subscribers out of the roughly 400,000 total of Indonesian subscribers at the end of 2000 (ITU, 2002a: 10). Many of these users were utilising TelkomNet's Instant service. The second largest ISP was Indosat with 40,000 dial-up subscribers at the end of 2000 (ITU, 2002a: 10).

#### 4.6 Civil Society Driven Development: *Warnet*

With the arrival of private commercial ISPs, the Internet had attained a public presence by 1995. However, the boom of ISPs in Indonesia had not led to the Internet being widely used. It was still only used by certain social classes, namely those people who were able to pay both telephone pulse and internet subscription fees, had telephone lines and personal computers.

The international issue of the digital divide pushed the government of Indonesia to establish a national Internet programme through a loan from the World Bank. However, the low telephone penetration, low GDP, lack of stable infrastructure and the economic crisis in 1997 led to the collapse of both the commercial Internet and the government's project. The growth in ISP subscribers was unsatisfactory and the national programmes were stuck at a low level.

An alternative form of commercial Internet that survived the crisis was the *warnet*, or the Internet café, which could potentially reach even the lower classes as it emerged to offer low-cost Internet access. *Warnet*, shortened from 'warung Internet', emerged in 1996 (Lim, 2002a, 2003c), and since then has become the major access point for Indonesian Internet users all across the country. While the wording as well as the concept of *warnet* could be traced to the term *wartel*<sup>65</sup> (a telecommunication café), the retailing concept adapted in *warnet* is modelled on the computer rental shop, which was very popular in Indonesia in the late 1980s. How the *warnet* has developed and been popularised will be outlined in the following historical narrative on the *warnet* development.

---

<sup>65</sup> *Wartel* is an abbreviation of *warung telekomunikasi*, meaning "telecommunications kiosk". The concept of "*wartel*" was coined in 1984 by the Kawitel (Chairman of Telecommunication Area) VIII Nusa Tenggara, Benny S. Nasution. This idea emerged as a solution to the need of telecommunication service points in areas far away from central telecommunication facilities. The term *warung* is also perceived as a good word to neutralise the extravagancy of the word "telecommunication" (*telekomunikasi*).



#### 4.6.1 Pioneering warnet

While it is unclear who coined the term *warnet* and created the *warnet* for the first time,<sup>66</sup> the search for the oldest *warnet* brings us to a small town of Bogor.<sup>67</sup> 'Waroeng Bonet', was the name Michael Sunggiardi, an IT entrepreneur and BBS hobbyist,<sup>68</sup> gave to a simple small Internet café he established in January 1996. This *warnet* was created from a computer rental shop he had run since 1981.<sup>69</sup> He revealed that the idea of setting up an Internet café came when he sat down at an Internet café in Singapore.<sup>70</sup> At that time, router technology to share a connection was not yet available, thus there was only one computer at the rental shop that had an Internet connection. At first, Sunggiardi named this Internet café the BoNet Café. BoNet came from the name of his ISP, a subsidiary ISP of Indonet (Sunggiardi, 2000). In addition to Internet access, the café also provided some snacks such as fried banana (*pisang goreng*) for free. Later, Sunggiardi changed the name to Waroeng Bonet since he felt that the term 'café' sounded too luxurious and would prevent people from middle and lower classes using the service. He preferred the term '*warung*' (waroeng = warung, oe is u in old Indonesian spelling) instead as it sounded more egalitarian. As the business grew, Sunggiardi opened more *warnet* in Bogor and expanded his business to Jakarta in 1997.<sup>71</sup>

Following Waroeng Bonet, in the second half of 1996, several *warnet* opened in major cities in Indonesia. In Surabaya, in July 1996, the CCF Internet café was opened in the French Cultural Centre (Hill and Sen, 1997: 199). By the end of 1996, at least three Internet cafés were established in Jakarta, the capital city: the Cyber Corner café at Twilite Café in Kemang, and two Toko Gunung Agung cafés at Taman Anggrek Mall and Mega Mall Pluit (Hill and Sen, 1997: 214). In Yogyakarta, there were already three *warnet* open in September 1996 (Hill and Sen, 1997: 68-69): *Maga*, *GAMA-net* and *Pujayo.C@fe.Net*, plus one *warposnet* (*warung pos* Internet or Internet post kiosk) set up by W-Net.

W-Net, as mentioned in the previous section, only began offering dial-in services in early 1996. Later in the same year, PT. Pos Indonesia launched a *warposnet* business

---

<sup>66</sup> Zamfarra from CNRG claimed that the pioneers in this business were him, Onno Purbo and his group (Z. Zamfarra, personal interview, 11 October 2000). However, before they built their first *warnet* in 1997, some *warnet* were already operating in Bogor, Jakarta and Yogyakarta, as noted in this section.

<sup>67</sup> Hill and Sen (1997) speculate that the first *warnet* was established in Yogyakarta in September 1996. However, as can be seen in this section, Waroeng Bonet was established before the Yogyakarta *warnet*.

<sup>68</sup> M. Sunggiardi, personal interviews by email, 23-24 November 2000.

<sup>69</sup> M. Sunggiardi, personal interviews by email, 23-24 November 2000.

<sup>70</sup> Sunggiardi was in Singapore to attend a meeting with a manager of Conner, the hard disk company from the United States; its Asia head office is located in Singapore (M. Sunggiardi, personal interviews by email, 23-24 November 2000).

<sup>71</sup> M. Sunggiardi, personal interviews by email, 23-24 November 2000.

by establishing *warnet* in post-offices. "It was part of an ambitious national strategy to supply Internet access in all Indonesian provinces, paralleling conventional postal services" (Hill and Sen, 1997: 69). From the government's point of view, W-Net's attraction was that it could support efforts to 'maintain national stability' by controlling the flow of information at the point of access. After setting up some trial *warposnet* in 1996, in 1997 W-Net started to wire all the main postal offices in the capitals of the 27 provinces and in 51 other towns. By establishing the *warposnet* network, W-Net manifested its ambition to control Internet access territorially. However, it was not a successful business. With their poor performance (as previously mentioned, W-Net connections were slower than other ISPs), W-Net cafés could not compete with other *warnet* in urban settings in Java where connection were generally better. Although having no real competitors outside of Java, the number of potential users in these areas was less promising than on Java. In early 2002 as 41 W-Net branch offices were closed as a result of a major financial and management restructuring in PT Pos Indonesia, *warposnet* in these offices were also closed (Detik.com, 2 April 2002).

#### 4.6.2 *Socialising warnet*

While the *warnet* industry began in 1996, the proliferation of *warnet* throughout the country multiplied exponentially only from 1997 onwards. While who was the founder of *warnet* is arguable, the Internet technology used through the *warnet* was clearly popularised and socialised by Onno Purbo (Lim 2002a, 2003a) and the chain of *warnet* called Pointer, short for *Pojok Internet* (Internet Corner).<sup>72</sup>

Established by Purbo and his colleagues/students at CNRG in 1997, Pointer emerged with the ambition of getting as many Indonesians connected to the Internet as possible. As in the ITB network, they did so by working around the telephone network, using radio and VSAT instead. Through a makeshift form of franchising and with financial support from a domestic venture capital firm, Sarana Jabar Ventura,<sup>73</sup> Pointer established numerous *warnet* throughout Bandung and Jakarta.

Apart from Pointer's business aims, Onno Purbo, supported by Zilmy Zamfarra from Pointer and Michael Sunggiardi from BoNet as well as some followers of Purbo, vigorously socialised the *warnet* model all over the country by what Purbo called 'guerrilla, grassroots' efforts. They held many free workshops on the *warnet* business and wrote and spread articles about *warnet* in cyberspace. These efforts were fruitful,

---

<sup>72</sup> Zilmy Zamfarra from Pointer claimed that only he could be seen as the pioneer of the development of *warnet* technology in Indonesia, although he considered that Onno Purbo had also helped in pioneering this technology (Z. Zamfarra, personal interview, 11 October 2000).

<sup>73</sup> The Sarana Jabar Ventura is owned by Yani Rodyat who graduated from the DEE-ITB and was a close friend of the former DEE-ITB chair, Tati Mengko. Rodyat is also the sister of Arifin Panigoro, an ITB alumni who was an outspoken leading figure of Megawati Sukarnoputri's party, the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI). The Sarana Jabar Ventura has been a real partner of DEE and a major source of capital for many IT projects ran by the DEE lecturers and students (various personal interviews with DEE lecturers and graduates, 2002).

resulting in an extensive growth in the number of *warnet* in Indonesia, particularly in urban areas of Java and Bali. Since 1997 the Internet has become affordable for wider segments of society and has been developing tremendously in the last seven years. In 1997 there were approximately 100 *warnet* across the country, and by the end of 2001 the number exceeded 2,500 (Hardjito, 2002).

#### **4.6.3 Warnet association**

As the number of *warnet* grew, Onno Purbo set up a mailing list for *warnet* owners and managers, called the Asosiasi-Warnet mailing list ([asosiasi-warnet@itb.ac.id](mailto:asosiasi-warnet@itb.ac.id), later changed to [asosiasi-warnet@yahoogroups.com](mailto:asosiasi-warnet@yahoogroups.com)). What started as a mailing list became a virtual organisation to discuss *warnet*-related issues. However, later it developed into a space for discussions on a wide number of topics, ranging from technical computer-related problems to topics such as the monopoly of power of the state-owned company and telecommunications regulations/policies. The list had its own motto: 'the association is virtual, the fight is real'.

As a need to have a real and legal forum still existed, in May 2000 the active members of this mailing list met and legally established an association, AWARI (*Asosiasi Warnet Indonesia*, Association of Internet Kiosks in Indonesia) (Awari 2001). Although all agenda items were still arranged through virtual space, resistance to the state monopoly (Telkom) accelerated through the discussions and conversations using the list. This ultimately led to the creation of a non-virtual project of building an alternative to the state run system. The project manifest itself in a boycott of using the telephone as a protest against an increase in the telephone tariff, followed by a street demonstration, a protest against a draft regulation by the Minister of Communications about licensing the Internet industry, and other resistance actions that resulted in some positive outcomes. Meanwhile, at the local neighbourhood and city levels, unaffiliated *warnet* associations also began to emerge in response to two needs: to prevent price competition and to organise the sharing of bandwidth (Barker et al., 2001). While perhaps modest or narrow in focus, AWARI reveals how the creation of an open-ended bulletin board was transformed into a successful project to resist state control and maintain alternative avenues of access to the Internet as a principal means for social interaction and identity formation.

#### **4.6.4 Onno Purbo and the community-based Internet network**

After successfully wiring the ITB campus and subsequently building a basis for Indonesian university networks through the AI3-Net as well as building and socialising packet radio Internet, Onno Purbo focused his activities more on promoting 'Internet for education' and the *warnet* (as will be explained in Section 4.7.2). In 2000, he left the campus and resigned his position as a lecturer in ITB but continues to socialise the Internet mostly by speaking at various workshops and disseminating his writings and presentations (PPT powerpoint files) in cyberspace as well as in physical space; Purbo

distributes the CDs containing his articles for free. Since his 'forced' resignation,<sup>74</sup> Purbo always declares himself as 'an ordinary person' (*orang biasa*), 'ex-professor' (*bekas professor*) or 'ex-civil servant' (*bekas pegawai negeri*) — the latter two imply a desire of being perceived of as being victimised and radical at the same time — and as an 'Internet guru' or 'IT expert'.

Purbo believes that "a self-financed, bottom-up Internet infrastructure is a key to achieving a knowledge-based society in developing countries" (Purbo, 2003). Purbo sees the Indonesian government as an obstacle to building the mass infrastructure of the Internet and believes that communities can build their own infrastructures without any help from the government. Purbo uses the terms 'guerrilla', 'rebel', 'grassroots', and 'democracy' to propagate his ideas. With this type of attitude, Purbo easily appears 'radical'. He easily became a symbol of resistance and a hero for the young generation in Indonesia, especially those who are interested in information technology.

Purbo appeals not only to radical youngsters. His use of some religious terms also makes him appealing to religious communities. When asked about why he chooses to work on Internet community-based development, he always says, 'to be rewarded in heaven' (*mendapatkan pahala di surga*). When asked about how to be successful or how to gain fame, he always answers, 'Just do more deeds and you will get blessings and rewards' (*terus saja beramal, rizki dan pahala pasti datang*). Purbo's statements are frequently quoted by members of his groups (ARC and CNRG) and his followers.

Beyond spilling out religiously sounding statements, Purbo shows his religiosity by initiating efforts to build an Internet infrastructure for Muslim communities by propagating the idea of PesantrenNet. Purbo gives lectures and talks at *pesantren*, Islamic educational centres. He works together with religious leaders to get more Muslims connected to the Internet by establishing *warnet*-type points of Internet access at *pesantren*. Muslim communities, including fundamentalist ones, welcome Onno's proposal. For many Muslims, being connected to the Internet is a symbol of embracing modernity. It is an antidote to the allegation that Islam is a backward religion that is not compatible with modernity.

Beside PesantrenNet, Purbo and other *warnet* pioneers also promote a community-based Internet network that is called 'RT/RW-Net'. The network is built using wireless (radio packet Internet) connection. It can connect 6 houses with 8 connection ports. Purbo and his groups modified the specifications for the network to use some recycled elements, such as empty tin cans, to minimise the cost of equipment. Despite the spirited efforts of Purbo and his groups in promoting this idea, most Indonesian Internet users are not ready to invest in equipment. They prefer to use the Internet from their campus or their workplaces, or they go to a *warnet* instead.

---

<sup>74</sup> There are different stories about Purbo's resignation. Purbo himself (in personal correspondence by email) claimed that it was a forced resignation, other sources say otherwise. However, this is not critical to the purpose of this chapter.

The vision of Purbo, through this community-based type of network, is to get ordinary people from lower classes engaged in the information society. Calling this network 'Rebel-Net', Purbo always claims that there is no other country in the world that could build such a wide-scale network without any support from the government or foreign-loans. Moreover, he emphasises, all this is accomplished against suppression from the government and threats from Telkom. In various international forums, Purbo has impressed international audiences by declaring how successful the Rebel-Net is, and how this network has empowered 'small people' (*orang kecil*). In actuality, though, most of those who are connected to the Rebel-Net are IT persons: the middle-class youngsters. Observably, the network is used to empower these youngsters rather than ordinary people from lower classes. Still, there is truth in what Purbo says, historically the Internet in Indonesia was developed mostly by non-state actors and was private and civil society driven. Whether Rebel-Net is successful in empowering society or not, unquestionably Purbo is successful in propagating his ideas about how the Internet should work and be developed. His perceptions, which are embedded in his statements, have become 'ideologies' of the Internet in Indonesia. While Indonesians perceive Purbo, as he perceives himself, as a leading figure in the Internet development and as a technology innovator, Onno Purbo was, and still is, actually the social 'enactor' (Rip, 2004) who tries to construct scenarios of progress to be made and identified obstacles that must be overcome. He emphasises the positive aspects of his choices of technology (e.g. *warnet*, Rebel-Net) and works through an illusion of the government's suppression and control of Telkom. His ways of enacting the Internet may be more important than the technology itself. His values are embedded in the processes of introducing the new technology, which supposedly are based on unstructured experience. Undoubtedly, Purbo's behaviour and values (and that of his groups) have influenced how society goes through the process of "learning technology", that is how society adopts and adapts to innovations in technology (Rip and Kemp, 1998: 138).

#### 4.7 Warnet – Up, Close and Personal

An understanding of the social dynamics of the Indonesian Internet should include an understanding as to how the *warnet* becomes a context where all kind of social and cultural experiences intermingle. As in any other Internet café in another countries, to use the *warnet* does not require computer ownership or an ISP personal subscription. Access is instead rented by the hour or minute. However, what does differentiate *warnet* from a generic Internet café is that the *warnet* is attached to the historical socio-cultural setting of Indonesian life. *Warnet* is not only a point of Internet access, it is also the result of a transformation and localisation of Internet technology. *Warnet* is an Indonesian Internet. The Internet within the form of *warnet* is a media that is "continuous with and embedded in other social spaces" within everyday "social structures and relations that they may transform but cannot escape into a self-enclosed cyberian apartness" (Miller and Slater, 2000: 5).

#### 4.7.1 *The physical sites of popular Internet access*

The term *warnet*, an abbreviation of ‘*warung* Internet’, is rooted in the term ‘*warung*’ which refers to a very simple place where people from the lower-middle and lower classes buy snacks or meals and congregate with friends or family while eating.<sup>75</sup> *Warung* (see Figure 4.6) can be permanent or non-permanent.



**Figure 4.6** *The traditional warung*  
Source: Author's photo, 2001.

Permanent ones can physically be located in the front part of a house, usually in an erstwhile guest room. Alternatively, they may be built as a room extension in the front yard or on the street. The non-permanent ones consist of movable kiosks covered by a plastic tent. Many *warung* have only one long table and one long bench. However, sometimes the *warung* can be larger, allowing them to have more than one table. In some *warung* one would find people sitting on the floor (*lesehan*) and eating from short tables. The *lesehan* type tends to be more family-oriented. The most famous eating street with the *lesehan* type of *warung* is perhaps Malioboro Street in the centre of Yogyakarta.

In the traditional type of *warung*, besides *lesehan*, another specific element is *krepyak*, the bamboo curtain, which is very common and used to cover the front side of the *warung*. This *krepyak* has two functions, first for sun-protection and second to give a sense of privacy by shielding the people inside from the public view.

The physical appearance of the *warung* is substantially adapted by the *warnet*. The physical location of some *warnet* follows that of the *warung*: in the front part of a house. Wood and bamboo also dominate the materials used to construct and culturally represent a *warung* feeling for many *warnet* in Indonesia, particularly in Bandung. The

---

<sup>75</sup> Sometimes people misuse the term *warung* by calling a small snack or cigarette stall a *warung*. The fundamental issue is whether one can sit and eat something (then it is a *warung*), or whether one has to stand and buy (then it cannot be called a *warung*).

*krepyak* is commonly used either as a window cover (sun protection) or as a partition that separates each computer in a small space of room (see Figure 4.7).



**Figure 4.7** *The interior of warnet (JoyNet in Bandung)*  
Source: Author's photo, 2001

The *lesehan* idea of a *warung* is commonly adapted in the physical structure of a *warnet*. According to *warnet* owners, many *warnet* in Bandung (47%<sup>76</sup>) offer *lesehan* type of lounges because users favour this type. The *lesehan* type permits the users to access the Internet while sitting on the floor with the computer's monitor on a low table. The *lesehan* type is most popular among teenagers. Some *warnet* provide *lesehan* lounges consisting of three or four computers which a group can hire all exclusively for certain duration. This gives a sense of closeness as well as group privacy.

In Bandung, in 1998-2000, *lesehan* became such a trend that *warnet* would put the word '*lesehan*' in their banners or advertisements to attract more costumers. On the banner of Feliz, a *warnet* in Jalan Dago, for example, it was written, "High speed connection 256 Kbps, Pentium, AC, *lesehan* provided." The combination of the local sense of *lesehan* and the modern comfort of high-speed connections (large bandwidth), latest computer technology and air-conditioning (AC) room was way to popularise the *warnet*.

However, as *warung* in contemporary Indonesian cities do not always appear 'traditional' — some *warung* can appear very modern, with fancy contemporary look or plain functional design — so do *warnet*. Some *warnet*, especially in Jakarta, have a very modern look with neon signs and metallic fixtures. Some *warnet* in Bandung and Bali have painted their walls in pastel colours or added fancy graffiti and named their *warnet*

<sup>76</sup> 16% of *warnet* offer *lesehan* type seating only, 53% offer no *lesehan* type (normal chairs only) and 31% offer a choice (based on a field survey in Bandung by Lim and Dwiarta, 1 August–14 October 2002).

after the dominant colour of the walls such as Blue Internet in Denpasar, Bali, the Biru (blue) *warnet* in Setiabudhi street, Bandung and the Birunet in Gegerkalong street, Bandung, all of which are blue. In Yogyakarta, generally, *warnet* tend to look more functional rather than fancy.

*Warnet* can also be very simple. Some only consist of one room with four computers hooked to the Internet, no partition, no fancy table. Some *warnet* choose to have a functional design. Some mega-*warnet*, i.e. *warnet* with more than 50 computers, only have one large hall divided into smaller booths (partitioned).

Apart from the physical appearance, for some, erecting a building for a modern technology business is not really detached from local cultural practices. Just like building other social spaces, establishing a *warnet* too to appropriate cultural emblems and practices. As in other businesses, 'success' or 'failure' in the *warnet* business could be related to cultural (ethno-religious) appropriations. One example of this comes from a *warnet* in Denpasar. Since its launch on 14 May 2001, the *warnet* had various problems, the biggest being in May 2002 when one of the owners misused the assets without the permission of the other owners, resulting in the business crashing. In September 2003, the *warnet* was revived with a new look, a new design, newly painted, new computers, and this time the launch of the *warnet* was accompanied by a set of rituals (*selamatan*), *melaspas* and *mendem pedagingan*, to ensure that the business would not be troubled again. These rituals were meant to protect the *warnet* from 'underground creatures' and to bestow and store spiritual energy in the physical housing of the *warnet*.

Such *warung* adoption and cultural appropriation in their physical design and symbolism can be superficial. Overall, the physical adoption of elements of the *warung* is only one, albeit an important one, of the attempts to anchor the *warnet* in Indonesian culture. To enable the linkages to be fully realised, social networks based on cultural traditions must also flourish in and beyond the built environment of the *warnet*.

#### 4.7.2 *Social network and social space*

Beyond its physical attributes, the *warnet* is culturally entrenched in the traditional social network formation that has existed for a long time. In other words, it is a *warung*-like network. As traditional food outlets, *warung* is an important social and culinary focus for most Indonesians (Rigg, 1996). The existence of *warung* in a neighbourhood is very important, especially for lower-middle and lower classes of people. For a city or a village, the *warung* is simultaneously a point of commerce, a meeting point and an information network for households in a neighbourhood. Not only a place to buy or to eat, the *warung* is also the place for people to chat and to gain and spread information, including the most popular form of information spreading, gossip.

The *warung* is a place to talk about various things from the price of meals to business matters, from love lives to politics. It is public yet altogether private. *Warung* and *warung*-like places such as *pasar* (traditional markets) are among the places that are potentially more civic than others. The *warung* take on a role as social spaces or 'civic



spaces', "those spaces in which people of different origins and walks of life can co-mingle without overt control by government, commercial or other private interests, or *de facto* dominance by one group over another" (Douglass et al., 2002: 346). It is like the role of the old-fashion coffee shops in North America and Europe where people are mostly free to spend time and engage in conversation at reasonable cost and with limited commercial insistence. It also parallels the public bath in Japan and Korea where all people in a community would gather not only to bathe but also to engage in conversation (Douglass, 1993). More than functioning as a civic space, *warung* can also reproduce micro-civic spaces. The conversations and dialogues that are created in *warung* are brought to other communities. Markets, families, working-spaces and paddy fields, all become civic space nodes where the information from the *warung* is brought to points of social engagement. Thus, *warung* and these points together create a network of information flows that reach far beyond the nodal sites themselves.

With the rapid influence of modernisation and 'globalisation' that traps people in hyper-real lifestyles, much of the urban middle-class no longer has an opportunity to go to *warung* or *warung*-like places. The habit of going to *warung* is replaced by frequent visits to fast food restaurants and shopping malls. Such places do not provide spaces for dialogues or the privacy to talk freely for any length of time. Most such interpersonal exchanges that happen in such spaces are commodified, inhibited and commercialised.

In such a situation, the *warnet* emerges as a re-incarnation or a contemporary form of *warung*, and has a more engaging social atmosphere and is more convivial than its predecessor, the *wartel*, *warung telekomunikasi* or telecommunication centre.<sup>77</sup> While people can access the Internet from other places like home, office, or university, *warnet* account for approximately 45-60% of total Internet users.<sup>78</sup> As an entry point to cyberspace, they provide spaces for dialogue and accessing information that is substantially free from the intervention of the state and other dominant parties such as parents or teachers.

As a physical space, the *warnet* is also one kind of social space. Accessing the Internet from *warnet*, unlike connecting from home, office or public library, is a direct form of social engagement. While sitting by the computer in *warnet*, the users also interact physically both with the *warnet* physical space and with other users. Some, who want to enjoy accessing the Internet together with friends would choose the *warnet* with private *lesehan* lounge where they can be relax by sitting on the floor and sharing some interesting URLs<sup>79</sup> or listening to the same MP3<sup>80</sup> songs. In JoyNet, a *warnet* in Jalan

---

<sup>77</sup> The form of *wartel* inhibits its from being social as usually a *wartel* has no common room and consists of very small booths where a person who makes a call can hardly sit down.

<sup>78</sup> There are different figures for *warnet* users. It was 58% according to Mars-e survey in June 2000 and was 60%, according to a survey done by Swa and Mark Plus magazine in November 2000. AC Nielsen's figures are 50% in 2000 and 64% in 2004.

<sup>79</sup> URL (Uniform Resource Locator) is "an address that specifies the location of a file on the Internet" (Florida State University Library, 2005).

Dago in the northern part of Bandung, customers can reserve such a lounge in advance, either by email or by phone.

Besides its public-ness, the *warnet* can also be private. For those who want personal privacy, *warnet*<sup>81</sup> offer partitioned private spaces where the users can have their own highly secured space, ideal for those who want to have private conversations in chat rooms or want to access pornographic websites or sites with forbidden (before May 1998) political ideologies.

Besides physical privacy, the new form of privacy made possible by chat rooms is of particular importance. It enables young people to gain more autonomy from their parents and the older generation than they have in offline space, especially concerning social relations between the sexes (Slama, 2002). When asked about why they engage in and like Internet chatting, the common answer is 'looking for friends' (*cari teman*). However, what is so neutrally described as 'friends' usually means the opposite sex. Many chatters said they saw no reason for chatting with the same sex as they can do that freely in physical space. Some also hope to find a serious partner (*jodoh*) through chat rooms.

Among chatters, a person one has intimate chats with is called a *gebetan*. "Have you got a *gebetan*?" is chitchat often heard in *warnet*, referring to a major criterion for whether chats are successful or not. Most *warnet* users are aware of the possibility that some of their online *gebetan* may want to meet offline. Based on the author's observations, readiness for blind dates among Bandung, Jakarta and Yogyakarta chatters is actually quite high.<sup>82</sup> Having considered switching a relationship from online to offline leads most chatters to chat within limited local geographical spheres. Among the busiest Indonesian chatrooms are geographically based communities, such as #jakarta and #bandung (Lim, 2002b).

Beside such relationships, chatters also use the Internet as a tool for '*curhat*', literally meaning 'to pour out one's heart'.<sup>83</sup> For young Internet users, there are many problems to discuss online: problems with parents, teachers, or even boyfriends/girlfriends. Like chatting in general, most *curhat* takes place between the sexes. Most chatters recognise some advantages in online *curhat* compared to

<sup>80</sup> MP3 is the file extension for MPEG (Moving Picture Expert Group), audio layer 3. "Layer 3 is one of three coding schemes (layer 1, layer 2 and layer 3) for the compression of audio signals. Layer 3 uses perceptual audio coding and psychoacoustic compression to remove all superfluous information (more specifically, the redundant and irrelevant parts of a sound signal. The stuff the human ear doesn't hear anyway). Because MP3 files are small, they can easily be transferred across the Internet. Controversy arises when copyrighted songs are sold and distributed illegally through websites. On the other hand, musicians can use this technology to distribute their own songs from their own websites to their listeners, thus eliminating the need for record companies. Costs to the consumer would decrease, and profits for the musicians would increase" (Infowest, 2005).

<sup>81</sup> 4% of *warnet* in Bandung offer partitioned rooms only, 4% are open space *warnet* (no partitioned rooms) and 92% offer both choices (based on a field survey done in Bandung by Lim and Dwiarta, 1 August – 14 October 2002).

<sup>82</sup> This is confirmed by Martin Slama's (2002) research on the Internet use among Indonesian youth in Jakarta.

<sup>83</sup> Slama (2002) also found a similar '*curhat*' culture among the youth in Yogyakarta.

conventional offline *curhat*. As stated by one chatter, “Well, if I’m in a bad mood I tend to *curhat* in the chat rooms. If I *curhat* with a stranger, it is impossible that he/she will tell people who know me. That is a nice thing of *curhat* by chatting.”<sup>84</sup> The possibility to be anonymous in chat rooms makes it possible for the young users to circumvent the social fields where gossip usually prevails, such as in a peer group, the family or the neighbourhood.

Internet privacy thus has something of a subculture (Slama, 2002) which is mostly not accommodated in any other spaces or places in society. Just like *warung*, while it is public, it is also private. While the *warnet* facilitates online social relationships created in cyberspace, a number of *warnet* also are places for creating offline relationships. For example, a couple of young people might meet in person in a *warnet* as a follow up to their online chat.

The physical and virtual nodes created within and by *warnet* are both part of social network formation. Moreover, these networks do not stop in the *warnet* itself. The *warnet* extends its flows to the society’s existing social networks. The information is not constrained to only *warnet* users. Using the existing cultural foundations of communication, including the traditional network of *warung*-like places, information can go beyond *warnet*, to capture spaces where people may not even be familiar with the word ‘Internet’.

#### 4.7.3 *The dark side of the warnet*

There are many activities online that can be classified as ‘the dark side’ of the Internet. The most common ones identified in *warnet* are pornography and cybercrime. In the early development of the Internet, compared with North American and European countries and even compared to some of its Asian neighbours such as Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, in Indonesia, concern about pornography on the Internet was muted (Hill and Sen, 2000b: 200). From 1996 to mid-1998, interest in political information appeared to be strongest (Hill and Sen, 2000b: 200). The demand for pornographic sites was low, yet *warnet* operators chose not to intervene or block clients’ access to any site, pornographic or political (Hill and Sen, 2000b: 200). This might be due to the political situation at that time which was conducive for political information. It might also be due to the technical limit of the Internet technology at that time — the low bandwidth — which prevented *warnet* users accessing heavy bandwidth websites such as websites full of pictures. With a change in the political situation and faster connection (higher bandwidth), pornography became more popular among *warnet* users. All the *warnet* operators interviewed for this research, claimed to have caught their users accessing pornographic websites. However, only a small number of *warnet* chose to block the access

---

<sup>84</sup> “Yah, kalo lagi bete gue suka *curhat* di chatroom. Kalo *curhat* sama orang yang engga kenal, dia kan ngga mungkin bilang-bilang sama orang yang kenal gue. Itu enaknya *curhat* lewat *chatting*” (Ani, personal interview, 22 October 2002).

to pornographic websites, either by manually blocking the IP addresses of known pornographic websites or by installing readily available software such as CyberNanny. Most *warnet* operators asserted that they could only suggest that clients did not access these websites, they did not want to abuse their clients' 'freedom'. In the field, though, it was observed that many *warnet* operators only pay attention to income, meaning getting more clients, and do not seem to really care about what clients access in their *warnet*.

In Indonesia, society maintains strong taboos against premarital sex and discussion of sexuality among the young. Providing information services to unmarried youth on reproduction also remains highly controversial. In this context, for many youngsters, accessing pornographic websites could be challenging and apparently enjoyable, partly due to its taboo-ness. Not only young adults, but also young teenagers are frequently found accessing pornographic websites in *warnet*. For example, in one *warnet* in Pangkalan Jati Kalimalang Jakarta, a group of junior high school students (SMP) routinely visit this *warnet*. This group, consisting of 5-6 teenagers, usually rents only one computer. They collectively look at the screen and giggle while accessing pornographic websites. Even such an activity is done in a social group. In other *warnet*, other groups of teenagers do the same thing. They rent only one computer and use it collectively. However, according to the *warnet* operator, they never really do any online activities. Apparently, they only rent the computer to watch pornographic VCDs they bring from home. According to some *warnet* operators, such events are common in many other *warnet* in Indonesia.

As for the other dark side, cybercrime, Indonesia has been internationally well-known as the location of various acts in this category, particularly cyberfraud. ClearCommerce.com, an e-security research company based in Texas, ranked Indonesia second only after the Ukraine in cases of cyberfraud. ClearCommerce.com also remarked that 20% of all credit card transactions from Indonesia on the Internet are fraudulent, which is the highest fraud percentage of transaction in the world.

Based on some observations during this research, many cybercrimes happen in *warnet*. *Warnet* is a better place to do cybercrime than other Internet access points as a cybercrime actor can easily remove any identification from the Internet. While many *warnet* do make logs of online activities, most of *warnet* not record or check the identity of the users. Checking customers' IDs would result in a decline in customers.

More than just being a place where cybercrimes happen, some *warnet* operators are involved in the acts of cybercrime. One medium-sized *warnet* in East Jakarta, for example, has an operator who also acts as a croupier, receiver and distributor of illegal material resulting from carding (credit card fraud). Other *warnet* operators are using their *warnet* for cyber fraud against their customers by installing software to record passwords and other information that can be used for underground activities. Some *warnet* users, without permission from the operators, install this kind of software on their usual *warnet* site to record sensitive information from other customers who visit that *warnet*.

In addition to be a place and space where cybercrime takes place, the *warnet* business itself is prone to small criminal actions by crackers. Cracker is the term used for a black hacker, those who hack into the information system for negative uses that harm others. Some crackers steal the passwords for a *warnet's* Internet access, and then they can freely use the passwords to connect from home or elsewhere with the cost borne by the *warnet*. Some crack the *warnet's* billing system so they can 'play' with the fees.

Besides pornography and cybercrime, there is another activity that is not publicly mentioned as part of the dark side of *warnet*, namely the exposure to violence and hatred on websites. The case of Imam Samudra, who was charged with engineering the Bali bombing, shows how the *warnet* can become a site where someone can hook up to radicalism and eventually plan the acts of violence. Samudra claimed that he learned about *jihad* (in its violent meaning) by surfing the Internet and communicating online with other radical fundamentalist Muslims all over the world (Bali Post, 23 November 2002; Sinar Harapan, 23 November 2002). In conducting the bombing, Samudra also used the Internet through *warnet* (and in text messaging) in Surabaya and Denpasar, to coordinate actions with his supportive team (Sinar Harapan, 23 November 2002). In the last chapter of his memoirs *Me Against the Terrorist! (Aku Melawan Teroris)* (Samudra, 2004), published in print and online, he argues that fighting in cyberspace is a must for a Muslim in contemporary society. He also calls for all his fellow Muslim radicals to take the holy war into cyberspace by attacking US computers (Samudra, 2004).

Examples in this section show that while facilitating positive activities, *warnet* can also facilitate negative ones. Since the beginning, *warnet* have developed in the spirit of openness and freedom as well as facilitated privacy. They thus become more accommodating to all kind of activities than controlled social spaces. Obviously, in other public spaces such as traditional markets, shopping malls, public squares and parks, private activities, especially those related to what is seen as taboo, would not be readily allowed (though they do occur). In a *warnet*, as the user can have privacy while being in a publicly accessible space, all kinds of activities including those that are taboo can be conveniently undertaken.

Interestingly, not many Indonesian Internet observers express their concern about this dark side. The leading figures who were pioneering Internet development in Indonesia were mostly more concerned about barriers related to the development of infrastructure such as Telkom's monopoly. Many say that as law enforcement in Indonesia, in general, is not adequately applied on the ground, to expect it to be applied in cyberspace is unrealistic. In this regard, Onno Purbo relies more on religiously self-realisation of 'after life reward and punishment'. He stated that there are three law paradigms in cyberspace, just as in the real world. The first is norms, ethics and values that are vertical. The second paradigm is written law such as cyberlaw, copyright law and other acts. The third is unwritten law such as the consensus of the community. If written law does not work, then others might work: community's consensus and *azab kubur*

(death torment). "It is up to them to choose, but wickedness is not something that can be brought to death safely,"<sup>85</sup> Purbo declared (Detik.com, 7 January 2001).

#### 4.7.4 *Resistance identities*

Since the Indonesian Internet, especially the *warnet*, was originally born free from the interference of state and corporate agendas, society sees it as a comfortable zone, a free zone where they can act openly and without restraint. Yet, it should not be romanticised as a virtuous sanctuary of social good and harmony. Internet users are not always the most enlightened or well-intentioned people. Socially irresponsible acts, such as the advocacy of violence by one identity group against another, can and are promoted on the Internet (as detailed in Chapter 6). At the same time, resistance alone does not easily counter the hegemonic tendencies of global capital or the state-corporate nexus. In other words, the flowering of the Internet within society is itself fraught with pitfalls and misdirection, antagonisms and even violence.

As a 'free-zone', the *warnet* becomes a place that gives the feeling of being beyond the state's control. This has been shown in many ways. During the reformation struggle against Suharto's government, the *warnet* was the major source of 'forbidden' information, such as short-wave foreign news broadcasts, campus rumour networks and faxed and photocopied underground bulletins for young people (as detailed in Chapter 5).

When the government started to expand into the *warnet* business by the ambitious national W-Net *warposnet* project, some Internet users saw this as an attempt by the state to create a monopoly over its use and access. This really bothered some young people on the Indonesian Internet because the invasion of the state into the *warnet* meant that it no longer belonged to the 'people' as they had imagined it. One of these young people, the CyberBug, a hacker from a prominent group of Indonesian hackers named *Kecoak* (cockroach), thus created a kind of Robin Hood resistance identity by 'hacking' the Wasantara *warnet* billing system so the *warnet* users could avoid paying the money due for their minutes of Internet use. But why did these hackers just try to hack the billing system of Wasantara and not of other *warnet* and why did they publish the method for hacking on the web? The answer is because they wanted to gain identities as leaders of resistance to the power of the state, a movement of a new-generation of hackers, as implied in a statement by one *Kecoak* member:

"Almost all of the new-generation hackers are anti-establishment, anti-oppression. A tyrannical government like that of Indonesia is suitable to be perceived as an enemy by these hackers. In the end, no matter how harsh are the authorised party's measures against these intelligent people, it will be impossible to stop the

---

<sup>85</sup> *Terserah mau milih yang mana, tapi yang namanya kejahatan itu bukan sesuatu yang bisa dengan mudah dibawa mati dengan selamat.*

hackers. As quoted from the 'Hacker Manifesto': 'you may stop me but you will not stop all of us'...'”<sup>86</sup> (Torremendez, 1997).

Another important example of individual resistance concerns KlikBCA, the e-banking website of Indonesia's largest bank, Bank Central Asia (BCA), and Steven Haryanto. In this case, Haryanto used his own money to buy domain names similar to 'klikbca', [www.klikbca.com](http://www.klikbca.com). He bought [wwwklikbca.com](http://wwwklikbca.com), [kilkbca.com](http://kilkbca.com), [clikbca.com](http://clikbca.com) and [klickbca.com](http://klickbca.com), and then published them with such a look that people could not distinguish from the original website. His typo-error logic was proven right. From these websites, he obtained about 150 user names of BCA customers with their personal identification numbers (PIN). However, he had no criminal intention. He never used the user names and PINs, and gave all of the data back to the BCA. He also registered his original name with a full address as the owner of those websites and thus he could be easily traced. As he stated in his open letter to the public, his intention was only to “make the Internet banking users more aware about the security system” (Haryanto, 2001).

While there were pros and cons related to his action, many young Internet users supported his actions and believed that it was important to fight the domination of the corporation (BCA) over the people (BCA customers) (S'to, 2001a, 2001b). Haryanto had created a resistance identity, which could be seen as being destructive and as a misinterpretation of the freedom of the Internet through his notorious action. Yet, it also caused some to pause to think about such episodes in terms of how corporate actors occupy the Internet without considering the rights and the security of consumers.

Most of the forms of resistance that occur in *warnet* can be seen as having no vision or clearly articulated social purpose. Putting these in the broader context of politics, these 'everyday forms' of resistance are critical to, and are among the significant forms of struggle against, the state and/or corporate domination. For Scott (1985a), this resistance can be intentional, non-intentional, individual or coordinated. In fact, anything that members of a subordinate group do to ward off the onerous presence of a powerful state or, increasingly, corporate interests, even if it might not necessarily result in large-scale social movements, nevertheless serves as both a form of resistance to disempowerment as well as a mechanism to manage communities (Scott, 1985a).

## 4.8 Conclusions

“The development of the Internet is a very grassroots, democratic processes” (Onno Purbo, the Internet leading figure in Indonesia)<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>86</sup> *Sebagian hacker generasi baru adalah mereka yang anti-kemapanan, anti-opresi. Dan pemerintahan tiranseperti indonesia memang selayaknya dipandang sebagai musuh oleh mereka ini. Pada akhirnya, biar bagaimana kerasnya pihak 'berwenang' berusaha menindak para cerdas ini, akan mustahil bagi mereka untuk menghentikan 'hacker'. Sebab, seperti apa yang dimuat dalam "Manifesto Hacker", "kalian mungkin saja menghentikan diriku, namun kalian tidak akan menghentikan kami semua..."*

Whether Purbo's statement is true or not, along with Purbo's perception, many Indonesians, especially the actors that were involved in developing the Internet, do believe that, in contrast to other media, the development of the Internet is a democratic process. The Internet itself, as stated by Purbo on other occasions, offers democratic qualities of openness and freedom that are not intrinsic to other media.

The history of Internet development, as narrated in this chapter, suggests that there is a good degree of validity to this perception. Historically the Internet development appears to be relatively democratic in Indonesia, especially if compared to previous media development that mostly were driven by the state. 'Democratic' is understood here not as a set of political institutions to ensure 'one person, one vote', but rather in the more direct democracy sense of creating a sphere "within civil society itself" (Douglass, 2003) that can then penetrate the state-corporate political sphere of governance.

More interesting than the validity of Purbo's perception of the democratic aspect of Internet development in Indonesia is the faith of Indonesian Internet actors, in a belief in the powers of the Internet technology to deliver a better society. This faith has been expressed as an aspiration to use the Internet as a means to bring 'everybody' to the higher levels of society, to establish 'a national network' which these actors believe is necessary for the country. This faith seeks to achieve national unity through a shared fantasy of letting everyone become what Mrazek (2002) calls 'radio mechanics'. Another interesting point is that the mission of the central actor, Purbo, is not only to get more people connected to the Internet by expanding the Internet networks and making more connections, but also, whether it is intentional or unintentional mission, to spread his values in his way of socialising — 'enacting' (Rip, 2004) — the technology.

The conviviality of the Internet (Chapter 2), in combination with the changing politics and economic situation in the late years of New Order, enabled the Internet to develop in a manner that was different to the development of other media. Internet development in Indonesia was a 'bottom-up' process, as opposed to the 'top-bottom' process that marked the development of satellite, telephone and television, with much of the activity 'on-stage' (Barker et al., 2001). The distinction of 'on-stage' from 'off-stage', is particularly important in Indonesia, a country that is marked with a culture of 'off stage' or 'backroom' negotiations. The emergence of the *warnet* as a network of sites linking not just computer to computer but also diffusing outward through traditional as well as modern socio-cultural spheres greatly has enhanced on-stage grassroots processes of information sharing and identity formation. The on-stage process signifies the openness of the development, and this becomes more apparent when contrasted with the development processes of previous media and the culture of politics under the New Order regime, which is the subject of Chapter 5.

<sup>87</sup> *Pembangunan Internet adalah sebuah proses yang merakyat dan demokratis.* This statement was delivered by Onno Purbo on his Foundation Day Oration at Duta Wacana Christian University, Yogyakarta, 31 October 1996 (Hill and Sen, 1997: 67).



---

## ELITES TO THE STREETS

### GLOBAL CONNECTIONS AND LOCAL ACTIONS

#### IN THE MAY 1998 *REFORMASI*<sup>88</sup>

### 5.1 Introduction

From its earliest days, the Internet has been about networking, not just networks of wires and hubs and routers and IPs, but also networks of spaces and networks of people (see Chapter 3). Collective political activism, collective action and social movement, is also related to networking, usually to networks of people who have a common goal or interest and come together, whether in a physical place, such as in a public park, or through a petition or other campaign. Thus it may seem logical that the Internet has been used both as a technology and as a space for political activism in many forms. Nevertheless, these two concepts of ‘network’ are not the same. The Internet networks can be categorised as both “physical networks” which are “technical systems” and “media networks” which are “media systems with symbol systems and information structures” (van Dijk, 2001: 4). In collective political activism, networks mean “social networks”, which are “social systems with concrete and abstract relationships” (van Dijk, 2001: 4). It can be regarded as social relations that connect informally (Diani, 1992): all kinds of social connections, including family connections, business connections, social cleavage, indirect connections as well as their junctures, disjunctures and all kinds of ad-hoc connections and clusters.

Online activism, or what is called ‘cyberactivism’, “the presence of political activism on the Internet” (McCaughy and Ayers, 2003: 1), has become an attractive field

---

<sup>88</sup> *Reformasi* literally means ‘reform’. In Indonesian politics, though, the term does not always refer to an actual political reform. The term used in this chapter, May 1998 *reformasi*, refers to the major event on 21 May 1998 when Suharto, the President of Indonesia who had been in power for thirty-two years, finally stepped down after a wave of student protests emerged in major cities in Indonesia, mainly in Jakarta, Yogyakarta and Bandung. The role of student protests was central in this event and so the 1998 *reformasi* movement (*gerakan reformasi*) is usually paralleled with student activism. While there are many different analyses of the role of students in the ousting of Suharto (see Widjojo, 1999), it is inarguable that on the street level of politics it was largely students that played the main role.

of study in social sciences. Much scholarship has been devoted to this field. Topics addressed range from activists' use of websites to promote opinions globally, that can lead to global protests via the Internet (Gurak and Logie, 2003), to the establishment of alternative media sources such as Indymedia (Kidd, 2003) and the direct action of 'hacktivists' who disturb public or commercial computer networks (Vegh, 2003). Through examining how activists utilise the Internet to recruit, strategise, create change and even settle on the politics of the Internet itself, studies show that such contemporary activism has emerged as a direct influence of the use of Internet technologies.

Many scholars study this field and try to theorise about this phenomenon. Castells (2001: 139) states that the Internet serves political activism well in the information age and has become its privileged medium. He argues that today's movements are highly dependent on the Internet because to be successful they have to be hooked to global information networks which, in Castells' opinion, are networks of all types having the Internet as an access point (2001: 143). Tim Jordan (2002), a social movement scholar, believes that traditional political battles have been replaced by the collective practices of a new activism that are highly reliant on the use of the information technology. Further, the futurist Howard Rheingold (2002) prophesises that future social revolutions will happen around the existence of sophisticated mobile (Internet) networks that will connect human beings of all races and walks of life to solve problems or form political movements.

These views are compelling, important and inspirational. However, in all of these studies, the informational networks only serve those who have access to the technology, and either explicitly or implicitly close off possibilities for the so-called 'have nots' to gain access to the networks. Like most of the studies on the Internet, studies on social and political activism and the Internet tend to isolate and reduce the relationship between the Internet and individuals/society to the link between a person and a computer screen,<sup>89</sup> as if one can really isolate the social spectrum of the Internet and cyberspace from any other material artefacts — other media — that are embedded in society. These prevalent views continue to see the issue as a 'digital divide' rather than as a more complex linkage of 'elites to the streets' through social hierarchies and inter-modal media connections between a small numbers of Internet users and society at large.

Seizing a new technology to gain an advantage is hardly new to activists wanting to reach large audiences. Various collective actions and social movements have historically incorporated new technologies into their social change struggles. Whether it be newspapers, radio or TV, activists have embraced new communications media and their technological capacities to disseminate information, make statements and raise consciousness to raise the scale of their causes and reach previously inaccessible groups

---

<sup>89</sup> Hill and Sen (2000b) try to measure the impact of the Internet in Indonesia as beyond the degree of Internet penetration, or the number of computers connected to the Internet in the country, referring to the fact that a personal computer is mostly used by more than one user. While this implies an attempt to measure the impact without depending on the physicality of person-computer interface, this study is still influenced by the 'digital divide' framework.

and classes of people. Often overlooked in media and communication studies are the linkages among these technologies that make dissemination from a relatively small number of elites to the broader citizenry possible. Thus it is not simply interactions among Internet computer users, for example, that demarcate the boundaries of a political movement, but rather it is the extent to which various communication technologies can link or bridge various social groups with different types of access to various media, including 'small media' (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Mohammadi, 1994): things like pamphlets, graffiti, cellular phones, VCDs and political banners. For the university student in a Southeast Asian country, this medium might be the Internet, for a group of office workers it might be the fax machine, and for the people on the street it might be a newspaper or printed leaflet. Studies on the new media forms should be "situated and analysed in relation to previous and older discursive forms and media forms and media practices with respect to which the newer ones have developed and with which they continue to interact" (Spyer et al., 2002: 178).

Of interest to the discussion here are the many cases in which political activists have been able to marshal other media technologies around the Internet, as a radically new technology that has expanded the total capacity for political mobilisation. For example, over a decade ago, Chinese student activists in the Tiananmen Square democracy movement used computer bulletin boards and faxes to link global and local political mobilisation. Of even greater notoriety, the Zapatista guerrilla movement in Chiapas, Mexico, broadcast its struggles using computer databases in addition to guerrilla radio and other forms of media (Kellner, 1997). In this manner, the more intimate face-to-face or in-the-flesh meetings (now called 'meetings' by those frequently online) called to make plans, form a collective identity, protest, or create symbols and images to inspire a crowd could be rapidly amplified over space in a manner not previously possible.

In the last decade, activists have not only incorporated the Internet into their repertoire but have also changed substantially the nature and concepts of activism, community, collective identity, democratic space and political strategy. Online activists have not only challenged the academic world to think about how cyberspace is meant to be used but they have politically challenged the status quo as well. This has been accomplished not by staying within virtual communities in ethereal cyberspace, but by the strategic use of the Internet as a key technology to link with what can now be called the 'more traditional' media technologies.

In the case of Indonesia, as in many other societies with authoritarian states, the Internet was not simply a new layer added to other technologies. Rather it proved to be the media that broke through constraints and bottlenecks constructed by the state to prevent the use of territorially controllable media, notably the print media, radio and television (Chapter 4). In light of the propositions in Chapter 2 about the Internet as a convivial medium, this chapter uses the case of the May 1998 *reformasi* in Indonesia to show how cyberspace provides an opening for political activism to, first, break through the barriers of state monopoly over the production of knowledge and flows of information and, second, to reach a national and even international audience through the cascading of

information from the Internet to people on the street using other media technologies. In the case of Indonesia, through successful popular movement, made possible through openings created by the Internet, these other 'more traditional' media could also at last play their roles in giving voice to the 'people'. These 'more traditional' media were also changed by their linkages with the Internet. They were renewed and given new meanings and new values.

## 5.2 *Reformasi* May 1998: the Question of the Role of the Internet

As rebellions broke out across Indonesia this month, protesters did not have tanks or guns. But they had a powerful tool that was not available during the country's previous uprisings: The Internet (Marcus, 1998).

Capable of cutting through time and space, the Internet offers a means of communication not previously dreamed of. It has created important new possibilities as it shrinks distances and provides an astounding volume and variety of information to those who have computer access. One result of these is the acceleration of solidarity networks among peoples, regions and countries. In Indonesia, it has even managed to help topple a strongman who, until his unscheduled resignation in May 1998, had been Asia's longest reigning post-war ruler. To Indonesia's powers that be, controlling the Internet has become close to being an obsession (Basuki, 1998).

When the 'father of development' of the New Order, President Suharto, was forced to step down in May 1998, some authors, including those making the two statements quoted above, paralleled this event with the Zapatista's Net movement in Chiapas, Mexico: namely, that the political revolution in Indonesia was Internet-driven (Basuki, 1998; Marcus, 1998; Hill and Sen, 2000a, 2000b, 2002). The picture of some Indonesian students using a laptop connected to the Internet from inside the parliamentary building made headlines in the international news, and as a powerful image, has been used to try to prove this argument. Some of these authors argue that the Internet critically undercut the ability of the government to control information, making the fall of the authoritarian regime a predestined outcome of the power of the Internet (Basuki, 1998; Williams, 2000: 4). W. Scott Thompson argues that "this was the first revolution using the Internet" (Marcus, 1998: 73-74), and even Diana Lady Dougan, who is more cautious in her appraisal of the Internet in Suharto's downfall, admits that the Internet "was an escalating factor; it fast-forwarded things", even though she believes that the Internet did not change the outcome in Indonesia (Marcus, 1998: 75).

While it is certainly true that the Internet did have a crucial role in the May 1998 *reformasi*, the questions of how significant this role was, and what concrete part the Internet played are not yet convincingly answered. Kalathil and Boas (2001), in reference to Hill and Sen (2000b), state, "And while much attention has focused on the role of

Internet-coordinated student protest in the downfall of Suharto in Indonesia, analysts have found it hard to draw a causal link between protestors' use of the technology and regime change." The problem here is that while the role of the Internet in the 1998 reform is frequently mentioned, no in-depth research has been completed to document it. Hill and Sen (2000a, 2000b, 2002) did important research about the Internet and democracy in Indonesia; but their research is preliminary and much of it focuses on the sole role of the Internet. It needs further research to fully understand how the Internet worked in supporting the May 1998 *reformasi*.

Contrary to the quoted passages earlier in this chapter, some Indonesian media and information technologists and observers<sup>90</sup> state that it was not possible for the Internet to have such a key role in the overthrow of Suharto's New Order Government. This dissenting opinion is heavily based on:

- First, the statistical fact that the estimated number of Internet users in Indonesia at that time was just less than 1% of population, and the assumption that this 1% was an elite group unlikely to join in anti authoritarian (Suharto) regime actions.
- Second, the Internet is only an extension or advance of old/previous media which, although changing the mode of communication and the transfer of information, is still considered to be a neutral technology that could only reflect the existing power structures of society (and the world).
- Third, as a corollary, the Internet is part of the media and culture of the dominant social forces, and thus retains a rigid connection with existing power holders. It would thus be impossible for the weaker segments of society to use any part of this media without being co-opted by the identities presented to them through state-controlled media channelled through the Internet. With previous communication and information technologies, such as satellite and broadcast television, Indonesian society could only make use of them in a passive manner to facilitate the state's agenda, which was to make use of these technologies to reach society as a whole to legitimise its identity with the nation by providing standardised information that was favourable to the regime.

It is inappropriate to claim that the Internet did not have any role in supporting the May 1998 *reformasi* event by lumping this new technology to the long domination by the Indonesian state over the use of communication and media technologies. These technologies, from the telegraph to the telephone, from radio reception to broadcast

---

<sup>90</sup> Among the well-known technologists and observers who have this opinion are: Onno Purbo from ITB, Eni Maryani from the Communication Studies University of Padjajaran Bandung, and Redi Panuju from Unitomo Surabaya (Suara Hidayatullah, 1999a).

radio, from the satellite to broadcast television, all have been developing to suit the desire for domination by elites, as explained briefly in Chapter 4. It is clear that the vast majority of people have never been able to exercise power from their marginalised positions. However, by putting the story of the Indonesian experience into the picture, this chapter argues that the Internet is not neutral to power and, further, that power can act in non-linear ways in cyberspace as in other cultural sites. Those with limited power, as much as those who are in power, can also create or continue their own agendas, their own forms of identity, culture and community by using a new medium such as the Internet especially since, at that time, the mid 1990s, this medium was new, it was not innately geared to the existing set of social relations. And although those who were in power might try to co-opt the Internet, its conviviality inhibited simple domination by elites, which had been the case with other media.

It is indeed too naïve to accept as true that the Internet was the only medium that played a role in giving birth to the downfall of Suharto in May 1998. While this technology undercut the ability of Suharto's government to control the flows of information, it took more than the Internet technology and a small group of students and activists using the Internet to create the political momentum needed to make major political changes or to successfully promote popular mobilisation to overthrow the regime in power. To gain the momentum to reach a critical mass, in such setting like Indonesia where the penetration of the Internet is low, the media of the Internet would have to reach far beyond the computer screen. This can be accomplished only by tapping into other social as well as media networks of communication. One insight into such linkages was discussed in Chapter 4, which detailed the ways in which, in Indonesia, the Internet was early on embodied in society in the form of a *warnet*. This gave it properties promoting its operation beyond the computer screen by locating it in Indonesian cultural sites that transformed the new media/technology into a traditional network culture enabling messages and ideas generated on the Internet to reach beyond the *warnet*.

In the following sections, the role of the Internet in the May 1998 *reformasi* will be examined, first, by seeing it as a part, a continuation and a result of the political use of the Internet long before the *reformasi*. This can be traced back to the late 1980s with the emergence of some major spaces for political discussions in Indonesian cyberspace. Second, by situating the role of the Internet in relation to 'the more traditional media', how the Internet linked to, supported and was supported by these media. Third, by looking at some particular political events in the country, for example, the Marsinah case, the banning of *Tempo* magazine, the 27 July 1996 incident and the kidnapping of PRD activists, as will be explained in Section 5.5, that had intensified the use of all media, especially the Internet, for smaller collective actions before the May 1998 *reformasi*. Lastly, by considering that in accepting the many interrelationships between social action and multiple media technologies, the Internet nonetheless did play a distinctive, even pivotal, role in intensifying, escalating and fast-forwarding the momentum of the May 1998 *reformasi*, and in supporting identity formation processes that resulted in a joint

forces action between 'elites' and ordinary citizens, 'contentious politics' (see Sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.4).

### 5.3 Pioneering the Political Use of the Internet

The political dialogue in Indonesian cyberspace spans the long-standing mailing lists created by and for Indonesian students (and non-students) abroad such as *Janus*, *Isnet* (*Isnet@*), *FicaNet* and *Parokinet* and, certainly, the famous *Apakabar* list created by John MacDougall of Maryland, United States. All these groups were born in the late 1980s and early 1990s. While *Apakabar* was definitely the pioneer in the political use of the Internet in Indonesia, the global network that was created by Indonesian students overseas prior to and along side *Apakabar* contributed to the creation of spaces for political discussions. While not always a space for "rational communicative discourse" (Habermas, 1984), *Apakabar* nevertheless provided convivial space for cross-fertilisation of various ideas and opinions. Within this Indonesian global constellation of Internet networks, *Apakabar* occupies the highest level in the information hierarchy, meaning that other global forums mostly refer to *Apakabar*, not the other way around.

#### 5.3.1 Early global Indonesian networks

Some Indonesian mailing lists existed overseas before the Internet became publicly available in Indonesia. These lists were not intentionally created for political discussions but were mostly created as social spaces to network with other Indonesians. However, they could not avoid becoming spaces to discuss politically-related issues. Being outside the country, these Indonesians abroad were thirsty for any Indonesian news from their home country, especially socio-political news related to national affairs. At that time, WWW (website) technology was not yet as accessible as e-mail, and so e-mail based information was more popular among Internet users.

*Janus Garuda Indonesia* ([Indonesians@Janus.berkeley.edu](mailto:Indonesians@Janus.berkeley.edu)), shortened to *Janus*, was created in 1987 using UC Berkeley's server, by Eka Ginting, an Indonesian who was studying at the University of Seattle, and is the oldest Indonesian mailing list. As there was no other Indonesian mailing list until 1989, this list attracted many Indonesians from all over the world, most of whom were students. At its peak, this list had approximately 1,000 members.

In 1989 several other Indonesian mailing lists emerged. UK-Net was created for Indonesian students in the United Kingdom, *Indoz-Net*<sup>91</sup> came out for those located in

---

<sup>91</sup> The word INDOZ-NET was taken from INDOnesia – OZtralia – NETwork. This list was founded by Yos Ginting, a chemical engineering student at the University of Tasmania, Australia. Homepage of Indoz-Net: <http://www.utas.edu.au/docs/yos/indoz-net/> (not longer valid anymore). Ozlists Indonesia homepage: <http://ww.gu.edu.au/ozlists/indonesia.html> (last accessed on 30 July 2000).

Australia, and *Isnet*<sup>92</sup> (the Islamic Network) was born out of the efforts of two Indonesian students in the United States for Muslim (Indonesian) students. The Isnet was not only the most active list, it also became an established organisation that was well networked nationally and internationally.<sup>93</sup>

In the next couple of years several other mailing lists appeared in the Indonesian cyberspace. They were *Parokinet*, *PAU-Mikro-Net* and the IDS list. *Parokinet* ([paroki@uiuc.edu](mailto:paroki@uiuc.edu)) was launched on Christmas Day 1991 from the server of the University of Illinois by *Romo* (Pastor) Alex Soesilo Wijoyo, a student of Columbia University.<sup>94</sup> This mailing list, which was originally created to discuss Catholicism, ended up as a rich source of political information and an active forum for political discussions. Budi Rahardjo who studied at the University of Manitoba, Canada, and created the super-active mailing list of *PAU-Mikro-Net* in 1991.<sup>95</sup> The IDS (Indonesian Development Studies) list was set up in

---

<sup>92</sup> Formerly it was [Islamic@iuvax.cs.indiana.edu](mailto:Islamic@iuvax.cs.indiana.edu) maintained by Tri Djoko Wahyono. Later it was moved to the server of University of Wisconsin at Madison and the list name was changed into [is-lam@vms.macc.wisc.edu](mailto:is-lam@vms.macc.wisc.edu) maintained by Bachtiar Muin. Since 1992, Isnet has been operating with its own server, starting with the first server a Sun SPARClassic II bought with fundraising money. This server was located at the Electronic Engineering Laboratory of the University of Manitoba at Winnipeg, and maintained by Budi Rahardjo, with the domain name [isnet.ee.umanitoba.ca](http://isnet.ee.umanitoba.ca). The current domain name, [Isnet.org](http://Isnet.org), was registered under this server on May 1994, and thus the name of the list changed into [is-lam@isnet.org](mailto:is-lam@isnet.org) (Suara Hidayatullah, 1999a).

<sup>93</sup> This organisation is closely linked to ICMI (*Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia*, the Association of Muslim Intellectual Indonesia), the Islamic organisation that was much under the influence of Habibie (see Chapter 4) and was also used as a tool for Habibie's political strategy as well as other ICMI members' political strategy, International Institute of Islamic Thought, Malaysian Islamic Study Group, *Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia* and South East Asian Moslem (Suara Hidayatullah, 1999a).

<sup>94</sup> ParokiNet archive. Moko Darjamoko, subject: *[PNet]: Server Semeru...riwayatmu duluuuuuu*. Posted in [paroki@parokinet.org](mailto:paroki@parokinet.org), on 12 March 2000, 07:13:01 p.m. GMT+07.

<sup>95</sup> This list has been a discussion forum on the narrower subject of building the computer network in Indonesia and also various microelectronics and computer science aspects since the majority of PAU-Mikro-Net members have engineering backgrounds. At an early stage of Internet development in Indonesia, PAU-MIKRO-Net became an influential mailing list and a great force in the spreading of Internet use in Indonesia. The mailing list that previously was meant for the staff of PAU-Microelectronic ITB to communicate with grew to be the mailing list for Indonesians who were interested in learning more about the technology of the Internet. To help in building the Internet information infrastructure in Indonesia, discussions in this mailing list served several purposes: to transfer knowledge by consultations over any problems encountered in implementing the Internet technology in Indonesia, to create feed-back and report on network expansion in Indonesia, to find alternative international routes and funding for Indonesians, and to keep the spirit of some colleagues in Indonesia for building the Internet network. (Purbo, 1995; Rahardjo, 2000).



1991<sup>96</sup> at the server of Syracuse University. This mailing list dealt with general issues related to Indonesian development and enjoyed the participation of a number of key people from international organisations (Purbo, 1995).

In Japan between 1992 and 1993, two Indonesian university mailing lists were born. First was the *Unpar-Net*, the mailing list for the *Unpar* (a well-known private university in Bandung) community, set up by Johannes Widodo, an *Unpar* lecturer who was studying for his Ph.D. at the University of Tokyo.<sup>97</sup> Meanwhile, Suhono Harso Supangkat, an ITB lecturer who was also studying in Japan, initiated the ITB-Net for the ITB community. Later, other university mailing lists emerged in cyberspace; all were started up outside Indonesia, particularly in the UK, Canada, Japan, the United States and Australia.

In the early 1990s, free web-based mailing lists such as 'egroups' or 'yahoogroups' were not yet available, and so the number of mailing lists did not increase rapidly over time. As Indonesian Internet users grew in numbers, the memberships of these mailing lists also grew exponentially. These lists acted not merely as social space for networking among overseas Indonesians, the lists also remarkably grew to become spaces for all kinds of discussions and frequently these were related to politics. Suddenly Indonesians found a way to be connected to other Indonesians and to talk about things that in Indonesia had been considered taboo: politics and SARA.<sup>98</sup>

These mailing lists were not always peaceful spaces. Conflicts occurred frequently, especially when members started to talk about religion, in particular about Islam and Christianity. One major reason for the formation of the Islamic Network (*Isnet*) was indeed because some Muslim members of *Janus* were disappointed with the discussions in the *Janus* mailing list. For a similar reason, Catholic members of *Janus* also formed *Parokinet*. In spite of the occurrence of conflicts and inflammatory exchanges, these mailing lists undoubtedly provided Indonesians with something that they did not have before, namely, 'total freedom' to speak their opinions. With a high concentration of members and frequency of discussions, these mailing lists became substantial foundations for Indonesian information networks, especially for the flow of political information.

---

<sup>96</sup> The IDS network uses computerised communications for an open discussion forum on the national development issues of Indonesia. It also serves to disseminate news about the country and anything else that is important to the entire group. Anyone who is interested can subscribe to IDS. You are welcome to use multi-disciplinary, comparative or any other appropriate approaches and either Indonesian or English in the discussion. IDS was established in 1991 by Wahyu Purwinto, who resided at Syracuse University, New York, and was running the site under LISTSERV software installed on the IBM/CMS mainframe. The address was <IDS@SUV.M.ACS.SYR.EDU>. Initially, the list name was PBDList or the Paradigms for Boosting Development. On Saturday 9, 1993, the list name was changed to IDS or Indonesian Development Studies. On May 1995, the IDS list was moved to the Unix platform with the new address of [IDS@LISTSERV.SYR.EDU](mailto:IDS@LISTSERV.SYR.EDU) (IDS, 1996).

<sup>97</sup> Widodo set up this mailing list at the server of the University of Kanazawa in 1992 with the help of his friend (J. Widodo, personal interviews by email, 15-18 January 2001).

<sup>98</sup> See Section 4.2.4 and footnote #37.

### 5.3.2 *Apakabar*

The first, and the most significant, source of Indonesian related political news accessible on the Internet was an online news service called *Apakabar*. This service was started on 7 October 1990<sup>99</sup> in Maryland, the United States, by John A. MacDougall, a former staff member at the US Embassy in Jakarta who launched his own information company in 1984 (Basuki, 1998). MacDougall's Indonesia Publications and Task Force Indonesia<sup>100</sup> specialised in collecting and spreading all kinds of information about Indonesia. He compiled this information and sold it commercially, and at the same time he also disseminated it through various Internet mailing lists, conferences and newsgroups. This disseminated information received such enthusiastic responses that MacDougall responded by setting up a newsgroup named Indonesia-L, which later in the mid 1990s became prominently known as *Apakabar* (meaning 'How do you do?' or 'What's new?'). The word *Apakabar* was actually the email address of the moderator, MacDougall <[Apakabar@clark.net](mailto:Apakabar@clark.net)>.<sup>101</sup>

In terms of technology, in *Apakabar's* history, MacDougall progressed from a newsgroup to a mailing list and finally to a web-based mailing list. There was also a certain period when MacDougall only moderated the list, and later he edited the incoming messages. When *Apakabar* first emerged in early October 1990, it was like the elaborate Usenet newsgroups of that time, located on a proprietary American Internet service provider, the Institute for Global Communications (IGC), an English-language activist network.

Most of the early messages from this newsgroup were just announcements and explanations about the newsgroup and some short general writings about Indonesia plus some calls of the Indonesian-related news/information. Since 10 October 1990 MacDougall has been posting real information such as short news, flash news, alerts and Indonesian related news/articles from many sources from abroad like UPI, Wire, Reuter and Xinhua and also from within Indonesia like the *Jakarta Post*, *Antara*, *Kompas*, *Tempo* and *Editor*. With an average 5-10 postings per day, MacDougall not only provided list subscribers with rich information from various sources, he also acted as a kind of filter who delivered only the specific things he thought people (members) would like to read concerning social and political situations in Indonesia. Much of the information/news posted here was not available in the Indonesian mainstream media. Some was

---

<sup>99</sup> Source: "Purpose of This Conference", from: [Apakabar@igc.apc.org](mailto:Apakabar@igc.apc.org), date: Sunday, Oct 07 1990 – 10:25:00 EDT, <http://basisdata.esosoft.net/1990/10/07/0000.html> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>100</sup> Source: "Talking to Your Facilitator!" (r), from: [Apakabar@igc.apc.org](mailto:Apakabar@igc.apc.org), date: Mon Oct 08 1990 – 08:00:00 EDT.

<sup>101</sup> John A. MacDougall also used some other '*Apakabar*' addresses like [Apakabar@access.digex.net](mailto:Apakabar@access.digex.net) and [Apakabar@igc.org](mailto:Apakabar@igc.org), [Apakabar@saltmine.radix.net](mailto:Apakabar@saltmine.radix.net).

controversial and critical of the New Order regime. The news about 'Tapol',<sup>102</sup> 'Arrests in East Timor' and 'Government's corruption' were among these topics.

During *Apakabar's* early years, its subscribers were mostly Indonesian students studying overseas and some non-Indonesians whose work was related to Indonesia (researchers, journalists or observers). At this point, none of these subscribers was anonymous. Indeed technically it was difficult to have an anonymous e-mail address because free web-based e-mail providers like Hotmail and Yahoo were not yet available. All members were using their university or institution e-mails.<sup>103</sup>

Connections with other online forums became routine. The two largest Indonesian mailing lists, *Janus* and *Isnet*, were always sent copies of *Apakabar's* postings on a routine basis as a means of keeping the overseas students informed on events at home (MacDougall, 2003). At the same time the moderators of *Janus*, *Isnet*, *Indoz-Net* and *PAU-Mikro-Net* were also members of *Apakabar*. They thus re-sent and re-forwarded these messages to their mailing lists. Very quickly, *Apakabar* became the most popular source of political information among Indonesian students abroad. While *Apakabar* itself, at this point, only acted as a news provider and not yet as a discussion forum, often forwarded emails from *Apakabar* were discussed in student mailing lists.

In the mid 1990s, *Apakabar* was converted from a newsgroup to an independent public list. This happened when IGC, the server where *Apakabar* was located, acquired list technology of its own and the Internet became publicly available in Indonesia.<sup>104</sup> This change brought a dramatic expansion on readership especially among Indonesians living in Indonesia. Very quickly Indonesians at home became the vast majority of readers, and thus changed the dominant language of postings from English to Indonesia. The character of postings was also changed from mainly news to exchanges of opinions among Indonesians both home and abroad (MacDougall, 2003). At this point MacDougall, as the moderator, facilitated this exchange of opinions based on pluralism as a codeword. For those who were eager to post opinions but wanted to remain anonymous, MacDougall helped by eliminating their names and e-mail addresses before their messages were posted. This facility, along with the provision of free web-based e-mails (e.g. Hotmail, iName, Yahoo) that enables one to be unidentified, made *Apakabar* ideal for Indonesians who wanted to be exposed to political discussions, freely without any fear. This turned *Apakabar* into an extremely busy mailing list. Peter Ferdinand, one of *Apakabar's*

---

<sup>102</sup> Tapol stands for *tahanan politik*, literally means political prisoner, but during the New Order regime this term was used specifically to the prisoners who were related to the case of G30S/PKI 1965 (see Section 4.2).

<sup>103</sup> It is interesting to note, based on the author's observation, that many of the Indonesian student members of *Apakabar* were pursuing Ph.D. degrees. Logically these students would be back to Indonesia after 4-5 years. Thus one can speculate that in 1996-1997 these students would have been in Indonesia and could have been involved in the May 1998 *reformasi* movement (or at least in disseminating information) or might have supported the movement.

<sup>104</sup> For sometime, *Apakabar* was also accessible from its mirror at <http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/indonesia/news> (last accessed on 30 March 1999).

members, who is a political scientist from the University of Warwick, confirmed this situation. He reported that when he left his e-mails unchecked for one week he found his mailbox had crashed from the number of messages he received because he forgot to unsubscribe (or set 'nomail') from *Apakabar*.<sup>105</sup> This story indicates that a remarkable number of postings were exchanged using this list.

As it became an active mailing list, *Apakabar* reached a point where it became a space for discussions on a wide range of views, from the radical to the moderate, and from pro-democracy activists to intelligence officers disguised as students or common Internet users. These intelligence officers infiltrated the list to counter any negative information about the New Order regime. They tried hard to hide their identities by impersonating the way students or activists (textually) 'talk'. But genuine *Apakabar* members could almost always differentiate the real activists from the false ones (Basuki, 1998).

In 1996-1998, this list became one of the major irritations for the army and the Department of Information while, at the same time, it was a great success for a newsgroup and mailing list, seen as "immune to Indonesian Government pressure" (Hill and Sen, 1997). For Indonesians, as stated by one of Indonesia Internet users,<sup>106</sup> *Apakabar* was a list that accepted opposing opinions (against Suharto's regime), "here was the place for Indonesian activists to freely spill out all kinds of complaints, grumbles or even anger about the government."<sup>107</sup>

Alongside *Apakabar*, another popular source of political information in the early 1990s was the Usenet newsgroup *soc.culture.indonesia*, which was the first Usenet newsgroup in and about Indonesia. This was followed by the emergence of its sister newsgroup *alt.culture.indonesia*. These newsgroups, especially the former, became the busiest newsgroups in Indonesian cyberspace. While the names might imply social and cultural elements, during those years the dominant information was political. The contents of these lists are similar to *Apakabar*, the difference is that these newsgroups have always been newsgroups, which are more like bulletin boards, and they were never intended to become discussion lists like *Apakabar*.

---

<sup>105</sup> This story was told by Peter Ferdinand himself to the author on 4 August 2003 at the Oxford Internet Institute Summer Doctoral Programme.

<sup>106</sup> *Disinilah tempatnya para aktifis Indonesia bebas menumpahkan segala macam uneg-uneg, maupun keluh kesah sampai makian tentang pemerintah kita* (Ramadhani, 2003).

<sup>107</sup> After the overthrow of Suharto, on 15 July 1998, MacDougall announced that the Indonesia-L mailing list was closed to any new posting from readers, and to get the news from this mailing list people had to pay a subscription fee (see; *Indonesia-L/Apakabar* post mortem message, <http://w3.rz-berlin.mpg.de/~wm/ML/Apakabar-postmortem.html>). Indonesia-L would become a special mailing list for Indonesia Publications and Task Force Indonesia. But MacDougall did not apply this rule for too long. In 1999 he again opened this mailing list to the public. During the Gus Dur presidency, the basic guidelines for postings in *Apakabar* were pluralism, non-violence and support for Gus Dur's government. In early 2002, because the expense of maintaining the site had grown enormously, *Apakabar* was finally closed solely for financial reasons. When it closed, *Akababar* consisted of 175,000 postings reaching 250,000 subscribers in 96 countries and had become the largest Indonesian list in the history of the Internet (MacDougall, 2003). After its closure, the database of *Apakabar* still exists as a part of the *indopubs.com* site, the site devoted by MacDougall to research and learning about Indonesia, Southeast Asia and the Islamic world.

### 5.3.3 George Aditjondro: Global individual resistance

While there were many Indonesian cyber-activists emerging in the late 1990s, it is rare to find someone who could bravely confront the Suharto regime in the early 1990s. Among these rare people is George Aditjondro who, since 1994, has switched his struggles against the authoritarian state to cyberspace. George Aditjondro was formerly a lecturer at the University of *Satya Wacana* in Salatiga, a small city in Central Java. According to his personal testimony,<sup>108</sup> Aditjondro ran away from Indonesia immediately after giving a lecture in Yogyakarta in 1994. His lecture about the oligarchy of the political regime was claimed to be insulting to President Suharto. He was thus interrogated after the lecture. Knowing that he would not be able to escape from the Indonesian authoritarian government's grip that would possibly end his career, he decided to fly to Australia before any further actions were taken by the state. As Aditjondro arrived in Australia, the state took the further action of bringing him to court. But such action was fruitless since Aditjondro had already moved beyond the geographical boundary of the Indonesian government's authority and was protected by the Australian government (Munindo, 1998).

Aditjondro's escape to Australia was seen as a controversial affair in the eyes of the Indonesian public. His decision to move to Australia, instead of facing trial under the Indonesian government, was perceived as an irresponsible act. He was called a "coward, gutless and untrustworthy".<sup>109</sup> Even one of his colleagues at Satya Wacana University commented that Aditjondro "lacks gallantry and has brought down academic excellence" and General Attorney Singgih said, "He is '*mbalelo*' (selfishly stubborn)" (Tiras, 22 June 1995).<sup>110</sup> The Indonesian media published negative news about him. One newspaper in Semarang even put out a caricature of Aditjondro being in the pouch of a kangaroo and next to it there was a monkey saying, "It seems not only monkeys who look for an asylum" (Aditjondro, 1995). Aditjondro who felt that he was being degraded and humiliated chose to clear his name by circulating a story from his side using the Internet.

In the period of pre-*reformasi*, Aditjondro was working as a professor teaching the 'Sociology of Corruption' at the University of Newcastle in Australia, calling himself 'a scent dog of Suharto's wealth'. He had been compiling data about the business of Suharto and his cronies since 1994 (Munindo, 1998). He had been actively writing articles based on this information since 1997. Among these articles are: "Autumn of the Patriarch: The Suharto Grip on Indonesia's Wealth", the series of "The Swiss Business Links of the Suharto and Habibie Oligarchy of Indonesia", "Chips off the old block: Suharto's corrupt

---

<sup>108</sup> There are some different stories about the reasons for his leaving the country, however such stories are not revealed here as they are not relevant to the discussion in this chapter.

<sup>109</sup> *Pengecut, penakut, tidak kesatria* (see Aditjondro, 1995).

<sup>110</sup> Quotes are derived from an English summary of this article, written by Gerry van Klinken, posted on [Apakabar@clark.net](mailto:Apakabar@clark.net) on 23 June 1995.

children”, and the series “Suharto’s Wealth” which became the major source for “The List of Suharto’s wealth” (Munindo, 2000).

Besides Suharto’s corruption, another of Aditjondro’s major concerns was East Timor. Many of his writings about the Indonesian military invasion of East Timor were circulated in cyberspace. His articles were circulated in *Apakabar* with a special tag ‘GJA’, an acronym for George Junus Aditjondro. His way of writing, which is more like a journalist than an academic (he worked as a journalist at *Tempo* magazine before moving to the academic world) made his articles sound aggressive and provocative.

Being unable to spread his views in the mainstream media, Aditjondro effectively made use of the Internet as a medium to spread his voice of dissent by posting his articles on mailing lists and emailing them to his network of colleagues and friends. His posting frequently appeared in the *Apakabar* mailing list and also in other forums such *SiaR* (see 5.4.1) and *Pijar* (see 5.5.3).

## 5.4 The Internet and the ‘more traditional’ media

As previously explained in Chapter 4, when the Internet arrived in Indonesia it enjoyed a unique situation that was not available to the other media. Due to social, economic and political factors, and the characteristics of this technology itself, the Internet seemed to slip beyond the grasp of the Indonesian government. And thus, as Hill and Sen (2000a: 210) point out, the freedom of the Internet “became a constant reminder of the absence of openness and freedom in other media.”

However, in its development, the Internet did not march apart from other media. The ‘more traditional’ media, such as print media (newspapers and magazines), radio and TV, all have supported and popularised the technology of the Internet as well as being linked to it. In fact, traditional media providers were among the first institutions to embrace the Internet openly. In addition, a handful of pro-democracy online activists actually came from these ‘more traditional’ media, especially the print media.

### 5.4.1 From mainstream to alternative media

The birth of the banned Alliance of Independent Journalist (AJI, *Aliansi Jurnalis Independen*), the illegal journalists union formed in the wake of the banning of *Tempo*, *Detik* and *Editor*, as an alternative to the government-supported Indonesian Journalist Association (PWI, *Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia*), on 7 August 1994 in Sinargalih could be seen as a turning point for Indonesian pro-democracy media activists. As this event coincided with the launch of commercial Internet in Indonesia, the emergence of the AJI could also be seen as the beginning of the use of the Internet as an alternative to mainstream publishing media.

Following the formation of the AJI, the government, through PWI, put pressures on editors of mainstream media to dismiss AJI journalists, arguing that the Indonesian law only acknowledged one, single and compulsory journalist organisation. The PWI

Secretary General Parni Hadi, who was also the chief editor of *Republika* newspaper, stated, "Those who are out of PWI are not allowed to work as journalists" (Harsono, 1996). Being unable to publish legally, the 'illegal' journalists of AJI began using the Internet to publish online its banned publication *Suara Independen* (Woods, 1996: 28). The AJI also published AJINews that actively delivered uncensored works by AJI journalists.

The link between the 'more traditional' media and the Internet is very palpable in the case of *Tempo* magazine. After the banning of *Tempo* in 1994, this magazine re-emerged in cyberspace on 6 March 1996 as *Tempo Interaktif*.<sup>111</sup> Regarding this online version of *Tempo*, Harmoko, the infamous Minister of Information who had banned this magazine, commented: "Anybody can go on the Internet. There are no regulations against it" (Harsono, 1996). This online version, in its 3 May 1996 edition, editorialised that although the sources of information could be traced and banned, the rapid development of the Internet technology would make attempts at censorship increasingly less effective (Woods, 1996: 28). Indeed, this editorial was proved by the emergence of the online version of the banned *Tempo*.

Meanwhile some professional journalists, who could not publish their reports in the mainstream media, either because they were banned or because their reports were politically incorrect or controversial, established an underground news agency called 'PIPA' (literally means 'pipe') on the Internet.<sup>112</sup> Reports published here were professionally written and based on factual observations. They were frequently used by Jakarta-based foreign journalists. Besides PIPA, there some other alternative online media for both professional and amateur journalists. Some journalists formed an online discussion group called *Kuli Tinta* (Slave of Ink).

In the meantime, many online services also emerged, resulted from cooperation between Indonesians at home and organisations overseas. Early in 1996 *Kabar dari PIJAR* (KdP, see Section 5.5.3) went online. At around the same time, an underground periodical *Independen* and the SiaR News Service, which was closely connected to both *Independen* and *Tempo*, also went online. *SiaR* News Service ([siar@minihub.org](mailto:siar@minihub.org))<sup>113</sup> was located on the server of the University of Murdoch Australia. *SiaR* was particularly valued for its specialised editorial teams. It used different codewords to mark various topics: *Istiglal* for civic and social related information, *MateBEAN* for East Timor, *MeunaSAH* for Aceh and *MemberaMO* for Papua/West Irian. Meanwhile, in August 1995 in Germany,

---

<sup>111</sup> First it was located at <http://www.idola.net/tempo> (last accessed on 30 July 1996). Later it was moved to its own server at <http://www.tempco.co.id> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>112</sup> Located in <gopher://gopher.igc.apc.org:2998/7REG-INDONESIA?PIPA> (last accessed on 30 July 2000).

<sup>113</sup> URL: <http://apchr.murdoch.edu.au/minihub/siarlist/maillist.html> (last accessed on 30 July 2000).

the Indonesian Daily News<sup>114</sup> service was formed for similar purposes, as well as the Indonesian Daily Reports based at the KITLV Leiden, the Netherlands.<sup>115</sup>

The Internet was also used as a source of information for major journalists and their news organisations as well as providing an outlet for banned journalists to write for overseas publications. A number of Indonesian journalists joined the *Apakabar* list and used it to distribute their news reports as they believed that this list was free from any censorship (Harsono, 2000: 83).

This section shows that, at that time, pro-democracy journalists found the Internet an idyllic space in which “to create a genuine political movement, studying pro-democracy movements elsewhere and establishing networks of their own” (Harsono, 2000: 83). The larger project set in motion was to go beyond elites to the masses.

#### 5.4.2 *Popularising the Internet*

While not as directly involved in the pro-democracy movement as the alternative media, the mainstream media indirectly contributed to the movement by promoting the Internet. As Hill and Sen (2000b: 196) point out, major dailies including *Kompas*, *Media Indonesia* and *Republika* had regular columns and features devoted to the Internet and associated computer technology.

Somewhat paradoxically, the government’s attempt to restrain Internet use by propagating the issues of pornography and ‘forbidden politics’, observably, just made the Internet more popular. The government under Suharto viewed the Internet as a source of global culture that could have negative impacts on society. Suharto’s Minister of Post and Telecommunications clearly stated that regulations were needed to protect the young generation of Indonesians from the dangers of pornography and guerrilla politics through the Internet. Senior armed forces officials also criticised the many postings on the Internet (referring to *Apakabar*) that they deemed to be “divisive, inciteful and endangering political stability” (Basuki, 1998).

For the media, this issue certainly was controversial and had a high selling value. Thus many mainstream media picked up the issue and made the ‘pornography and forbidden politics’ of the Internet as topics in their published articles. *The Jakarta Post* even included a pro-Megawati homepage PDI, and John MacDougall’s *Apakabar*, in its regular stories and features about the Internet that also effectively advertised their website addresses. *The Jakarta Post* stated that through these websites people could access “prohibited, unsanctioned or even banned material not generally available to the public” (May 25, 1997: 1). Arguably, this kind of article would make young Indonesians more eager to go online.

---

<sup>114</sup> URL: <http://www.indo-news.com> (last accessed on 30 July 2000).

<sup>115</sup> Located in `gopher://oasis.leide.nuniv.nl/11/.kitlv/.daily-report`



## 5.5 Cyber-home for the Opposition, the Left and the Forbidden

Whereas political discussions had been on going on the Internet since the early 1990s with the emergence of overseas mailing lists and *Apakabar*, there were certain events that intensified online activism. The case of Marsinah in 1993, the banning of *Tempo* in 1994 (especially for journalists), and the 27 July 1996 Grey Saturday (*Sabtu Kelabu*) are among those events that triggered the rapid use of the Internet for political actions.

The Marsinah case concerned a 25 year old woman named Marsinah, a worker activist with PT. Catur Putra Surya, a watch manufacturing company in the regency of Sidoarjo, East Java, who was found dead on 8 May 1993. It was believed that her death was related to a previous strike action by workers at the factory where she worked. This case pushed the Indonesian Legal Aid Institute Foundation (YLBHI, *Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia*) to post a press release explaining the case and calling for justice, on 17 April 1994.<sup>116</sup> Three days after this press release, TAPOL, the Indonesian Human Rights Campaign, issued an 'Urgent Action' alert on *Apakabar*, calling for international support.<sup>117</sup> Within six hours of the alert being posted, fax machines in the President's office, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Defence and Security became jammed with hundreds of protest messages from all over the world. This event had changed the unknown village girl Marsinah into a worldwide heroine. Ever since, urgent action alerts have been used in Indonesian cyberspace to call for attention from the international public.

The banning of *Tempo* and the subsequent formation of AJI, as explained in Section 5.4.1, was the turning point in the realisation among journalists that freedom to speak was not impossible, and that the Internet could provide the space for uncensored journalism. In fact, since then the press situation in Indonesia has changed. Although censorship and control were still tight, the mainstream media started to find ways to escape from the government's control, and increasingly tried to circumvent self-censorship. In publishing political news, media appeared to be sharper and less dependent on official sources of information. In addition, in 1995-1996, almost all major dailies, *Kompas*, *Media Indonesia*, *Jawa Pos*, *The Jakarta Post*, *Republika*, *Suara Pembaharuan* and *Pikiran Rakyat*, went online. In their online versions these newspapers could be more open as there was a firm belief that cyberspace was free from state's control and censorship. This episode also added pressure for media freedom in the country.

---

<sup>116</sup> A forwarded message to *Apakabar*, forwarded by: [Apakabar@clark.net](mailto:Apakabar@clark.net), "Siaran Pers YLBHI ttg Marsinah", from: [mahendro@indotap.tool.nl](mailto:mahendro@indotap.tool.nl), date: Sun Apr 17 10:34 EDT 1994.

<sup>117</sup> An email posted to *Apakabar*, "Medan's Striking Workers", from: [tapol@gn.apc.org](mailto:tapol@gn.apc.org), date: Wed Apr 20 1994 - 17:06:00 EDT.

A much bigger wave of online activism, came in 1996, subsequent to the Grey Saturday of 27 July 1996 when members of the Democratic Party of Indonesia (PDI, *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia*) of Soerjadi's faction, backed by Suharto's government, attacked and ousted Megawati Sukarno's supporters from the party's central headquarters in Jakarta. Focusing on the period surrounding 27 July 1996, this section will explain the widespread use of the Internet for online activism using some examples.

### 5.5.1 *Megawati and the Internet*

'Opposition' was a taboo concept for Suharto's regime. Oppositions were not allowed to survive. When Megawati Sukarnoputri was elected as chairperson of PDI in late 1993, and "for the first time in the history of Suharto's New Order, a political party was headed by a leader who had not been groomed by the government" (Aspinal, 1996) but was legitimised by the people, Suharto's government felt threatened. Thus at the government backed PDI congress in Medan in June 1996, Megawati was ousted and replaced by former PDI leader Soerjadi. By installing their 'own' leader of the PDI, Suharto's government assumed that they would not only gain control over the internal operations of the political party but also (by installing an unpopular leader) to drastically reduce grassroots PDI support.

Megawati, no doubt, had been a remarkably popular leader. Even before the Medan congress dispute, with much help from the media, Megawati, who was always seen as being repressed, was already popular. However, while the congress that led to the ousting of Megawati was unconstitutional, the government had carefully orchestrated the event and managed the case well for its own ends. On 2 June 1996, before the Medan congress, the government had invited forty newspaper editors and television executives to attend a luncheon in a military building in Jakarta. On behalf of the Indonesian government, the military spokesman Brigadier General Amir Syarifudin warned the editors 'not to exaggerate' their coverage of Megawati Sukarnoputri. He even jokingly asked the editors not to use the terms 'unseat' and 'to topple' in their reports, stressed the importance of "defending the dignity of the government" (AJI, 1996), and instructed them to play down the issue and report in a "manner sympathetic to Megawati's opponents and the government" (Aspinall, 1996).

This intimidation was largely effective. In the days after that meeting, the Indonesian media clearly toned down their coverage. Unfortunately for the government, uncensored reports and news kept being posted on the Internet as well as through international media and radio. In its posting entitled 'Urgent Alert on Indonesia' to *Apakabar* on 7 June 1996, AJI reported the Medan congress, including how the government represented by General Syarifuddin had intimidated journalists in the meeting dated 2 June 1996.<sup>118</sup> Gerry van Klinken from *Inside Indonesia* posted an

---

<sup>118</sup> An email posted to *Apakabar*, "Action Alert on Indonesia, from: [Apakabar@clark.net](mailto:Apakabar@clark.net), date: Fri Jun 07 1996 - 12:13:00 EDT.

analytical article about the political manipulation of the PDI by the government,<sup>119</sup> the pro-democratic student based People's Democratic Party (PRD, *Partai Rakyat Demokrat*) sent an email noting their rejection of the military's intervention in PDI<sup>120</sup> and there were other postings in a similar tone.

The pro-Megawati information did not remain in cyberspace. Protesters gathering at the PDI headquarters in Central Jakarta distributed printouts originating from *Apakabar*, faxed them to their provincial offices and plastered these uncensored reports on walls. Internet-based reports with controversial titles such as "Officers accompany PDI representatives in Congress", "Army is the engineer of Congress", "Journalist are beaten and bribed", "Army sets up check points around Medan", and "Suharto himself has appointed Soerjadi" were widely distributed in Jakarta (Harsono, 1997). This spread of information at the very least strengthened the resistance of pro-Megawati activists to the government. Pro-Megawati support kept increasing and, in protest against the congress, thousands of Megawati supporters took to the streets of cities and towns around the country, occupying provincial branches of the PDI and incurring the wrath of the security forces. Surprisingly, "most media reported the [Medan congress] dispute as if it was merely an internal split in the party, giving little explicit coverage of government intervention" (Aspinall, 1996); even the above-mentioned June pro-Megawati street rallies which resulted in a clash with riot police and the military did not get major coverage.

The dispute reached a peak on 27 July 1996 when Soerjadi's PDI members, along with government troops and hired thugs, attacked the PDI headquarters, expelling Megawati supporters, and triggered riots that left at least five people dead, 124 injured and 23 missing (*The Jakarta Post*, May 27, 1997: 2).<sup>121</sup> Subsequent to the attack on the PDI office and the ensuing riots, "the student movement became the target of extreme repression" (McRae, 2001: 5). The commander of the armed forces, Feisal Tanjung, appeared on national television to threaten "subversive groups associated with the PDI", while Jakarta's Military Commander, Sutiyoso, ordered "his troops to shoot troublemakers on sight" (Aspinall, 1996).

While the mainstream media, particularly the print media and television, were still hesitant in their reporting of the events around the 27 July attack and the riots, the news coverage on the Internet was more open to that of the print media and reports from the authorities (Tickle, 1997: 11). Journalists and activists updated the international public through their postings of news and reports in cyberspace. For weeks, *Apakabar* and *soc.culture.Indonesia* were filled with 27 July related news. In *Apakabar*, news and reports from Reuters were being posted, and someone using the nickname 'tapol'

---

<sup>119</sup> An email posted to *Apakabar*, "Megawati Out?" forwarded by: [Apakabar@clark.net](mailto:Apakabar@clark.net), date: Mon Jun 10 1996 - 07:16:00 EDT.

<sup>120</sup> An email posted to *Apakabar*, "Penolakan Intervensi Militer dalam Tubuh PDI", forwarded by: [Apakabar@clark.net](mailto:Apakabar@clark.net), date: Fri Jun 07 1996 - 06:35:00 EDT.

<sup>121</sup> Note here that the *Jakarta Post* published the story one year after the incident.

(political prisoner)<sup>122</sup> kept posting 27 July related news explicitly condemning the action of the military.<sup>123</sup>

After this July incident, while the PDI faction of Megawati was formally removed from the Indonesian political ground, this party, in opposition to *Golkar* secretly kept holding their meetings and still had a 'free space' in cyberspace as its supporters put together a homepage devoted to Megawati (see Figure 5.1) and her party to raise public sympathy for the repression of party rights on 27 July 1996.<sup>124</sup>



**Figure 5.1 Megawati Soekarnoputri@Internet**  
Source: <http://megawati.forpresident.com>

The homepage was created by Megawati sympathisers in Germany and was located on a German server. With a large picture of a smiling Megawati, the red and white national flags at her sides and the symbol of the nation, the Garuda, along with the blinking white ribbon campaign of peaceful reformation in Indonesia, the website offered cyber-legitimacy for the repressed opposition.

<sup>122</sup> The real name of 'tapol' is Camel Budiardjo.

<sup>123</sup> For example: "PDI Office Assaulted, Street Clashes", from: [tapol@gn.apc.org](mailto:tapol@gn.apc.org), date: Sat Jul 27 1996 - 11:50:00 EDT.

<sup>124</sup> URL: <http://megawati.forpresident.com> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

### 5.5.2 PRD online

The People's Democratic Party (PRD, *Partai Rakyat Demokrat*)<sup>125</sup> is a pro-democracy organisation centred on a network of local student, labour and farmer groups based in Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Solo, Surabaya, Medan and Manado. On 2 May 1995, supported by some prominent oppositionists such as Adnan Buyung Nasution the director of LBH, Dede Triawan from the environmental umbrella organisation WALHI, Muhtar Pakpahan head of the recently formed independent trade union SBSI who was awaiting trial on political charges and Pramoedya Ananta Toer the renowned 'left' novelist, this organisation was launched in Jakarta.

At its launch, the chairperson, Sugeng Bahagijo, set out a founding declaration calling for the democratisation of Indonesian society and a return to civilian rule. PRD demanded direct elections (for president), called for the restoration of the right to form political parties and mass organisations beyond those chosen by the government, the right to hold public rallies, demonstrations and other political activities, and the restoration of freedom of speech and a free press. All of these tough demands and especially two particularly bold further demands in the Indonesian context — calling for the restoration of civil rights to the tens of thousands of leftist and national former political prisoners arrested in 1965 and for peaceful resolution, no military intervention and recognising the human rights of the East Timorese nation — naturally put this organisation on the Suharto's government's blacklist.

Soon after its launch, Soesilo Soedarman, the Minister for politics and security, stated: "The PRD is not legal. There are only three political vehicles recognised by the government: PPP (United Development Party), Golkar (the Suharto's government party) and the PDI (Indonesian Democratic Party). The government will take firm action" (Lane, 1995). The government proved true to its word, and after its public debut, the PRD faced severe negative sentiments and crackdowns by the state.

When the 27 July 1996 incident occurred, the PRD, which was perceived as being akin to communism, Marxism and the forbidden PKI party (see Chapter 4), became a target for the state's politics of scapegoating. Many of its activists—called 'sons of PKI'—were kidnapped and killed. PRD thus had no single physical or legal institutional space in which to hold its activities. In less than three weeks of the July 1996 tragedy, the PRD leader and high-rank activists such as Budiman Sujatmiko, Pius Lustris Lanang, I. Pranowo, B. Sembiring and J. Kurniawan were sent for trial and held in permanent detention.

---

<sup>125</sup> PRD consisted of a national student organisation called Students in Solidarity for Democracy in Indonesia (SMID, *Solidaritas Masyarakat Indonesia untuk Demokrasi*), an independent trade union named the Indonesian Centre of Labour Struggle (PPBI, *Pusat Perjuangan Buruh Indonesia*), a national peasant's union (STN, *Serikat Tani Nasional*) and a youth-urban poor organisation (Gozal, 1998).

PRD activists thus decided to turn to underground struggles and hold their meetings secretly to avoid police and military attacks (Info Pembebasan, 11 July 1997). However, such activities were not effective as the state police could always arrest and imprison PRD activists due to these activities. In this critical situation, the PRD members decided to focus their struggles on cyberspace.<sup>126</sup>

Prior to 1996, PRD had already used the Internet as an additional tool for communication as well as to spread pro-democracy information. PRD subscribed to *Apakabar* and frequently posted on this list. After the July 1996 crackdown, the Internet became the main information and communication backbone of PRD. It was used to actively communicate and coordinate at the national level, linking its members all across the country by *warnet* connections, and also to build networks with international pro-democracy institutions.<sup>127</sup>

Information dissemination on the Internet was done in three ways. First, by e-mail managed from the Netherlands using [prdeuro@xs4all.nl](mailto:prdeuro@xs4all.nl) in cooperation with CSVI (explained in 5.5.3) and ASIET (Action in Solidarity with Indonesia and East Timor). Second, by websites located on the CSVI server in the Netherlands<sup>128</sup> and on the ASIET server in Australia.<sup>129</sup> And third, by publishing an electronic newsletter, *Info Pembebasan*. PRD representatives believed that by locating their websites at overseas servers it would be easier to maintain these websites, as well as hinder government control.<sup>130</sup> While focusing on cyberactivism, PRD did not neglect its non-cyber activities. The PRD magazine *Pembebasan*, the print version of *Info Pembebasan*, continued to be published underground. According to a PRD representative, by disseminating this magazine, PRD could assess the development of the structure of struggle against Suharto regime and build the recruitment base from various points of dissemination.<sup>131</sup>

The PRD website (see Figure 5.2) bravely showed its opposition to Suharto, putting its symbol, half a black wheel and a yellow star on a red background, that has strong communist overtones on the top of the front page, the PRD thus did not try to escape from accusations that it was linked to PKI. The design incorporates some of the well-known symbols of communism: blood red as its background and bright yellow for its star. The Communist Party of China uses a similar design.

---

<sup>126</sup> PRD representative, personal interview by email, 11 April 2003.

<sup>127</sup> PRD representative, personal interview by email, 12 April 2003.

<sup>128</sup> <http://www.xs4all.nl/~peace> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>129</sup> <http://www.asiet.org.au> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>130</sup> PRD representative, personal interview by email, 16 April 2003.

<sup>131</sup> PRD representative, personal interview by email, 16 April 2003.



**Figure 5.2 Homepage of PRD**  
Source: <http://www.xs4all.nl/~peace>

The website was bilingual, in English and Indonesian, while the PRD manifesto was published in four languages: Indonesian, English, Spanish and Dutch. This showed the serious intent of PRD to maintain this website, demonstrated that the website was significant for the sustainability of this organisation and clearly showed PRD's intention of gaining international support.

Through its websites, e-mails and newsletters, PRD maintained its profile. The testimonies of activists who were kidnapped by the military were published on the websites calling for international support. The PRD leader, Budiman Sujatmiko, kept updating his sympathisers with his letters from prison that were transformed to online articles. Even the poet Widji Thukul, one of the missing PRD members suspected of being kidnapped and murdered, could mysteriously appear with a poem at *Apakabar* before he finally disappeared forever. For PRD, the Internet not only helped its pro-democracy struggles; at that time cyberspace had become 'the only space' where PRD could exist without any fear of crackdown or detention of its members.

### 5.5.3 *The blazing news from PIJAR*

An organisation called as PIJAR had similar characteristics to PRD. Founded in 1989, PIJAR consisted of students from various universities in Jakarta, Bandung and Yogyakarta. Its main purpose was to join the struggle for democracy and human rights in Indonesia. Since its birth, its public activities, such as street demonstrations and public meetings, were considered illegal by the state, and its leaders were sent for trial and then

imprisoned. PIJAR thus decided to shift its activities to disseminating resistance against the state by spreading an underground bulletin called “News from PIJAR” (KdP, *Kabar dari PIJAR*).

While PIJAR stands for the Centre of Information and Action Network for Reform (*Pusat Informasi dan Jaringan Aksi untuk Reformasi*), the word ‘*pjar*’ itself means ‘flame’, ‘flare’ or ‘blaze’, and the News from PIJAR (KdP) did have this character. KdP’s contents were essentially news about alternative opinions mainly criticising Suharto’s regime, which was not provided by the mainstream media. However, this kind of activity was not that effective; the circulation was not so wide and the risk of arrest was still very high. In July 1995, the chief editor of KdP, Tri Agus, was put in jail after publishing an article entitled, “This country has been thrown into a mess by someone called Suharto”. He was sentenced to two years’ imprisonment for ‘insulting the Head of State’.

Early in 1996, KdP decided to move to cyberspace, and since then it has become the major news-provider for alternative political information about Indonesia. Helped by international networks, PIJAR successfully built its nodes of information flows through an American-based server (provided by the Association for Progressive Communication in the United States) for its mailing list (KdP-net) and a Germany based (provided by the University of Stuttgart) server for its website.<sup>132</sup> Some of the information disseminated was provided by anonymous contributors that wanted to support the pro-democracy movements but did not want to put themselves in danger. To protect the security of contributors, who mostly accessed the Internet from the *warnet*, PIJAR provided an encryption program, the Pretty Good Privacy (PGP) Public Key. This way anybody could secretly communicate with the PIJAR’s administrators (Pijar, 1999).

#### *5.5.4 The ‘left’ side of Indonesian cyberspace*

With the help of some pro-democracy cyber-activists such as *Apakabar* and *PIJAR*, the New Order’s assaults against pro-democracy movements in Indonesia received global exposure and condemnation from an international audience, especially from Indonesians abroad. The spread of this kind of information created a momentum for some Indonesians, especially those residing in Europe, who for political reasons could not go back to Indonesia after the G30S/PKI 1965 event,<sup>133</sup> to join the pro-democracy movements. With the support of the Internet, these people connected to the pro-democracy movements by engaging in online activism. These people and groups, who were always marked as being ‘left wing’ — their voices were suppressed by the Suharto regime — found a way to voice their opinions through cyberspace.

---

<sup>132</sup> URL: <http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/indonesia/pjar/> (last accessed on 30 July 1999).

<sup>133</sup> About the G30S/PKI 1965 event, see Section 4.2.



One important example is the emergence of The People's Resistance in Indonesia (CSVI, *Coördinatiegroep voor Steun aan het Volksverzet in Indonesie*).<sup>134</sup> CSVI was founded in Amsterdam in June 1996 as a reaction against the military crackdown on the PPBI, part of PRD, the pro-labour movement in Surabaya.<sup>135</sup> Just two weeks after the 27 July 1996 event, CSVI launched its website,<sup>136</sup> which contained numerous controversial articles with left-wing nuances, something that was unacceptable in Indonesia, supporting the pro-democracy PRD movement and also the party-in-opposition, PDI-P, of Megawati Sukarno.<sup>137</sup>

CSVI had no difficulties voicing its ideas in Holland. This group held street demonstrations in front of the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague and received easy access to Dutch media. In this way it created its own 'Indonesian political space' but outside Indonesia. When it started CSVI did not have any easy access to Indonesian society. However, with the Internet, CSVI could be in contact not only with other pro-democracy movements in the world but also with those in Indonesia. Bonded by the same spirit of democracy, similar ideology (pro-labour, Marxism, left-wing) and with a shared enemy (Suharto and his cronies), CSVI supported PRD by providing a space to maintain its profile on CSVI's server.<sup>138</sup>

Other examples are the online activism of Waruno Mahdi and Oemar Said. Both of them had no choice but to reside in Europe as a result of the 1965 tragedy when Suharto forcefully took over the presidency from Sukarno. Waruno Mahdi was an Indonesian (and now a German citizen) who happened to be in USSR when the G30S/PKI 1965 event occurred.<sup>139</sup> He moved around different places until he finally asked for asylum in Berlin and became a citizen of the Federal Republic of Germany in 2000. On his university server, Mahdi created a homepage entitled "Look at Indonesia",<sup>140</sup> a page full of links to various websites which John A. MacDougall considered to be the most complete personal page about Indonesia. Many websites he listed were links to political information, including *Apakabar*, *SiaR* and *PIJAR*. Here he also published his compiled articles and

---

<sup>134</sup> The formal English name of CVSI, The People's Resistance in Indonesia, is not literally translated from its Dutch name. The literal translation of CVSI is actually the Coordination Group for Support of the People's Resistance in Indonesia.

<sup>135</sup> CSVI representative, personal interviews by email, 16-20 April 2003.

<sup>136</sup> URL: <http://www.xs4all.nl/~peace/> (last accessed on 30 April 2003).

<sup>137</sup> URL: <http://www.xs4all.nl/~peace/pubeng/mov/mov.html> (last accessed on 19 August 2000).

<sup>138</sup> URL: <http://www.xs4all.nl/~peace/pubeng/pdm.html> (last accessed on 19 August 2000).

<sup>139</sup> From 1960 to 1965, Mahdi had been a chemical technology student at the Mendeleev Institute of Chemical Technology Moscow. Subsequent to the 1965 tragedy, in 1966 — at the recommendation of the military attaché of the Indonesian Embassy — Wahdi signed a loyalty declaration to the first President of Indonesia (Sukarno). When Sukarno was arrested, the embassy and military attaché shifted their loyalty to the new regime in power, Suharto, but Mahdi refused to back out from his signed loyalty declaration and decided to join the opposition. As a result, his passport was declared invalid and Mahdi was ordered to return to Indonesia for further process. However, Mahdi chose to go into exile (Mahdi, 1997).

<sup>140</sup> URL: <http://w3.rz-berlin.mpg.de/~wm/wm6.html> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

news about the 27 July 1996 Grey Saturday incident, the military invasion in East Timor, and other information that clearly criticised the Suharto regime and the military.

Oemar Said was a journalist at the *Ekonomi Nasional* newspaper who happened to attend a conference in Algeria when G30S/PKI 1965 event happened. After the 1965 incident the *Ekonomi Nasional*, along with some other media, was banned and closed down by Suharto. Said flew from Algeria to Beijing and stayed there while waiting for a chance to go back to Indonesia. However, the opportunity never came, and, thus, like Mahdi, Said too was moving from place to place until he took up permanent residence in Paris.

After the 27 July 1996 incident Said started actively to write about his criticisms of the Suharto regime. He frequently posted his articles on *Apakabar* using a made-up name. He sometimes sent emails using a bogus female name (Siti Sundari) and asked the *Apakabar*'s moderator, John A. MacDougall, to disguise his name. MacDougall then changed Siti Sundari to male names like Yoso Sanyoto.<sup>141</sup> At other times Said sent his articles using a male name such as Rasyidin Sulaiman. After the *reformasi*, Said exposed his true identity and started to disseminate articles freely using the tag "Notes of A. Umar Said" (*Catatan A. Umar Said*).

One last example is the presence of the well-known 'banned' novelist Pramoedya Ananta Toer, commonly called Pram, in cyberspace.<sup>142</sup> In 1965, Pram's sympathy towards the Indonesian Communist Party, which was reflected in his essays and cultural criticism, brought him to jail. He was jailed for 14 years and during his imprisonment he produced some novels and other writings that are full of political messages. His works were considered to be carrying the message of 'communism' and were therefore banned by the Suharto regime. However, in 1996, a man named A.D. Ticoalu published excerpts of these works by putting them on a website dedicated to Pram. The homepage of Pramoedya Ananta Toer proves that even a most severely banned writer can still maintain a profile in cyberspace.

The examples in this section show once again that, at that time, before May 1998 *reformasi*, the Internet offered openness and freedom that was absent in other media. For the 'left', such freedom was non-existent in other media and in many other spaces of society. Soon, however, the increasing intermodality of media linkages with the Internet would create deeper grassroots foundations for *reformasi*.

## 5.6 On *Reformasi*: From Elites to the Streets

The previous section has shown that over some events the Internet emerged to support political activism. There is also evidence that the Internet was not the only infrastructure

---

<sup>141</sup><http://perso.club-Internet.fr/kontak/27%20Juli%20dan%20masalah%20Presiden%20Suharto.htm> (last accessed on 20 August 2002).

<sup>142</sup> <http://www.geocities.com/Broadway/Orchestra/9632/index4.html> (last accessed on 20 August 2002).

supporting the activism. In the Marsinah case it was the fax that became the supportive tool that made global protest possible. In the 1996 PDI protest, the Internet's role linked with the roles of printed information (photocopy) and faxes. Some pro-democracy groups such as PRD, while highly dependent on the Internet, still needed to publish underground printed versions of its e-newsletter. In the collective popular action of the May 1998 *reformasi*, it is also evident that the Internet was not the only tool or driver. Tracing the journey of one message that was closely related to the May 1998 *reformasi*, the following sections will explain how the Internet network worked with intermodal linkages to other media and other networks, thus significantly contributing to the process of identity formation — the accumulation of resistance — leading to the mass social mobilisation that resulted in fundamental political change.

### 5.6.1 *The journey of a message*

Among the information spread on the Internet that can be classified as 'unavailable and controversial', the most popular was the famous *Daftar Kekayaan Suharto* or "the list of Suharto's wealth". This information was originally written by George Aditjondro (1998d).

The original "list of Suharto's wealth" was actually not a list. It was a series of four long emails on the subject of: "*Kekayaan Suharto (Suharto's Wealth)*", version 1 to 4 with "*Yayasan-yayasan Suharto: cakupan, dampak, dan pertanggungjawabannya (Suharto's foundations: their coverage, impact and blameworthiness)*" as subtitles (Aditjondro, 1998e, 1998f, 1998g, 1998h). In these emails Aditjondro narrated how Suharto used his "charity" foundations to cover his corrupt business practices and the network of his businesses as well as identified those who were involved and the amount of money spent/gained.

The four emails were sent by Aditjondro to John MacDougall, the moderator of the major mailing list *Apakabar*, [Indonesia-l@indopub.com](mailto:Indonesia-l@indopub.com), on 31 January 1998. The moderator then spread these emails through *Apakabar* mailing list on 1 February 1998. At the same time, Aditjondro also sent the emails to other colleagues and friends. Other groups who were among the earliest recipients besides *Apakabar* were Munindo (Aditjondro, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c), *Pijar* (KdPnet, 1998) and Indonesian Daily News Online (SiaR, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1998d, 1998e). All put the information on their homepages and/or spread the information through mailing lists.

Up to April 1998, many other websites were also copying this information. Many more websites, even personal ones, linked their websites to the information. The link that was most frequently cited was the URL-link to Indonesian Daily News Online (SiaR, 1998e). Some of the reproductions of Aditjondro's information used the exact title given by Aditjondro, some slightly changed the title making it a bit more provocative and some even totally changed the title to a much more provocative and controversial line. Some

titles actually sounded cynically hilarious rather than provocative.<sup>143</sup> Not only the title, but also the format of the information was modified, such as from a long narrative into a shorter version of narrative. Some Internet-users also tried to change it into a summary. Others tried to paraphrase the narrative and put Aditjondro as a reference (Luknanto, 1998b).

The most significant change made by Internet users was to transform the long narrative format into a short list or bullet points (Luknanto, 1998c). Such a list only captured the names of the foundations and their links to the business industry. This kind of information is simpler, more readable, more provocative and more effective for ordinary people. All efforts were taken to ensure this information received widespread attention from Internet users. Meanwhile the process of dissemination was continuing, especially by emails using Indonesian mailing lists. Within a few months of Aditjondro posting his article, the information about Suharto's wealth was spreading all over cyberspace, especially in March–April 1998, after President Suharto was re-elected for his 7<sup>th</sup> term on 11 March 1998.

In April 1998, some activists published their first edition of an online tabloid, named *Indonesia Baru* (the new Indonesia). While publishing politically related information they also placed “the steps to disseminate information” on their website, which consisted of the request to spread the information from their online tabloid in five ways (Indonesia Baru, 1998),<sup>144</sup> as follows:

- ‘Tell’ your friends about the *Indonesia Baru* website so they will also visit this homepage,
- ‘Forward’ the content of the *Indonesia Baru* by email to your friends.
- ‘Print’ the content of *Indonesia Baru* out and ‘fax’ it to your friends.
- ‘Photocopy’ the print out of *Indonesia Baru* and ‘disseminate’ it to people who do not have access to the Internet, e-mail, or fax.
- If you know of any website whose mission is similar to *Indonesia Baru*, please let us know so we can have a more ‘integrated network’.

---

<sup>143</sup> One title was ‘*Daftar Isi Kekayaan Eyang Kakung*’, List of Wealth of the Grandfather (Luknanto, 1998a). *Eyang kakung* is a Javanese term which sounds very family-oriented and has a positive meaning. Addressing the grandfather with the words *eyang kakung* means treating him with respect. In this regard, the positiveness of this word was used to humiliate Suharto who, literally speaking, was old like a grandfather for the country but not worthy of respect.

<sup>144</sup> 1. Memberi tahu teman-teman lain tentang homepage “*Indonesia Baru*”, sehingga mereka turut menjadi pengunjung. 2. Mengirim isi “*Indonesia Baru*” lewat email kepada teman anda. 3. Memprint-out isi “*Indonesia Baru*”, kemudian mengirimkan dengan faksimili kepada teman anda. 4. Memfotokopi print out “*Indonesia Baru*” dan memberikan kepada masyarakat yang tidak terjangkau oleh Internet, email, atau faksimili. 5. Apabila ada pengunjung yang mengetahui alamat homepage yang misinya seperti “*Indonesia Baru*” maka kami mohon untuk mengkhabarkan kepada redaksi “*Indonesia Baru*”, sehingga kita bisa membuat jaringan yang lebih padu (Indonesia Baru, 1998).

This suggestion proved a breakthrough. Many other websites who were also active at that time then suggested the same thing. In April – May 1998, there had been many mysterious faxes arriving at office' fax machines in major cities in Indonesia sent by unknown numbers. Various messages were disseminated using faxing machines, but the most popular one remained the list of Suharto's wealth. The people working in these offices, directors, managers, secretaries and even the janitors whose duty was to deliver the mail and faxes to the addressees, became aware of this information and were willing to spread this information to the people within their social clusters.

Yen (34), an executive secretary with a textile manufacturer in Padalarang (17 km west of Bandung) said:

“Almost everyday I received faxes about Suharto, sometimes about Prabowo too. They came from friends, friends of friends, or even unknown people. Well, I was never into politics, but this kind of information is very very interesting, shocking and hot! My boss too was always interested to read this kind of information. The funny thing is that I also gave the copy to my father who has been a supporter of Suharto for decades. He was shocked when he read it! Haha!”<sup>145</sup>

Printed versions of this information were also spread through the Internet cafés (*warnet*). Many *warnet* operators in Bandung put this list on their announcement board, together with some other net-related issues such as 'top-10 hot chat rooms' or 'top pop music websites'. *Warnet* users also disseminated this information to other *warnet* users and spread the photocopied materials to non-*warnet*-users.

The information was not only spread among *warnet*-related peers. The photocopied version of the list of Suharto's wealth was commonly found on the streets from mid-March to mid-May 1998. The newspaper sellers and the street-vendors sold this photocopied version at traffic lights, bus stations and train stations. In Bandung and Jakarta, a one page copy of this list was sold for 1,000 rupiahs (approximately US\$ 10 cents). Some printouts were even plastered on buses. In this way, the information reached many ordinary people. It reached people in cars, motorcycles, buses, trains and other public transport. Verbal rumours and talk played a significant role in further disseminating the information.

In Jakarta, two social groups among the larger society were identified as the ones that had speedy access to political information. First, the group of taxi drivers, who always knew where the students held or would hold street demonstrations (taxi drivers found out to avoid the traffic jams); then they would want to know why these demonstrations were held, to give answers to their passengers. Students also made friends with these taxi

---

<sup>145</sup> *Ampir tiap hari gue nerima fax tentang Suharto, kadang juga tentang Prabowo. Datengnya ya dari mana-mana, dari temen, dari temennya temen, kadang dari orang yg kagak kenal. Well, gue sih ngga suka politik, tapi kalo info kayak ginian sih seru, bikin heboh, hot! Lucunya, gue juga ngasih info ini sama bokap gue yang udah puluhan taun ngedukung Suharto. Jelas dia shock berat, haha!* (Yen, personal interview, 14 August 2002).

drivers. Some taxi drivers in Jakarta claimed to receive some stacks of photocopied information from students to be freely disseminated to passengers. Interestingly, this relationship meant that taxi drivers were influenced by students, at least in their use of terminologies. The words '*reformasi*' 'regime', 'crisis', 'unconstitutional', 'cronies' and 'corruption-collusion-nepotism' (KKN, *korupsi-kolusi-nepotisme*) easily came out in regular conversations, although such terminologies were essentially foreign to these drivers. For example, when he was asked about the 1998 *reformasi* and student demonstration, Suparman, a middle aged taxi driver in Jakarta who has been driving since 1989, said:

"It is about time to do reform, *neng* (young lady). Before the Suharto regime finally brings our country to a fatal destruction. This monetary [crisis] is definitely the result of corruption, collusion and nepotism by Suharto regime and his cronies, *neng. Masya Allah* (Oh God), Suharto has so much wealth everywhere! Of course I am supporting the *reformasi*, I am supporting the students. Even though there is a traffic jam all the time, it's okay. I hope the fortune will come to small people like me if the reform is successful."<sup>146</sup>

According to some taxi drivers, in those days of student demonstrations, the taxi-radio was frequently used to spread information about the demonstrations. Sometimes taxi-radios were also used to spread political gossip besides the regular daily gossip.

The second group consists of the food stall/kiosk (*warung*) owners around the universities where students lived and carried out their activities. They would chat with students at breakfast, lunch and dinner times. These ordinary people (mostly from mid-lower classes) developed sympathy with the students by listening to their gripes and occasionally supplied food. Political as well as daily rumours and gossip were spread to, from and among the *warung*.

The cabs and the *warung* thus became sub-hubs of networks of information flows. The cabs and *warung* are definitely among the most important urban artefacts in terms of where the social fabric of urban society finds its nexus. The combination of cabs and *warung* also represent the preset (i.e. immobile) and the mobile modes of communications and information networks. From the streets, cabs, *warung* and other alternative hubs, the information reached many people both at the nucleus and the fringes of urban areas. The traditional network of information was thus awakened. Thus, the 'political contention' and the resistance developed by a small segment of society, the elites, were disseminated to a wider urban society. In many other places, mainly in urban

---

<sup>146</sup> *Sudah saatnya kita ini melakukan reformasi, neng, sebelum negara ini hancur berantakan oleh rejim Suharto. Krisis moneter ini kan akibat praktek KKN rejim Suharto dan kroni-nya, neng. MasyaAllah, itu Suharto hartanya segunung ada di mana-mana!. Saya dukung lah reformasi, saya dukung mahasiswa. Walau jalanan jadi macet terus, tak apalah. Mudah-mudahan nasib orang-orang kecil seperti saya ini berubah kalau jadi reformasi* (Suparman, personal interview, 15 April 1998).

regions of Indonesia, people began to demand that Suharto resign. Students abroad posted their statements on the Internet. A trishaw driver voiced his statement at a free speech podium at Gasibu Park Bandung. White-collar workers in Jakarta Stock Exchange held a one-day action to voice their opinion. Lecturers from UI joined the students to march on the streets. All demanded the same thing, '*Turunkan Suharto!*' (Overthrow Suharto!).

### **5.6.2 Filtering the information**

Not all Suharto-related information from the 'elites' reached 'the streets'. The "list of Suharto's wealth", as explained in the previous section, was one piece of information that flew from cyberspace to the streets. The huge amount of information in cyberspace went through filtering processes that absorbed in both cyberspace and physical space. While it is impossible to fully trace how information was filtered and who filtered it, this section, using the same example as in Section 5.6.1, attempts to show four levels of filtering that accompanied the information dissemination process.

Global actors, both individuals and groups such as MacDougall (*Apakabar*), Aditjondro, PRD and first-hand disseminators (e.g. *Munindo* and *Pijar*), who mostly were based abroad (i.e. in the global sphere), played key roles as first-level filterers. They activated filtering processes on information flows at the global level before they entered Indonesia. They occupied places in the first layer of disseminators. This first level filtering process was mostly based on the degree of negativity about the authority (Suharto and his New Order regime). There was a tendency that the higher the degree of negativity the more likely the information would be transmitted onward to Indonesia. MacDougall of *Apakabar*, for example, tended to post information that was anti-Suharto rather than the more neutral material. All of Aditjondro and PRD's postings had strong negative connotations about Suharto and the New Order. The global actors emboldened resistance in an explicit way by providing this filtered information.

Indonesian Internet communities did the second-level of filtering. These were the individuals who were joining political mailing lists such as *Apakabar*. Some of them were politically engaged in active discussions, reading and rapidly spreading serious political information. These users got the information from the global sources and disseminated them within Indonesian cyberspace, among Indonesian users. As mentioned in Section 5.6.1, some of these Internet users put in effort to make the information less complex and more readable by the layperson by shortening the articles and 'translating' the academic language to everyday spoken language (Luknanto, 1998b, 1998c).

The group of filterers at the third-level were the youngsters who accessed the Internet from *warnet* all over the country. They were not particularly interested in political discussions. Some did join politically-related mailing lists but mostly they were only passively engaged in political discourse. These youngsters liked to chat and talk about 'light' issues. Regarding politically related information, they selected the information they read and spread to others based on content. Mostly, only rumour-type

political information was disseminated by and among these young *warnet* users. These youngsters favoured information that was low in complexity and easy to digest. Following an example from Section 5.6.1, the bullet list type of information such as “the list of Suharto’s wealth” is an example of the types of information they preferred.

The fourth-level of filtering was done through linkages between the Internet and other domestic media, which clearly happened outside cyberspace. At this level, the sources acted as mediators between cyberspace and the real local social and physical space, between the Internet users and non-Internet users, between the ‘elites’ and ordinary people (Lim, 2002a, 2003c). At this level, among the mediators, were newspaper sellers, taxi-drivers and kiosk owners (see Lim, 2003c; Section 5.6.1.). The newspaper sellers selected the information to disseminate based on the economic returns it would bring from charging a price for it. They spread the information by selling photocopied versions of pages from the Internet. They were interested in spreading, particularly, the information that was easy to sell, i.e. the light, simple, gossip-like and bombastic, the rumour. Unsurprisingly, the “list of Suharto’s wealth” was such information because it sounded more like rumour rather than the usual type of political information that was mostly serious and heavy. Finally, after such processes of filtering, the ‘contentious’ message that came to the ‘streets’ and was captured by ordinary people was one that was popular, unofficial and gossip-like. It offered a simple yet strong causality: “Suharto(’s wealth) is a cause of the economic crisis” or even the simplified formula of “Suharto = Crisis”.

Meanwhile, the people who did not actively produce and disseminate the information also filtered the information they received. They filtered it based on their identities, values and beliefs. In the case of the May 1998 *reformasi*, the anti-Suharto message might initially conflict with previous ideas about Suharto that had been cultivated over 35 years through ‘development’ ideograph and nationalist meta-narratives (see Chapter 4). However, as people wanted a reason of all difficulties they were facing — the economic crisis — an easy formula of “Suharto = Crisis” offered by “the list of Suharto’s wealth” appeared to be a right answer.

### *5.6.3 The weeks, days, hours and minutes leading to the 21 May 1998 reformasi*

With information reaching so many people, it was time to have real mass-based anti Suharto action. The accumulation of collective resistance reached its peak in the months of April, and especially May 1998, when students and ordinary people joined to demand that President Suharto give up his position. What was the role of the Internet, besides spreading the information that led to mass resistance and mass mobilisation? What was the specific role with regard to the mobilisation itself? Some journalists assumed that the Internet was used by activists to coordinate and to mobilise. However, there is no strong evidence of this.



Erwithon Napitupulu, an interviewee and a *reformasi* activist of 1998, who was also a lecturer at the Department of Architecture in ITB, explained that the Internet was not directly used to coordinate and mobilise, but on their mailing lists student activists did announce their plans to hold demonstrations.<sup>147</sup> Occasionally student activists also asked list members' opinions about such a plan. Such questions as "What is the best time for a street demonstration, this Saturday or next Monday?" were common. Napitupulu also stated that in ITB there was not much support from the lecturers and Board of Directors for the student activists, and so the mailing lists on the ITB server could not be used publicly to coordinate or to mobilise. Nevertheless, student activists and some lecturer activists like himself kept posting political information and kept updating as many ITB students and faculty as possible about the situation on the street (student demonstrations, etc.). Anas, the administrator of the ITB server, confirmed Napitupulu's explanation. He also said that some student activists used private 'fake' emails to coordinate and plan the mobilisation because it was too risky to use student emails or email lists.<sup>148</sup>

Some activists speculated that for coordination during a mobilisation the cellular phone might be more useful than the Internet as it enables people to communicate when they are on the move. Another reason was because the cellular phone was more common in Indonesia. The number of cellular phone users, less than 1 million in 1998 (Koran Tempo, 23 June 2001), was higher than the penetration of the Internet which had about half a million official users in the same year (APJII, 2005). Yet, as the cellular phone cannot be not used collectively while the Internet can, the actual number of Internet users in May 1998 may have exceeded the number of cellular phone users. In addition, prior to May 1998 the connection fee for calling was high<sup>149</sup> and short-message-texting was not widely available, so cellular phone use was limited. In fact, as street demonstrations had become routine — students and activists were on the streets almost every day from early April 1998 to 21 May 1998, and literally every day from 11 to 21 May 1998 — the masses did not have to be mobilised anymore. People just came out and joined any protests they found on the streets.

The evidence from the field shows that the Internet was effective during the mobilisation itself not so much for coordination but more for informing others about events that were happening in various places. Various mailing lists became 'announcement boards' to publicise forthcoming protests as well as to report earlier protests. Student e-newsletters played an important role in spreading information about such events. Erwin, the editor of the electronic version of *Majalah Unpar*, a magazine of the University of Parahyangan, Bandung, for example, was active in publishing detailed chronologies of student events, mainly street demonstrations in Bandung. From Jakarta,

---

<sup>147</sup> E. Napitupulu, personal interview, 8 July 2002.

<sup>148</sup> Anas, personal interview, 18 November 2002.

<sup>149</sup> The average connection fee for a cellular phone in 1998 was certainly much more expensive than an Internet connection.

UI and Trisakti student-reporters regularly updated Indonesian Internet users about *reformasi*-related events in Jakarta.

Writing a chronological report of the events seemed to be a trend in cyberspace during this period of *reformasi* movements. *Apakabar* and other mailing lists were filled with chronological reports of student demonstrations. The report was usually written on behalf of the Student Senate and posted within a couple hours after a demonstration ending. Written with detailed timelines (minute-by-minute), the reports were usually decorated with some 'bloody incidents', complete with a list of injured protestors to make it sound more heroic. While the original purpose of reporting demonstrations in such detail was perhaps to enhance solidarity and the spirit of *reformasi*, at times, such reports gave the impression of being a way to show off and/or compete among universities and/or cities.

Besides mailing lists, websites were also used to publish announcements, reports and to greet each other. Students from Makassar showed their support for students in other cities and reported the news from their location by publishing on a website entitled "The Information on Reform from Makassar" (*Informasi Reformasi dari Makassar*).<sup>150</sup> Students from Medan did the same thing by publishing their "Students of Archipelagos Page: From Medan for Reform" (*Halaman Mahasiswa Nusantara: Dari Medan untuk Reformasi*).<sup>151</sup>

A fairly important website that reported various events from various places was the "IndoProtest: Uncensored Articles on Indonesian Student Protests".<sup>152</sup> On this website, students could freely post reports and articles on student protests. From 2 May to 20 May 1998, the website published new articles and reports every day. These articles provoke more sympathy from students. Many students reacted positively towards the protests by signing the guest book of this website. When six Trisakti students<sup>153</sup> were killed during the protests on 12 May 1998, Internet users (students) reacted strongly by sending their sympathetic posts to the guest book and encouraging each other to continue the struggles. After this bloody tragedy, there was a great escalation in the resistance against Suharto, which was also reflected in many postings on the Internet. Students and activists posted messages full of hatred and anger against Suharto. Impudent statements such as 'Hang Suharto' and 'Demolish Suharto' decorated many messages. Calls for mass protests became more extensive and sounded more forceful with statements such as "*Demo atau Mati*" (join demonstration or perish), which implied a negative pressure on students who were disinclined to join.

---

<sup>150</sup> <http://expage.com/page/inforeformasi> (last accessed on 20 May 2002).

<sup>151</sup> <http://www.anakmedan.or.id/vegatech/reformasi/index.htm> (last accessed on 20 May 2002).

<sup>152</sup> <http://members.tripod.com/~indoprotest/> (last accessed on 20 May 2002).

<sup>153</sup> Six students of Trisakti University, Jakarta — Elang Mulia Lesmana, Hartarto, Hafidin Royani, Hendriawan, Vero, and Alan — were killed during student protests held in the front yard of their university. While identities of the gunmen were never revealed, the police and military were suspected.

The supremacy of the Internet was evident especially when the Suharto regime tried to control the chaotic situation in May 1998 by censoring television broadcasts. The Minister of Information decided to launch a “*Televisi Pool*”, to coordinate all material broadcast by private television stations. From 15 May 1998, all broadcast materials became homogenous and were ‘legalised’ by the logo of TVRI. Critical voices of the opponents were absent, and any news about student demonstrations was also temporarily missing (SCTV, 2002). Thanks to the Internet, during this period, *Apakabar*, the IndoProtest and other pro-*reformasi* websites/ mailing lists and student e-newsletters could update people about the protests every few hours, or even every few minutes. The spirit of the student movement became greater and greater as they knew that there were more students fighting for the same purpose elsewhere in Indonesia. Students abroad supported them by posting statements of “support of Student Action” (*Pernyataan Dukungan Aksi Mahasiswa*).

Greatly driven by the stamp of violence by the military when six Trisakti students were killed during the protests, the popular movement of joint forces of ‘elites’ and ordinary people created the political revolution on 21 May 1998 when Suharto announced his resignation as President of the Republic of Indonesia. During the period leading to the climax of 21 May 1998, the Internet had provided openings, a social ‘affordance’, for political activism to take place under a repressive regime and helped the ‘elites’ to pave a way in generating collective actions leading to popular social movements resulting in a political revolution, the May 1998 *reformasi*, by reaching the ‘people’ on the ‘streets’ via linkages to the ‘more traditional’ media.

## 5.7 Analysis

The Indonesian May 1998 *reformasi* case shows that the Internet was not simply another communication or media technologies. The Internet was successfully used as a tool and space for political activism to break through barriers of state monopoly over the production of knowledge and flows of information and to reach a national and even international audience through the cascading of information from the Internet to people on the street via other media and other networks. Based on the case in this chapter, the following points are drawn to explain the flourishing uses of the Internet for political activism leading to the political revolution of the May 1998 *reformasi*.

### 5.7.1 Novelty and conviviality of the Internet

As the technology was new and thus not (yet) captured by any dominant players in existing social relations, the Internet’s conviviality and early ‘enactor’(s) (Rip, 2004) of the Internet in Indonesia such as Purbo (see Chapter 4), provided openings and opportunities for non-state actors to engage in political activism without overt control of the state. Unlike other media, the Internet was not yet territorially controlled thus it was beyond the dominant power domain that worked in a defined space, the nation-state. This enabled some activists that could not freely express their political opinions in the country

(territorially), such as PRD members and Aditjondro, to participate in the global sphere of Indonesian political activism.

The political and economic situation in Indonesia at that time was not favourable for the government to capture the Internet. This enabled the Internet to be developed and its use expanded by non-state actors, especially by civil society actors in the field of education. The Internet is not neutral; it inclines to serve those who best master the technology, and in this case this was not the Indonesian government. Had the government (state) captured the technology first, the opportunity for civil society would have been limited, as in the case of China, Vietnam and Singapore (Kalathil and Boas, 2003).

As the Internet started in, developed in, and grew from educational institutions (see Section 4.4), it was familiarised mostly by students and education-related actors. Thus, it is not surprising that the Internet became a media that was more suitable, more convivial, for students, university-based activists (e.g. Aditjondro) and student-based political groups/parties (e.g. PRD). Its secondary home was also that of students, at the *warnet*, which, although less politically oriented, also became a source of linking information over cyberspace to the national consciousness.

Thus, while the Internet is convivial medium, it does not mean that it is automatically easily accessible for everybody. This chapter shows the Internet was mostly accessible for the 'elites'. Here, the analysis of the role of the Internet in Indonesia can start from the impact on 'elite politics and perceptions' and particularly on the shifting in control over information from 'political elites' to 'techno-elites'. The term 'techno-elites' is used here instead of simply 'elites' since the common concept of elite is mostly refers to class and status, while in this case the group of Internet users is considered 'elite' not solely because of its class or economic and political status, but because of its technical (Internet) literacy. Yet, at the same time, it is probable that Internet literacy is related to economic status as well as the availability of the technology. Prior to May 1998, the Internet was still new, an elite technology that was not yet accessible by most of the population. The 'techno-elites' of the May 1998 *reformasi*, as can be seen from some examples in this Chapter, consist of those who actually belonged to the middle urban class. The techno-elites in the case of the May 1998 *reformasi* were national/local players as well as global players who were technologically privileged being located in places with technological advantage. While the global players were located in countries where the Internet technology was more developed, the national/local players were mostly students or young activists who were located in Indonesian major cities (urban regions) where the Internet (*warnet*) was more available than in other places.

The novelty and the conviviality of the Internet, resulted in government's inability to control the Internet, enabled the techno-elites to direct the flows of incoming and outgoing information across the territorial boundary of the nation-state as well as to exchange ideas and information within the country.

### 5.7.2 *Intermodality*

In this case, it is clear that the intermodality, the linkages between the Internet network and other types of networks, was significant. Without this intermodality, it would have been impossible for the Internet to bring information from 'elites' to the 'streets'. With this intermodality, hybrid networks were created not only between the Internet and the 'more traditional' media but also between 'space' and 'place' (i.e. cyberspace and physical space such as in *warnet*), between global and national/local (e.g. Aditjondro and PRD), between media and non-media networks (e.g. printed versions of Internet-based information and taxi drivers), and between elites and society at large, especially in urban areas.

With intermodality, the points at which different modes of information networks intersect are extremely important. For example, the *Indonesia Baru* website (see section 5.6.1.) suggesting to its readers to 'tell, forward, print, fax, photocopy' is a significant example. Here the *Indonesia Baru* acts as a point of intersection between print media, fax and photocopy, and the Internet. Other examples are *warnet* and *warung*. *Warnet* is definitely the point where cyberspace and physical space meet as well as one where the Internet and print media meet. *Warung* was mainly a point where student (elite) networks meet networks of ordinary people.

With this intermodality, a large network of activism, including networks of all types, was created. Within the networks, the most convivial medium, the Internet, was the one that opened the flows of information. The Internet tapped other networks, allowed other media to play their role in social mobilisation for political change and gave these media new meaning. These 'more traditional' media were no longer suppressed and controlled but became the media of resistance against the authoritarian government.

In collective action, people tend to associate with people similar to themselves (Klandermans, 1992: 88). Social networks tend to be homogenous and to reproduce themselves. As a result, the constituency of collective actions, including their organisations or groups, usually follow specific horizontal lines of social categorisation, for example by race, gender or class. In Klanderman's (1989) words, people tend to validate information by comparing their interpretations of grievances with those of significant others, particularly like-minded individuals.

This implies that interaction with a trusted individual from one's own social network is the most successful way of ensuring participation. Thus, in the context of the May 1998 *reformasi*, reproduction of networks through peer-to-peer horizontal type of social networks, such as taxi drivers' networks, students-*warung* networks and face-to-face meetings in *warnet*, where individuals meet with their trusted social clusters, was a significant contribution to forming a wave of successful political mass movements.

While recognising the power of intermodality, this Chapter also shows the intermodality has a limit. The linkages between the Internet networks and other media as well as non-media networks and the linkages between 'space' and 'place' were only

possibly created when these networks had existed densely, overlapped with each other, in one 'context' such as the urban areas of Indonesian major cities. In the context where hundreds of *warnet* spread all over the city and exist side by side with media networks (e.g. newspaper sellers) and non-media networks (e.g. taxi drivers and *warung*), such intermodalities are thus possibly created just as they took shape in Bandung, Jakarta and Yogyakarta in the case of the May 1998 *reformasi*.

### *5.7.3 Transforming politics to political rumour*

Millions of Indonesians turned out on the streets demanding that Suharto give up his position. Does this signify a high political awareness among Indonesians? Were these millions of people interested in politics? The answer is yes and no. This case shows that the majority of the population only became interested in disseminating and reading 'political' information when it had been transformed to rumour type of information. Among small groups of Internet users in cyberspace, political discussions did indeed take place, but, even among 'elites', the number of those who were really interested in political discussion was not that high. As illustrated in Sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.2, certain information would become popular and be disseminated to the populace would only when it could become something that could fit into daily conversation, when talking about politics became no different to talking about sexual affairs of the neighbour. Talking about Suharto's wealth, at that time, was more like talking about a rumour rather than about politics.

As explained in Chapter 4, Suharto's authoritarian regime was successful in controlling information, not only by controlling media and (incoming and outgoing) information flows, but also by suppressing politically (even in the cultural and historical sense) related story telling, e.g. by 'taboo' proscriptions. In an important sense, the telling of stories by word of mouth or through print, journalism and other media, is the only way political actions as such acquire meaning. During Suharto's presidency, political dialogue and gossip about public affairs, once the staple diet of all gatherings and conversations, had vanished. More sensitive minds who resisted the relentless pressure to support the regime became repelled by the mere idea of engaging in political activity; it was deemed an intrinsically degrading and contemptible preoccupation. The polity, whose self-definition is that 'everything is political', under the Suharto regime, created one of the most apolitical populations around. The profound metamorphosis in attitude occurred in just a few years. The result was a vulnerable populace, unable to 'think' or accumulate experience in dealing with itself, and consequently more prey than ever to believing the most fantastic lies.

Thus, while political information remained purely political, it would be extremely unlikely that it would really penetrate the majority of the population. Efforts to transform political information into rumour and gossip-like politics was needed to break the apolitical state of affairs. When the populace can talk about politics as if they were talking about daily affairs, then a door to political activism is opened.

#### 5.7.4 *Identity filtering, frame alignment and enemy imaging*

During the crisis, political communications became of great importance. Politically related information in this context matters more than it does in a normal situation. The content of such information that spreads in society also really matters; it can either calm or bring to the boil the emotions of people in crisis. In the Indonesian situation, prior to May 1998, as the authority was in a crisis of legitimacy and people became sensitive to all kinds of information they were able to get, the Internet, quickly began to function as one of the main sources of 'outside' information. How the sources of information were chosen, filtered and spread in Indonesia became crucial to the continued legitimacy of the authority. Here, the process of identity filtering became significant. The actors and disseminators selected and filtered the content of information they disseminated, for their own purposes, beliefs and for the identities they chose to project (see Section 5.6.2). The filtering process accompanied the framing processes not only in cyberspace but also in the physical space and involved both Internet users and non-Internet users. The filtering process can be related to politics, but politics is not the sole factor to be considered in the process since politics cannot be isolated from other social considerations.

The identity filtering cannot be separated from the frame alignment, which refers to the linkage of a person's orientation to that of a collective action such that some set of personal interests, values and beliefs are congruent and complementary to the group's activities, goals and ideology (Snow et al., 1986; Section 3.4.1). In the case of the Indonesian May 1998 *reformasi*, the movement was not so much about a large group of individuals finding the *reformasi* movement's activities, goals and ideology to be congruent and complementary with their own personal interests, values and beliefs. It was more about connecting people with different interests, values and beliefs into one large movement against the regime, without even knowing what the activities, goals and identity of this *reformasi* movement were, except for one short-term goal: ousting Suharto's authoritarian regime. It was more about turning 'resistance identity' (Castells, 1997) against Suharto's authoritarian regime into 'project identity' (Castells, 1997), i.e. mass actions, using the intermodality of the Internet and other media. Yet, the frame alignment process took place among a small group of elites, such as political activists and student leaders, as well as among ordinary people.

In frame alignment theory (see Section 4.3.1), frame bridging (Snow et al., 1986: 468) usually refers to the linkage of ideologically congruent, but structurally unconnected, frames regarding a particular issue of problem. In this May 1998 *reformasi* case, however, the Internet was used in frame bridging that linked not only groups that were ideologically congruent such as PRD, CSVI and PKI-related people in Europe (socialists), but also groups of students and activists which had different ideologies either in terms of political orientation or other types of beliefs (e.g. religion). Global student forums, for example, clearly include students with different ideologies and beliefs.

What is clear in this case is that the Internet was useful in amplifying the issue (frame amplifying, Snow et al., 1986: 469). The Internet was used not to amplify the value, but to amplify the resistance, i.e. increase negative feelings against Suharto. The Internet was also used to amplify the issue of 'regime change', which linked to the 'crisis' issue. The Internet was effective at linking, and at the same time, simplifying the causality between the crisis, particularly economic, and the regime in power, Suharto. This is in line with an argument of Hunt et al. (1994) that for a strong collective identity to exist, contact with a defined opponent is needed bring the group feel closer together. The framing and identity filtering processes led to a strong enemy imaging process, and resulted in a well-defined opponent.

As noted previously, the Internet became popular in Indonesia at the moment of crisis. Within the period of deep crisis, society sought a way to escape the crisis. As there was no way out, society thus sought to find someone to blame. As shown in previous sections, the Internet lent a hand in disseminating information about the 'cause' of the crisis. By flooding the cyberspace, as well as physical space, with simplified message that 'Suharto is the cause of crisis', the enemy of society was well defined. Suharto was strongly defined as an enemy, the opposition of society, and this triggered people to gather in mass actions against him. By defining a clear opposition/enemy of society, mass mobilisation went faster and was more effective than ever before, yet the resulting bond did not last. It succeeded in toppling Suharto but when the enemy (Suharto) was gone, it immediately morphed into struggles for the state itself through various fomented identities.

### *5.7.5 Meta-narratives formation*

Beyond filtering, framing and defining the enemy, is meta-narrative formation, the creation of singularly un-negotiable 'truth'. As explained in Chapter 4, the President of Indonesia, Suharto, defined the nation-state by negating 'Others' and subsequently created his 'nationalist-developmental' meta-narratives with himself as the centre point, the 'father of development'. This meta-narrative was cultivated in the people's minds for decades, and thus it was not easy for Indonesian to switch this opinion to another.

Before 1998, there were some contestations between Suharto's meta-narratives and smaller, counter-narratives by the PDI (Megawati), PRD and other pro-democracy movements. Yet, these counter narratives were not that successful in mobilising people to march on the streets. The majority did not always see the oppositional stance of PDI and PRD as positive, as many still believed that Suharto really was the father of development who had made substantial contributions in economic terms, and was better than the previous president, Sukarno. The PRD, especially, had great difficulties in gaining support from the populace since its ideology was always paralleled with communism, which in Suharto's meta-narrative was positioned as an 'evil' (see Chapter 4).

Mass mobilisation only started gaining momentum, and then escalated, when the flows of information were dominated by the strong negation of Suharto, which led to the significant politics of 'otherness', which was immeasurably augmented by the deep



economic crisis. Further to framing the issue, filtering information and defining Suharto as a collective enemy, political activism on the Internet came to create a meta-narrative, a single truth that claimed that Suharto was the sole reason for all the troubles and generated only one solution: 'Overthrow Suharto'. This was reflected in many impudent statements such as 'Hang Suharto', 'Demolish Suharto'. Thus they created a strong dichotomy that gave no space for those who were not against Suharto. Either you are with 'us', condemning Suharto, or you are (with) 'Suharto'. For students this dichotomy was even sharper, 'joining demonstration or perish' (see Section 5.6.3).

According to Mc Adam's research on participation patterns, "individuals are drawn into participation...as the result of their embeddedness in associational networks that render them 'structurally available' for protest activity" (McAdam, 1994: 36-37). Social networks, for example, ease the uncertainty of joining or, alternatively provide negative peer pressure should one not join (McAdam and Paulsen, 1993: 644). Thus in the case of the May 1998 *reformasi*, the 'anti Suharto' meta-narrative played the significant role of drawing in participation for anti-regime movements, especially by putting negative pressure on those who were inclined not to join.

Klandermans (1988) demonstrates that much of what goes on within social networks of social movements is the formation of consensus. In the case of the May 1998 *reformasi*, though, the only clear collective consensus formed was to overthrow Suharto. There was no clear consensus on a wider political agenda after this one; there was no consensus about the next target. After Suharto fell, there was no common enemy. Long standing differences and conflicts between activists, obscured by the huge demonstrations against the one 'Other', Suharto, re-emerged. The anti-Suharto meta-narrative was useful in creating an instantaneous unity to overthrow Suharto, but in the long run it failed because it ignores the smaller narratives of collective daily experiences that can be a stronger basis for long-term unity.

## 5.8 Conclusions

The Indonesian 'Elites to the Streets' of the May 1998 *reformasi* story shows how meaningless the access figure of '1%' is in indicating the scope and impact of the spread of information from the Internet. As the crisis broke, the Indonesian authorities had no workable up plans to control or censor the Internet, and were quite ignorant about the political potential of Internet. This was quite different to the methods that the regime had maintained to censor other forms of communications and informational media. This situation put the Internet in a much better position to support nascent social movements. Under such an immense crisis and tension as occurred in the late 1990s, it was relatively easy for students and activists to use the Internet to awaken the traditional networks of information that had been suppressed under the authoritarian regime. In such a situation, the social groups could be indistinct, with multiple interconnections, the intermodality creating linkages among disparate networks of horizontal and vertical flows. Uneducated, old, technologically blind, poor, female, were no longer a cumulative set of barriers for the

many to participate in the spaces of information flows. While the Internet itself is still elite-bound, and its role as a technology is limited — and thus it cannot be said to be the reason for the downfall of the Suharto authoritarian regime — it is clear that the Internet has had an impact on, and been impacted on, by a diversity of people. They might be mostly young, but they were connected with the older generations. They had many different aims, but were not bound to the agendas of the authoritarian regime in power.

The story also shows that the Internet is a unique technology that brings to the public previously inaccessible information. The conviviality of the Internet is proven to work efficiently in a specific 'locality' such as Indonesia even when only a few elites actually have access to it. Although only these elites actually reach beyond the local, to the global, however as the information and communication network created in cyberspace is not isolated from other media networks, this limited number of elites can also be connected to society at large. In certain circumstances, this limited number of elites has the agency to bring the global to other Internet users and on to the streets through intermodal linkages of media technologies and even beyond the media.

We may describe the May 1998 Indonesian political revolution as an Internet 'coincident' revolution. In fact, the Internet was not the only or even the principal source of information for social mobilisation that led to the downfall of Suharto. However, it is clear, that the Internet emerged at the perfect space-time coordinate, when other forms of media were tightly controlled and traditional networks of information circulation could still be tapped for political mobilisation. The most important factor was not cyberspace itself, but the intermodal linkages between cyberspace, cyber nodes (e.g. *warnet*), and other media and the physical spaces of Indonesian cities, especially the urban regions and the 'where' and the 'when' these linkages were created.

Castells (1996) argues that, in the information age, dominant functions and processes are increasingly organised around networks. Networks constitute the social morphology of our society and the diffusion of networking logic substantially modifies the operation and outcomes in the processes of production, experience, power and culture (1996: 469). In line with this argument, while networking, i.e. intermodality, has existed in other times and spaces, the *warnet* and *warung*-like paradigm provides the basis for its near simultaneous expansion throughout the entire social structure. The power of the network flows becomes more important than the specific interests they represent. It becomes vital to be present in a network and not to be excluded from it. At certain moments in the history, the nodes of cyberspace, *warnet* and *warung*-like settings joined to create a powerful network, which, in the case of the May 1998 *reformasi*, was more dynamic than the collapsing networks of the state-corporate economy of Suharto regime.

However, the concept of 'networks' here is broader and more complicated than Castells' one. To some degree, the 'power of networks' in this pro-democracy popular movement in Indonesia was incompatible with Castells' thesis, which posits that social movement in the information age should be connected to global information networks centred on the Internet. While Castells' argument might be true for countries where the majority of the population is connected to the Internet, this is not the case in Indonesia.

This chapter clearly shows that the successful social movement of 1998 in Indonesia was not about political activism hooked to global information network on cyberspace. The key point is how the elite, who are hooked to the global information network, find a way to be a channel for information flow to the local populace beyond the Internet network. Here the intermodality of the Internet and other 'more traditional media' as well as the intermodality of the cyberspace (spaces) and physical space (places) become significant.

From the May 1998 *reformasi* case, it is clear that in Indonesia, while the Internet is exclusive and only available to a small segment of society, it can help the society to enter the novel space where information exchanges and political discourses can take place without barriers. From this, we learn that a steady traditional network, one that was conventionally used by the state to control society, is absolutely essential to bring the wider society into a public sphere where they can participate in transformative politics towards a more democratic society. On the other hand, this case also shows that the Internet is not that idealised Habermasian public sphere where 'rational' communicative dialogues take place. Even in this case of successful political activism, the mobilisation of the 1998 Indonesian *reformasi*, it was not the 'rationality' of political messages and interactions that enabled collective identity formation and eventually triggered a revolutionary mass movement. 'True believers' of social movements, student and political activists, may find rational communications interesting and stimulating, but most players in cyberspace were not 'true believers'. Youngsters found it fun and a challenge to spread political gossip and rumours. They found cyberspace convenient to speak and to communicate freely, both in rational and irrational ways. Ironically, by being far from an ideal public sphere, cyberspace becomes more egalitarian for all kinds of political and social expressions to emerge. 'True believers', 'free riders', or whatever category people belong to, are free to have political opinions in cyberspace. This explosion of opportunities fitted the political momentum and thus enabled the technology to support political activism, mobilisation that led to political change in May 1998. Yet, a similar opportunity need not result in such a linear positive change if it happened in another place (context) and another historical juncture (time). Even in the case of Indonesia, events were about to take another turn.



---

## LASKAR JIHAD ONLINE

### GLOBAL AND NATIONAL META-NARRATIVES IN CYBERSPACE

#### 6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the case study on the May 1998 *reformasi* showed how the Internet was used for social activism, using linkages with the 'more traditional' media, to generate collective action and a popular movement that resulted in regime change. The social and political changes in the latter years of Suharto's New Order regime provided openings for the convivial aspects of the Internet to create spaces for a pro-democracy movement to flourish in cyberspace. The Internet became the catalyst for collective political action in the form of popular (student) movements by tapping into broader traditional media and non-media networks that had been repressed under the New Order authoritarian regime.

The post-authoritarian state following the downfall of Suharto and the subsequent long economic crisis engendered two interrelated conditions: first, the weakening of the state and the continuing resistance of civil society against the state and, second, the rise of alternative political ideologies, especially ones that had been repressed under the Suharto regime, such as Islamist politics.

Among the most conspicuous new phenomena in the post-Suharto era was the rise of ethno-religious conflicts such as in the Moluccas and in the Poso district in Central Sulawesi. Along with these conflicts, there was an emergence of violent Muslim vigilante groups employing a *jihadist*<sup>154</sup> discourse and mobilising followers for *jihad*<sup>155</sup> in these conflict regions. Among these *jihadi* groups, Laskar Jihad, involved the Moluccan conflict,

---

<sup>154</sup> *Jihadist* is an adjective form of '*jihad*' (see footnote #155).

<sup>155</sup> The root word of *jihad* is *Ju-h-D*, means 'effort'. *Jihad* means striving; in its primary sense it is an inner thing, within oneself, to rid one of debased actions or inclinations, and exercise constancy and perseverance in achieving a higher moral standard. In this chapter, it is used to speak of a form of physical war against the 'unfaithful'. In the recent history, *jihad* in the sense of violence, as used in this chapter, has prevailed and it appears to be a common word used by "resistance, liberation and terrorist movements alike to legitimate their cause and motivate their followers" (Esposito 2002: 26).

was perhaps the most prominent one, both nationally and internationally. Prominence was partly achieved through its advanced use of the media, particularly the Internet.

This chapter describes how Laskar Jihad used the Internet to support its *jihad* action in the Moluccan conflict, first by giving a background to the conflict and current explanations of the conflict, as well as about the role of the Internet in the conflict. Second, by providing a detailed description of Laskar Jihad, its leader and its ideology. Third, by examining the use of the Internet by Laskar Jihad, and fourth by investigating the linkage that Laskar Jihad made through cyberspace to other media and the physical space.

## 6.2 The Moluccan conflict

To understand how Laskar Jihad used the Internet in the Moluccan conflict, it is necessary to understand the conflict itself. The Moluccan conflict in this chapter refers to three years of continuous fighting between Christians<sup>156</sup> and Muslims that occurred in the Moluccas from its outbreak in January 1999 to the launch of the Malino II peace agreement in February 2002. In this conflict, at least 5,000 people (perhaps as many as 10,000) of both faiths, Christianity and Islam, were killed, and nearly 700,000 became refugees due to sectarian violence across the Moluccas islands (International Crisis Group, 2002).

The Moluccas (*Maluku* in Indonesian) is a cluster of islands in the eastern part of Indonesian archipelago (see Figure 6.1).



*Figure 6.1 Map of the Moluccas*

Also known as the ‘Spice Islands’, these islands were discovered in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century and were settled by the Portuguese. The Dutch took them over in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and used them as the basis for their monopoly over the spice trade. The Moluccas had been a

---

<sup>156</sup> Note: in Indonesia, the term Christian mostly refers to the Protestant wing of the Christian Church and does not include Catholics.

single province under Indonesian rule called 'Maluku', with Ambon as its capital, until the islands were split into two provinces in September 1999 under President Habibie.

Before the recent Moluccan conflict, the Moluccas had also been a centre of conflict a half of century earlier when, after the war of Indonesian independence (1945-1949), a group in this predominantly Christian province declared the independence of the Moluccas, under the banner of the *Republik Maluku Selatan* or RMS (the Republic of the South Moluccas), from the Republic of Indonesia, a predominantly Muslim state. The RMS struggle for self-determination was not without reason. Under the Dutch colonial rule, a considerable number of Moluccan men (primarily Christians from the island of Ambon) were recruited into service with the Dutch colonial army, the *Koninklijk Nederland-Indisch Leger* (KNIL), a force that consolidated and enforced Dutch control over the East Indies. When Japan attacked the Netherlands-Indies in the early 1940s, the KNIL surrendered to the Japanese. During the Japanese occupation the Moluccans suffered badly at the hands of the Japanese occupiers, while the Indonesian nationalists cooperated with the Japanese. After the war of Indonesian independence, Indonesia and the Netherlands negotiated the formation of an independent federal state in Indonesia in 1949 (Chauvel, 1990).

This federalist state lasted only a few months, however, as the Indonesian nationalists abandoned the agreed federalist power-sharing system and replaced it with a Unitarian government dominated by Java. Partly as a reaction to the stridency of Javanian-Indonesian nationalism, nationalist feelings among the Moluccans was increased. Another reason was the resentment felt by Indonesians towards the Moluccans. Because of their participation in the Dutch military forces, the Moluccans were called 'black Dutch', 'bloodhounds of the white' and 'traitors' by the Indonesians, especially the Javanese Indonesians. The Moluccan nationalists decided to proclaim the Republic of South Moluccas (RMS) on 25 April 1950. The Moluccan independence did not last long as Indonesian forces quickly invaded the islands, seized cities and installations, and forced the RMS into a bloody guerrilla war (Chauvel, 1990).

Sukarno, the first president and one of the founding fathers of Indonesia, labelled this RMS separatist movement as "foreign colonialist" (Puar, 1956: 3) or, more specifically, "the labour of Dutch reactionary elements" (Puar, 1956: 49). Sukarno declared the RMS to be a dangerous anti-nationalist movement.<sup>157</sup> Suharto, in his efforts to maintain the 'national unity' continued cultivating the RMS as an anti-nationalism

---

<sup>157</sup> In his speech on Independence Day, 17 August 1950, Sukarno rationalised that the use of force against the South Moluccas occurred because the RMS did not welcome the peaceful efforts Indonesia initiated (Sukarno in Puar, 1956: 8-9). By blaming those whom he termed 'disloyal separatist', Sukarno tried to silence the voices of federalists who pointing out that the government's effort in uniting Indonesia was more like a forced action rather than a strategic effort (Sunday Couriers, 1950).

issue in the formal history books used from elementary school upwards.<sup>158</sup> In these history books, the treatment of the contemporary history of the Moluccas has always included the existence of the RMS which, almost always was identified with the group of Christian Ambonese — Ambonese being the ethnicity of local residents of the Moluccas — who were loyal to the coloniser, the Dutch, and unfaithful to the Indonesian state (Muslim Ambonese were described as against the ideas of the RMS) (Depdikbud 1983: 110). In one of these books, RMS was labelled as “an armed demolition tactic of colonialism” (Depdikbud, 1977: 90). In both Sukarno’s and Suharto’s narratives, termed ‘nationalist meta-narratives’ throughout this chapter (see Section 4.2.2), the RMS conflict was described as one of the horrible incidents in the history of Indonesia and portrayed as an example of the unfaithfulness that was the fault of one ethnic group, the Ambonese, and Christians in particular (Ohorella et al., 1993). In the eyes of ordinary Indonesians, in Java and other parts of the archipelago, the Moluccas has always had a dark history of being disloyal to the nation-state.

In a country where Muslims make up about 88% of the 235 million people and Christians about 9%, the Moluccas is an anomaly as, in this region, Muslims and Christians are roughly equal in number.<sup>159</sup> Until the 1980s, Christians were in the majority, but since then the Muslim numbers have been increasing, partly through massive migration from other parts of Indonesia. However, most Indonesians have learned through the formal history taught in Indonesia that the Moluccans were initially predominantly Islam. The narrative of the state which, again, was cultivated in school history books, told people that the Moluccan inhabitants were once Muslims — demonstrated by stories of the glory and prosperity of the Ternate and Tidore Islamic Sultanates — before the Portuguese came to colonise these islands and, it is claimed,

---

<sup>158</sup> The main history books for third grade junior high school (ninth grade) in the 1975 to 1994 curriculum clearly mentioned the RMS as one of the most important separatist movements in the history of the Indonesian Republic. A significant change in the interpretation of the RMS happened after the 1998 political reform when many stories (especially about separatism and rebellion movements) in school history books were revised. In the revised history book, those events are described simply as events themselves without any tendency to inscribe any super-negative judgment. Until early 2003, all elementary schools and junior high schools in Indonesia were required to only use the books that were approved by the government through the Department of Education and Culture (now the Department of National Education) as major sources of teaching. In early 2003, the Department of National Education endorsed a rule that allows schools to choose the books by themselves.

<sup>159</sup> According to official statistics cited in an International Crisis Group report, in 1997 more than 57 percent of the population of Ambon city were Christians, but Muslims were a 59 percent majority in the province as a whole (International Crisis Group, 2002: 1).



forcefully converted the people to Christianity (Depdikbud 1977, 1983; Ohorella et al., 1993).<sup>160</sup>

Five decades later in 1999, a minor quarrel between a Christian driver and a Muslim passenger occurred, and marked the beginning of a bloody, enduring conflict, ending the allegedly harmonious bond between Christians and Muslims in this region. Enraged slaughter, savage mutilations, forced conversions and the gratuitous destruction of property characterised the conflict following its outbreak on 19 January 1999 (Schulze, 2002: 57). The society of the Moluccas has since then, been formally (and forcefully) divided by religion, Christian vs. Muslim, resulting in an ongoing physical battle between the two. The battle between Christian fighters and Muslim fighters continued to wipe out more lives. In this conflict, the discourse about the RMS re-emerged and the RMS, in line with the nationalist meta-narrative, was identified as a principal actor behind it.

Before going further to investigate the use of the Internet in the Moluccan conflict, there are three important questions posed as an entry point to the case. First, what are the current explanations put forth by social science scholars regarding the causes of the Moluccan conflict? Second, what are the current explanations about the role of the Internet in the Moluccan conflict? Third, what will this chapter attempt to contribute to the explanation of the role of the Internet in both the course and the continuation of the conflict?

### *6.2.1 Current explanations about the Moluccan conflict*

Much scholarship has been devoted to explaining the recent Moluccan conflict. The writers of these explanations identify various external and internal factors as the grounds or catalyst for the eventual outbreak of conflict. These various explanations can be mainly characterised as falling into two sometimes overlapping camps that focus on two different scales, excessively 'national' or too 'local' in perspective.<sup>161</sup>

The first camp focuses on the power struggles in the capital of Indonesia, Jakarta (and Java), and assumes that violence at the local level is the effect of power struggles at the centre. This line of argument refers to:

---

<sup>160</sup> All history books of the Moluccas published by the Department of Education and Culture mentioned this until the latest version which states that while the North of the Moluccas, especially Ternate and Tidore, had been in touch with Islam before Portuguese came with its Christianity (Catholicism), the South of the Moluccas (Uliase, Ambon, Buru, and Seram) was never touched by Islam. The religion of the indigenous people here was animism, or the so-called pre-Islamic belief (Depdikbud, 1999).

<sup>161</sup> The categorisation of arguments is based on a close reading of the works of Alqadrie (1999), Human Right Watch (1999), Abas and Pakkanna (2000), Abel and Pattiradjawane (2000), Aditjondro (2000a, 2001), Ahmad and Oesman (2000), Bartels (2000), Hefner (2000b), International Crisis Group (2000, 2002), ISAI (2000), Tuasikal (2000), Alhadar (2001a, 2001b), Bubandt (2001), Salampessy and Husain (2001), Tridjono (2001), Dean (2002), Schulze (2002) and Azca (2003).

- The role of either the military or Suharto's clan in provoking violence in pursuit of its political and economic interests. Political contestations between Suharto and his clans and the later *reformasi* government (Abdurahman Wahid and Megawati Sukarno) are seen as having an impact on the stepping down of Suharto and the transitions of *reformasi*. Along this line of contestation, there were Islamic groups who maintained the supposed Moluccan conflict in order to mobilise their mass to put pressure on, or even tumble, Wahid and Megawati from their positions. In this scenario, Moluccans had no 'agency' but were merely manipulated by external forces.
- Policies of the Indonesian government under Suharto that impoverished the indigenous communities were a major case of violence. Especially the transmigration projects, modernisation and homogenisation programmes (including Islamisation in the late period of the Suharto regime)<sup>162</sup> that diminished the capability of traditional leaders to control their own communities.

The second line of explanation comes from a local perspective. It can be categorised as historical materialism arguments:

- Long-term tensions between Ambonese Christians and Muslims related to the Dutch colonial rule which established the religious division of labour that privileged Christians and marginalised Muslims.
- The processes of Islamisation and Christianisation following World War II and the erosion of the common ground of *adat* (custom) shared among all Ambonese.
- The majority of the population were poor, not highly educated, and therefore easily manipulated to join the conflict. The high level of unemployment resulted in the emergence of criminality and Ambonese gangs (who were being used as provocateurs for the military's or Suharto's interests) and thus with a presumed willingness to engage in violence.
- All the above magnified by a particular event when one group gains a material advantage over another such as by migrants planting highly remunerative cash crops, land loss due to similar events, or any other significant event that magnifies economic differences and disparities in access to productive resources.

These types of arguments assume that although tensions and differences historically existed, these were managed and dampened by mediating institutions and

---

<sup>162</sup> On the Islamisation of Indonesia under the late period of New Order, see Hefner (1997, 2000).

symbiotic economic relations (e.g. *pela gandong*,<sup>163</sup> killing of pigs by non-Muslims at the request of Muslims), but the uneasy stability of these relationships was upset by specific events such as described in the first view or from other intrusive forces such as transmigration sponsored by the Java-based central government. The difference between the first and the second view is that the second focuses on how tensions have always existed but were managed, and has the tendency to downplay the political and military role of Jakarta/Java (various factors including Suharto and fundamentalism on Java) in violence in the Moluccas.

While these arguments are not unreasonable, individually or together, they can, at best, only partially explain why the conflict arose when it did, and how it was fermented. Arguments that identify state policies as the cause of communal violence, for example, ignore the fact that although many regions were affected by these policies, only some produced communal violence. Theories focusing on the military or Suharto's involvement can also be criticised in a similar manner.

Conversely, explanations focusing on the local level, while they offer some valuable insights, also suffer from an inability to move the explanation beyond the local (neighbourhood) experience. In particular, these explanations, which tend to dismiss explorations into higher levels of ideology formation, are, in the final analysis, unable to fully internalise, for example, the role of global level identity formation (e.g. why a person in Java was upset over the plight of Muslims in Palestine and went to war against Christians in the Moluccas) and its symbolism in local level conflict.

Among the considerable amount of work on the Moluccan conflict, Gerry van Klinken's work offers a more theoretically coherent explanation. Employing the concept of 'communal contenders' from Gurr (1993), van Klinken (1999, 2001) argues that the Moluccan conflict was generated by local leaders, not in order to break away from the state, but to grab a wider share of power for themselves. He relates this concept to the patron-client structure of Indonesian politics. The clientelistic model of politics in Indonesia, he argues, emphasises "personal ties of obligation between individual government machinery, thus creating hierarchical, behind-the-scenes network of ties that can stretch from the capital to the remotest provincial town" (van Klinken, 2001: 2). He also argues that the patron-client relationship is basically unstable, especially during the transition from authoritarian rule. However, this argument still cannot answer why some regions produced communal violence and some did not. Nevertheless, van Klinken's

---

<sup>163</sup> *Pela* literally means, "everything is clear" (Salampessy and Hussain, 2001:14). It is a uniquely Moluccan term describing relations between communities. *Gandong* is Moluccan slang for the Indonesian word '*kandungan*' which means 'womb'. *Pela*, a vow of brotherhood, could exist either among Muslim or Christian villages, or between the two. *Gandong* applied to connections between villages that were descended from the same patriarch. This often included both Muslim and Christian villages. Such vows required the villagers to help each other in times of need, and also to cooperate in building houses of worship. While the system was instrumental in preserving social harmony, it was not perfect. Occasional episodes of communal violence would still occur between Christian and Muslim villages.

model provides a less Jakarta-centric approach to comprehending communal conflict in Indonesia.<sup>164</sup>

Theoretically not as coherent as van Klinken, but giving a more holistic picture about the conflict than many, is the work of Thamrin Amal Tomagola (2001a, 2001b). In his analysis, Tomagola (2000, 2001a, 2001b) marries the external and internal causalities, drawing heavily on the work of Schulte Nordholt (2000a, 2000b) that reveals the complexity of the causes by looking at socio-political tensions at both national and local levels.

In the light of these explanations, generally, as Patricia Spyer (2002: 24) points out: “some of this writing is just too grand, too abstract and too removed from the volatile fractured field... [where the Moluccan] men, women, and children piece together their everyday lives out of the fears, contingencies, insecurities, and apprehensions that now weigh upon them”. Spyer (2002) calls attention to the work of the imagination and the construction of knowledge, and how these become driving forces behind particular actions and shape the actors who carry them out.

Indeed, the challenge is to link the micro to the macro and showing how larger scale interdependencies are linked to local scale discontents. Among the many ways into this, the interest here is on the Internet as a technology, and the related institutional capacities that make this linkage possible.

### *6.2.2 Current debates on the role of the Internet in the Moluccan conflict*

The role of the Internet is barely discussed in most of the scholarly work on the Moluccan conflict, with the notable exception of Bräuchler (2003, 2004). Yet, for the world outside the Moluccas, there was hardly any sources of comprehensive information about this conflict except for that on the Internet.<sup>165</sup> Moreover, both parties involved in the conflict, Christian and Muslim representatives, were intensively using the Internet to get their messages out of the Moluccas to Java and the rest of the world.

Regarding the role of the Internet, two types of general views seem to have developed among scholars and observers. One argues that the Internet has no role at all in the conflict. This view relies mainly on the statistical fact that the number of Internet users in the Moluccas is very low (and unknown) and even the number of Internet users in Indonesia amounts to only 2% (in 2000) to 4% (in 2002) of the total population. This

---

<sup>164</sup> Gerry van Klinken (1999, 2001) also has successfully moved beyond the dominant approaches to political analysis of Indonesian state, such as a bureaucratic polity model (Jackson and Pye, 1978), the corporatism model (Reeve, 1985), the bureaucratic-authoritarian model (King, 1982), and the bureaucratic capitalist model (Robison, 1986).

<sup>165</sup> Among the Moluccan diasporas, especially the Christian ones, the telephone was used to spread the news, however the telephone could not report comprehensively since it is a voice-based technology. The Internet can provide detailed stories on the conflicts with both textual and visual presentations.

view is shared by some of the social scientists who have studied the conflict.<sup>166</sup> They see the Internet as just one of some tools to disseminate information about the conflict; with this technology existing separately from the conflict itself. They also assume that the groups who used Internet related to the conflict are not the same groups as those that were involved in the conflict; and therefore there is no way that the use of the Internet could influence the conflict.<sup>167</sup>

A second view is that the Internet played an essential role in this conflict. Generally, this view is exclusively shared among the terrorist researchers<sup>168</sup> (Kelley, 2002; Manin, 2002; Thomas, 2003; Tibbetts, 2002; Trabelsi, 2002). While none reveals the direct role of the Internet in the Moluccan conflict itself, these researchers presume that the Internet plays a key role in the planning and execution of terror attacks throughout the world including in Indonesia. The work of terrorist experts, who mostly only mention Laskar Jihad, a major group involved in the Moluccan conflict, in passing, claim that the Internet has been used by many *jihadi* groups, including Laskar Jihad, to communicate, recruit, coordinate, and spread information.

Much of this kind of work emphasises the links between Indonesian *jihadi* group(s) and the network of international radical movements such as *Al-Qaeda* and *Jemaah Islamiyah*. The Internet is seen as an important technology for linking up and organising the subsets of these international networks. While this view has some general validity, in the case of Moluccas it is not well evidenced. First, there is no convincing proof that Laskar Jihad is a part of either *Al-Qaeda* or any other larger network (Crouch, 2001).<sup>169</sup> Second, as none of these researchers have done in-depth study on the use of the Internet by Laskar Jihad, they cannot really show how, or for what, this group actually used the Internet.

Among the work considering this argument is the comprehensive research by Birgit Bräuchler (2003, 2004), who examined three Internet groups represented in the Moluccan conflict: the Laskar Jihad website (Muslim), the *Masariku* Network (Christian/Protestant) and the CCDA (Crisis Centre Diocese of Ambon) electronic newsletter (Christian/Catholic). She claims that Moluccan groups use the Internet as a tool to create a public sphere for a specific audience in order to shape the knowledge and the opinions about local events such as the Moluccan conflict (Bräuchler, 2004). She also states that the same leading or representative figures of Moluccan groups were very much

---

<sup>166</sup> Such a statement came from a number of researchers who attended the Conference on the Sectarian Violence in Eastern Indonesia in Honolulu, 14-16 May 2003.

<sup>167</sup> Noorhaidi Hasan, a researcher who is doing thorough research on one key group in the conflict, Laskar Jihad, claims the Internet did not mean much in terms of real actions of the followers in the field. According to him, it only served audiences outside the conflicting groups themselves (14 September 2002).

<sup>168</sup> With Birgit Bräuchler (2003, 2004) as an exception; she is not a terrorist researcher.

<sup>169</sup> Ja'far Umar Thalib claimed that Laskar Jihad had no link with Al-Qaeda (Laskar Jihad Online, 2001). Thalib admitted that Al-Qaeda had ever approached him in the summer of 2001 at his headquarters in Ambon promising funding and training in return for Laskar Jihad's cooperation, but Thalib said he rejected the offer (Huang, 2002).

involved in both online and offline discourse about the conflict (Bräuchler, 2004). Thus, according to her, the debates in cyberspace very much resemble the discourses on the local level.

What is problematic with her work is that she seems to be trapped in the utopian thought of the cyberspace as a Habermasian public sphere. In her conclusions, she insists that, in the Moluccan conflict, the Internet provided multiple public spheres, one for each group involved. Cyberspace is said to provide 'spaces of communications' for members of each group to communicate among themselves and these spaces co-exist in cyberspace. However, as her research shows, these spaces exist separately without any cross-communications among them. They thus more accurately 'communicate' in a 'negation' sense (flame war). Can these spaces therefore really be categorised as forming a nested set of public spheres? Are all two-way, supposedly free and decentralised communications able to be the basis for the realisation of public spheres? One obvious issue is related to this example: even in the communication space of each group, while it is true that people can address one another as equals (not in the case of the Laskar Jihad mailing list, since all emails went through the moderator before being disseminated), the group can hardly be seen as a forum for rational discourse. The principle of making a rational decision or a rational communicative action, which is central to Habermasian's justification of the public sphere, is far from being exercised in any of the three Internet forums chosen as case studies by Bräuchler (2003, 2004).

The anthropologist Robert Hefner (2003) offers a slightly different view to the first two types. He suggests that the expansion of new media in Indonesia, along with the growth of well-educated Muslims and a new Muslim leadership, have brought about a remarkable pluralisation of the country's Muslim community. However, he also points out that the new communication and media technologies sweeping Indonesia, including the Internet, are more skilfully exploited by *jihadi* hardliners than by civic pluralists (Hefner, 2003). In his discussion about Laskar Jihad, he does address the importance of this new media technology to the survival of this group. Yet, in this work Hefner (2003) mostly examines the issue of pluralism and Laskar Jihad, and it lacks an analysis of the role of the new media (the Internet) itself, only touching on this issue on the surface.

David Hill and Krishna Sen (2002) also did research on the Internet in the Moluccan conflict looking intensively at one mailing list, AMBONnet, which was a forum for the global Moluccan Diaspora. They offer a broad overall argument that while the Internet has a political impact on society, it is human actions that determine social and political directions (Hill and Sen, 2002: 182). In reference to the issue itself Hill and Sen (2002) argue that while the Internet did play a role in transmitting information about events in the Moluccas to Moluccans outside their homeland, online debate was predominantly divorced from offline events. This argument, however, reflects their approach to the case study rather than the dynamics of cyberactivism and the physical conflicts. Being limited by the case study choice, Hill and Sen did not explore how the process of scaling up information from national and local levels to global level (in

cyberspace) took place and how the globalised ideology and information could have scaled back down to ideological and informational messages at the local level.

Arguments and analysis from these studies help lay the foundations for the position developed here by giving an overall setting of the stage of online debate about the Moluccan conflict. They also show the need for further research to study the relationship between the uses of the Internet and the real world conflicts (the physical battle in the Moluccas) by repositioning and scaling the debates as will be explained in the next section.

### *6.2.3 Repositioning and scaling the debates*

In centring interest on the Internet, the purpose of the discussion that follows is to add another layer to the above insights and explanations for the course of the Moluccan conflict. The point of departure for discussing the role of the Internet is that the Internet was not yet in place in January 1999 when the outbreak started. Thus this technology could not be directly linked to the causes of the conflict. Rather, it came into fuller play as the conflict expanded.

Focusing on the role of the Internet in the conflict, this chapter relates the micro to the macro by showing how global, national and local scales of interaction become intertwined to reinforce each other through real and imagined forms of shared discontent. This chapter will illustrate that through the Internet, the moral high ground is constructed not just through local power relations but also by drawing on the fact that transcendent ideologies can interplay to heighten propensities for, if not instigate, violence. This is accomplished by cross-transmuting through images of shared victimisation explanations of why the suffering in one part of the world is linked to the similar causes of victimisation in another corner of the globe. In this case, neither Moluccans, nor most of the Indonesians, could possibly have had any lived parallel experience, for example, as a Palestine Muslim or as a US Muslim. Nor could Muslims, even on Java, have experienced Christian-Muslim relations in the Moluccas. Yet by scaling up narratives of victimisation, they can also scale back down to focus larger forces onto the single seemingly remote case.

Using the Internet as the entrance to look at the Moluccan conflict, this chapter offers a partial explanation of how the conflict (re)emerged and was (re)shaped, (re)fomented and (re)imagined, hence, lengthening the conflict. This will be done by showing: how the Internet was used to shape the new reality for people in seeing and acting towards the Moluccan conflict; how identity formation has been purposefully manipulated in cyberspace to expand the sphere of anti-democratic and exclusionary movements in this local context; and how the meta-narratives that are created in cyberspace can compete against or strengthen/intensify long existing meta-narratives. Before the advent of the Internet, in the era of the print media or the earlier era of oral

communication, constructing a strong meta-narrative could take decades.<sup>170</sup> However, in the age of the Internet where time can ‘annihilate’ space, the Internet has a revolutionary capacity to disseminate storylines and avoid state (or any other) regulation while placing no responsibility in practical terms for the violence it might exhort people to do, making it the ideal technology for meta-narratives to be played out in a distant local arena. It thus also allows remote places such as the Moluccas to be instantly integrated into global storylines and, in a reverse fashion, for the periphery to provide sites for struggles over the core.

Of interest is to look at how the Internet influenced offline activism in a real world setting. In order to study the linkage between the Internet and offline activism, it is also important to study all kinds of media and social networks outside the Internet that might (or might not) link cyberspace with real world events. By doing so, the impact of the use of the Internet beyond the online realm can be studied.

### 6.3 The Internet in the Moluccan Conflict

As mentioned in Chapter 4, outside Java, Bali and Sumatra, Internet penetration was, in 1999, and still is, low. Neither the numbers of Internet subscribers nor of users in the Moluccas were known. It can be estimated, however, that the number of subscribers was lower than 1,000.<sup>171</sup> Only three *warnet* have been identified, two in the capital Ambon<sup>172</sup> and one in Ternate,<sup>173</sup> and thus, probably, only three *warnet* existed in the whole of the Moluccas. In the early period of the conflict, the Internet was down completely in the Moluccas, as the staff of WasantaraNet, the main provider in the region, could not travel between their homes and the office. But, in the continuation of the conflict, some parts of the service restarted, and the Ambon *warnet* was operating again by September 2000 (Hill and Sen, 2002: 176).

Before the outbreak of hostilities in January 1999, there was hardly any website about the Moluccas or Moluccans, not even ones specifically devoted to tourism in the Moluccas. The information about the Moluccas on the Internet was mostly included as a minor addition to the Indonesian tourism websites that largely focused on Java and

---

<sup>170</sup> An example of this old way of meta-narrative dissemination is the case of Dayak red bowl. In Dayak culture, as soon as the blood of a Dayak is shed, the entire clan is duty-bound to declare war on the attacker and the group to which he belongs. This is done by passing the “red bowl”, an ordinary bowl filled with four ritual elements: the blood of a chicken to signify war; and feathers, a match stick, and a piece of roof thatch to signify that word of the war must fly from one village to another, even in darkness (the match) or bad weather (the thatch).

<sup>171</sup> This number is estimated based on the number of Internet subscribers in Mataram, one of the capitals outside Java, Bali and Sumatra, which was 1,000 in 2001 (Castle Asia, 2002).

<sup>172</sup> There are at least two *warnet* in Ambon, AladinNet at Sultan Baabulah street and Funt@menta Warnet at A. Y. Patty Street. Both are main streets in Ambon.

<sup>173</sup> Hill and Sen (2002) identified two *warnet* in the port cities of Ambon and Ternate.



Bali.<sup>174</sup> The official website of the provincial government of the Moluccas was only launched on 25 February 2004.<sup>175</sup> However, a number of websites set up by Moluccan communities in the Netherlands have been available since 1996. DLM, *Djangan lupa Maluku* (Don't forget the Moluccas)<sup>176</sup> came online in August 1996. At first it was only available in Dutch with an 'under-construction' English page. Another website, *Malr@'s Maluku Tenggara Site* (The Southeast Moluccas),<sup>177</sup> was launched in March 1997 and used Dutch and Indonesian (with Moluccan inflections, which is difficult to understand by native Indonesian speakers).

Both websites were rarely updated. Only once the conflict started, did they become regularly updated and include English versions. Among the early forums was AMBONnet. It was established in August 1998 as an open and un-moderated list. Using Indonesian, this forum was launched from the Netherlands and was meant to be a space of communications and discussions by the global Moluccan Diaspora.<sup>178</sup>

Regarding the Moluccan conflict, at first, hardly any information about this conflict was available on the Internet. Nevertheless, after the first phase of conflict (January to April 1999) the word '*Maluku*' (Moluccas) was filling up cyberspace from the news websites to the religious websites, from mailing lists to e-newsletters, from discussion forums to chat rooms. Very quickly, Internet users concerned about the Moluccan conflict were confronted by an information overflow.

Many websites concerned with the Moluccan conflict emerged between April 1999 and October 2002. There were some secular ones, but most represented the either Christian or the Muslim side. Just as in the physical conflict itself, the representation in cyberspace was running along religious lines, thus contributing to the image of a religious war (Bräuchler, 2003; Lim, 2005). In cyberspace, the Christian representatives created their own spaces for communication and information to voice different opinions and stories around the conflict than the Muslim representatives.

### ***6.3.1 Religion and the Internet in the Moluccan conflict***

The presence of religion in cyberspace and the use of the Internet by religious communities should not be a surprise and is not a new phenomenon. Rather, it is a new manifestation of an older struggle that originated in the use of the Internet's predecessors.

---

<sup>174</sup> An example: <http://www.terkenal.com/Pariwisata/> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>175</sup> URL: <http://www.malukuprov.go.id> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>176</sup> URL: <http://www.dlm.org> (last accessed on 30 April 2005). DLM claimed to be neutral and to have no political, ethnic or religious preferences. However, besides introducing the Moluccan culture and history to the younger generation of Moluccans, the website was also meant to provide discussions and information on some prohibited subjects (in Indonesia). These include the RMS and the oppression and violations of human rights by the government of Indonesia, particularly against the Moluccans.

<sup>177</sup> URL: <http://www.malra.org> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>178</sup> While it does not carry any explicit religious symbol, the AMBONnet clearly is a forum for Moluccan Christians.

Various religious organisations have always used the media, from print to broadcast media, to maintain their existence and to reach wider audiences. In the United States, Pentecostal/Evangelical churches, the fundamentalist wing of the Christian Church, are perhaps the most advanced in using the media. Since the Internet became commercialised in the mid-1990s, religious websites and forums have mushroomed in cyberspace.

In Indonesia, as briefly mentioned in Chapter 4, the Muslim community comfortably embraces the Internet. Confident about the religiosity of the Indonesian Internet pioneers (Purbo and his groups), Indonesian Muslims on the whole do not seem to see the Internet as a negative tool that can corrupt their piety and religiosity. Some Muslim Internet users actually see cyberspace as a venue to bank heavenly rewards and to fight against the wickedness, immorality and evilness of the world, as well as providing a social space to communicate with other Muslims. Arguably, non-Muslims, too, do not find that the Internet conflicts with their religions.

For a country such as Indonesia where religion is often the strongest source of personal as well as group identity, religion can become extremely important for those involved in conflict. In this context, the Internet as a network technology, has it a high potential to be a tool and a space for collective identity formation and division (see Chapters 2, 3 and 5). The acceptance of the Internet by religious communities, combined with the importance of religion, in Indonesia, amplify the potential of the Internet to facilitate religion based collective identity formation. The merger of religion and the Internet thus creates an ideal playground for the identity (re-)construction process and provides the means for the imagination of communities to reify identities, which constitutes part of the Moluccan conflict.

### *6.3.2 Christian representatives*

Since the beginning of the conflict, hundreds of Christian-related websites and forums (particularly mailing lists) worldwide have begun to include information or discussions on the Moluccan conflict, but most of them were non-Indonesian websites. Many of them explicitly supported their Moluccan Christian fellows. More notably, a number of Moluccan specific websites and forums emerged. At this point, the supposedly non-religious Dutch Moluccan websites and forums tended to be identified with Christians. The DLM website provided a list of Christian websites specifically on the Moluccan conflict.<sup>179</sup>

The Masariku Network<sup>180</sup> is the first Christian-Protestant Moluccan group to regularly provide information about the Moluccan conflict through a mailing list (Bräuchler, 2003). The intention was to distribute information on the Moluccan conflict

---

<sup>179</sup> These include: Maluku news portal <http://www.maluku.org> (last accessed on 30 April 2005). Posko Zwolle News Portal <http://www.malra.org/posko/> (last accessed on 30 April 2005). Lopa-ropa <http://www.geocities.com/chosye> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>180</sup> URL: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/masariku> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

and the troubles experienced by Indonesian churches (Masariku, 1999). Using a free platform (*Yahoo*), the group was founded in August 1999 using Indonesian as its communication language. The information available in the Masariku mailing list mostly consisted of reports written by Masariku itself, reports from other Christian groups and also articles from the local, national, and international press.

Meanwhile, the Catholic Crisis Centre Diocese of Amboina (CCDA), founded in July 1999, started delivering newsletters on the Moluccan conflict since 22 June 2000 directly from Ambon. Using English as its base language, this newsletter was clearly meant to reach international communities. The sources used by CCDA were mainly the local broadcast media (RRI and TVRI) and newspapers (Sawalima and Suara Maluku), which claimed to be neutral, although this cannot be confirmed (Bräuchler, 2003).

The most referred to and acknowledged among the Christian websites was *Ambon Berdarah* Online (ABO)<sup>181</sup> (Bloody Ambon Online). This website was launched in August 1999, and was the only website on the DLM list that was run from Indonesia.<sup>182</sup> The rest were located on Dutch servers. With the cross as a symbol on its front page, ABO clearly showed its Christian identity. However, the articles did not come only from Christian sources (Masariku and CCDA) but also from secular media such as local newspapers (mostly *the Jakarta Post*, *Kompas*, *Detik.com* and *Tempo*) and international media. Visitor statistics show average hits of 109 per day, with 25% of the visitors from the Netherlands and only 17% from Indonesia.<sup>183</sup> While the site was dedicated to “News and Pictures about the Ambon/Maluku Tragedy”, the most provocative section in this website was not the picture gallery but the ‘Latupatti’ section. This section contained Latupatti’s commentaries on other articles. Latupatti’s somewhat intellectual writing, blunt style, sometimes rude, made him popular. His commentaries were widely spread through Indonesian mailing lists, including *Apakabar*. Despite his popularity, the identity of Latupatti is never revealed.

There was more than one argument/explanation put forward by the Christian side for the Moluccan conflict. In fact, it is difficult to separate the explanations of the Christian side from many explanations in secular media and scholarly articles (see Section 6.2.1). As most of the online materials on the Moluccan conflict from Christian representatives were in English, they were not widely spread among Indonesians and were mostly meant for international audiences. As most of the websites and forums were

---

<sup>181</sup> At first, it used the URL <http://www.geocities.com/alifuru67/noframe.index.htm> (last accessed on 20 May 2001) with <http://go.to/ambon> as a shortcut. Later the URL was changed to [http://www.geocities.com/batu\\_capeu/index.htm](http://www.geocities.com/batu_capeu/index.htm) (last accessed on 30 April 2005). The website could also be accessed from the former URL, the shortcut, and the URL of <http://www.geocities.com/arumbaikole/index.htm> (last accessed on 30 April 2005) and <http://www.geocities.com/toelehoe/> (last accessed on 30 April 2005) which were redirected to the final URL.

<sup>182</sup> Using Indosat to connect to geocities.com.

<sup>183</sup> These figures are based on a statistical counter from 10 April 2001 to 4 September 2001.

administered from the Netherlands, their administrators were certainly not physically involved in the conflict.

The Christian side generally avoided talking about religion. In reaction to the Muslims' accusation that the Christians started the conflict, Christian groups denied this charge and accused the government, especially the Suharto and Habibie regimes, of being the cause of the conflict. The Islamisation policies which were inscribed in the massive transmigration policy of the central government (with huge amounts of associated spontaneous migration also bringing many Muslims into the Moluccas), undermined the former religious balance in the Moluccas and was seen as one of the major contributing causes. The Christians also pointed to provocateurs from outside of the Moluccas — sent out by political elites in Jakarta — as actors behind the conflict.

Concerning the RMS, the Christian side was divided into two groups: one which rejected the existence and thus the independence struggles of the RMS, and one which supported the RMS. The latter was less dominant than the first. Both agreed that the conflict was largely not triggered by the RMS, but by larger issues such as the extension of the politics of the New Order regime. Both also agreed that while Laskar Jihad had not caused the conflict, its coming to the Moluccas had exacerbated the conflict.

### ***6.3.3 Muslim representatives***

Since the first outbreak of violence in January 1999, not only Islamic websites, but also secular Indonesian websites, included information about the conflict from Muslim perspectives. Differing from the Christian sites, which were mostly based outside Indonesia, these Islamic websites were based in Indonesia and used Indonesian as the primary language. Discussions about the conflict also dominated existing mailing lists in the first months of the Moluccan conflict. Websites and forums specifically devoted to the conflict also emerged.

The most prominent website of the Muslim representatives was Laskar Jihad Online. This website was owned by the Islamic militia group, the Communications Forum of the Followers of the *Sunnah* (FKAWJ, *Forum Komunikasi Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jamaah*), and its paramilitary wing Laskar Jihad. In addition to this prominent site there were some other relatively active websites, but of these websites Laskar Jihad Online was better maintained. With an average of 1,000 hits per day (see ABO's hit rate for comparison in Section 6.3.2.), Laskar Jihad Online was the most popular Moluccan conflict website in cyberspace. Not only well designed, it was also well maintained, regularly updated and used efficiently by the Laskar Jihad Webmaster and managerial staff. This is one of the reasons why this chapter focuses on the existence of Laskar Jihad Online and Laskar Jihad's related activities. Another reason is that Laskar Jihad was the only group that fully integrated their online activities with offline activities, the physical battle in the field (Lim, 2005). Thus this fits well with the concern of this thesis to analyse the dynamics of cyberactivism in relationship to political collective action in a real world setting.

From the discourse on the Internet and identity politics, Laskar Jihad is of special interest for two other reasons. First, Laskar Jihad relied heavily on the new communications technology that became broadly available across Indonesia from the 1990s (see Chapter 4; Lim, 2005). Second, Laskar Jihad utilised these new technologies in combination with traditional media to overcome the disadvantages it faced relative to Indonesia's larger and more moderate Muslim groupings such as *Muhammadiyah* and *Nahdlatul Ulama*. As in the analysis of Turkish Islamists (White, 2002), the combination of abstract, electronic communication with face-to-face mobilisation extended Laskar Jihad's appeal far beyond what would have been possible using Internet-based or face-to-face communication alone (Hefner, 2003).

To better understand how Laskar Jihad used the Internet to support its offline activities, the following section will provide some background about this organisation, its ideology, its leader and its use of media.

## 6.4 Laskar Jihad

Laskar Jihad was established on 30 January 2000 (Hasan, 2002) when its commander-in-chief, Ja'far Umar Thalib, proclaimed its establishment in front of more than 10,000 male Muslims who had gathered at the Kridosono Stadium in Yogyakarta. Laskar Jihad was formed in response to the government's inability to resolve the conflict in Ambon (van Bruinessen, 2002a), the capital of the Moluccas province, and was intended to protect Ambon Muslims from a perceived Christian onslaught. In addition, according to some analysts, it also aimed to drive President Abdurrahman Wahid from power (Hefner, 2003). President Wahid, who was also a leader of the largest moderate Muslim community in Indonesia, *Nahdlatul Ulama*, was disliked by some fundamentalist politicians, mainly because of his closeness to Christians (van Bruinessen, 2002b). His plan to initiate diplomatic relations with Israel triggered resentment from some fundamentalist groups, including Laskar Jihad (Baker, 2001; Hasan, 2002; Schulze, 2002; van Bruinessen, 2002b).

In April 2000, Laskar Jihad was introduced to the public when its members, along with other groups of Muslims, held a *Tabligh Akbar*<sup>184</sup> and a street demonstration in Jakarta calling for a *jihad* in the Moluccas. Laskar Jihad arranged for military training to be given to volunteers at a camp in Bogor, near Jakarta. Despite President Abdurrahman

---

<sup>184</sup> The phrase '*tabligh akbar*' (Arabic) comes from two words; *tabligh* and *akbar*. *Tabligh* literally means 'the propagation of message' while *akbar* literally means 'big, grand, great'. The original purpose of *tabligh* is to disseminate the message of Allah faithfully in its true form, fully and completely.

Wahid's objections, an estimated 3,000 *mujahedeen*<sup>185</sup> departed for Ambon in the months after April 2000 (Huang, 2002).

The parent organisation of Laskar Jihad, FKAWJ, was founded earlier in Solo on 14 February 1998 by Ja'far Umar Thalib, a Madurese-Hadrami Arab, only three months before the overthrow of President Suharto in May 1998. Laskar Jihad claimed a three-part mission: social work, Muslim education and a 'security mission', and it had over 10,000 members<sup>186</sup>, 4,000 of whom were active in communal violence in the eastern part of Indonesia, the Moluccas and Poso. Laskar Jihad gained support from certain group within the Indonesian National Army (TNI) and was also able to embezzle money from them (International Crisis Group 2001, 2002; van Bruinessen, 2002b; Hefner, 2003). Its founder claimed to have rejected approaches from Al-Qaeda, but Laskar Jihad did support the September 11 attacks on the US (Thalib, 2001b).

In mid October 2002, three days after the Bali bombing of 12 October, Laskar Jihad formally announced that it had disbanded. Laskar Jihad leaders claimed that the organisation had informally stopped all activities one day before the Bali bombing, on 11 October 2002. The reasons as to why the group disbanded, according to political analysts (ICG, 2002, 2004; Hefner, 2003), were both practical and ideological. Thalib's decision to disband the organisation possibly came in response to orders from *Salafist*<sup>187</sup> sheikhs in Yemen and Saudi Arabia on whom the Laskar Jihad leadership depended for religious guidance and sanction throughout the conflict (ICG, 2004). Thalib may also have been pressured into dismantling the militia when the sheikhs began to claim conditions in the Moluccas archipelago were no longer conducive for a justifiable *jihad*. Laskar Jihad was also accused by these *Salafist* sheikhs of having deviated from *Salafy* principles as it had become too political and no longer simply devoted to 'defending' Muslims. Another reason is that with the instalment of Megawati Sukarnoputri as President in July 2001, in place of Abdurahman Wahid, the group may have had less political and financial support from the Indonesian army.

---

<sup>185</sup> *Mujahedeen*, also written as *as mujahideen*, *mujahedin*, *mujahidin*, *mujaheddin*, literally translates from Arabic as 'strugglers'. *Mujahid* means 'struggler'. The root of the word *mujahedeen* is *jihad*, *Ju-h-D*, means 'effort'. A *mujahid* is therefore someone who exerts effort or struggles; *mujahedeen* is simply the plural (from Islamic Dictionary, 2005). While the word has been extensively used in the context of 'holy war', there is no explicit 'holy' or 'warrior' within the word itself.

<sup>186</sup> Thalib claimed that Laskar Jihad consisted of about 10,000 members and several hundred thousand supporters.

<sup>187</sup> The word '*salafy*' comes from *salaf*. *Salaf* literally means 'those (from history) who precede, have gone before'. *Salafy* means 'of the *salaf*'. The 'i' or 'y' (sounds like 'ee') on the end of the word means 'of the', 'of' and/or 'are'. The word *salafy* can only be used in association with words that are of things that are truly from the far past, and in this case (when referring to Islamic matters) are truly from the first three generation of pious Muslims, or those who came after them, but who are still in the far past to us today (from Islamic Dictionary, 2005).

#### 6.4.1 *Thalib and salafy jihadism*

Ja'far Umar Thalib was a central figure in defining Laskar Jihad. The grandson of a Yemeni trader, Thalib had some international experiences including fighting with the Afghan *mujahdeen* in 1988-1989 and studying Islam in Lahore, Pakistan (FKAWJ, 2001a, 2001b; Hefner, 2003). Both experiences had shaped his view of Islam as well as shaping the struggle of Laskar Jihad in the Moluccas and other places in Indonesia.

Long before the establishment of FKAWJ in 1998, Thalib had already founded a *madrasah* (Islamic boarding school) *Ihya al-Sunnah Tadribud Du'at* in 1993 in the village of Degolan, about 15 kilometres north of Yogyakarta. In the school, which comprised of about half a dozen buildings, including a small mosque, several houses and two cramped dormitories, the teaching of Thalib was taught. With the founding of FKAWJ, Thalib's students at *Ihya al-Sunnah* were among Thalib's first followers and the first Laskar Jihad fighters.

While Ja'far identified himself and his followers as '*Salafy*', a reference to a long established movement in Islam, they were often associated with Saudi *Wahhabism*, which aims to model the profession of faith on the example of the first generation of followers of the Prophet (Schulze, 2002; van Bruinessen, 2002b). However, Ja'far and the Laskar Jihad movement are better described as neo-*Salafy*, because they emphasise extreme political views not associated with earlier forms of *Salafism*, including those still popular in Saudi Arabia (Hefner, 2003). One such emphasis is the firm belief that the United States and Israel, lumped together as Christians-Jews and termed as 'Zionist-Crusaders', are leading a worldwide conspiracy to destroy Islam, and the response by Muslims to this effort must be armed *jihad* (Thalib, 2001a; FKAWJ, 2002; Schulze, 2002; Hefner, 2003). This view, which throughout this chapter is termed the 'Global *Jihad* meta-narrative', has been used by various *Salafy jihadis*<sup>188</sup> groups to justify their armed *jihad* actions.

#### 6.4.2 *Sword and pen: FKAWJ and the use of media*

FKAWJ was among the most advanced Indonesian mass organisations in terms of using media and ICT. From the beginning, FKAWJ used fax machines and computers to organise and develop its organisation as well as to disseminate information. Later it included the Internet as an important tool to coordinate its operations, disseminate

---

<sup>188</sup> It is important to differentiate *Salafy Jihadism* from *Salafism*. While both share a similar determination to restore the purity of the faith and regard themselves as guardians of that purity, they differ over four issues: "One, as [to] whether it is permissible to rebel against Muslim governments. *Salafis* say no, *salafy jihadis* say yes. A second is on organisation. *Salafy jihadis* in order to achieve their political goals need a level of organisation that to *salafy* purists smacks on 'partyism'. *Salafis* then to define the concept of *jihad* in broad terms as the taking of whatever actions are necessary to improve one's own faith; *salafy jihadi* define it as battle. Finally they differ on tactics and acceptable methodology for achieving their aims, particularly with respect to *jihad*" (International Crisis Group, 2004: 29).

information, recruit members and also for fundraising in addition to the more traditional ways.

FKAWJ also used print media, *Maluku Hari Ini* (The Moluccas Today), a daily newsletter, *Salafy* monthly, the weekly *Laskar Jihad Bulletin*, and some books published by FKAWJ and other publishers<sup>189</sup> to spread information regarding its ideology and activities while still very much depending on face-to-face communications.

Laskar Jihad's awareness of the benefits of the media and ICT cannot be separated from the role of Ayip Syarifuddin, the architect behind Laskar Jihad. He claimed that his weapons were 'the sword and the pen'. This is not surprising since Syarifuddin had a journalism background and had worked as a journalist<sup>190</sup> before he decided to be a full-time *da'wah*<sup>191</sup> activist, and joined Thalib in FKAWJ. For Ayip Syarifuddin, the media is an effective weapon for disseminating, socialising, defending and fighting for an ideology.<sup>192</sup> He believed that the existence of Islamic media is significant in balancing the domination of the Christian (Western) media, which has distorted the image of Islam (Hidayatullah, 2002). With his leadership role in Laskar Jihad, Syarifuddin's view, which was very much in line with the *jihad* ideology, underpinned the framing processes for all types of Laskar Jihad's media.

## 6.5 Laskar Jihad on the Internet

As the Internet became popular, it seems that the FKAWJ leadership immediately recognised the potential of this new technology. With the coming of the Internet, the *Salafy* magazine staff could maintain editorial and layout operations at the *Ihya al-Sunnah* school outside Yogyakarta, while more than tripling their staff to include writers from around the country. As the Internet technology became more widely available, the FKAWJ established branch offices in other cities and used the Internet and communication technologies to coordinate operations. Each branch office was equipped with an Internet connection with e-mail address, telephone, and fax machine.

---

<sup>189</sup> Among these books are Thalib (2001a) and Kastor (2000a, 2000b, 2000c).

<sup>190</sup> Syarifuddin has been writing in the media since he was a teenager. When he was a university student he wrote a book entitled *Pendidikan Seks untuk Anak* (Sex Education for Children) published by the *Pustaka Mantiq* whom later offered him a position as an editor. In 1992, Ayip Syarifuddin pioneered the Islamic magazine *Assunah*, but then he left this *Salafism* magazine to form a new magazine called *Salafy* (Hidayatullah, 2002).

<sup>191</sup> *Da'wah* can be translated as the propagation of the Islamic faith. It is one of the main forms of religious authority networks and is the main instrument for dissemination of this authority. The traditional type of *da'wah* is achieved mostly through education and religious lecturers (in boarding schools and mosques). However, in the modern *da'wah*, one can seek to disseminate Islamic values not only through education but also by initiating welfare programmes.

<sup>192</sup> Apart from professional uses, Syarifuddin also uses the Internet for his personal relationship. He said that he uses e-mail to communicate with his *jundi* (sons) and *jundiyah* (daughters) (Hidayatullah, 2002).



Later, with the establishment of Laskar Jihad in January 2000, FKAJ began to take full advantage of the Internet, as shown by the creation of the official website for Laskar Jihad: Laskar Jihad Online, <http://www.laskarjihad.or.id>. The website was subsequently the major vehicle for maintaining and developing the group's presence and identity. Well designed, bilingual, Indonesian and English, and regularly updated, Laskar Jihad Online shows how Laskar Jihad, while being ultra conservative in its ideology, is ultra-modern in using technologies and very much aware about the potential of the Internet and other information and communication technologies. Beyond the website, Laskar Jihad also had a mailing list which kept its members, who were scattered across 53 branch offices all over Indonesia, updated with the latest news (Lim, 2002a).

### 6.5.1 *Laskar Jihad Online*

“Remember! Death is already fixed; it won't be hastened by *jihad*, and will not be delayed by not carrying out *jihad*.”

The quotation above is taken from the official website of Laskar Jihad, Laskar Jihad Online. This line always appeared below the banner of Laskar Jihad on the first page of Laskar Jihad Online. In the left corner the blinking image of the symbol of Laskar Jihad, crossed swords and the Koran (see Figure 6.2), combined with the texts of “*Jihad* in Ambon, fear nothing but Allah”, appeared to be catchy, direct and efficient in disseminating the general message of this *jihad* group and showing that this was a religious project.



**Figure 6.2** *The symbol of Laskar Jihad*  
Source: <http://www.laskarjihad.or.id>

The image of crossed swords and the Koran is commonly used by *jihadi* groups all over the world, including those in Saudi Arabia and Egypt. To strengthen its Islamic identity, the daily updated news page was completed with citations from the Koran.

These selected verses, Al Baqarah 120 and 190<sup>193</sup>, that seemingly justify the act of *jihad*.<sup>194</sup> Just as the logo, the banner, and Koran citations indicated, the Laskar Jihad website (see Figure 6.3) was meant to incite Muslims to join the ranks of the *jihad* to fight against the Christians, particularly in the Moluccas and Poso, but also throughout Indonesia and beyond.



Figure 6.3 Laskar Jihad Online snapshot  
Source: <http://www.laskarjihad.or.id>

Laskar Jihad Online was launched in June 2000 and was officially shut down by 15 October 2002. Web-mastered by Arif Rahman Hakim, a medical student of University of Diponegoro, Semarang, this website offered information about the ongoing conflicts in Indonesia in which Laskar Jihad was involved, with a focus on the Moluccan conflict, in textual, visual and audio forms (Lim, 2002a).

This well maintained and regularly updated website published very comprehensive information about the FKAJ and Laskar Jihad, and tried to set out the basis and reasoning for the group's *jihad* actions. One of the sections was on the *fatwa* (authoritative treatises and jurisprudential issuances). The *fatwa* was used to justify their 'call for *jihad*' in the Moluccas as being in the framework of defending Islam as a religion. The section consisted of translations of *fatwas* (from Arabic) that Laskar Jihad had received from the *Salafist* Sheiks in Saudi Arabia and Yemen. In these *fatwas*, the

<sup>193</sup> Al Baqarah 120 says: "Never will the Jews nor the Christians be pleased with you until you follow their religion", while Al Baqarah 190 says: "And fight in the Way of Allah those who fight you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors."

<sup>194</sup> Al-Baqarah: 120 is the most cited verse used by *Jihadi* Islamic websites to justify their conspiracy theory. And based on this verse, the *Jihadi* Islamic websites point to the conflicts in Palestine, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Molucca – Ambon, Poso, and other places in the world as proof of that verse. As an extension of this proof, the other verse, Al-Baqarah: 190, is used to justify *jihad* action in the form of physical violence. As of April 2003 there were at least 2,675 web pages that cite these verses.

authorities appealed to all Muslims in Indonesia to carry out *jihad* in the name of God and defeat Christians who had attacked Muslims and occupied Muslim territory. The importance of the Saudi and Yemeni authorities illustrates the global element in this local movement. By communicating these *fatwas* through the Internet, Laskar Jihad asserted a global identity while still paying attention to local issues. In using the Internet, Laskar Jihad was also able to bypass national and local Islamic authorities — President Wahid who was also a national Islamic leader clearly ordered Laskar Jihad to stay away from the Moluccas — by presenting an ‘order’ from ‘global’ authorities, in this case Saudi and Yemeni Sheikhs. Further, as mentioned previously, Laskar Jihad only stopped its activities when the Sheiks ordered them to do so.

Through its website, Laskar Jihad also maintained its image and representation, which were carefully looked after section by section. For example, in the ‘Question of the Day’ section, Laskar Jihad attempted to show how they were being inclusive, encompassing people from various places, strata and classes by showcasing selected questions from a global setting as well as from local, urban and remote places, from a teenager to a trishaw driver.

While most of the selected questions were in Indonesian, occasionally some questions in English appeared; these were asked by foreigners in Malaysia, Japan, the United States and other countries, and fluently answered by Laskar Jihad officers in English. Questions from Indonesian audiences came from various places in Indonesia, from Jakarta to Banjarmasin. The selected questions also represented different types of people, from highly educated people to *becak* (trishaw) driver. From time to time the ‘Question of the Day’ highlighted questions from the ‘wannabe’ *jihad* warriors. Once it featured a trishaw driver who wanted to join the *jihad* and professed that he had already sold his trishaw to fund his *jihad* in the Moluccas. He was asking about what else he should be doing in order to join the *jihad*. Another time it featured a teenager from the upper middle class who was impressed by the ‘call for *jihad*’ in Jakarta’s *Tabligh Akbar* of Ja’far Umar Thalib and posed the same question as the trishaw driver.

As only one question per day was published, the webmaster and/or the information division of Laskar Jihad had to select the question to be published. There was a broad range of types of questions published on the website. From pragmatic questions such as the ones concerning: “How to join the *jihad* in the Moluccas” or “Traffic light fundraising”, to more ideological and political issues such as, “What is the meaning of *jihad*” and “The conspiracy of Americans and Jews behind the conflict”. The titles of the questions generally sounded provocative and were not written by the public but were added by officers of the Laskar Jihad information division.

Meanwhile, the ‘List of Adopted Children’ section attempted to show the ‘social/generous’ side of Laskar Jihad. By publishing a list of adopted children, Laskar Jihad simultaneously validated two claims. The first was that this militia group did not only come to the Moluccas to fight but also to socially serve the community. The second was that ‘Christians had slaughtered Muslims’ in these islands, with these orphanages as a proof of the ‘Christians’ brutality’.

The 'Hot News' section had links to actual news related to the conflict and related issues such as Christianisation. Most of the times this section was used to explain or to clarify some predicaments highlighted by other media. For example, when the *jihad* leader Ja'far Umar Thalib was charged in connection with a stoning-to-death case, the 'Hot News' section provided some articles about this event including an Islamic explanation justifying the stoning-to-death action. On another occasion, after the 11 September 2001 attack, a couple of links in English and Indonesian appeared in this section that claimed to show that Laskar Jihad had no links to Al-Qaeda.

The 'Picture and Map' section was essential for this website. Here, the website featured a map of Ambon showing the territory captured by Laskar Jihad and photo galleries of alleged Christian atrocities showing mutilated bodies which Laskar Jihad said were massacres of Muslim victims, burnt or damaged mosques, and graffiti on walls containing messages that insult Islam (see Figure 6.4). All were graphically shown in support of the textual argumentation. By showing only dead Muslims and burnt mosques, Laskar Jihad were suggesting that the conflict was a one-sided attack by Christians against Muslims, rather than Christians versus Muslims. Pictures shown on the website were indeed very powerful. Pictures in the form of photographs bring the viewer closer to the reality than texts can ever do, in part because photography has implicit connotations of authenticity, presupposing that the image is an unmediated transcription of reality, making them very powerful in evoking emotions and transferring the grievance to the larger collective of faithful adherents.



**Figure 6.4** Examples of the pictures of burnt mosques and graffiti on the walls that insult Islam

Source: <http://www.laskarjihad.or.id>

The 'download' section offered 'accessories for fans' such as the logo of Laskar Jihad, wallpaper motives and sound (real audio) files. The latter mostly contained the speeches of Laskar Jihad and other radical leaders boosting the spirit of fighting for *jihad*. The most downloaded sound file was the speech given by Ja'far Umar Thalib at the *Tabligh Akbar* at the Senayan Stadium, Jakarta, on 6 April 2000 before sending Muslim

fighters to the Moluccas. The 'sound' files also included recordings of what were called 'proof of conspiracy' such as the recording of a conversation between Madeline Albright and Henry Kissinger of their secret plan to undermine Islam.

During its first year of operation, Laskar Jihad Online also featured stories and links to the websites of other *jihadi* groups around the world, including those in Chechnya, Palestine, Lebanon, Kashmir, and Afghanistan. The choice of places is typical of *Salafy jihadi* online media. The *jihad* website of Hamas, Saudi Arabian based *jihad* websites, as well as some of Bin Laden's propaganda video tapes (as shown in some *jihadi* websites) always include images of stories from Chechnya, Lebanon (the Israeli bombardment of the village of Qana), Palestine, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Indonesia, and more recently Iraq. These images are shown to as evidence of the existence of a global conspiracy against Islam and justify the thesis that Christians (the West) and Jews are in an alliance to destroy Islam. These images, just like those on the Laskar Jihad website, are very powerful in propagating grievances and calling for solidarity, especially among those who are 'far away'.<sup>195</sup>

However, after 11 September 2001, especially after the accusation by the US administration that Laskar Jihad had ties to Al Qaeda, these international links were quietly removed from the site. By removing these 'virtual' links, Laskar Jihad also tried to detach itself from any 'real' links to these organisations as claimed by western media.

Two of the most important sections perhaps were the 'Registration' and 'Donation' sections. From these sections, any 'wannabe' fighters could register through an online application form and any Laskar Jihad sympathisers could donate through the list of bank accounts provided there. Everybody who donated some money to Laskar Jihad would be put on the list of contributors which was also posted on the website. From the list of contributors, it appeared that Laskar Jihad collected a considerable amount of money from both Indonesian and global communities.

Beyond the website, the group had more than 1,400 members<sup>196</sup> on its Internet mailing lists, which kept the fighters, members and supporters who were scattered in many places across Indonesia updated with the latest news. Using Yahoo as a platform, this Laskar Jihad mailing list was using Indonesian as the language of communication. Some of the news posted through this mailing list was directly derived from the Laskar Jihad website, while the rest was claimed to be posted directly from the Moluccas.

---

<sup>195</sup> In one conversation in a chat room, several teenagers who had just visited the Indonesian version of Chechnya *Jihad* websites said that they were provoked and very upset about what was done by a Christian-Jewish alliance against their fellow Muslims in Chechnya as much as by the Moluccan conflict. They ended up fully appreciating the *jihad* action against the Christian-Jewish conspiracy all over the world, including the one in the Moluccas. One of them said: "As I saw the blood of my sisters and brothers, I burst into tears and drowned in a very deep sadness and unspeakable anger. We, Muslims, should do revenge. *Jihad* is the only answer" (*Aku menangis, air mataku berlinang, hatiku begitu geram dan sedih melihat darah saudara-saudariku. Kita umat Islam harus membalas. Hanya Jihad jawabannya*) (recorded on 19 August 2002 from server irc.myquran.com:6667 #myQuran).

<sup>196</sup> As of October 2001, there were 1,419 members on this mailing list.

The mailing list that was founded on 17 May 2000 was not meant to provide a space for dialogue since only moderators were allowed to post to the list.<sup>197</sup> It was actually a one-directional newsletter that provided news ‘from the battlefield’. This mechanism shows how the digital setting of cyberspace allows certain groups of people – in this case the moderators of the Laskar Jihad mailing list – to filter the information that is spread, and thus restrict and limit what audiences read.

Many messages spread through the mailing list were written as personal journals. By communicating the conflict through personal frames, Laskar defined the conflict by the feelings, attitudes and voices of individuals, which in this case proved more appealing for the Muslim public. With the existence of its website and mailing list, Laskar Jihad had been marrying communal resistance, based on religiosity, with the post-modern weapon of information technology (Lim, 2002a, 2005). This was exemplified by the Laskar Jihad Online webmaster, a medical student by day, cyberspace holy warrior by night, who wrote in a mission statement that his intention was “to show the software side of *jihad*, a holy war” (Ebiz Asia, 2001).

### *6.5.2 The argument: A fusion of nationalist and global jihad meta-narratives*

Concerning its *jihad* war in the Moluccas, the main argument of Laskar Jihad, as strongly depicted on its website and mailing list, was heavily rooted in the thesis of Rustam Kastor. This retired Ambonese brigadier can be seen as the ideological father of Laskar Jihad. Kastor elaborated the thesis in his three books. The first book (Kastor, 2000a) was published in early 2000, well before April 2000 when the actual *jihad* war started in Ambon, and became a best seller in Indonesia.

In these books, Kastor (2000a, 2000b, 2000c) provided a pseudo-scientific justification for sending Laskar Jihad to the Moluccas. According to this theory, the Dutch-supported Christians in the Moluccas were planning to re-establish the Republic of the South Moluccas (RMS) and to wipe out the Muslims. In his opinion, not only *Gereja Protestan Maluku*, or GPM (the Protestant Church of the Moluccas) was behind the conflict, but also the branch association of the ‘Christian-Nationalist’<sup>198</sup> PDI-P, the party of the fifth president, Megawati Sukarnoputri. Moreover, this conflict, according to Kastor, was part of a Christianisation project going on throughout Indonesia which, in the end, supports the Christians-Jews international project in destroying Islam worldwide.

---

<sup>197</sup> The period of existence of this Laskar Jihad mailing list was much shorter than for the website. This mailing list was halted on 4 October 2001, about three weeks after the 9–11 attack. The reason is, according to the Webmaster of Laskar Jihad, because the host of this free mailing list, Yahooogroups, put pictures of naked woman in the group’s site (part of the commercial banners). This kind of picture is not acceptable to *Salafy* followers.

<sup>198</sup> Calling PDI-P as a ‘Christian-Nationalist’ is not without reason. At least 53 out of 153 PDI-P Members of Parliament (MPs) were Christians (Catholic and Protestant) and all PDI-P MPs from the Moluccas were Christians.

These books of Kastor were available online for free downloading and links were accessible from Laskar Jihad Online. To support this thesis, in some articles on Laskar Jihad Online, it was pointed out that the Moluccans were once Muslims before Western colonisers forcefully converted them to Christianity, as mentioned in all the state's history books.

The Islamic society in Indonesia is now being targeted by the conspiracy of international Zionists-Crusaders and Islam has been regarded as a threat to the hegemony of Zionists-Crusaders in Indonesia and its surroundings. Therefore, various evil conspiracies are being directed to Indonesia because the majority of Indonesians are Islamic and Indonesia has the potential to become a super-power country against the supremacy of hegemonic international Zionists-Crusaders (Thalib, 2001a: 7).<sup>199</sup>

More than just appearing as an independent group, Laskar Jihad claimed to represent Islam itself in carrying out a holy duty to purify the Muslims of Indonesia, to lead them back on the right path, and to not be trapped by the tricks and domination of the non-Muslims (Zionist-Crusaders, Jews, Christians, the US). Further, this could only be fulfilled by the application of Muslim law (Islamic *sha'ria*) throughout Indonesia. Laskar Jihad used the words Jew, Christian, Crusader, Zionist and American as if all of those words represented one person or one group of people or one identity group.

Laskar Jihad also equated Christians in the Moluccas with RMS, and even created a new term for RMS: *Republik Maluku Serani* (Christian Republic of the Moluccas), accusing all Christians of being in the struggle for sovereignty and separation from the Indonesian state. When a Christian Ambonese medical doctor named Alex Manuputty commenced the Moluccas Sovereignty Forum (*Front Kedaulatan Maluku*, FKM) at the end of 2000 and suggested its ideological connection to the RMS movement of the 1950s, the Laskar Jihad thesis was self-fulfilled (Bräuchler, 2003). This then became a legitimate reason for Laskar Jihad to attack Christians.

With its stories from the battlefield supported by pictures of victims, Laskar Jihad also tried to reconstruct Islam as the victim. Referring to the Moluccas case, Laskar Jihad accused the government (military) of taking the side of the Christians. At the same time, by putting the Moluccas case in the bigger picture of the Indonesian state, Laskar Jihad tried to convince its followers, and the world, that the state had always marginalised Islam (see Section 4.2.2). This narrative thus asserted that the Christian minority had stirred up the state to victimise Muslims, just like all Christians are accused of doing elsewhere in the world.

---

<sup>199</sup> *Ummat Islam Indonesia sedang dibidik oleh konspirasi salibis-zionis internasional dan Ummat ini telah dianggap sebagai ancaman hegemoni salibis-zionis di Indonesia dan sekitarnya. Oleh karena itu berbagai makar jahat sedang mereka lancarkan terhadap NKRI berhubung penduduknya mayoritas Islam dan berpotensi untuk menjadi negara super power berhadapan dengan supremasi hegemoni salibis-zionis internasional.*

In this context, the RMS issue, which is an unforgivable sin in the nationalist perspective, is added to the righteousness of Laskar Jihad in the debate on the Moluccas conflict. The separatism is seen as a valid reason for attacking Christians in the Moluccas. The linkages of the Moluccas to the Dutch in the past as well as the present connectivity of the Moluccans in the Moluccas with the Moluccan Diaspora in the Netherlands, and GPM in Ambon with the GPM in the Netherlands, also legitimised the Christianisation issue.

The fusion of the nationalist and Global *Jihad* meta-narrative thus made Laskar Jihad's argument stronger than either on its own. This created a powerful synergy between nation-state ideology and religiosity. Just as the leader Thalib (2001) had always said, "We do *jihad* for the country, nation-state, and God (Islam)."

### 6.5.3 Cyber-linkages

Beyond Laskar Jihad Online and the Laskar Jihad mailing list, the meta-narratives of this organisation were disseminated rapidly through many other Islamic websites, either linked or not linked to <http://www.laskarjihad.or.id>. The Webmaster of Laskar Jihad Online was persistent in sending an announcement about Laskar Jihad Online to many guest-books, mailing lists and chatrooms. Almost all the common website shortcuts related to Ambon<sup>200</sup> were on the Islamic side of the struggle. The reaction of cyber-Muslims towards the Moluccan conflict being quite remarkable, especially when compared to cyber-Christians.<sup>201</sup>

Some online newspapers such as Marsinah.com, Hidayatullah.com and Republika.co.id were dependent on Laskar Jihad Online as their source for news on the Moluccan conflict. Many times, these online newspapers simply published Laskar Jihad articles as they were, without investigating, rewriting or modifying them.

Many other websites devoted to Muslims in the Moluccas and elsewhere in Indonesia with a reference (hyperlink) to Laskar Jihad Online were also created.<sup>202</sup> Existing Islamic and secular websites also devoted a section or a page to the Moluccan *jihad*. Some universities and schools even put a link of Laskar Jihad Online on their official websites. Many personal Muslim websites also created hyperlinks to Laskar Jihad Online.

In fact, the term *jihad* itself was transformed into a cyber-*jihad* among Muslim youth who, in assuming that the world is dominated by Western-based media that are biased against Islam, feel that only the Internet can still be free for Muslims to engage in

---

<sup>200</sup> Examples: <http://listen.to/ambon>, <http://scroll.to/ambon>, <http://connect.to/Maluku> and <http://come.to/suaraambon>.

<sup>201</sup> While there were some Christian websites on the Moluccan conflicts, these websites were not necessarily linked to the regular Christian websites. These conflict websites were mostly linked to themselves.

<sup>202</sup> Examples: <http://www.alsofwah.or.id/html/berita.html>, <http://www.malu.ku.org/>, <http://www.ummah.net/sos/indonesia.htm>, <http://islamic-world.net/youth/jihadambon&aceh.htm> (last accessed on 30 July 2002).



their struggle. Thus Muslims should fight by creating as many Islamic (*jihad*) websites as possible.<sup>203</sup>

While not directly influenced by Laskar Jihad, after the launch of Laskar Jihad Online, some Islamic radicalist websites, both those who claimed to be *Salafist* and non-*Salafist*, emerged on the Internet. Among these were the website of Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia,<sup>204</sup> the website of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia,<sup>205</sup> the website of the Defender of Islam Front,<sup>206</sup> the website of Hamas Indonesia<sup>207</sup> and some fundamentalist news websites such as Swara Muslim<sup>208</sup> and IslamOnline.<sup>209</sup> All of these websites subscribed to the meta-narratives of Laskar Jihad, and when they talked about the Moluccan conflict they would refer to articles from Laskar Jihad Online.

## 6.6 Beyond cyberspace: linkages to other media & physical space

Using its website and mailing list, as well as the cyber-network, Laskar Jihad was successful in disseminating its perspective on the conflict and the meta-narratives to justify the *jihad* action in the Moluccas. However, such efforts would only reach Internet users. As mentioned previously, Laskar Jihad did not only use the Internet, but also used other media and even traditional ways to disseminate their messages. How did Laskar Jihad reach non-Internet users? Was there any linkage that Laskar Jihad created with non-Internet media? How influential was Laskar Jihad in non-Internet media? Was Laskar Jihad successful in using the Internet and other media to mobilise people to go to war in the Moluccas? All of these questions are addressed in the following sections.

### 6.6.1 *Laskar Jihad's intermodality*

Laskar Jihad demonstrated great skill in linking its Internet resources to other communications media. For example, the Internet was used to send daily reports on the Moluccan conflict to each of the Laskar Jihad branch offices around the country. Each office downloaded the messages, which were already laid out in a desktop publishing format. These were then printed out on a single, two-sided sheet of paper to create a newsletter with the letterhead *The Moluccas Today*. The left of the letterhead featured the Laskar Jihad logo with its open-paged Koran set above two crossed swords. On the bottom of the back page, information on the Laskar Jihad website, e-mail address, bank account and the local branch address were printed.

---

<sup>203</sup> Based on some conversations in Islamic youth chatrooms.

<sup>204</sup> URL: <http://www.mujahidin.or.id> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>205</sup> URL: <http://www.hizbut-tahrir.or.id> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>206</sup> URL: <http://walisongo.homestead.com/fpi.html> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>207</sup> URL: <http://www.palestina-info.melayu.net> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>208</sup> URL: <http://www.swaramuslim.net> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

<sup>209</sup> URL: <http://www.islamonline.net> (last accessed on 30 April 2005).

More advanced than the daily newsletter, Laskar Jihad produced a monthly *Salafy* tabloid and a bi-weekly national bulletin of Laskar Jihad (*Buletin Laskar Jihad Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah*). The *Salafy* tabloid was actually established long before the establishment of Laskar Jihad. A year after the founding of the *Ihya al-Sunnah* school of Ja'far Umar Thalib, several of Thalib's students, one of them was Ayip Syarifuddin, got together to create the *Salafy* tabloid, a glossy-covered yet inexpensive monthly dedicated to the militant *Salafism* teaching of Thalib. Using desktop-publishing technologies, the staff of the *Salafy* tabloid did most of the editorial and layout work at their homes or at the *Ihya al-Sunnah* school. Printing was then out-sourced to a shop in the nearby town of Klaten. After the establishment of the FKAWJ in February 1998, the *Salafy* tabloid became the official organ of this organisation. While Laskar Jihad Online was shut down following the dissolution of Laskar Jihad in October 2002, the *Salafy* tabloid continued being published.

The Laskar Jihad Bulletin was a sixteen page bi-weekly featuring articles mainly about Laskar Jihad's activities and FKAWJ's ideology with colour photos and some advertisements. Some of the articles in this bi-weekly bulletin were derived from the content of Laskar Jihad Online, and some were specially written for the bulletin. The Laskar Jihad Bulletin was promoted online through a pop-up menu on the index page of Laskar Jihad Online. Every time someone opened the website, a small window of the Laskar Jihad Bulletin would pop up with the image of the bulletin's cover. The circulation of this bi-weekly was about 100,000. These tabloids and bulletins were sold across the country through the branch offices of Laskar Jihad, mosques, street vendors, street kiosks (such as the street-kiosk on Ganesha street next to the Salman Mosque, near the Institute of Technology Bandung) and small shops.

At the height of its operation, Laskar Jihad officials in branch offices would make thousands of copies of the daily newsletter to be given to young male volunteers to distribute to the public. Dressed in the *jihadis'* trademark tunic, trousers and turban, the volunteers placed themselves at traffic lights in cities across Indonesia, primarily in Java. They distributed the newsletter for free but with the understanding, conveyed in a none-too-subtle fashion by passing a bucket in front of car windows, that donations to the Moluccan *jihad* were welcome.

Besides passing a bucket around at traffic lights and the Internet based fundraising through the website, Laskar Jihad also had a more common way of fundraising putting the donation boxes in restaurants and cafes, especially in Padang restaurants (*rumah makan Padang*), which are among the most popular roadside urban eateries in Indonesia. Humble in appearance, this way of fundraising was effective, and sometimes it could even draw money from those who did not actually plan to give. In such ways, Laskar Jihad never neglected the more conventional ways of looking after the organisation. Mobilisation, promotion, recruitment and fundraising were all also done in traditional ways. By holding rallies all over the country, Laskar Jihad persuaded

thousands of students<sup>210</sup> and youths to become troopers (i.e. members). The cleverly combined use of new and traditional media and communications goes against the assumption that radical groups mostly consist of low-educated people.<sup>211</sup> This also shows that Laskar Jihad got sufficient funding to make effect communication, dissemination and recruitment on a large scale.<sup>212</sup>

### **6.6.2 Linkages to other media**

It was not only in cyberspace, Laskar Jihad Online also became the most cited source of news and information about the Moluccan conflict in some print media. Being confined by the frame that Laskar Jihad had created, the images and discourses of some print media — including *Republika* daily, *Suara Hidayatullah*, *Media Dakwah*, *Tabloid Oposisi* and *Sabili* — framed the Moluccan conflict in a way that strengthened the meta-narratives of Laskar Jihad rather than providing a coherent account of what, and why, actually happening in the conflict.

Even before the launch of Laskar Jihad Online, these media had reported the ongoing conflict in the Moluccas with sensational stories and provocative headlines claiming that this conflict was a pilot project of the Christianisation project in Indonesia, and a part of the Jews' and Christians' plan to cleanse the world of Muslims everywhere. The *Sabili*, for example, used headlines such as “Moslim Cleansing: Ambon is not alone” (*Sabili*, 29 March 1999), “Christianisation: Volume 2” (*Sabili*, 28 July 1999), “Thousands of Muslims were slaughtered by the infidel Christians” (*Sabili*, 26 January 2000). The *Suara Hidayatullah*, following *Sabili*'s lead, also tried to popularise the Zionists-Crusaders conspiracy theory with headlines such as “Uncover the practice of the GGG: Gold-Gospel-Glory, the Moslem cleansing in Ambon” (*Suara Hidayatullah*, 1999). The *Media Dakwah*, in its article entitled “The *Jihad* War is continuing in Ambon” (*Media Dakwah*, 1999: 42–44) not only referred to the Zionists-Crusaders conspiracy but equated this conflict to a Christian crusade and called on Indonesian Muslims to join the *jihad*. The *Tabloid Oposisi* reported “a systematic plan” behind the conflict that involved an internationally-supported Christian conspiracy born of New Order politics and local political egoism (*Tabloid Oposisi*, 17 December 1999; see also Kastor, 2002a). However, before the emergence of Laskar Jihad Online, these media made no explicit link between *jihad* action and nationalism. *Jihad* was formerly seen as a purely religious action to be undertaken by Muslims, for other Muslims, in the name of God. After the launch of

---

<sup>210</sup> According to van Bruinessen (2002a), many of Laskar Jihad members had at least a few years university education and had previously taken part in other Islamic student movements.

<sup>211</sup> Laskar Jihad leaders boasted that 30% of its troopers were university graduates/students. However, according to Noorhaidi Hasan (a researcher, see footnote #167) most of the basic level members (the fighters who went for the war in the Moluccas) were not highly educated.

<sup>212</sup> Some political analysts claim that Laskar Jihad enjoyed a close relationship with some ex high-ranking army officials and civilians who funded it in order to pursue their own political ambitions (Aditjondro, 2000c, 2003; Hefner, 2003).

Laskar Jihad Online, the fusion of the Global *Jihad* meta-narrative and the nationalist meta-narrative of Laskar Jihad became prominent in these Islamist media.

Furthermore, with the emergence of Laskar Jihad Online, these media could bring a sense of the reality to their readers such as with ‘stories from the battlefield’. Images and personal stories of Laskar Jihad fighters and supporters in Ambon and other areas in the Moluccas brought narratives vividly alive and were thus more convincing and influential.

The case of the *Republika* daily shows the distinct influence of Laskar Jihad Online. Before the launch of this website, *Republika* – unlike mainstream newspapers who relied on a military news office for their sources – was highly dependent on their own field reporters, who were few in number. *Republika* thus did not publish many articles. Also, while biased towards Muslims (and against Christians), this newspaper, at that time, still tried to be uncontroversial and show a balance view.<sup>213</sup> However, with the emergence of the Laskar Jihad website, *Republika* became more active in publishing news on the Moluccas. This newspaper became very dependent on the Laskar Jihad website, and even used it as its main source of information about the conflict. As a result, *Republika* ended up publishing highly biased reports using a frame that reflected the views and ideology of Laskar Jihad.

Besides these newspapers and magazines, books about Maluku that were published by Islamic writers/organisations from 2000 to 2002 also heavily referred to Laskar Jihad Online.<sup>214</sup> Many of the storylines, arguments and even visual representations (photographs) in these books were taken directly from Laskar Jihad Online.

Beyond influencing books for Islamic adults, the *jihad* concept also became the main theme in many Islamic books for children (see Figure 6.5).



**Figure 6.5** Examples of children books with the jihad theme  
Source: Author's photo, Jakarta, 2002

---

<sup>213</sup> The observation of *Republika's* reporting of news on the Moluccan conflict before the launch of the Laskar Jihad Online is based on an unpublished master thesis written by Buni Yani (2002).

<sup>214</sup> See Abbas and Pakkanna (2000), Ahmad and Oesman (2000), Djaelani (2001) and Kastor (2000a, 2000b, 2000c).

Comic books with heroic stories of holy wars and *laskars* who fought the enemy in the name of Allah, with covers showing pictures of a hero/heroine with a sabre or sword in their hands, filled the racks of children's sections of bookstores in major cities, including Jakarta.

### 6.6.3 *Global ummah*

As extensively described in this chapter, Laskar Jihad showed how to use the Internet (and other advanced media and communication tools) and cyber-networks extremely well to cultivate an Islamic society with its meta-narratives of a common enemy and absolute truths. According to some political analysts (Aditjondro, 2001; International Crisis Group, 2002, Hefner, 2003), the Laskar Jihad project was no more than domestic political project that was aimed at defending Muslims from Christian militias, which the government seemed unable to contain, and was further also aimed at driving President Abdurrahman Wahid from power (Hefner, 2003). Yet its atmosphere, sensationalism and impact, went beyond these purposes. This does not mean that, with this use of various media, Laskar Jihad was successful in inciting people to join the *jihad*.

While through Laskar Jihad's propaganda on the Internet and other media, a large number of Indonesian Muslims could understand and appreciate its *jihad* action, the vast majority of these Indonesians did not go to the battlefield to fight. All the Muslims interviewed<sup>215</sup> for this thesis claimed that they would not go for the war, except one who said, "I might go if I had relatives there who got killed by Christians." Yet, all sixteen Muslims interviewed for this research declined to say that Laskar Jihad was wrong. Most of them said that the *jihad* action of this group was reasonable and understandable, but that they did not fully agree with all the activities carried out by Laskar Jihad. Seven of the sixteen said that this *jihad* action was the only way out for Muslims in the Moluccas as the government could not handle the situation, and Christians were heavily supported by international links. Twelve believed that this conflict was a religious conflict initiated by the Christian separatist movement of the RMS. And three others, while believing that the RMS was behind the conflict, were not sure whether this conflict was religious or purely political. While only four claimed a firm belief that the RMS was a part of the global conspiracy against Islam, nine others considered that the possibility of international (Western-Christian) links in this conflict should not be overlooked, but they refused to consider the involvement of Israel. The interviewees did not condemn the physical violence of Laskar Jihad, except two female interviewees who were insistent that this conflict was purely political and both parties, Laskar Jihad and RMS, should be condemned.

---

<sup>215</sup> These interviews (in the form of informal conversations) were conducted in July - August 2002. The interviewees were Muslim, 10 male, 6 female, 18-39 years old, high school students to Ph.D. students, all were Internet users, all of them had accessed Laskar Jihad Online and received information originally from Laskar Jihad.

The voices of these interviewees cannot be generalised as the voices of Indonesians as a whole. Methodologically they do not represent the majority of population. However the results of these interviews portray a dilemma that Indonesian Muslims faced. After all, in most Indonesians' minds (particularly those on Java where more than half of the national population lives), both Muslims and others, the RMS is always a negative factor in national integrity, as it had been cultivated in the nationalist meta-narrative. And the concept of a single *ummah* — a Muslim belongs to the worldwide Muslim community, thus should defend any Muslim anywhere in the world who is hurt by a non-Muslim — supported by belief in the Global *Jihad* meta-narratives makes it difficult for a Muslim to condemn Laskar Jihad for its exhortations to violently defend the nation and Islam in the Moluccas, as illustrated by two statements below.

“After all, they are my brothers. I believe there is a strong reason behind their acts” [in English] (Nina, female, Master student in the United States, who claims to be a moderate Muslim).<sup>216</sup>

“All members of my family, and my neighbours too, believe that *jihad* is necessary since they believe that Islam is in danger as the Jewish and Christian people are in a strong conspiracy against Islam. In the Moluccan case, joining Laskar Jihad is the holiest that Muslims can do, that's what my father said. If possible, going there is even better. My youngest brother actually wants to go there as my cousin has already gone there. This view is commonly shared among my Muslim friends and acquaintances. However, I am not one who has this view, but perhaps a Muslim who thinks like me is very very rare.” (Rina, female, working for a non-governmental organisation in Bandung, Indonesia, claiming to be 'liberal').<sup>217</sup>

For a moderate Muslim who does not necessarily support *jihad*, Laskar Jihad's actions might have a certain resonance with either their religious or national identities, and most likely both. Thus, it is understandable why a consistent voice of condemnation seemed to be inhibited from rising from within the broader Muslim population.

#### **6.6.4 The role of 'small' media in the battlefield**

As described in the previous section, while Laskar Jihad successfully convinced many Indonesian Muslims to believe in their narrative of global conspiracy, Laskar Jihad could

---

<sup>216</sup> Nina, personal interview, 12 July 2002.

<sup>217</sup> *Keluarga dan tetangga gue semuanya pada setuju kalau Jihad itu wajib, apalagi karena mereka percaya kalau Islam lagi diserang sama Yahudi dan Kristen yang konspirasi. Kalau dalam kasus Maluku, mereka pikir gabung sama Laskar Jihad udah paling mulia. Bokap gue juga setuju. Kalau bisa sih ya pergi ke sono. Adik gue yang cowo juga pingin pergi ke sono soalnya sepupu gue udah duluan pergi. Banyak lho temen-temen dan kenalan gue yang Muslim yang percaya sama ini. Gue sih ngga percaya lah. Tapi kayaknya yang kayak gue ini sangat sangat jarang* (Rina, personal interview, 13 July 2002).

not actually mobilise them through their use of Internet and other media. Laskar Jihad was successful generally at the rhetorical level, but not so successful in mobilising masses through the use of these media. Some verbally supported Laskar Jihad, some donated money, but that was all. While Laskar Jihad claimed that some Muslim Internet users, including some foreigners from abroad (Bräuchler, 2003), did register online to be fighters and then joined the training camp, it is unlikely that they did it solely because of the Internet alone.

The fact that the Moluccas is a thousand miles away from Java limits the effectiveness of the media in mobilising the masses. Meta-narratives of Laskar Jihad are persuasive enough to incite Muslims in Java and other places in Indonesia to not condemning their actions. However, as they were detached from the daily experiences of Muslims in Java — who did not experience a similar crisis even close to that of Muslims in the Moluccas — these meta-narratives only existed at an ideological level, in the world of the imagination, that could not readily be extrapolated from their own experiences.

Another reason for the inability to translate rhetoric about the plight of Islam in the Moluccas into mobilisation for a violent response from Java is that the *jihad* action toward the Moluccas was more than the usual collective action when people go on to the streets to protest against the government or any other dominant institution. It is also far more than joining the riots that happen on the streets in front of your eyes. It is about voluntarily giving up a life in the name of religion. The acute solidarity that the Laskar Jihad meta-narratives focused on the Moluccas over a short period was not sufficient.

On the battlefield itself, in the Moluccas, media — especially 'small media' (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Mohammadi, 1994) — played a very significant role in mobilising people to join the riots or even initiate the riots and thus prolong the conflict, in both Christian and Muslim communities. For locals in the Moluccas, the bloody conflict was a series of riots that happened before their eyes. As Nils Bubandt (2003) vividly explains in his study on the role of pamphlets in the Moluccan riots, political pamphlets functioned as a mobilising agent in communal violence. While the relative paucity of computers and Internet access within the Moluccas limited the use of the Internet as a means of local information and rumour dissemination, VCDs (video compact discs) showing scenes of riots and violence, tape-recordings in which narratives of suffering in the shadows of the conflict were recounted and photographs showing the victims were widely distributed in this region (Spyer, 2002; Bubandt, 2003).

Tapes, videos and pictures acted as technological devices that served to extend and intensify an already rampant rumour discourse. The ready availability of photocopiers in the Moluccas, however, made pamphlets (photocopied rumours) the most pervasive and significant form of rumour dissemination in the Moluccan conflict because such 'hardcopy rumours' often had a direct impact of the riots themselves (Bubandt, 2003). Meta-narratives of conspiracies are effective when they are reproduced in print form and these were used by people to justify their acts of violence against the 'enemy', people from another religion.

However, while Laskar Jihad's uses of the Internet and the print media in Java did not result in successful mobilisation (recruitment of *jihad* fighters), the meta-narratives of Laskar Jihad did change the dynamics of the local conflict in the Moluccas. Laskar Jihad meta-narratives did inspire local Moluccan Muslims into become more radicalised, increased Islamic motives and provided religious reasons for war against Christians. It was only with the coming of Laskar Jihad, and the influence of the meta-narratives, that local Muslims became convinced that killing Christians was legalised by Islamic *shari'a* (Sholeh, 2003). These meta-narratives also gave local Muslims a new imagined enemy that was part of the global conspiracy against Islam.

In addition, following the intervention of Laskar Jihad in the conflict, some local media in the Moluccas extended the Laskar Jihad meta-narratives and acted as agents for mobilisation. The military radio, for example, reported that they had confiscated Israeli-manufactured weapons among the groups fighting — implying that Israel was involved and thus strengthened the narrative of conspiracy — only to deny it a few days later (Bubandt, 2003). There were also some rumours of boatloads of expatriate Dutch Moluccan killing teams arriving in Ambon at night from Holland and mysteriously disappearing before dawn. For Christians and Muslims who fought against each other, all kinds of conspiracies, from apocalyptic to Laskar Jihad type of meta-narratives had become their daily feast. The religious based narratives of conspiracies, though, were stronger than any of the other narratives. They were so strong that people in the Moluccan conflict paralleled their conflict with the Israel-Palestine conflict (which in most Indonesian minds is a religious conflict rather than a territorial dispute). They even named the street that divided the Christians and the Muslims in the capital Ambon 'Gaza Stripe' (*Jalur Gaza*).

## 6.7 Analysis

The story of Laskar Jihad shows how one organisation could effectively use the Internet and support it with other media to disseminate their opinions and influence people's perception about the conflict by endorsing strong meta-narratives that positioned Muslims as victims of an on-going and growing Christian-Judeo hegemony. The story also shows, however, that for a *jihad* type of collective action, the use of the Internet and supporting media was not sufficiently persuasive to mobilise the masses for violent responses in an area of the Indonesian archipelago that is far from Java. Based on the case study of Laskar Jihad and the Moluccan conflict, the following conceptual points are made with regard to the Internet.

### 6.7.1 Multiple identities

By fostering dis-embeddedness and de-territorialisation, the Internet appeals to individuals by helping them to connect to people who share some commonality beyond the confines of nation-states. In cyberspace, a community is no longer tied to any nation,



a circumstance that corresponds to the mythical *ummah* of *Salafism*, which specifically rejects nationalism and fosters the global *jihad* priority of fighting against the 'far enemy' rather than the 'near enemy'.

However, people always have multiple identities. Indonesian Muslims not only have their religious identity — a Muslim and a member of a global *ummah* — they also have a national identity and/or a local/ethnic identity. Being an Indonesian and a Muslim at the same time, an Indonesian Muslim can embrace whichever identity better suits them. This can change and switch between the many options. Laskar Jihad was able to touch on both identities by rallying along religious and nationalism lines, and this contributed to Laskar Jihad's rapidly rising supremacy. Thus, for Muslims on Java, far away from the Moluccas, the separatist movement RMS could simultaneously be the enemy of the nation-state and the enemy of Islam, the relatively near and the far enemies at the same time. This also to an extent explains why the Moluccan conflict incited more Muslims in Java to identify and to become more involved than in the East Timor or Aceh conflicts, neither of which could be postured as conflicts between world religions.

#### ***6.7.2 Social/political hierarchy, old and new***

The absence of hierarchy on the Internet tremendously enhances the prospects for an egalitarian type of communications in which every voice is potentially as important as each other. For Muslim Internet users, this opens a space to examine religion with no authority except the texts of the Koran and Hadits. By learning from the Internet, people can feel that they have acquired sufficient Islamic knowledge to guide important life decisions without needing recourse to more traditional scholars such as imam or Islamic teachers in local mosques. At the same time, by using the Internet, radical fundamentalist groups can bypass local authorities, national/sub-national authorities, imam, local religious leaders and parents, to directly reach ordinary Muslims in cyberspace.

However, although the old types of hierarchies are bypassed, this does not mean that no hierarchy will emerge in cyberspace. The emergence of hierarchy even with the advent of a convivial technology such as the Internet, is also possible. In the Moluccan situation, tendencies toward hierarchical social relationships through the Internet emanated from a classic form: the divine authority of a charismatic figure, and his ability to consolidate legitimacy and generate obedience through, and for, religious faith (Weber, 1946, 1947). Religious fundamentalist communities are characterised by a tight hierarchy (Barzilai, 2003; Liebman, 1993; Weber, 1964). Religious communal hierarchies are based mainly on the subordination of large groups to an elite religious authority that often professes to have been bestowed with divine authority.

In the case of Laskar Jihad, the authority of Abdurrahman Wahid both as President and especially as a senior leader of the Islamic community in Indonesia was removed, allowing a new religious authority that was not territoriality bound to emerge. The Saudi Arabian and Yemeni sheiks thus were able to fill the top position in the new

hierarchy. The Internet was used not to remove hierarchy but to establish a new de-territorialised pattern of hierarchy.

### **6.7.3 Simplification**

The simplicity and clarity of the arguments put forward by Laskar Jihad, as publicised on its website, mailing list and print media, are the strength of this organisation. The structure of the argument these media advance, particularly the website, is familiar to every high school debater:

- describe the problem ã many Muslims in the Moluccas died;
- explain the causes of the problem ã Christian separatist groups killed them and this was part of the international Zionists-Crusaders against Islam; and
- propose a clear solution to the problem that addresses the causes you have described ã the holy war, *Jihad!*

The logical simplicity of the argument forecloses any need to understand Islamic theology, specific political grievances in different lands, or the structure and organisation of the group summoning you to war. By presenting a black-and-white picture and identifying an unambiguous enemy, Laskar Jihad was successful in promoting a resistance identity and even turning it into a project identity (Castells, 1997) in the sense that they could transform their resistance into actions and people legitimised them. In cyberspace, where an Internet user can easily be flooded by too much information, the simplicity of Laskar Jihad's argument is more appealing than complicated analyses offered by academics and political analysts (in Section 6.2.1).

### **6.7.4 Media intermodality**

As shown in the previous case study (Chapter 5), it is how the Internet is linked to other media and how the Internet network is linked to other networks, including those more traditional networks, that becomes the key issue in how the Internet can extend its influence. Using such linkages, formed through the intermodalities of media, information originating from cyberspace can flow beyond the computer screen and reach larger audiences.

Another point to be considered is the question of direct communication and information networks, that is, those webs of interpersonal communication that do not operate through media, even though they are fed by the media and feed into the media. These networks are essential, both to such media (the Internet) and to radical movements. This is a very different notion of the media audience than the typical one, for it is those members of the audience who are active in social networks that, in times of social tumult and political crisis, are often the best-placed heralds of the new, and the best-informed advisers on movement strategies for those networks. It is in such webs that we find the key communicative linkages between media and radical movements.

In the case of Laskar Jihad, we find a particularly clear instance of the operation of already existing networks in relation to a core medium, the Internet. It was through communitarian social networks and religious networks that all the print media and printed versions of Laskar Jihad Online were circulated, and the values and traditions of these networks gave cohesion, sanction and energy to the vast movement in opposition to a secular system. To understand the role of the Internet in such a context, it is essential to examine its interaction with these networks.

#### **6.7.5 *The Internet and 'die' for (political) religion***

The use of the Internet and the print media helped Laskar Jihad find a way for potential *jihad* fighters to join. An interested person could find out the address of the local Laskar Jihad office that might eventually make a link to the real 'holy' war after an appropriate process of vetting the candidate, such as a teenager from an outer island or a trishaw driver (see Section 6.5.1). However, the Internet does not provide a means of being in contact with the battlefield itself, nor does it allow Laskar Jihad as an organisation to assess the reliability of a potential candidate. For the type of allegiance that the *jihad* demands, there is no evidence that the Internet as a medium to verify 'truth', is persuasive enough by itself. So far, there is no convincing evidence that Laskar Jihad fighters joined the *jihad* solely on the basis of what they had read on the Internet.

After all, *jihad* in the form of a physical war is neither simply a blind and bloody-minded scramble for temporal power nor solely a door through which to pass into the hereafter. Rather, it is a form of political action in which the pursuit of immortality is inextricably linked to a profoundly this-world endeavour, the founding or recreation of a just community on earth (Arendt, 1972). The Internet, however, is useful in socialising a potential fighter to the ideology of the global *jihad* when a person is uncertain about his willingness to make sacrifices for the *jihad*.

### **6.8 Conclusions**

The case of Laskar Jihad is an exceptionally revealing example of how the conviviality of the Internet can be used by a radical fundamentalist organisation to reinforce its identity and ideologies, expand its network and disseminate information and meanings. Moreover, Laskar Jihad also used this technology to cultivate meta-narratives — the marriage of Global *Jihad* and nationalist meta-narratives — to successfully shape the Indonesian Muslim, especially Javanese, perception of the conflict.

The Laskar Jihad case shows that the Internet allowed seemingly local events to be integrated into distantly-managed networks that transform ideologies and agendas into physical world outcomes wherever conditions are ripe for implementation. As such, cyberspace, space constituted by the Internet, becomes a network of sites where groups in conflict extend their offline existence and power into localised confrontations that can include violence. Among the more powerful ways in which cyberspace becomes divided

into contested virtual and real spaces is through identity formation. As symbols, stylised messages and news tailored to conform to religious and other identities coalesce around websites, mailing lists and decision-making organisations operating through the Internet. Conflict is scaled down to local situations and then scaled back up to a global context. Confrontations generated in even the most remote location feed into global identity politics as evidence of conspiracy and are communicated to every member of the network no matter where in the world they reside.

The case shows, however, that for a *jihad* type of collective action where the battlefield is located far away from the spread of the Internet, media, and non-media networks, the use of these media is not sufficiently persuasive to mobilise people for such heinous actions as killing and murder. Nevertheless, the expansion of meta-narratives through this network did change the dynamics of the conflict in the battlefield. The meta-narratives might not change the sabres, daggers, swords, and guns used in the fights, nor the number killed in the fights, but they can change the motives and reasons behind the fights.

The Internet's distributive networks allow the meta-narrative of the global to incite the local and the local to confirm the global. But, inevitably, a meta-narrative is flawed. Wrong in that it cannot ring true everywhere. In an archipelagic society as complex as Indonesia, the 'realities' of experiences vary too much to be consistent with a single meta-narrative, even when it appeals to a combination of nationalism and religion. The fact that most Javanese did not join the *jihad* is evidence of a more hopeful society than that imagined by the terrorism. Thus, the final point is that of Reza Aslan (2005), in his book *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*, namely, that the real objective of *Jihad* fighters is to capture the souls and minds of Muslims, not to defeat the supposedly Neo-Crusaders. In this aspect, they failed because meta-narratives are too general to capture all experiences, and killing is not a universally shared response to distant episodes. As Aslan (2005) says, the emergence of *Jihad* fighters is possibly a sign of weakness and ultimate collapse. It is not a sign of ascendancy or universal truth.

---

## CONCLUSIONS

### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the principal theses of the foregoing chapters and provides an interpretation of the results aimed at both aligning the study with other research in the field and discussing its implications for understanding the complex interdependencies between socio-political change and a technological artefact, the Internet. Conclusions are drawn covering 5 (five) aspects of the research on:

- Empirical contributions of the dissertation
- Contribution of the dissertation to the field
- Methodological implications of the dissertation
- Theoretical contributions of the dissertation
- The importance of 'context'.

### 7.2 Empirical Contributions

This research is one the few detailed empirical studies on the relationship between the Internet and society in a non-Western context. Thus, it presents a different context for exploring Internet-society relations. As such, it contributes to a broader understanding of the interplay between the Internet as a technology and the Internet as it is embedded in differing social contexts. The research is not so much intended to be a counterpoint to Western-centred research but is, instead, offered as a way of showing how context matters, even when searching among more abstract concepts of analysis and explanations in theory.

On the history of the Internet in Indonesia, this dissertation presents an in-depth study based on critical analysis, evaluation and selection of original (first-hand) source materials that were weaved into a historical narrative and subjected to scholarly methods of criticism. To the author's knowledge, no other empirical research on Internet-society relations has examined the role of the Internet in political activism in real settings beyond the screen. As such, this is the first research of its kind to study how online activism using

the Internet is linked to activities in non-computer based forms of association and onto the streets.

Chapter 4, “Wiring Indonesia: Developing the Internet under the Panoptic state”, specifically contributes to the historiography on the development of the Internet in Indonesia in relation to the socio-political dynamics of the New Order regime. In addition to being complementary to the work of Barker et al. (2001) on the brief history of the Internet in Indonesia, it also adds depth and breadth to understandings of the political dimension of the history of the Internet. As an original and pioneering detailed empirical account of the *warnet*, Chapter 4 contributes to enriching scholarly repertoires of the local social innovation of technology in developing countries.

Both Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 are not only fully detailed empirical pieces of work on the political uses of the Internet in Indonesia in an important historical transition period, but they also contain the first known studies that link activism in cyberspace with activism in other media and physical space. A similar attempt to assess the relationships between the Internet and politics in Indonesia was previously conducted by David Hill and Krishna Sen (2000a, 2000b, 2002: 194-216). However, their work, as mentioned elsewhere, focuses solely on online activism. Their work is also very preliminary and only partially reveals the empirical basis of the relationships between the Internet and politics in Indonesia. In assessing the impact of the Internet in the 1998 *reformasi*, for example, Hill and Sen (2000b) only looked briefly at general online activities from 1995 to 1998. Nevertheless, Hill and Sen’s work was helpful in establishing the starting point for this dissertation research, especially to recognise that there were many gaps to be filled in Indonesian Internet studies. For example, Hill and Sen (2000b) hint that there was a reproduction of Internet based information in printed form, yet they did not examine how this information was reproduced and what kind of information was reproduced. Thus, working on Hill and Sen’s (2000b) indicative point, in this dissertation, the way the Internet-based information reached audiences beyond the screen, through the cascading of information from the Internet to the streets through other media, was examined.

Chapter 5, “From Elites to the Streets: Global Connections and Local Actions in the May 1998 *Reformasi*” empirically establishes a chronological account of how the Internet was used politically by various Indonesian Internet users from its genesis (as the medium for global cyber communities) to the peak moment in the May 1998 *reformasi*. This is followed in Chapter 6, “Laskar Jihad Online: National and Global Meta-narratives in Cyberspace” by the most complete empirical account written to date on Laskar Jihad’s uses of the Internet and other media, and their linkages to physical space and unfolding real world events.

### 7.3 Contributions to the field

This dissertation not only explores many contemporary ideas from existing theories, but also links these ideas together to give a multi-layered, richly textured analysis that draws from key perspectives. These include: the idea of conviviality; the concept of network

society; theories on collective action and identity formation; meta-narratives as ideology and hegemony; and materialist explanations of social discontent.

In weaving together insights from these perspectives, the dissertation rests on the broader premise that understanding a set of phenomena such as the social use of the Internet cannot be reduced to a single explanation from a single discipline. Borrowing from, and inspired by, various theoretical constructs, methods and ideas from communication studies, sociology, anthropology, technology studies, globalisation studies and political science, this dissertation believes that a more complete understanding of society and technology relations to be found at the crossroads of explanations from many social science disciplines and the humanities.

This dissertation contributes to studies of collective actions and social movements by adding not only the online dimension of collective activism, but also insights into the linkages of cyberactivism with the actual realisation of collective activism in physical spaces.

It is also significant in adding to the literature on globalisation and the global-local interface in social and political change (Castells, 1997; Graham, 2000). In so doing, it also contributes to the growing body of literature that shows how social and political institutions matter greatly in exploring the theoretical debate, and allows for a more open-ended, locally contextualised historical process enabling human agency, both individually and collectively, to create alternative pathways.

#### **7.4 Methodological Implications**

This dissertation has a number of implications for research methodologies. First is the online/offline issue. As argued by Miller and Slater (2000) and Hine (2000), the research carried out in this dissertation confirms the view that any studies on the Internet should not take on a straightforward distinction of an online/offline boundary. The combination of online and offline realms in which the Internet operates and within which the people concerned present themselves and use the technology, produces a multi-faceted social landscape that cannot be strictly divided into online and offline domains. While online activities can be distinguished from offline activities at a technical level, they are not socially detached from each other. The story of the *warnet* clearly shows how a point of Internet access can be both part of the online realm of cyberspace and the offline realm of physical social space

Second, in encountering yet another dualistic formulation, the digital divide, this dissertation substantiates a contrary view that in examining Internet-society relations, a dichotomy between the haves and have-nots does not hold, especially at moments of significant social unrest and upheaval, as was the case in Indonesia in 1998 and again just a few years later in the Moluccas. The relationships between the Internet and individuals/society cannot be isolated or reduced to the link between a person and a computer screen. Nor can the social spectrum of the Internet be isolated from other

media and material artefacts. Studies on Internet-society relations would do well to consider realms beyond the screen as a gateway to cyberspace.

This dissertation involves both primary data of many kinds (e.g. user interviews, content analysis of websites and mailing lists, key information interviews) and secondary data (e.g. computer usage). In addition, a review of current literature was used to establish questions in building the framework for the research. Many of the data needed in this kind of study are not readily available. Thus a researcher needs to patch together small-scale original research with more quantitative data to be able to establish causal or associational linkages.

## 7.5 Theoretical Contributions

The main intended contribution of this dissertation is to explain the relationship between the Internet and political activism by means of four key perspectives. Here, in this dissertation, the focus is on a brief moment of history covering just less than one decade. In investigating the interplay between technology and society during this period, the analysis reveals that the dynamics of social change do not form linear pathways, but are instead marked by breaking points and disjuncture that have no pre-conceived or necessary future destinations. In the milieu of politics, culture and economic structures, the Internet as technology is found to play a critical yet ultimately indeterminate role.

The reasons for its particular role in society are partly explained by the first perspective, namely, the **conviviality** of the Internet. This endows it with certain characteristics that make it less amenable to domination by a small number of elites or, for that matter, any fraction of society. Linking the question of conviviality with the phenomenon of cyberactivism, this dissertation argues that while the Internet has potential for supporting and generating collective action, the Internet cannot and will not replace the importance of prevailing cultural and interpersonal linkages in collective actions.

Thus, **intermodality**, the second perspective, is needed to link the Internet and other networks, 'the more traditional media' and non-media social networks, especially if it is to support the generation of inclusive collective action that includes ordinary citizens in addition to the elites. Insights from the third perspective, **identity formation and filtering**, come into play in showing the ways in which information flows in the Internet and other networks and is directed and targeted at building identity for collective actions. Identity filtering and the capacity to transform identity from resistance to social projects are key elements that reveal how the Internet is implicated in changing alliances and forms of social mobilisation.

The final key perspective is the idea of **meta-narratives**. As a convivial space for certain groups of people to direct and target information flows for collective identity formation, the Internet can be a tool to amplify collective actions and the narratives of resistance created by a group. The amplified narratives have the potential to be meta-



narratives, which are often constructed as a non-negotiable truth that can mobilise collective power beyond an initial episode.

In addition to these four key perspectives, and drawing from two case studies in Chapters 5 and 6, this dissertation also posits two additional insights that are specific to case studies, namely: (1) the Internet and the politics of rumour and (2) Internet-enabled collective activism as an urban phenomenon.

### *7.5.1 Conviviality of the Internet as an 'affordance' for political activism*

Rather than making a case of the potential of Internet in supporting or hindering democracy, this dissertation chooses to reveal the characteristics of the Internet itself. The term 'convivial' (Illich, 1973) is used to describe the nature, or the state of being, of the Internet, which covers the following features: convergence (one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-many communications), broad availability, low cost and resilient at control and censorship (Section 2.4.5). These features lend the Internet to convivial uses. Yet, the dynamics of Internet-society relations over time make the outcomes of its use open-ended. The open terrain of the conviviality of the Internet creates openings for more diverse forms of contestations and this in turn affects political dynamics in complex, often unexpected, ways.

As suggested in Chapter 2, the conviviality of the Internet endows it with technological 'affordance' enabling less dominant actors to make use of the technology with relatively high autonomy and freedom. For purposes of political activism, the conviviality of the Internet enables it to perform better in supporting and facilitating collective activism than other media.

In Chapter 2, the discussion on this suggested that presenting the Internet as a convivial technology and medium is only half of the story in explaining the relationship between the Internet and politics. Comprehensive analysis through empirical case studies on how society, individually and collectively, directly and indirectly, develops and uses the convivial technology of the Internet, as shown in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, is meant to complete 'the missing half'. The further intention was to avoid technological determinism without, at the same time, ignoring the importance of the technology itself.

Chapter 4 shows that the conviviality of the Internet to an extent enabled actors that were not dominant players in 'the more traditional media' to pave the way in developing the technology of the Internet independent of the state. Yet, other factors contributed to the more 'grassroots-based' (as termed by Onno Purbo, see p. 82, 84, 96) development. The changing political and economic situation in the later years of the Suharto's New Order provided openings for non-state actors such as Onno Purbo and his groups to be leading players in Internet development in Indonesia.

Chapter 4 also shows that the conviviality of the Internet influenced the perceptions of non-state actors involved in the development of the Internet in Indonesia. They perceived the Internet as being 'democratic', especially in comparison with previous media. This perception influenced the further development of the Internet in Indonesia,

and thus the actual use of the technology of the Internet was also influenced by this perception. Given the conviviality of the Internet, Onno Purbo and other leading figures in the development of the Internet in Indonesia managed to build social 'affordances' for further uses of the Internet. These social 'affordances' were a social type of "functional and relational aspects which frame[d], while not determining, the possibilities for agentic action in relation to an object [the Internet]" (Hutchby, 2001: 444). In other words, human agency found a pathway for political expression that, while in ferment throughout most of the Suharto regime, had been obstructed by the state monopoly and control over all other media. Both the case of the May 1998 *reformasi* and the case of Laskar Jihad reveal that the Internet, after its development by non-state actors, enabled related groups or organisations to use this technology to reinforce resistance identities that eventually turned into project and legitimising identities.

Of course, the Internet as technology will not and cannot change politics — nor therefore will it or could it *ipso facto* democratise society — but it does offer a vehicle that can be employed for political uses and that might eventually influence the political system in ways previously unexpected. By being convivial, the most important functions of the Internet in facilitating and supporting political activism have been the sharing of otherwise hard to obtain information and the self-organising of resistance that the information has made possible. The inherent network pattern of communication originally built into the design of the Internet is important to this process.

### ***7.5.2 Intermodality: the linkages between the Internet and other networks***

While the Internet has the potential to facilitate collective action, its potential is limited if it is constrained to the online realm. In societies where most of the population is online, the potential of Internet-only communication to spread widely is substantial. However, this is not the case in countries such as Indonesia where Internet users only come from a small elite segment of society. When information only circulates among the members of a small 'elite', it loses its potential to mobilise ordinary citizens. Any efforts entirely within cyberspace will be largely ineffective unless they are extended into real social, political and economic spaces beyond the computer screen. The intermodality between Internet networks and other media networks — linkages to 'the more traditional media' that can include 'small media', 'big media' and social networks — is needed to enhance the ability to produce and disseminate information. This thus can widen the size of the mobilised audiences.

Intermodality forms networks that overlap, including both newer and older types, or what Castells (1997) calls 'spaces of flows' and 'spaces of places'. Contrary to Castells' thesis, however, the newest type of networks — the Internet based networks — are not necessarily separated from the older ones but are, instead, richly connected. There are two types of intermodality identified from the case studies: the intermodality among various forms of media (the Internet and the 'more traditional' media) and the

intermodality between space and place, e.g. between cyberspace (computer screen) and the physical space of *warnet*, and between cyberspace and streets.

Chapter 5 shows how the media and space-place intermodality was to an extent initiated intentionally by some cyberactivists who recognised the limits of online activism. The obvious example is the case of Indonesia Baru, where cyberactivists urged their Internet readers to ‘tell, forward, print, fax, photocopy’ (Section 5.6.1) in order to spread the message beyond the computer screen. However, most other initiatives to link to other media were rather informal and unintentional. As the intermodality was created, the networks of diffusion grew and the contention spread wider and wider. On the wider diffusion, social networks — interpersonal and cultural connections — took over from the online network. In the *reformasi* case, the intermodality was mostly created by ad-hoc initiatives that involved various groups of people in an unplanned manner.

In contrast to the case of the 1998 *reformasi* movement, in the latter chapter on the case of Laskar Jihad, the main intermodality was initiated intentionally and institutionally generated by Laskar Jihad leaders and members. The linkages between the Internet and other media networks were established institutionally and orderly under the umbrella of one organisation, Laskar Jihad. This was possible since the Indonesian political situation, after May 1998, was substantially much more open in comparison to the previous case (Chapter 5). Arguably, Laskar Jihad might have learned from activists’ experiences in the May 1998 *reformasi*, namely, that in order to capture wider audience, the Internet network alone is not enough. By consciously establishing intermodal linkages among various networks, Laskar Jihad spread its message to a wider audience in a relatively short time.

### 7.5.3 *Identity on the Internet*

There are two identity-related issues revealed in this dissertation. The first is the online-offline issue, and the second the global-local issue. Much of early work on identity on the Internet focused on the online/offline identity dichotomy (McRae, 1996; Reid, 1994; Turkle, 1994, 1996; Waskul and Douglass, 1997; Westfall, 2000) and posited such concepts as ‘virtual embodiment’, ‘the Other Self’, ‘cyber-self’, ‘virtual identity’, ‘identity play’ and many other similar terms to capture in a stylised way, the striking differences between online and offline social interaction. In contrast to this approach, this dissertation argues that while the dynamics of communities and identities are changed with the emergence of cyberspace, communities and identities formed in cyberspace are not necessarily detached from the existing communities and identities in the physical world of human encounters (Chapter 3). Collective identity, which is the concern of this dissertation, is clearly based on existing identities in the physical realm of interpersonal exchanges.

At the same time, global-local issues also involve, rather than separate spheres, overlapping, and sometimes mutually reinforcing, spheres. Yet much of the work on collective identity on the Internet focuses on the emergence of global identity and implies

the obsolescence of the nation-state, nationalism and even the absorption of local identity into a hegemonically globalised one through Western cultural imperialism or the global capitalist commodification of culture (Appadurai, 1996; Mills, 1998; Rheingold, 1993; Rothkopf, 1998). These views are expressed in such terms as 'post-national', 'global nation', 'transnational' and 'cyber-nation'. While recognising the global dimension of the Internet, this dissertation argues that cyberspace is a zone in which real world events are carried out and are connected to the corporeality of its users. The Internet is not detached from the realities of the social world. Rather than simply being displaced, existing local and global relations are extended into cyberspace and act as interpreters, mediators and filters of the global cyber-exchanges of information, ideas and the production of knowledge and its interpretations as truth.

In both the case studies, the May 1998 *reformasi* and Laskar Jihad, the analyses lead to the conclusion that while global connections were formed on the Internet and global flows of information took place, local identities persisted. Nationalism and national identity with the construction of the nation-state of Indonesia did not become irrelevant or obsolete. Rather, they remained strong and were even strengthened among key segments of society, notably those on Java from where national authority emanated, by rapid communications among members of the nation-state — Indonesians — in cyberspace. While cyberspace can be a viable global arena for Muslims — 'a global *ummah*' — in which they can promote and practice their faith (Bunt, 2000), Indonesian Muslims continue to identify with Indonesia and their national identity is not replaced by a global Islamic one as they form Muslim communities online. As shown in the case study of Laskar Jihad, one can have and maintain multiple identities, religiously global and nationally local at the same time, embracing both Muslim and Indonesian national identities.

People have multiple identities, any one of which can be brought to the fore at a given historical juncture. In the first of the two cases presented, the May 1998 *reformasi* movement heightened a common identity of people as Indonesian citizens struggling together against an oppressive political regime in power. In the second instance, concerning Laskar Jihad, when the state was no longer capable of maintaining its hegemony over identity formation, struggles shifted toward identity differences based on religion, race and ethnicity. Thus, in studying the role of the Internet in political change, the manner in which shifts occur in identity formation cannot be posited in the abstract, but should be subject to historical analysis.

A broader issue cutting across these online-offline and global-local issues is identity formation itself, which is an important factor in transforming information flows so as they coalesce around and enable collective action. The Internet has played a significant function in disseminating messages, symbolic representations and ideological positions that have been crucial to both the collective imagination of ordinary Indonesians in confronting Suharto and the New Order, and the entrenched resistance imagination of Laskar Jihad supporters. In these processes of shaping the collective imagination, identity filtering, a process through which information is channelled through

meanings, beliefs, accepted values and social institutions to enhance existing or build new identities, has played a key role.

With boundless information exchanged by a plethora of people and groups on the Internet, the potential information overload intrinsic to the Internet means that groups or organisations meet significant difficulties in prevailing over others in sending targeted messages to their intended audiences. Identity filtering, which is a common human trait, is needed and can work effectively in certain contexts to knit information together to suit an already existing collective identity among a group of people or an organisation promoting the message.

In both the case studies presented in Chapters 5 and 6, a small group of people were able to use the Internet to filter information to be compatible with the collective identity they wanted to represent. In the case of the May 1998 *reformasi*, resistance identity against Suharto was formed online, partially through a set of identity filters imposed by various cyberactivists. In the case of Laskar Jihad, identity filtering was more obvious and more target-based. *Jihad*-based identity filtering was effectively used to construct meta-narratives utilised in the formation of a collective resistance identity supporting *jihad* action in the Moluccas.

Besides the identity filtering done by individuals and groups/organisations in disseminating or constructing information, identity filtering is adopted by the receivers of information. Information is reconstructed in such a manner that it caters to the identity filters of the receivers, i.e., preconceived or wilful interpretations of messages, including unsubstantiated rumours.

#### *7.5.4 Creating, reinventing and disseminating meta-narrative(s) in cyberspace*

Meta-narratives — transcendent master stories that relocate single events into broader claims of collective historical missions and travails — are part of all civilisational identities, whether secular or religious. However, contemporary post-modern society is defined as showing ‘incredulity toward meta-narratives’, seeing them instead as political expedients created and nurtured by powerful interests (Lyotard, 1979: xxiv). Yet, as suggested by Jameson (1991), human incredulity has not completely exiled meta-narratives, they have simply been relocated, in some instances into cyberspace, only to be brought back again to measure and interpret local experiences. While incredulity might be expressed towards ‘old’ meta-narratives, new ones are uncritically accepted by both new and old ‘true believers’ and even those who had been previously less than convinced. The new meta-narratives quite often are not that new but are instead reincarnations or refurbished renditions of older ones. An example can be drawn from the Indonesian situation where some Indonesians accepted new meta-narratives, whether it was anti-Suharto meta-narrative (Chapter 5) or Global *Jihad* meta-narrative (Chapter 6), that are in opposition to the older ones, uncritically.

The Internet, like other types of media, has an ability to amplify an issue. Supported by the human penchant for identity filtering, the Internet enables the amplifying process to be much faster and spread much wider. It can easily function for the re-incarnation, creation and dissemination processes of meta-narratives. The Internet is the one place in our realm of experience where all cultural expressions can coexist, not always peacefully, but at least in a proximity previously unimaginable. The most disparate narratives are but one click away.

Similarities between the two case studies are that both the student-led popular movement of the May 1998 *reformasi* and the religion-inspired Jihad movement were radical movements and both were organised around simplified issues or causes. However, the first one was a pro-democracy movement and the latter was not. The similarity of the simplicity in messages suggests that in the rapid and busy flows of information, radicalised simplified messages/narratives are more appealing than complicated ones. Also, collective actions that are organised around simple issues or causes require a lower degree of collective trust if compared to ones organised around complex issues involving different goals among its audience. Thus, the Internet is more suited to the former than the latter, as the latter needs a high degree of mutual trust that is more likely to be achieved by face-to-face interactions than through Internet-based interactions.

In the case of the May 1998 *reformasi* movement, the anti-Suharto narrative created, amplified and disseminated from the Internet to the streets was not purely a meta-narrative; it was arguably more like a spreading rumour. However, it had a meta-narrative tendency as it provided only one truth about the 'cause of all problems': 'Suharto = crisis'. It was only when the narrative of the causes of the political and economic crisis in Indonesia became so simplified that it spread all over society. In this situation, the anti-Suharto meta-narrative that emerged on the Internet was successful as it encapsulated daily (political and especially economic) experiences of most of the people who had long experienced the political corruption and authoritarian rule of the New Order. The anti-Suharto meta-narrative calling for the overthrow of his regime momentarily became the answer to all the daily problems encountered by the majority of the population who, as the economic crisis brought a collapse of the Rupiah and extraordinary increases in prices for daily needs such as cooking oil, found both the cause and the solution in government. It became the banner that tied the elites, students and ordinary people together in a truly widespread mobilisation of popular activism against Suharto.

The case of Laskar Jihad (Chapter 6) even more clearly shows how meta-narratives were intentionally and easily disseminated using the Internet. The Laskar Jihad case also shows how the Internet, with its ability to construct 'narratives' through texts, images and sounds in a hyperlink type of construction, was technically supportive in facilitating the dissemination of a meta-narrative. Yet, while the Internet is particularly suited to transcendent meta-narratives, the final unreal nature of the 'meta' ultimately led to great difficulty in translating it to a sustained project due to the lack of a closely perceived relationship to place-lived, real world experience. While there were many Muslims in Java who were convinced by the meta-narratives of Laskar Jihad, they did not

go to fight in the Moluccas. On this point, the meta-narratives failed because they are too general to capture all experiences to a level sufficient to convince people to travel to a distant locale to kill other people, since this is not a universally shared response to distant episodes.

Meta-narratives are the result of social actions since someone, or a group of people, invented them with a particular motive in mind. They invite new forms of socio-political practices. They open up to new interpretation of the past, and to the inscription of these events in new horizons of meanings. These re-inscriptions in turn influence or stimulate new forms of political practice, and may become justifications for further acts of violence. Meta-narratives, in other words, become social actions themselves, rather than merely being the result of social actions. This is not intended to anthropomorphise the media and communications, but rather to emphasise the ways in which meta-narratives can 'take on a life of their own' beyond even the aims of their creators as they embrace new and wider audiences. Perhaps thriving best in extraordinary moments of social upheaval, the limitations of meta-narratives are, as noted, real and ultimately remain contingent on their match with cognitive experiences of everyday life.

#### *7.5.5 The Internet and the politics of rumour*

As previously explained (Chapters 3 and 5), some narratives in cyberspace and the reproduction of Internet-based narratives in print form (e.g. printed or photocopied) share a number of structural features, such as legends or rumours, with unofficial forms of discourse. Both are disseminated unofficially and non-commercially. They claim to reveal a 'believable' (if contentious) truth. Both are usually anonymous, although their claims to truth often rest on being attributed to a particular — if bogus — authenticating source or author; and both are 'intertexts' that speak to other narratives from the unofficial domain of gossip, hearsay and rumour, as well as from official domains (Smith, 1987: 181). They help shape the discursive conditions for the possibility of spontaneous collective action through a narrative intertextuality with rumours and other types of unofficial discourse.

Rumour has always played a central part in Indonesian politics (Anderson, 1990: 154) and is one of the main forms of political communication in Indonesia (Hefner, 2000a: 190). This characterisation is very apt when describing, for instance, the lead-up to the so-called 30 September coup in 1965 where rumours of Chinese weapons exports were dished up to bolster the story about an alleged Communist conspiracy behind the killing of six high-ranking army generals mentioned in Section 4.2 (Heryanto, 1999: 152). As rumour was used to counter Sukarno and PKI, the so-called rumour (of 'Suharto's

wealth')<sup>218</sup> was also used and contributed to the end Suharto's presidency through dramatic popular protest. What contrasts the 1998 episode with the 1965 episode is that, in the May 1998 *reformasi*, rumour was available not only in oral but also in textual form such as printed or photocopied versions of Internet rumours. Unlike the traditional types of rumour in the 1960s, the latter rumours were written, i.e., textual political rumour. They acquire a testimonial authority that oral rumours do not have. By appearing in written form, they gain a new kind of authority, authenticity and credibility. It was not until it appeared in print (printed and photocopied), that the information about Suharto's wealth became a 'truth' that people wanted to believe. In the case of Laskar Jihad, rumours were also spread through the Internet and in printed forms, in order to make sense of the call for *jihad* in the Moluccas.

However, textual political rumours in both cases, the 1998 *reformasi* and Laskar Jihad, only make sense within a wider discursive field in which conspiracy functions as political explanation, which is again related to the discourse on meta-narratives. This field encompasses unofficial discourses such as rumours as well as the official domain of political and media discourses that enclose and embody each other to shape the 'universal truth' — the meta-narrative — about events.

#### ***7.5.6 The Internet-enabled collective activism as an urban phenomenon***

The Internet in Indonesia is clearly an urban phenomenon. As shown in Chapter 4, Indonesian Internet users are highly concentrated in the urban settings of Java, as attested to by the numbers of ISPs and *warnet*'s high concentration in these areas. In this context, how the Internet impacted on political collective activism in Indonesia must start with its impact on 'elite politics and perceptions' (Winters, 2002), and particularly on the shifting of control over information from 'political-elites' to 'techno-elites', and on to the public. The rise of techno-elites in this urban area created possibilities for Internet-enabled collective activism.

As detailed in Chapter 5, anti-Suharto popular political activism making use of the Internet networks, *warnet* networks and all kinds of *warung*-like networks, was an urban phenomena. While non-territorial based communities and identities can emerge on the Internet, actual access to the Internet (e.g. the *warnet*) is territorially based and the actual realisation of political activism is carried out through the production of spaces (Lefebvre, 1991). In the Indonesian situation, both are territorially rooted in urban settings such as Jakarta, Bandung and Yogyakarta. The overlapping of physical spaces where Internet localities are actualised (*warnet* compounds) and places where authority is located, both

---

<sup>218</sup> One may argue that information about Suharto's wealth was not a rumour but a 'fact'. What is meant by a rumour here is the nature of the information of the 'list of Suharto's wealth' (see Sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.2) that was more like a rumour rather than official information (stories about Suharto's wealth were not published in print or broadcast media until after May 1998).



being located in urban setting, in the case of the 1998 *reformasi*, enabled the Internet to play a critical role in supporting political activism.

In the case of Laskar Jihad, though, while the rhetoric of *jihad* — through a meta-narrative — was spread in urban settings among *warnet* users in Java, the actual realisation of *jihad* activism was in another setting, the Moluccas, that was not well connected to Internet. The vast distance between the two made the Internet unable to fully facilitate *jihad* actions in the Moluccas.

Urban represents not only a compression of human interactions that provides powerful agglomeration economies for human activity, whether production or consumption. It is also a manifestation of a profound social transformation associated with a number of elements related to the emergence of a national political sphere. Historically, the city emerges as a necessary precondition for the creation of empires, which are invariably controlled from the city. The modern nation-state would be unthinkable without the centralisation of authority in nodes capable of centralising information and decision-making over great distances. It would be equally unthinkable for a regime to claim authority over Indonesia without having authority over its major cities, notably Jakarta. The same is not true of peripheral cities and regions, such as the Moluccas, which are deemed ‘secessionist’ when seeking autonomy from Jakarta.

Finally, the emergence of the Internet as a vital technology in Indonesia’s political sphere would have been improbable without the rise of an urban middle class of sufficient size to create a much needed social layer between the political (and economic) elites and the mass of low income and, in the Indonesia case, economically poor classes of society. For these reasons, the wiring of the Internet is also the wiring of cities and city networks over a vast archipelago and out into the global cybersphere.

## 7.6 The Importance of ‘Context’

What makes the outcomes of the development and the use of a technology — the Internet — differ from place to place? The answer can be simply stated as ‘place’, which is a term embracing the understanding that history, culture, material relations and lived experiences in one place differ from those in other places. Human agency, individually or collectively, exists in historically cumulative and transformative ways, in every locality. In addition to place, there is also a time dimension that makes similar developments and social process in one place have different outcomes. The context, ‘place’ and ‘time’, signifies the specificity of a locality.

In the modern world system, the nation-state is conventionally considered to be the principal territorial form of context that mediates the global and synthesises the local. Yet, as this study shows, contexts are multi-scalar, emanating from the individual to the household, community, local region, and upward to the nation-state and the world. Just as the role of the Internet is different in the North and the South, it is also different in key salient ways between the Moluccas and Java.

While detailing the scales of context is seemingly endless and risks succumbing to relativistic interpretations of such revolutionary technologies as the Internet, the fact that context matters is not only inescapable, it is methodologically necessary to build research on this basis. Too much of the contemporary research on the Internet uses a single case to implicitly assert that the findings are universally valid, with perhaps nuances among places, but without substantive deviations. One of the major aims of the research in this dissertation was to create room for a non-Western experience as a means of both contextualising and contrasting the substance of Internet-society interplay. In the end, what is hopefully shown is that the search should not be for universalisms, but rather that the concepts and theoretical constructs brought together can be used to reveal differences as well as similarities. In other words, the purpose is to contribute to comparative studies that invariably reveal how contexts differ and thus generate variable pathways into the future.

In the Indonesian case, how the Internet ‘worked’ in supporting the popular political activism of the May 1998 *reformasi*, that resulted in political regime change, cannot be separated from the particular context of Indonesia both over its long sweep of history and at the particular historical juncture of 35 years of one regime’s rule and a collapsing economy. The context is on the ‘where’ and the ‘when’ of the Internet being introduced, reinvented, developed and used (and perhaps re-introduced, re-developed and used in new ways). The Internet was introduced during the late period of Suharto’s authoritarian New Order regime that was marked by tumultuous changes in economics and politics. The Internet was popularised during a severe financial crisis that enabled it to be developed with relative autonomy from the state, which was unable to financially keep the Internet in its grasp. This situation led to the reinvention of the Internet in the form of *warnet*, the Indonesian Internet, a technology that ‘worked’ through the political and economic crisis from physical sites with deep connections to traditional culture beyond the state. The Internet thus started to be used in relation to politics under the shadow of Suharto’s New Order government with its repressive control over other media, and the conviviality of the Internet became the constant reminder of ‘openness’ and ‘freedom’ in contrast to the other controlled media. The ‘where’ and the ‘when’ do matter, and these make the case of Indonesia different from other cases, even in Southeast Asia. Concerning time frames, how the Internet worked before the regime change (Chapter 5) and after the regime change (Chapter 6) could not be fully generalised. Under different socio-political arrangements and moments, even in the same place, outcomes of similar relations — the Internet and politics — may be different. The task of research is not to fit all experiences into a single glass slipper, but to explain differences as well as similarities based on rigorous theoretical and methodological approaches that can abstract from history but without falsifying it.

The Indonesian situation analysed in this dissertation is not presented as universal. To gain a rich understanding of the complex dynamics of relationships between the Internet and politics, much more comparative research in other settings is needed. The Indonesian situation provides a contrast to many Western-centric/global North

works that often unconsciously or implicitly claim to be the general case. Yet, while this dissertation may represent one 'developing country's' case as a sort of antidote to the over-generalisations in mainstream literature, it of course does not represent all of developing countries or the so-called South.

While this dissertation posits general implications and gives a general validation of the usefulness of the analytical concepts it pulls together, more research in non-Western contexts is needed to understand better how the Internet unfolds under various historical, social, political and cultural dimensions. Only then can the classic dichotomy in ways of knowing between descriptive case studies and abstract theoretical constructs be bridged in a manner that avoids the excesses of each alone. This dissertation can be used as one possible step toward fruitful comparative research. The methods and concepts used in this dissertation can be applied to study the relationship of the Internet and society (politics) in other places, not only to find similarities — and thus perhaps can draw general patterns — but also to hopefully help show differences.



---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abbas, N., and Pakkanna, M. (2000). *Bara di Maluku: Upaya Untuk Mempertahankan Sejengkal Tanah*. Jakarta: Yayasan Lukman Harun.
- Abbate, J. (1999). *Inventing the Internet*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Abel, H., and Pattiradjawane, F. (2000). *Tragedi Kemanusiaan di Maluku*. Jakarta: Yayasan Antiokhia.
- Aditjondro, George J. (1995, 13 June). Trial by the Press – I. Retrieved 31 April 2005 from <http://www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata/1995/06/13/0001.html>.
- Aditjondro, George J. (1998a, 30 January). Kekayaan Suharto I. Retrieved 30 August 2002 from [http://www.munindo.brd.de/george/george\\_kekayaan\\_suharto1.html](http://www.munindo.brd.de/george/george_kekayaan_suharto1.html).
- Aditjondro, George J. (1998b, 30 January). Kekayaan Suharto II. Retrieved 30 August 2002 from [http://www.munindo.brd.de/george/george\\_kekayaan\\_suharto2.html](http://www.munindo.brd.de/george/george_kekayaan_suharto2.html).
- Aditjondro, George J. (1998c, 30 January). Kekayaan Suharto III. Retrieved 30 August 2002 from [http://www.munindo.brd.de/george/george\\_kekayaan\\_suharto3.html](http://www.munindo.brd.de/george/george_kekayaan_suharto3.html).
- Aditjondro, George J. (1998d, 30 January). Kekayaan Suharto: Yayasan-yayasan Suharto: cakupan, dampak, dan pertanggungjawabannya. Retrieved 30 August 2002 from: <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/4427/mpr.htm>.
- Aditjondro, George J. (1998e, 30 January). Kekayaan Suharto I. Retrieved 30 April 2004 from <http://www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata/1998/02/01/0004.html>.
- Aditjondro, George J. (1998f, 30 January). Kekayaan Suharto II. Retrieved 30 April 2004 from <http://www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata/1998/02/01/0003.html>.
- Aditjondro, George J. (1998g, 30 January). Kekayaan Suharto III. Retrieved 30 April 2004 from <http://www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata/1998/02/01/0006.html>.
- Aditjondro, George J. (1998h, 30 January). Kekayaan Suharto III. Retrieved 30 April 2004 from <http://www.hamline.edu/apakabar/basisdata/1998/02/01/0005.html>.
- Aditjondro, George J. (2000a). The political economy of violence in Maluku. *Munindo*. Retrieved 30 April 2003 from [http://www.munindo.brd.de/george/george\\_political\\_maluku.html](http://www.munindo.brd.de/george/george_political_maluku.html).
- Aditjondro, George J. (2000b). The tragedy of Maluku. Retrieved 30 July 2002 from <http://www.infomaluku.com/res/views/000503GA.htm>.
- Aditjondro, George J. (2000c). Notes on Jihad Forces in Maluku, Retrieved 30 April 2003 from <http://www.angelfire.com/rock/hotburrito/laskar/aditjondro500.html>.
- Aditjondro, George J. (2001). Guns, Pamphlets and Handie-Talkies: How the military exploited local ethno-religious tensions in Maluku to preserve their political and

- economic privileges. In Ingrid Wessel and Georgia Wimhofer (eds.), *Violence in Indonesia* (100-128). Hamburg: Abera Verlag.
- Aditjondro, George. J. (2003). Kayu hitam, bisnis pos penjagaan, perdagangan senjata dan proteksi modal besar: Ekonomi politik bisnis militer di Sulawesi bagian Timur. *Wacana*. Yogyakarta: INSIST.
- Ahmad, K. H., and Oesman, H. (2000). *Damai Yang Terkoyak: Catatan Kelam dari Bumi Halmahera*. Madani Press.
- AJI (1996, 7 June). Indonesian army pressures media in its efforts to unseat an opposition leader. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://www.ifex.org/fr/content/view/full/3343/>.
- Alhadar, S. (2001a). Kekerasan di Maluku: Produk sejarah kolonial. In Salampessy and Husain (2001), pp. 11-17.
- Alhadar, S. (2001b). Anatomi kerusakan sosial di Maluku Utara. In Salampessy and Husain (2001), pp. 69-74.
- Allen, G. (1995). Come the revolution. *Wired*, September: 46-48.
- Alqadrie, S.I. (1999). Konflik etnis di Ambon dan Sambas: Suatu tinjauan sosiologis. *Jurnal Antropologi Indonesia*, 58 (23): 36-57.
- Anderson, B., and McVey, Ruth T. (1971). *A Preliminary Analysis of the October 1, 1965, Coup in Indonesia*. Interim report series, Modern Indonesia Project. Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program.
- Anderson, B. (1987). How did the Generals die? *Indonesia*, 43 (April): 109-34.
- Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso Books.
- Annis, S. (1990). Toward a pro-poor information agenda at the World Bank. *Development*, 2.
- Apadurrai, A. (1996). *Modernity at Large: Cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- APJII (2005). Statistik APJII. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://www.apjii.or.id/dokumentasi/statistik.php?lang=ind&PHPSESSID=a0a5ab2d8dd65945003a5a0f989848b9>.
- Arendt, H. (1972). *Crises on the Republic*. New York: Harcourt Brace and Co.
- Arquilla, J.J., and Rondfelt, D.F. (1993). Cyber war is coming. *Comparative Strategy* 12(2): 141-165.
- Ash, T.G. (1990). *The Magic Lantern*. New York: Random House.
- Aslan, Reza (2005). *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*. New York: Random House.
- Aspinall, Edward (1996). What happened before the riots? *Inside Indonesia*, Edition 48 (Oct – Dec). Retrieved 20 May 2000 from <http://www.insideindonesia.org>.
- Azca, Muhammad Najib (2003). The landscape of the security forces in the conflict in Ambon: from the national panorama to the local picture. Paper presented at the conference on Sectarian Violence in Eastern Indonesia: Causes and Consequences, University of Hawaii, May 16-18.
- Baker, J. (2001). The national and global importance of the Laskar Jihad, ACICIS field report.
- Bali Post* (2002, 23 November). Imam Samudra akui kerjasama dengan Amrozy.

- Banks, S., and Builder, C. (1992). Seizing the moment: Harnessing the information technologies. *The Information Society*, 8 (1).
- Baran, Paul (1964). *On Distributed Communication* (Vols. 1-XI). Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://www.rand.org/publications/RM/baran.list.html>.
- Baran, Paul (1990). Packet switching. Transcript of interview by Judy O'Neill, 5 March. In *Role of DARPA/IPTO in the Development of Computer Science Oral History Collection*. Minneapolis: Charles Babbage Institute, University of Minnesota.
- Barber, B. R. (1996). *Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism & Tribalism Are Re-Shaping the World*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- Barber, B. R. (1998). *A Passion for Democracy: American Essays*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Barker, J. (1999). Surveillance and territoriality in Bandung. In Vicente L. Rafael (ed.), *Figures of Criminality in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Colonial Vietnam* (pp. 95-127). Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program.
- Barker, J. (2001). State of fear: Controlling the criminal contagion in Suharto's New Order. In B. Anderson (ed.), *Violence and the State in Suharto's Indonesia* (pp. 20-53). Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program.
- Barker, J., Lim, M., Rip, A., Argo, T., and Yuliar, S. (2001). Social Construction of Technology in the Indonesian Context nr. 95-CS-03. Final research report submitted to KNAW.
- Barker, J. (2004). Satellite nation: The anatomy and afterlife of developmental nationalism in Indonesia. Paper presented at Asian Nationalism Project, Workshop Two, October 1-3.
- Barlow, John P. (1996, 8 February). A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace. Retrieved 30 April 2004 from <http://homes.eff.org/~barlow/Declaration-Final.html>.
- Bartels, D. (2000). Guarding the invisible mountain: Intervillage alliances, religious syncretism and ethnic identity among Ambonese Christians and Moslems in the Moluccas, unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Ithaca: Cornell University.
- Barzilai, G. (2003). *Communities and Law: Politics and Culture of Legal Identities*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Basuki, T. (1998). Indonesia: The Web as a weapon. *Development Dialogue 2: The Southeast Asian Media in a Time of Crisis* (pp. 96-103).
- Bell, Mark R., and Boas, Taylor C. (2003). Falun Gong and Internet: Evangelism, Community, and Struggle for Survival. *Nova Religio*, 6 (2): 277-293.
- Bemonet (2000). Sejarah Bemonet. Retrieved 21 January 2002 from <http://www.bemo.or.id/info/history.shtm>.
- Beninger J. (1987). Personalization of mass media and the growth of pseudo-community. *Communication Research*, 14 (3) 352-371.
- Bijker, Wiebe E., and Law, J. (eds.) (1992). *Shaping Technology/Building Society: Studies in Sociotechnical Change*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Bijker, Wiebe E. (1995). *Of Bicycles, Bakelites and Bulbs: Toward a theory of sociotechnical change*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Birkerts, S. (1996). The electronic hive - refuse it. In Rob Kling (ed.), *Computerization and Controversy* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, pp. 79-82). San Diego: Academic Press.

- Blumler, J. G., McLeod, J.M., and Rosengren, K.E. (eds.) (1992). *Comparatively Speaking: Communication and Culture Across Space and Time*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- Bonchek, Mark (1995). Grassroots in cyberspace: Using computer networks to facilitate political participation. Retrieved 30 July 2003 from: <http://institute.strategosnet.com/msb/ppp/grassroots.html>.
- Bräuchler, Birgit (2003). Cyberidentities at war: religion, identity, and the Internet in the Moluccan conflict. *Indonesia*, 75: 123-151.
- Bräuchler, Birgit (2004). Public sphere and identity politics in the Moluccan cyberspace. *Electronic Journal of Communication/La Revue Electronique de Communication*, 14 (3-4). <http://www.cios.org/www/ejcrec2.htm>.
- Browning, G. (2002). *Electronic democracy: Using the Internet to Transform American Politics*. Medford: CyberAge Books.
- Bubandt, Nils (2001). Malukan Apocalypse: Themes in the dynamics of violence in Eastern Indonesia. In Ingrid Wessel and Georgia Wimhofer (eds.), *Violence in Indonesia* (pp. 228-253). Hamburg: Abera Verlag.
- Bubandt, Nils (2003). Pamphlets, rumors and the politics of paranoia in North Maluku. Paper presented at the conference on Sectarian Violence in Eastern Indonesia: Causes and Consequences, University of Hawai'i, May 16-18.
- Budge, I. (1996). *The new challenge of direct democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Buechler, Steven M. (2000). *Social Movements in Advanced Capitalism: The Political Economy and Cultural Construction of Social Activism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bunt, G. (2000). *Virtually Islamic: Computer-mediated Communication and Cyber-Islamic Environments*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
- Carey, J. (1989). *Communication as Culture*. Boston: Unwin-Hyman.
- Carey, P.B.R. (1981). *Babad Dipanagara: An Account of the Outbreak of the Java War 1825-1830*. Kuala Lumpur: Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society Monograph.
- Castells, Manuel (1996). *The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture (I): The Rise of Network Society*. Cambridge and Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Castells, Manuel (1997). *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture (II): The Power of Identity*. Malden and Oxford: Blackwell.
- Castells, Manuel (1998). *The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture (III): End of Millenium*. Malden and Oxford: Blackwell.
- Castells, Manuel (2001). *The Internet Galaxy: Reflections on the Internet, Business, and Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cerf, V.G., Clark, D.D., Kahn, R.E., Kleinrock, L., Leiner, B.M., Lynch, D.C., Postel, J., Roberts, L.G., and Wolff, S. (2000, 4 August). Brief history of the Internet Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.isoc.org/internet/history/brief.shtml>.
- Chauvel, R. (1990). *Nationalists, Soldiers and Separatists: The Ambonese Islands from colonialism to revolt, 1880-1950*. Leiden: KITLV Press.
- Christie, C.J. (1996). *A Modern History of Southeast Asia: decolonization, nationalism and separatism*. London and New York: I. B. Tauris Academic Studies.



- Cleaver, Harry (1996). The Zapatistas and the electronic fabric of struggle. *International Networking (INET) 96 Proceedings*. Retrieved 30 July 2003 from: [http://info.isoc.org/isoc/whatis/conferences/inet/96/proceedings/e1/e1\\_3.htm](http://info.isoc.org/isoc/whatis/conferences/inet/96/proceedings/e1/e1_3.htm).
- Coleman, Stephen (2001, 23 May). E-Politics: democracy or marketing. *Voxpolitics*. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://www.voxpolitics.com/news/voxfpub/story266.shtml>.
- Cox, R.M. (1999). Web of wisdom: A field of a virtual learning community (Internet), unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Palo Alto: Institute of Transpersonal Psychology.
- Cribb, R. (1992). *Historical Dictionary of Indonesia*. Metuchen: Scarecrow Press.
- Dake, Antonie C. A. (2002). *In the Spirit of the Red Banteng: Indonesian Communists between Moscow and Peking*. Jakarta: Aksara Karunia.
- Dean, Gary (2002). Ethno-religious conflict in Maluku. Retrieved 30 May 2003 from <http://www.okusi.net/garydean/works/maluku.html>.
- Depdikbud (1977). *Sejarah Daerah Maluku*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
- Depdikbud (1983). *Sejarah Sosial di Daerah Maluku*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
- Depdikbud (1999). *Sejarah Maluku*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
- Detik.com. (2001, 7 January). Pengguna kartu kredit bajakan perlu sadar hukum dan etika. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/berita-it/message/6615>.
- Detik.com. (2002, 2 April). 41 Warnet kantor pos ditutup. Retrieved 31 July 2002 from <http://www.detikinet.com/berita/2002/04/02/20020402-120408.shtml>.
- Dhakidae, D. (2003). *Cendekiawan dan Kekuasaan Dalam Negara Orde Baru*. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Diani, Mario (1992). The concept of social movement. *Sociological Review*, 40: 1-25.
- Diani, Mario (2000). Social movement networks virtual and real. *Information, Communication & Society* 3 (3): 386-401.
- Diani, Mario (2001). A Relational view of the social movement organisation vs. interest group distinction. Paper for the ECPR2001 General Conference, Canterbury, 6-8 September.
- DiMaggio, Paul (1997). Culture and cognition. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 23 (1): 263-288.
- Disco, C., Rip, A, and van der Meulen, B. (1992). Technical innovation and the universities. Divisions of labor in cosmopolitan technical regimes. *Social Science Information*, 31 (3): 465-507.
- Djaelani, A. K. (2001). *Agama dan Separatisme Menjadi Landasan Konflik Maluku dan Poso*. Jakarta : Yayasan Pengkajian Islam Madinah Al-Munawwarah.
- Douglass, Mike (1993). The 'new' Tokyo story: Restructuring space and the struggle for place in a world City. In K. Fujita and R. C. Hill (eds.), *Japanese Cities in the Global Economy: Global Restructuring and Urban-Industrial Change* (pp. 83-119). Philadelphia: Temple University Pres.
- Douglass, Mike (1994). The 'developmental state' and the Asian newly industrialized economies, *Environment and Planning A*, 26: 543-566.

- Douglass, Mike (1997). Structural change and urbanization in Indonesia: from the 'old' to the 'new' international division of labor, in Gavin Jones and Pravin Visaria (eds.). *Urbanization in Large Developing Countries; China, Indonesia, Brazil, and India* (pp. 111-141). Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Douglass, Mike, Ho, K.C., and Ooi, G.L. (2002). Civic spaces, globalisation and Pacific Asia cities. *International Development and Planning Review Journal*, 24 (4): 345-361.
- Dyson, E., Gilder, G., Keyworth, G., Toffler, A. (1994). *Cyberspace and the American dream: A Magna Carta for the knowledge age* (Release 1.2). Washington DC: Progress and Freedom Foundation. Retrieved 30 April 2004 from <http://www.townhall.com/pff/position.html>.
- Ebiz Asia (2001). Life in days after September 11 terrorist strikes. A transcript of interviews aired on October 6.
- Erikson, E.H. (1975). *Life history and the historical moment*. New York: Norton.
- Esposito, J. (2002). *Unholy War, Terror in the Name of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ferree, Myra M. (1992). The political context of rationality: Rational choice theory and resource mobilization. In A.D. Morris and C. M. Mueller (eds.), *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (pp. 29-52). New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Festinger, L. (1957). *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. Evanston: Row Peterson & Co.
- Fisher, D., and Wright, L.M. (2001). On utopias and dystopias: Toward an understanding of the discourse surrounding the Internet. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, 6 (2).
- FKAWJ (2000a). Jihad Troopers (Laskar Jihad). Retrieved 30 July 2002 from <http://www.laskarjihad.or.id/english/article/ljtroopers.htm>.
- FKAWJ (2000b). Riwayat Hidup Al Ustadz Ja'far Umar Thalib. Retrieved 30 July 2002 from <http://www.laskarjihad.or.id/about/cvjafar.htm>.
- FKAWJ (2002, 24 March). Ustadz Jafar Umar Thalib: Rencana intervensi militer AS, upaya penghancuran umat Islam. Retrieved 30 July 2002 from <http://www.laskarjihad.or.id>.
- Florida State University Library (2005). Glossary of common library terms. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://www.fsu.edu/library/search/glossary.shtml>.
- Foucault, M. (1972). *The Archeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Foucault, M. (1979). *Discipline and Punish*. New York: Vintage.
- Fox, E. (1994). Communication media in Latin America. *Journal of Communication*, 44 (3).
- Frederick, H (1992). Computer communications in cross-border coalition building: North American NGO networking against NAFTA. *The International Journal of Mass Communications Studies*, 50 (2/3).
- Free Online Dictionary of Computing (2005). Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://wombat.doc.ic.ac.uk/foldoc/>.
- Freeman, J. (1979). Resource mobilization and strategy: A model for analyzing social movement organization actions. In Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy (eds.), *The Dynamics of Social Movements: Resource Mobilization, Social Control, and Tactics*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Winthrop Publishers.

- Freeman, R. (1997). *Democracy in the Digital Age. Argument, 16*. London: Demos.
- Friedman, J. (1994). *Cultural Identity and Global Process*. London: Sage Publications.
- Gamson, William A. (1992). The social psychology of collective action. In A. D. Morris and C. Mueller (eds.), *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (pp. 53-76). New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Gamson, William A. (1995). Constructing social protest. In Hank Johnston and Bert Klandermans (eds.), *Social Movements and Culture*. Minneapolis: Regents of the University of Minnesota.
- Ganley, G., and Ganley, O. (1987). *Global Political Fallout: The VCR's First Decade, 1976-1985*.
- Ganley, G. (1992). *The Exploding Power of Personal Media*. Norwood: Ablex.
- Gibson, James J. (1979). *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Gilder, G., (1989). *Microcosm: The Quantum Revolution in Economics and Technology*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Giugni, Marco (1998). The other side of the coin: Explaining cross-national similarities between social movements. *Mobilization* 3(1): 89-105.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis*. New York: Harper Colophon.
- Gomez, Ricardo (1997). *Democratization and the Information Society: Use of computer-mediated communication in non-governmental organizations in a Latin American country (Colombia)*, unpublished Doctoral dissertation. Ithaca: Cornell University.
- Graham, Stephen (2000). Constructing premium network spaces: reflections on infrastructure networks and contemporary urban development. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 24 (1): 183-200.
- Grossmann, L. K. (1995). *The Electronic Republic*. New York.
- Gurak, L.J. (1997). *Persuasion and Privacy in Cyberspace: The Online Protests over Lotus Market-place and the Clipper Chip*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Gurak, L.J., and Logie, I.J. (2003). Internet protests, from text to Web. In McCaughey and Ayers (2003), pp. 25-46.
- Gurr, Ted Robert (1993). *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflicts*. Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace.
- Gutstein, D. (1999). *How the Internet Undermines Democracy*. Toronto: Stoddart.
- Habermas, J. (1984). *The Theory of Communicative Action, Volume 1, Reason and the Rationalization of Society*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Habermas, J. (1991). *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a category of Bourgeois Society*. Translated by Thomas Burger with Frederick Lawrence. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Hackbart, M. (1999). Introduction. In Michael T. Childress (ed.). *Collecting Taxes in the Cyberage* (pp. 1-3). Frankfort: The Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center.
- Hague, B., and Loader, B. (eds.) (1999). *Digital Democracy: Discourse and Decision Making in the Information Age*. London: Routledge.
- Hall, Stuart (1992). The question of cultural identity. In Stuart Hall, David Held and Tony McGrew (eds.), *Modernity and Its Futures* (pp. 273-326). Cambridge: Polity Press.

- HamNet. (2000). Kilas balik radio paket. Retrieved 30 April 2005 from <http://www.qsl.net/yb0emj/emjpkt.html>.
- Hanna, N. and S. Boyson. 1991. Information technology in World Bank lending: Increasing the development impact. Washington DC: World Bank, Asia Technical Department, Private Sector/Public Sector and Technology Development Division.
- Hardjito. (2002). Internet untuk pembelajaran. *Jurnal Teknodik*, 6 (10).
- Harsono, A. (1996). Indonesia: From mainstream to alternative media. *First Monday*, 1 (3). Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://firstmonday.org/issues/issue3/harsono/index.html>.
- Harsono, A. (2000). Indonesia: Dancing in the dark. In Williams, L. and Rich, R. (eds.), *Losing Control: Freedom of the Press in Asia* (pp. 74 – 92). Asia Pacific Press Canberra.
- Harvey, David (1989). *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Haryanto, S. (2001). Surat permintaan maaf. Retrieved 1 July 2002 from <http://www.master.web.id/tutorial/wawancara/klikbca.htm>.
- Hasan, Noorhaidi (2002). Faith and politics: the rise of the Laskar Jihad in the era of transition in Indonesia. *Indonesia*, 73: 145-169.
- Hefner, R. W. (2000b). Muslim-Christian violence in Maluku: the role of national politics. Paper presented for the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, Hearing on the Maluku Islands, Washington DC, February 13, 2001. Retrieved 20 May 2003 from [http://www.geocities.com/chosye/Paper/Robert\\_Hefner.htm](http://www.geocities.com/chosye/Paper/Robert_Hefner.htm)
- Hefner, R.W. (1997). Islamization and democratization in Indonesia. In Robert W. Hefner and Patricia Horvawitch, *Islam in an Era of Nation-States: Politics and Religious Renewal in Muslims Southeast Asia* (pp. 75-127). Honolulu: University of Hawaii.
- Hefner, R.W. (2000a). *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hefner, R.W. (2003). Civic pluralism denied? The new media and *jihadi* violence in Indonesia. In Dale F. Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson (eds.), *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*.
- Hertadi, M. (1995, 17 October). Perkembangan dunia cyber di Indonesia. Retrieved 31 January 2002 from <http://www.dlanet.com/infocenter/cyberindonesia.html>.
- Heryanto, Ariel (1988). The development of 'development'. *Indonesia*, 46: 1-24.
- Heryanto, Ariel (1998). Ethnic identities and erasure: Chinese Indonesians in public culture. In Joel S. Kahn (ed.), *Southeast Asian Identities: Culture and the Politics of Representation in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand* (pp. 95-114). Singapore and London: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.
- Heryanto, Ariel (1999). Where communism never dies. Violence, trauma, and narration in the last Cold War capitalist authoritarian state. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2 (2):147-177.
- Hidayatullah (2002). Ayip Syarifuddin: Sang arsitek Laskar Jihad. Retrieved 20 April 2003 from <http://www.hidayatullah.com/2002/04/profil.shtml>.
- Hill, D., and Sen, K. (1997). World-wired warungs: Interneting Indonesia. Retrieved 31 April 2005 from <http://wwwarc.murdoch.edu.au/asiaview/nov97/warungs.htm>.

- Hill, D., and Sen, K. (2000a). The Internet in Indonesia's new democracy. In P. Ferdinand (ed.). *The Internet, Democracy and Democratization* (pp. 119-136). London: Frank Cass.
- Hill, D., and Sen, K. (2000b). *Media, Culture and Politics in Indonesia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hill, D., and Sen, K. (2002). Netizens in combat: Conflict on the Internet in Indonesia. *Asian Studies Association of Australia*, 26 (2): 165-188.
- Hine, Christine (2000). *Virtual Ethnography*. London: Sage Publications.
- Hjarvard, Stig (2002). Mediated encounters: An essay on the role of communication media in the creation of trust in the 'global metropolis'. In Gitte Stald and Thomas Tuftte (eds.) *Global Encounters: Media and Cultural Transformation*, 69-84. Luton: University of Luton Press.
- Huang, R. (2002, 8 March). In the Spot: Laskar Jihad. Washington DC: Center for Defense Information. Retrieved 30 April 2004 from <http://www.cdi.org/terrorism/laskar.cfm>.
- Hughes, J. (1968). *Indonesian Upheaval*. Angus & Robertson.
- Human Rights Watch (1999). Indonesia: the violence in Ambon. Retrieved 20 May 2001 from <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/ambon>.
- Hunt, Scott A., Benford, Robert D., and Snow, David A. (1994). Identity fields: Framing processes and the social construction of movement identities. In Enrique Larana, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield (eds.), *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity* (pp. 185-208). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Hutchby, I. (2001). Technologies, texts and affordances. *Sociology*, 35 (2): 441-456.
- IDS (1996). Indonesian Development Studies. Retrieved 31 January 2002 from <http://www.airland.com/id/ids/idslst.txt>.
- IETF (2003). Overview of IETF. Retrieved 30 July 2003 from <http://www.ietf.org/overview.html>.
- Illich, I. (1973). *Tools for Conviviality*. London: Calder & Boyars.
- Indonesia Baru (1998, 8 April). Langkah penyebaran informasi. Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/4427/grafikin.htm>.
- Indonesia Cyber Industry and Market Research and Analysis Team. (2001). *Indonesia Cyber Industry and Market*. Jakarta: Elex Media Komputindo.
- Info Pembebasan* (1997, 11 July). Building a united front against the dictatorship: the PRD's tactics and strategies during and after the elections. Translated by James Balowski, ASIET Publications and Information Officer.
- Infokom (2000). Sanjaya: Menggaet pasar lewat program SMU 2000. (An interview). January-February 2000 Edition. Retrieved 30 July 2002 from <http://www.infokomputer.com/arsip/internet/022000/interviu/interviu.shtml>.
- Infowest (2005). Glossary. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://www.infowest.com/Support/FAQ/Glossary/>.
- International Crisis Group (2000). *Indonesia: Overcoming Murder and Violence in Maluku*. Asia Report. Jakarta/Brussels, 19 December.
- International Crisis Group (2001). *Indonesia: Violence and Radical Muslims*. Asia Report. Jakarta/Brussel, 10 October.

- International Crisis Group (2002). *Indonesia: The Search for Peace in Maluku*. Asia Report. Jakarta/Brussels, 8 February.
- International Crisis Group (2004). *Indonesia Backgrounder: Why Salafism and Terrorism Mostly Don't Mix*. Asia Report. Southeast Asia/Brussels, 13 September.
- Islamic Dictionary (2005). *Islamic Dictionary: English translation of Arabic words*. Retrieved 30 April 2004 from <http://muttaqun.com/dictionary3.html>.
- ITU. (2001). *Information Technology – World 1999*. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from [http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/at\\_glance/Internet99.pdf](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/at_glance/Internet99.pdf).
- ITU. (2002a). *Kretek Internet: Indonesia Case Study*. A country report. Geneva.
- ITU. (2002b) *Information Technology – World 2001*. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from [http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/at\\_glance/Internet01.pdf](http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/statistics/at_glance/Internet01.pdf).
- Jackson, Karl D., and Pye, Lucien W. (eds.) (1978). *Political Power and Communication in Indonesia*. Berkeley: California University Press.
- Jameson, F. (1991). *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. London: Verso.
- Jankowski, N., Prehn, O., and Stappers, J. (eds.) (1992). *The People's Voice: Local Radio and Television in Europe*. London: John Libbey.
- Johnston, Hank, Larana, Enrique, and Gusfield, Joseph R. (1994). Identities, grievances and new social movements. In E. Laurana, H. Johnston and J. R. Gusfield (eds.), *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity* (pp. 3-35). Pennsylvania: Temple University Press.
- Jordan, T. (1999). *Cyberculture: The Culture and Politics of Cyberspace and the Internet*. London: Routledge.
- Jordan, T. (2002). *Activism!: Direct action, Hacktivism and the Future of Society*. Reaktion.
- Kalathil, S., and Boas, T.C. (2001). *The Internet and State Control in Authoritarian Regimes: China, Cuba, and the counterrevolution*, Carnegie Working Paper #21.
- Kalathil, S., and Boas, T.C. (2003). *Open Networks, Closed Regimes: The Impact of the Internet on Authoritarian Rule*. Washington DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Kamarck, E. and Nye, J. (1999). *Democracy.com? Governance in a Networked World*. Hollis: Hollis Publishing.
- Kartodirjo, S. (1966). *The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1988*. S'Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff.
- Kastor, R. (2000a). *Fakta, Data dan Analisa: Konspirasi Politik RMS dan Kristen Menghancurkan Ummat Islam di Ambon-Maluku*. Yogyakarta: Wihdah Press. Retrieved 6 November 2004 from [http://www.geocities.com/r\\_kastor/Rustam-Isi.html](http://www.geocities.com/r_kastor/Rustam-Isi.html).
- Kastor, R. (2000b). *Suara Maluku Membantah, Rustam Kastor Menjawab*, Yogyakarta: Wihdah Press.
- Kastor, R. (2000c). *Damai Sekarang atau Perang Berlanjut*. Yogyakarta: Wihdah Press.
- Katz, Jon (1997). The birth of Digital Nation. *Wired*, April.
- KdPnet (1998). *Pijar Indonesia*. Retrieved 30 July 1999 from <http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/indonesia/pijar/>

- Kelley, J. (2002, 8-14 July). Militants wire web with links to Jihad. *USA Today*, CNO/IO Newsletter.
- Kellner, D. (1997). Intellectuals, the new public spheres, and technopolitics. *New Political Science*, 41-42 (Fall): 169-88.
- Kelly, Caroline, and Breinlinger, Sara (1996). The social psychology of collective action, identity, injustice and gender. In Rupert Brown (series ed.), *European Monographs in Social Psychology Series*. London: Taylor & Francis Ltd.
- Kerbo, Harold R. (1982). Movements of crisis and movements of affluence: A critique of deprivation and resource mobilization theories. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 26: 645-663.
- Kidd, D. (2003). Indymedia.org: A new communication commons. In McCaughey and Ayers (2003), pp. 44-70.
- King, Dwight J. (1982). Indonesia's New Order as a bureaucratic polity, a neopatrimonial regime or a bureaucratic authoritarian Regime: What difference does it make? In Benedict Anderson and Audrey Kahin (eds.), *Interpreting Indonesian Politics: Thirteen Contributions to the Debates*. Cornell Modern Indonesia Project (62). Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University.
- Kitley, P. (1994). Fine tuning control: Commercial television in Indonesia. *Continuum: The Australian Journal of Media and Culture*, 8: 103-123.
- Klandermans, Bert (1988). The formation and mobilization of consensus. *International Social Movement Research*, 1: 173-196.
- Klandermans, Bert (1989). Grievance interpretations and success expectations. *Social Behaviour*, 4: 113-125.
- Klandermans, Bert (1990). *Peace Movements in Western Europe and the United States*. Greenwich: JAI.
- Klandermans, Bert (1991). New social movements and resource mobilization: The European and the American approach revisited. In Rucht, Dieter (ed.), *Research on Social Movements: The State of the Art in Western Europe and the USA* (pp. 17-44). Frankfurt: Campus.
- Klandermans, Bert (1992). The social construction of protest and multiorganizational peace movement. In Aldon Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller (eds.), *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory* (pp. 77-103). New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Kling, R. (1996b). Synergies and competition between life in cyberspace and face-to-face communities. *Social Science Computer Review*, 14 (1): 50-54.
- Kling, R., (ed.) (1996a). *Computerization and Controversy: Value Conflicts and Social Choices*. San Diego, Academic Press.
- Kluver, R., and Qiu, J. L. (2003). The Internet and democracy in China. In Indrajit Banerjee (ed.), *The Internet and Democracy in Asia*. Singapore: Times Academic Press.
- Lane, Max (1995). Indonesian democratic group stirs controversy. Retrieved 31 April 2005 from <http://www.greenleft.org.au/back/1994/143/143p15b.htm>.
- Large, Peter (1980). *The Micro Revolution*. London: Fontana.
- Latief, A. (2000). *Pledoi Kol. A. Latief: Soeharto Terlibat G-30-S*. Jakarta: Institut Studi Arus Informasi.

- Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The Production of Space* (translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith). London: Basil Blackwell.
- Lerner, D. (1958). *The passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East*. MacMillan: Free Press Collier.
- Lévy, P. (2001). *Cyberculture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Liddle, W. R. (1996). *Leadership and Culture in Indonesian Politics*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin.
- Liebman, C. S. (1993). Jewish fundamentalism and the Israeli polity. In M. E. Marty and S. R. Appleby (eds.), *Fundamentalism and the State* (Vol. 3). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lim, M. (2002a). Cyber-civic space in Indonesia: From panopticon to pandemonium? *International Development Planning Review*, 24 (4): 383-400.
- Lim, M. (2002b). From walking city to telematic metropolis: Changing urban form in Bandung, Indonesia. In Tim Bunnell, Lisa B. W. Drummond and K. C. Ho (eds.), *Critical Reflections on Cities in Southeast Asia* (pp. 75-100). Brill Publisher and Times Academic Press.
- Lim, M. (2003a). From warnet to netwar: The Internet and resistance identities in Indonesia. *International Information and Library Review*, 35 (2-4): 233-248.
- Lim, M. (2003b). From real to virtual (and back again): Internet, identity and public Sphere in Indonesia. In KC. Ho, R. Kluver and K. Yang (eds), *Internet Development in Asia* (pp. ). London: Routledge.
- Lim, M. (2003c). The Internet, social network, and reform in Indonesia. In Nick Couldry and Danny Miller (eds.), *Contesting Media Power: Towards a Global Comparative Perspective* (pp. 273-288). Lanham: Rowan and Littlefield.
- Lim, M. (2004a). Informational terrains of identity and political power: The Internet in Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, 27 (73): 1-11.
- Lim, M. (2004b). The polarization of identity through the Internet and the struggle for democracy in Indonesia. *Electronic Journal of Communication/La Revue Electronique de Communication*, 14 (3-4). Available online at: <http://www.cios.org/www/ejcrec2.htm>.
- Lim, M. (2005). *The Internet, Islamic Radicalism and Narratives of Conspiracy* (Policy Studies Series). Washington DC: East-West Center Washington.
- Locke, T. (1999). Participation, inclusion, exclusion and netactivism: How the Internet invents new forms of democratic activity. In Hague and Loader (pp. 211-221).
- Luhukay, J.F. (1997). Pustaka maya in Internet. *Pokok Pikiran 2 – Karya Wisata*, 84 (20). BPK Penabur Jakarta. Retrieved 30 July 2002 from <http://www.bpkpenabur.ac.id/KW84-Pokok2.htm>.
- Luke, Timothy, and Toulouse, Chris (1998). *The Politics of Cyberspace*. London: Routledge.
- Luknanto, J. (1998a). Daftar isi kekayaan Eyang Kakung. Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.isnet.org/~djoko/Reformasi%201998/Kekayaan%20Suharto/00Index.html>.
- Luknanto, J. (1998b). Kekayaan Suharto. Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.isnet.org/~djoko/Reformasi%201998/Kekayaan%20Suharto/Kaya01.html>.



- Luknanto, J. (1998c). Daftar kekayaan Soeharto. Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.isnet.org/~djoko/Reformasi%201998/Kekayaan%20Suharto/Kaya03.html>.
- Lyon, D. (1994). *The Electronic Eye: The Rise of Surveillance Society*. Polity / Blackwell.
- Lyon, D. (2001). *Surveillance Society: Monitoring Everyday Life*. Open University Press.
- Lyotard, J. (1979). *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Manchester University Press, published in 1984.
- MacCarthy, Mayer N., and Zald, John D. (1979). *The Dynamics of Social Movements*. Cambridge: Winthrop Publisher.
- MacDougall, John A. (2003, 26 February). A Brief History of The Apakabar List. Retrieved 31 April 2005 from <http://www.library.ohiou.edu/indopubs/briefhistory.html>.
- MacKenzie, D., and Wajcman, J. (eds.) (1985). *The Social Shaping of Technology*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Mahdi, W. (1997). My curriculum vitae. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from: <http://w3.rz-berlin.mpg.de/~wm/EGO/cv.html>.
- Manin, C. E. (2002). Terrorism and information communication technology. *La Tribune*. College Interarmees de Defense.
- Marcus, D. L. (1998). Indonesia revolt was Net driven' in E. Aspinall, G. Klinken and H. van Feith (eds.) (1999), *The last days of President Suharto*. (pp. 73-75). Australia: Monash Asia Institute.
- Marvin, C. (1988). *When Old Technologies were New*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McAdam, Doug, and Paulsen, Ronnelle (1993). Specifying the relationship between social ties and activism. *American Journal of Sociology*, 99 (3): 640-667.
- McAdam, Doug, and Rucht, Dieter (1993). Cross-national diffusion of movement ideas: The American 'New Left' and the European New Social Movements. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 528: 56-74.
- McAdam, Doug (1994). Culture and social movements. In Enrique Larana, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield (eds.), *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity* (pp. 36-57). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- McAdam, Doug, Tarrow, Sidney, and Tilly, Charles (1996). To map contentious politics. *Mobilization*, 1 (1): 17-34.
- McCaughey, M., and Ayers, M. D. (eds.) (2003). *Cyberactivism: Online Activism in Theory and Practice*. New York: Routledge.
- McLuhan, Marshall (1964). *Understanding Media*. New York: Mentor.
- McRae, Dave (2001). *The 1998 Indonesian Student Movement*. Monash University Clayton.
- McRae, S. (1996). Flesh made word: Sex, text and the virtual body. In D. Porter (ed.). *Internet Culture* (pp. 73-86). New York: Routledge.
- Media Dakwah* (1999). Perang Jihad masih berlanjut di Ambon. December.
- Melucci, Alberto (1989). *Nomads of the Present: Social Movements and Individual Needs in Contemporary Society*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Melucci, Alberto (1994). A strange kind of newness: What's new in new social movements? In Enrique Laraña, Hank Johnston, and Joseph R. Gusfield (eds.),

- New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity* (pp. 101-130). Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Melucci, Alberto (1996). *Challenging Codes: Collective Action in the Information Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mengko, Richard (2001). Memanfaatkan teknologi informasi: Pentingkah hal ini bagi generasi mendatang? *Suplemen Berita Penelitian ITB*, August. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://www.lp.itb.ac.id/product/berita/august/2001/Berita%2520Penelitian-Agust2001.html>
- Meredith, Mike (1999). The "Poor Man's ARPANET", Unix, UUCP, and USENET. Retrieved 30 April 2004 from <http://www.iso.port.ac.uk/~mike/docs/internet/internet/node5.html>.
- Miller, Danny, and Slater, Don (2000). *The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach*. Oxford: Berg.
- Mills, Kurt (1998). *Human Rights in the Emerging Global Order: A New Sovereignty?* London: Macmillan.
- Moore, R. (1999). Democracy and cyberspace. In Hague and Loader (1999), pp. 35-59.
- Morley, David (1999). Transnationalism, feminism, and fundamentalism. In Caren Kaplan, Norma Alarcon and Mino Moallem (eds.) *Between Woman and Nation: Nationalism, transnationalism, feminism, and the state*. (pp. 320-328). London: Duke University Press.
- Mrazek, R. (2002). 'Let us become radio mechanics': Technology and national identity in late colonial Netherlands East Indies. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 39 (1): 3-33.
- Mulgan, G. (1994). Party Free Politics. *New Statesman*, 15 (April): 16-18.
- Mumford, Lewis (1964). Authoritarian and Democratic Technics. *Technology and Culture*, 5: 1-8.
- Munindo (1998, 5 October). JP: Aditjondro; sosok dan kiprahnya. Retrieved 29 August 2002 from [http://www.munindo.br.de/george/george\\_wawancara\\_george.html](http://www.munindo.br.de/george/george_wawancara_george.html).
- Munindo (2000, 29 June). Ruangan George. Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.munindo.brd.de/george/george.html>.
- Negroponte, Nicholas (1995). *Being Digital*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Nelson, R.R. and Winter, S.G. (1977). In search of useful theory of innovation. *Research Policy*, 6: 36-37.
- Neuman, Johanna (1996). *Lights, Camera, War: Is Media Technology Driving International Politics?* New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Norton, Robert (1983). *Communicator Style: Theory, Applications, and Measures*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- O'Neill, M. J. (1993). *The Roar of the Crowd: How Television and People Power are Changing the World*. New York.
- Ohorella, G. A., Harjono, S. P., Wulandari, T. (1993). *Tantangan and Rongrongan Terhadap Keutuhan Negara and Kesatuan RI: Kasus Republik Maluku Selatan*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan.
- Orwell, G. (1954). *Nineteen Eighty-four*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- P3TIE. (2002). *Indikator Teknologi Informasi dan Komunikasi*. Jakarta: BPPT.

- Pijar (1999). KdP Net PGP Public Key. Retrieved 30 May 2000 from <http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/indonesia/pijar/docs/pgp.htm>.
- Pinch, Trevor J., and Bijker, Wiebe E. (1987). The social construction of facts and artifacts: Or how the sociology of science and the sociology of technology might benefit each other. In Wiebe E. Bijker, Thomas P. Hughes and Trevor Pinch (eds.), *The social construction of technological systems* (pp. 17-50). Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Pool, Ithiel de Sola. (1990). *Technologies without Boundaries: On Telecommunications in a Global Age*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Poster, M. (2001). *What's the Matter with the Internet?* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Puar, J. A. (1956). *Peristiwa Republik Maluku Selatan*, Jakarta: Penerbit Bulan-Bintang.
- Purbo, Onno W. (1993). Alternative approach low cost TCP/IP in Indonesia. Conference Paper.
- Purbo, Onno W. (1995). The building of computer network in Indonesia. Retrieved 31 January 2002 from <http://www.panasia.org.sg/itb/casid.htm>.
- Purbo, Onno W. (1996). The Indonesia computer network infrastructure: A status report. Retrieved 30 July 2002 from <http://www.panasia.org.sg/itb/infra.htm>.
- Purbo, Onno W. (2003). Internet for the masses. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://www.cerncourier.com/main/article/43/6/20>.
- Ramadhani (2003). Refleksi: My online personal library. Retrieved 31 April 2005 from [http://dhani.singcat.com/refleksi/2003\\_06\\_01\\_archive.php](http://dhani.singcat.com/refleksi/2003_06_01_archive.php).
- Reeve, David (1985). *Golkar of Indonesia: An Alternative to the Party System*. Singapore and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Reid, Elizabeth (1995). Virtual worlds: Culture and imagination. In Steven G. Jones (ed.), *Cybersociety: Computer-Mediated Communication and Community* (pp. 164-183). Thousand Oakes: Sage Publications.
- RFC1122 (1989). RFC 1122 - Requirements for Internet Hosts - Communication Layers. Retrieved 30 April 2004 from <http://www.faqs.org/rfcs/rfc1122.html>.
- Rheingold, H. (1993). *The Virtual Community: Homesteading On The Electronic Frontier*. Reading: Addison-Wesley.
- Rheingold, H. (1995). *The Virtual Community: Finding connection in a computerised world*. London: Minerva.
- Rheingold, H. (2002). *Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution*. Perseus Books.
- Rigg, J. (ed.) 1996. *Indonesian heritage: The human environment*. Singapore.
- Rip, A., and Kemp, R. (1998). Towards a theory of socio-technical change. In S. Rayner and E. L. Malone (eds.), *Human Choice and Climate Change* (pp. 329-401). Columbus: Battelle Press.
- Rip, A. (2004). Articulating images, attitudes and views of nanotechnology: enactors and comparative selectors. Paper presented at the European Workshop on Social and Economic Research on Nanotechnologies and Nanosciences, European Commission, Brussels, 14-15 April.
- Robins, Kevin, and Webster, Frank (1989). *The Technical Fix: Education, Computers and Industry*. London: Macmillan.

- Robinson, G. (1984). Some arguments concerning US influence and complicity in the Indonesian coup October 1, 1965. Manuscript.
- Robison, Richard (1985). *Indonesia: The Rise of Capital*. Melbourne: Asian Studies Association of Australia.
- Ronfeldt, D.F., Arquilla, J.J., Fuller, G., and Fuller, M. (1998) *The Zapatista 'Social Netwar' in Mexico*. Santa Monica: Rand Arroyo Center.
- Rothkopf, David J. (1998). Cyberpolitik: The changing nature of power in the Information Age. *Journal of International Affairs*, 51 (Spring): 354.
- S'to (2001a). Peringatan serius: Hati-hati mengetikkan Klikbca.com. Retrieved 1 July 2002 from <http://www.jasakom.com/Artikel.asp?ID=121>.
- S'to (2001b). Perkembangan lanjutan atas kasus KlikBCA.COM. Retrieved 1 July 2002 from <http://www.jasakom.com/Artikel.asp?ID=125>.
- Sabili* (1999, 28 July). Kristenisasi Jilid Dua. *Sabili*, VII (3).
- Sabili* (1999, 29 March). Moslem cleansing, Ambon tidak sendirian. *Sabili*, VI (3).
- Sabili* (2000, 26 January). Memperingati satu tahun tragedi Maluku berdarah. *Sabili*, XVI (16).
- Sachs, Hiram (1995). An ethnographic study about the computer Networks. *Media, Culture and Society*. 17: 81-89.
- Salampessy, Z. and Husain, T. (2001). *Ketika Semerbak Cengkih Tergusur Asap Mesiu*. Jakarta: Sekretariat Tapak Ambon.
- Samudra, Imam. (2004). *Aku Melawan Teroris*. Solo: Jazera. Retrieved 6 November 2004 from <http://mcb.swaramuslim.net/index.php?section=23&page=-1>
- Sassen, Saskia (1998). *Globalization and Its Discontents*. New York: New Press.
- Schudson, M. (1989). The sociology of news production. *Media, Culture and Society*, 11: 262-89.
- Schulte Nordholt, N.G. (1987). *Ojo Dumej: Kepemimpinan Lokal dalam Pembangunan Pedesaan*. Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan.
- Schulte Nordholt, N.G. (1995). Aid and conditionality: the case of Dutch-Indonesian relationships. In Olav Stokke (ed.), *Aid and Political Conditionality* (pp. 129-161). London: Frank Cass, EADI.
- Schulte Nordholt, N.G. (2000a). Moluccas; the try-out arena for Jakarta's power struggle. A speech delivered at Moluks Historisch Museum – Utrecht, The Netherlands, January 15.
- Schulte Nordholt, N.G. (2000b). De Molukken als oefenterrein voor de machtsstrijd in Jakarta. In Wim Manuhutu and Henk Smeets (eds.), *Maluku Manis Maluku Menangis: De Molukken in Crisis: Een Poging tot Verklaring van de Geweldsexplosie op de Molukken* (pp. 33-44, 51-29). Utrecht: Moluks Historisch Museum/Moluccan Information and Documentation Centre.
- Schulte Nordholt, N.G. (2002). The Janus face of the Indonesian armed forces. In Kees Koonings and Dirk Kruijt (eds.), *Political Armies: The Military and Nation Building in the Age of Democracy* (pp. 135-161). London: Zed Books.
- Schulz, Markus S. (1998). Collective action across borders: Opportunity structures, network capacities, and communicative praxis in the age of advanced globalization. *Sociological Perspectives* 41(3): 587-616.

- Scott, James (1985a). *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Scott, P. D. (1975). Exporting military-economic development: America and the overthrow of Sukarno, 1965-67. In Malcolm Caldwell (ed.), *Ten Years' Military Terror in Indonesia*. Nottingham: Spokesman Books.
- Scott, P. D. (1985b). The United States and the overthrow of Sukarno. *Pacific Affairs*, 58 (2).
- SCTV (2002). Kilas Balik Peristiwa Mei 1998: Reformasi dan Ratusan Penjahar Hangus Terpanggang (ANS/Tim Liputan 6 SCTV). A transcript of documentary news aired on 15 May.
- Shoesmith, B. (1994). Asia in their shadow: Satellites and Asia. *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science*, 22: 125-141.
- Sholeh, B. (2003). Islamic forces in Maluku. Paper presented at the 2003 Melbourne Indonesian Consortium Conference, The Dynamics of Political Islam in Indonesia, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, 11-12 July.
- SiaR (1998a, 13 March) SiaR→GJA: Yayasan-yayasan Suharto...(1/4). Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/3005/harta1.html>.
- SiaR (1998b, 13 March). SiaR→GJA: Yayasan-yayasan Suharto...(2/4). Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/3005/harta2.html>.
- SiaR (1998c, 13 March). SiaR→GJA: Yayasan-yayasan Suharto...(3/4). Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/3005/harta3.html>.
- SiaR (1998d, 13 March) SiaR→GJA: Yayasan-yayasan Suharto...(4/4). Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/3005/harta4.html>.
- SiaR (1998e) Indonesian Daily News Online. Retrieved 29 August 2002 from <http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/indonesia/>.
- Sinar Harapan. (2002, 23 November). Hasil uji DNA perkuat pengakuan Imam Samudra.
- Slama, M. (2001). Towards a new autonomy: Internet practices of Indonesian youth - conditions and consequences. Paper presented at the Third International Symposium of Antropologi Indonesia Journal, Denpasar, 16 -19 July.
- Slevin, James (2000). *The Internet and Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Slouka, Mark. (1995). *War of the Worlds: Cyberspace and the High-Tech Assault on Reality*. New York: Basic Books.
- Smith, Paul (1987). Contemporary legend and the photocopy revolution: An exploration. In G. Bennett, P. Smith, and J. D. A. Widdowson (eds.), *Perspectives on Contemporary Legend* (Vol. 2, pp. 176-202). Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Snow, David A., Rochford, E. Burke. Jr., Worden, Steven K., and Benford, Robert D. (1986). Frame alignment processes, micromobilization, and movement participation. *American Sociological Review*, 51.
- Soegijoko, S., Purbo, O.W., Merati, W., Sutikno, P., and Achmad, I. (1996). Computer networking in Indonesia: Current status and recommendations for its developments, Institute of Technology Bandung. Retrieved 31 January 2002 from <http://www.panasia.org.sg/itb/apng2.htm>.

- Spyer, P.E. (2002). Fire without smoke and other phantoms of Ambon's violence: media effects, agency, and the work of the imagination. *Indonesia*, 74: 21-36.
- Spyer, P.E., Arps, B., Jurriëns, E.C.M., van Heeren, K., and Sushartami, W. (2002). Indonesian mediations: The re-imagining of community(s) in transition. In H. Schulte Nordholt and Irwan Abdullah (eds.), *Indonesia in Search of Transition* (pp. 177-206). Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Sreberny-Mohammadi, A., and Mohammadi, A. (1998). *Small Media, Big Revolution*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Stewart, Frances (1978). *Technology and Underdevelopment*. London: Macmillan.
- Stoll, Clifford (1995). *Silicon Snake Oil: Second Thoughts on the Information Highway*. New York: Doubleday.
- Suara Hidayatullah (1999a, March). Ihwal: Isnet.org ajang diskusi sampai aksi. Retrieved 31 January 2002 from <http://www.hidayatullah.com/sahid/9903/ihwal2.htm>.
- Sumartana, Th. (2003). SARA and national integration? The never ending tension. In S.A. Prasetyo, A.E. Priyono and O. Tornquist (eds.), *Indonesia's Post-Soeharto Democracy Movement* (pp. 65-80). Jakarta: DEMOS.
- Sunggiardi, Michael (2000). Retrieved 30 July 2002 from <http://www.bonet.co.id/~michael.html>.
- Tabloid Oposisi* (1999, 17 December 1999). Ada rencana sistematis.
- Tarrow, Sidney (1998). Fishnets, Internets, and catnets: Globalization and transnational collective action. In Michael P. Hanagan, Leslie Page Moch, and Wayne te Brake, (eds.), *Challenging Authority: the Historical Study of Contentious Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Tarrow, Sidney (1998). *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, Verta, and Whittier, Nancy (1992). Collective identity in social movement communities: lesbian feminist mobilization. In A. Morris and C. Mueller (eds.), *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Thalib, Ja'far Umar (2001a). *Laskar Jihad Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah - Mempelopori perlawanan terhadap kedurjanaan hegemoni Salibis-Zionis internasional di Indonesia*. FKAJWJ.
- Thalib, Ja'far Umar (2001b). Mampuslah Amerika. *Buletin Laskar Jihad* 10.
- The Asia Foundation (2002). SMEs and E-Commerce. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from [http://www.asiafoundation.org/pdf/SMEsurvey\\_Indo.pdf](http://www.asiafoundation.org/pdf/SMEsurvey_Indo.pdf)
- The Jakarta Post* (1997, May 25). Internet fever grips Indonesian cities, p. 1.
- The Jakarta Post* (1997, May 27). p. 2.
- Thomas, T.L. (2003) AlQaeda and the Internet: The Danger of Cyberplanning. *Parameters*, p. 112-23.
- Tibbetts, P.S. (2002). *Terrorist Use of the Internet and Related Information Technologies*. Fort Leavenworth: School of Advanced Military Studies.
- Tickle, Sharon (1997). The clamour of competing voices: An Indonesian digital snapshot. *Media and Culture Review*, 2 (November).
- Tiras (1995, 22 June). *Pengadilan Politik* (Political Trials).

- Toffler, A. (1991). *Power Shift: Knowledge, Wealth, and Violence at the Edge of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. New York: Bantam.
- Toffler, Alvin, and Toffler, Heidi (1994). *Creating a New Civilization: The Politics of the Third Wave*. Turner Publishing, Inc.
- Tomagola, Thamrin A. (1999, 31 May). Akar kekerasan komunal. *Kontan Online*, 35 (III). Retrieved 30 July 2001 from <http://www.kontan-online.com/03/35/refleksi/ref2.htm>.
- Tomagola, Thamrin A. (2000). The bleeding Halmahera of North Moluccas, paper presented at a Workshop on Political Violence in Asia organised by The Centre for Development and Environment, University of Oslo, June 05-07.
- Tomagola, Thamrin A. (2001a). Memetakan sumbu kerusuhan. In Salampessy and Husain (2001), pp. 48-52.
- Tornquist, O. (1984). *Dilemmas of Third World Communism: The destruction of the PKI in Indonesia*, London: Zed Books.
- Torremendez, C. (1997). Situasi perhackingan di Indonesia. Retrieved 1 July 2002 from <http://www.k-elektronik.org/ezone/situasi.htm>.
- Trabelsi, H. (2002, 27 June). Al-Qaeda wages cyber war against US. *Middle East Times*.
- Trijono, Lambang. (2001). *Keluar dari kemelut Maluku: refleksi pengalaman praktis bekerja untuk perdamaian Maluku*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Tsui, Lokman (2001). Internet in China: Big mama is watching you, unpublished Master thesis. Retrieved 30 July 2003 from: <http://www.lokman.nu/thesis/010717-thesis.pdf>.
- Tuasikal, Umar (2000). *Quo Vadis Modus Operandi Antar Umat Beragama di Ambon*. Jakarata: Himpunan Keluarga Muslimin Maluku.
- Turkle, Sherry (1994). Constructions and reconstructions of self in virtual reality: Playing in the MUD. *Mind, Culture and Activity*, 1 (3): 158-167.
- Turkle, Sherry (1996). *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson.
- UTARC (2003). UTARC History. Retrieved 30 July 2003 from <http://studentorgs.utexas.edu/utarc/history/1980s.html>.
- Van Bruinessen, M. (2002a). Genealogies of Islamic radicalism in post-Suharto Indonesia. *South East Asia Research*, 10 (2): 117-154.
- Van Bruinessen, M. (2002b). The violent fringes of Indonesia's radical Islam, background information after the Bali bombing of October 2002. Extended version of article published in ISIM Newsletter 11 (December), p. 7. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from [http://www.let.uu.nl/%7Emartin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/violent\\_fringe.htm](http://www.let.uu.nl/%7Emartin.vanbruinessen/personal/publications/violent_fringe.htm).
- Van de Poel, I. (1998). *Changing Technologies: A Comparative Study of Eight Processes of Transformation Of Technological Regimes*. Enschede: Twente University Press.
- Van Dijk, J.A.G.M. (1999a). *The Network Society: Social Aspects of New Media*. London: Sage Publications.
- Van Dijk, J.A.G.M. (1999b). The one dimensional network society of Manuel Castells. *New Media and Society*, 1 (1): 127-138.
- Van Dijk, J.A.G.M. (2001). Online of a multilevel theory of the Network Society. English version of Netwerken, het zenuwstelsel van onze maatschappij. Text of the inaugural

- lecture in acceptance of the Chair of Sociology of the Information Society at the University of Twente, November 1. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://www.gw.utwente.nl/vandijk/PDF%20Outline%20of%20a%20multilevel%20theory.pdf>.
- Van Klinken, G. (1999). What caused the Ambon violence? *Inside Indonesia*, 60.
- Van Klinken, G. (2001). The Maluku wars: Bringing society back. *Indonesia*, 71 (April): 1-26.
- Van Langenberg, M. (1986). Analysing Indonesia's New Order State: A Keywords Approach. *Review of Indonesian and Malaysia Affairs*, 20 (2).
- Van Langenberg, M. (1990). The New Order state: Language, ideology, hegemony. In A. Budiman (ed.). *State and Civil Society in Indonesia* (22, pp. 121-149.). Clayton: Monash Paper on Southeast Asia.
- Veebek, Peter-Paul (2005). *What Things Do: Philosophical, Reflections of Technology, Agency, and Design*. Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Vegh, S. (2003). Classifying forms of online activism: the case of cyberprotests against the World Bank. In McCaughey and Ayers (2003), pp. 71-96.
- W3C (2003). About the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). Retrieved 30 July 2003 from <http://www.w3c.org/Consortium/>.
- Ward, I. (1997). How democratic can we get? The Internet, the public sphere, and public discourse. *JAC: A Journal of Composition Theory*, 17: 365-379.
- Waskul, D., and Douglass, M. (1997). Cyberself: The emergence of self in on-line chat. *The Information Society*, 13 (4): 375-396.
- Weber, M. (1946). Politics as a vocation. In H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (pp. 77-128). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Weber, M. (1947). *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*. New York: Free Press.
- Weber, M. (1964) [1922]. *The Sociology of Religion*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Wertheim, W. (1979). Who's plot? New light on the 1965 events. *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, 9 (2).
- Westfall, J. (2000). What is cyberwoman? The second sex in cyberspace. *Ethics and Information Technology*, 2 (3): 159-166.
- White, Jenny B. (2002). *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study in Vernacular Politics*. University of Washington Press.
- Widjojo, Muridan S. (1999). *Penakluk Rezim Orde Baru: Gerakan Mahasiswa '98*. Jakarta : Pustaka Sinar Harapan.
- Wikipedia (2005). Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved 30 March 2005 from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>
- Wilhelm, A. G. (1998). Virtual sounding boards: How deliberative is on-line political discussion. *Information, Communication and Society*, 1 (3): 313-338.
- Williams, Louise (2000). Censors: At work, censors out of work' in Williams, L. and Rich, R. (eds.) *Losing Control: Freedom of the Press in Asia* (pp. 1 – 15). Asia Pacific Press Canberra.
- Williams, Robin and Edge, David (1996). The Social Shaping of Technology. *Research Policy*, 25: 856-899.



- Winner, Langdon (1980). Do artifacts have politics? *Daedalus*, 109 (1): 121-36.
- Woods, Jackie (1996). Internet's hope in Indonesia. *Reportage*, Winter.
- Yds (2001). Mengganyang carder, si maling kartu kredit. *Intisari*, July.
- Yin, R. (1993). *Applications of Case Study Research*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. (1994). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.



---

## INDEX

- Abas, 141  
Abdurahman Wahid, 60, 142, 154  
Abel, 141, 195  
ABO, 151, 152  
access, 3, 12, 14, 16, 24, 27, 35, 43, 45, 50, 62, 65, 68, 71, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 94, 95, 96, 102, 108, 117, 120, 121, 133, 134, 142, 172, 181, 190  
activism, 2, 3, 4, 5, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 40, 43, 44, 47, 48, 49, 51, 93, 94, 95, 108, 109, 116, 117, 119, 127, 129, 130, 133, 135, 137, 148, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 188, 190, 191, 192, 207, 214  
Aditjondro, 9, 105, 106, 119, 120, 123, 128, 129, 141, 167, 169, 195, 196, 208  
affordance, 28, 127, 183  
affordances, 28, 184, 203  
Afghanistan, 158, 161  
Ahmad, 70, 141, 168, 196  
AI3-NET, 65, 68  
AJI, 106, 109, 110, 196  
AJINews, 107  
Al-Baqarah, 158  
Albright, 160  
alienation, 16  
Allen, 1, 14, 196, 206  
Al-Qaeda, 145, 154, 160, 213  
Ambonese, 140, 142, 162, 163, 197, 198  
AMBONnet, 146, 149  
Anas, 125  
Anderson, 37, 51, 189, 196, 197, 202, 205  
Annis, 14, 196  
*Antara*, 102  
Apakabar, 7, 9, 99, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 123, 126, 127, 151, 207  
APJII, 5, 64, 73, 125, 196  
apolitical, 57, 130  
Appadurai, 39, 186  
archipelago, 54, 60, 138, 140, 154, 173, 191  
Arendt, 175, 196  
ARPA, 19, 20  
ARPAnet, 19, 20  
Arquilla, 16, 46, 196, 210  
artefact, 11, 12, 28, 47, 179  
Ash, 14, 196  
Aslan, 176, 196  
audio, 47, 84, 158, 160  
Australia, 9, 99, 100, 101, 105, 107, 114, 203, 207, 210  
authorised party, 56, 57, 88  
authoritarian, 11, 12, 14, 15, 46, 50, 60, 95, 96, 97, 105, 129, 130, 131, 133, 137, 143, 188, 192, 202, 205  
autonomy, 26, 28, 29, 84, 183, 191, 192, 211  
AWARI, 77  
Ayers, 93, 201, 205, 207, 214  
Azca, 141, 196  
backbone, 20, 114  
Bahagijo, 113  
Baker, 153, 196  
Banks, 14, 197  
Barber, 2, 15, 16, 197  
Barker, 6, 21, 49, 50, 51, 53, 58, 59, 67, 68, 69, 70, 72, 77, 90, 180, 197  
Bartels, 141, 197  
Barzilai, 174, 197  
Basuki, 96, 102, 104, 108, 197

- BBS, 21, 66, 70, 71, 72, 75  
BCA, 89  
Bell, 4, 66, 197  
Benford, 44, 203, 211  
Beninger, 16, 197  
Bijker, 17, 197, 209  
Birkerts, 16, 197  
blind date, 84  
Boas, 4, 96, 128, 197, 204  
Bonchek, 33, 198  
Bonet, 75  
Bosnia, 158  
bottom-up, 78, 90  
Boyson, 14, 202  
Bräuchler, 144, 145, 146, 149, 150, 151, 163, 171, 198  
Breinlingger, 41  
broadcast, 28, 95, 97, 127, 150, 151, 190  
Browning, 4, 198  
Bubandt, 141, 172, 198  
Budge, 14, 198  
Buechler, 40, 198  
Builder, 14, 197  
Bunt, 186, 198  
bureaucratic, 144, 205  
business, 2, 54, 64, 72, 73, 75, 76, 82, 87, 88, 93, 105, 119, 120  
Castells, 2, 4, 16, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, 94, 131, 134, 174, 181, 184, 198, 213  
Catholic, 56, 101, 145, 151, 162  
CCDA, 145, 151  
cellular phone, 47, 95, 125  
chat, 36, 82, 84, 85, 121, 122, 124, 149, 161, 214  
chats, 84  
chatting, 6, 26, 36, 84, 85  
Chauvel, 139, 198  
Chechnya, 161  
Chiapas, 4, 46, 95, 96  
China, 4, 114, 128, 200, 204, 205, 213  
Christian, 17, 56, 90, 138, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144, 145, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 156, 160, 163, 164, 167, 169, 170, 172, 174  
Christianisation, 142, 159, 162, 164, 167  
Christianity, 39, 101, 138, 141, 163  
Christians, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 149, 150, 152, 153, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 167, 168, 169, 172, 197  
civic, 14, 57, 83, 107, 146  
civic space, 83  
civil society, 1, 2, 27, 35, 38, 42, 57, 79, 90, 128, 137  
Cleaver, 4, 33, 199  
CNRG, 68, 69, 70, 71, 75, 76, 78  
coffee shop, 83  
cognitive, 40, 41, 44, 45, 189  
Coleman, 14, 199  
collective action, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 31, 32, 33, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 93, 94, 98, 127, 129, 131, 137, 152, 171, 173, 176, 181, 182, 184, 186, 188, 189, 201, 205, 212  
collective identity, 33, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 95, 132, 135, 150, 182, 185, 187  
communal, 2, 4, 143, 154, 162, 172, 174  
communal contender, 143  
communication, 1, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 31, 33, 35, 37, 43, 53, 54, 71, 85, 94, 96, 97, 98, 114, 127, 134, 146, 148, 149, 151, 153, 156, 157, 161, 167, 169, 175, 181, 184, 189, 201, 203, 205, 207  
communication technology, 1, 20, 207  
communism, 50, 51, 56, 60, 113, 114, 118, 132, 202  
communist, 55, 56, 114  
community, 15, 16, 24, 35, 37, 38, 60, 68, 69, 70, 71, 83, 87, 95, 98, 101, 146, 150, 153, 159, 173, 174, 175, 191, 199, 212  
computer, 1, 3, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 61, 65, 66, 68, 70, 71, 74, 75, 79, 81, 83, 86, 90, 94, 95, 96, 98, 100, 108, 175, 181, 182, 184, 185, 198, 209, 210  
computer network, 13, 16, 21, 24, 61, 66, 68, 94, 100, 198, 209  
conflict, 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 44, 51, 54, 60, 124, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 167, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 176, 196, 198, 199  
connectivity, 23, 73, 164

- conspiracy, 9, 155, 158, 159, 160, 161, 163, 167, 170, 171, 172, 176, 189, 190  
 contemporary, 4, 35, 37, 38, 81, 83, 87, 94, 140, 180, 187, 192, 201  
 contentious, 42, 46, 98, 124, 189, 207  
 contestation, 48, 142  
 context, 4, 10, 12, 14, 34, 36, 38, 43, 45, 46, 47, 49, 52, 56, 65, 79, 86, 89, 113, 129, 130, 131, 135, 147, 150, 154, 164, 175, 176, 179, 190, 191, 192, 200  
 control, 5, 11, 12, 16, 26, 27, 32, 49, 51, 54, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, 76, 77, 79, 83, 88, 96, 98, 109, 110, 114, 127, 128, 133, 135, 139, 142, 183, 184, 190, 192, 205  
 conviviality, 3, 10, 18, 26, 29, 31, 90, 98, 127, 128, 134, 176, 180, 182, 183, 192  
 corruption, 54, 103, 106, 122, 188  
 Cox, 14, 199  
 creativity, 18  
 Cribb, 54, 199  
 criminal, 87, 89, 197  
 Crouch, 145  
 Crusader, 163  
 CSVI, 114, 117, 131  
 cultural, 2, 17, 33, 34, 36, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 57, 60, 79, 82, 85, 98, 104, 118, 130, 182, 185, 186, 188, 193, 201  
 cultural appropriation, 82  
 culture, 14, 24, 35, 36, 39, 44, 49, 60, 82, 84, 90, 97, 98, 104, 108, 111, 134, 148, 149, 182, 186, 191, 192, 202  
*curhat*, 84, 85  
 cyber, 2, 31, 35, 86, 134, 180, 202, 213  
 cyberactivism, 9, 31, 34, 93, 114, 146, 152, 181, 182  
 cybercrime, 85, 86, 87  
 cyberfraud, 86  
 cyber-*jihad*, 164  
 cyber-nation, 186  
 cyberspace, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 13, 15, 16, 32, 34, 36, 37, 39, 40, 43, 44, 45, 77, 78, 83, 85, 87, 94, 95, 98, 99, 100, 101, 104, 105, 106, 107, 109, 111, 112, 114, 115, 116, 118, 120, 123, 124, 126, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 134, 135, 137, 138, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 152, 162, 165, 167, 173, 174, 175, 176, 180, 181, 182, 184, 185, 186, 187, 189, 198, 205, 208, 214  
 Darjamoko, 100  
 Dayak, 148  
 Dean, 141, 199  
 deliberation, 14  
 democratic, 1, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 28, 29, 31, 46, 49, 90, 95, 135, 183, 205, 206, 214  
 democratisation, 4, 13, 14, 113  
 demonstration, 6, 77, 122, 125, 126, 127, 133, 153  
 Depdikbud, 140, 141, 199  
 deterministic, 16  
*Detik*, 76, 88, 106, 151, 199  
*Detik.com*, 76, 88, 151, 199  
 development, 1, 10, 12, 16, 17, 19, 22, 24, 31, 49, 52, 53, 55, 56, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 69, 70, 71, 75, 76, 78, 79, 85, 87, 90, 96, 100, 101, 106, 107, 114, 124, 132, 180, 183, 191, 201, 202, 211  
 Dhakidae, 50, 199  
 Diani, 43, 44, 93, 199  
 digital divide, 62, 74, 94, 181  
 DiMaggio, 28, 199  
 Disco, 50, 199  
 dissonance, 44, 45  
 distributed network, 19, 21, 23, 26, 27  
 DLM, 149, 150, 151  
 Dougan, 96  
 Douglass, 52, 53, 83, 90, 185, 199, 200, 214  
 Dutch, 52, 53, 54, 55, 71, 115, 117, 138, 139, 142, 149, 150, 151, 164, 172  
 Dwiarta, 7, 81, 84  
 Dyson, 1, 14, 200  
 dystopian, 1, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 29, 32  
 East, 50, 73, 86, 100, 103, 106, 107, 109, 113, 114, 118, 139, 173, 206, 208, 213  
 East Timor, 103, 106, 107, 113, 114, 118, 173  
 economy, 13, 38, 52, 53, 134, 192, 195  
*Editor*, 102, 106  
 Egypt, 157  
 elite, 70, 97, 128, 129, 135, 174, 184, 190  
 elites, 28, 32, 42, 43, 46, 48, 94, 95, 97, 98, 108, 123, 124, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 134, 152, 182, 188, 190, 191

- email, 7, 26, 66, 67, 68, 72, 75, 78, 84, 101, 102, 109, 110, 111, 114, 117, 120, 125
- empirical, 5, 10, 13, 29, 179, 180, 183
- empowerment, 5
- enactor, 79, 127
- Erikson, 44, 200
- Europe, 37, 66, 83, 116, 117, 131, 204, 205
- Evans, 17
- evolution, 24
- face-to-face, 6, 16, 35, 43, 95, 129, 153, 156, 188, 205
- Falun Gong, 4, 197
- fax machine, 95, 109, 121, 155, 156
- Ferdinand, 103, 104, 203
- Ferree, 41, 200
- Fidonet, 21
- fighter, 176
- filtering, 8, 9, 27, 44, 45, 46, 123, 124, 131, 132, 133, 182, 186, 187, 188
- Fisher, 13, 200
- FKAWJ, 152, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 166, 200, 212
- FKM, 163
- flow, 8, 9, 13, 26, 76, 101, 135, 175
- flows, 2, 5, 25, 26, 33, 34, 36, 45, 83, 85, 95, 98, 116, 122, 123, 127, 128, 129, 130, 132, 134, 182, 184, 186, 188
- Foucault, 4, 56, 200
- Fox, 2, 16, 200
- frame, 28, 41, 42, 44, 45, 131, 132, 167, 168, 184
- frame alignment, 41, 42, 44, 45, 131
- frames, 28, 42, 131, 162, 192
- Frederick, 14, 200, 201
- free rider, 135
- freedom, 28, 29, 57, 86, 87, 89, 90, 101, 106, 109, 113, 118, 183, 192
- Freeman, 1, 14, 39, 43, 200, 201
- fundamentalist, 55, 60, 78, 87, 150, 153, 165, 173, 174, 176
- fundraising, 8, 100, 156, 159, 166
- G30S, 50, 51, 55, 56, 103, 116, 117, 118
- Gamson, 1, 41, 201
- Ganley, 14, 201
- gebetan*, 84
- Germany, 9, 68, 107, 112, 116, 117
- Gibson, 28, 201
- Gilder, 14, 200, 201
- Ginting, 99
- Giugni, 42, 46, 201
- global, 2, 3, 5, 24, 27, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 46, 47, 66, 69, 88, 94, 95, 99, 108, 116, 119, 123, 128, 129, 134, 143, 146, 147, 148, 149, 158, 159, 161, 162, 170, 171, 172, 173, 176, 180, 185, 186, 191, 192, 196, 203
- global nation, 186
- global *ummah*, 173, 186
- globalisation, 4, 10, 31, 32, 33, 35, 38, 46, 62, 83, 181, 200
- Goffman, 42, 201
- Golkar, 53, 112, 113, 209
- Gomez, 33, 201
- gossip, 82, 85, 122, 130, 135, 189
- government, 2, 14, 16, 19, 20, 37, 39, 46, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 56, 57, 58, 60, 61, 62, 65, 72, 73, 74, 76, 78, 79, 83, 88, 96, 98, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 113, 114, 128, 129, 139, 140, 142, 143, 149, 152, 153, 155, 163, 169, 170, 171, 188, 192
- GPM, 162, 164
- graffiti, 82, 95, 160
- Graham, 2, 181, 201
- Grey Saturday, 109, 118
- grievance, 160
- guerrilla, 69, 77, 78, 95, 108, 139
- Gurak, 33, 94, 201
- Gurr, 143, 201
- Gus Dur, 104
- Gutstein, 2, 4, 201
- Habermas, 99, 201
- Habermasian, 15, 135, 146
- Habibie, 53, 54, 60, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 72, 100, 105, 139, 152
- Hackbart, 27, 201
- hacker, 87, 88, 89
- Hadi, 107
- Hague, 1, 117, 201, 206, 208
- Hakim, 158
- Hall, 39, 201
- Hamas, 161, 165
- Hanna, 14, 202
- hardcopy, 172

- hardware, 11, 19, 25, 29, 68, 70
- Harsono, 107, 108, 111, 202
- Harvey, 33, 202
- Haryanto, 89, 202
- Hasan, 145, 153, 167, 202
- Hefner, 141, 142, 146, 153, 154, 155, 167, 169, 189, 202
- hegemonic, 4, 31, 38, 88, 163
- Heim, 16
- Heryanto, 51, 52, 60, 189, 202
- hierarchy, 99, 173, 174
- Hine, 181, 203
- historical materialism, 142
- Hjarvard, 39, 203
- Holland, 117, 172
- holy, 87, 154, 162, 163, 168, 174, 175
- holy war, 87, 154, 162, 168, 174
- household, 191
- Huang, 145, 154, 203
- human, 4, 13, 15, 33, 37, 44, 47, 52, 62, 84, 94, 113, 115, 146, 149, 181, 184, 185, 187, 188, 191, 209
- human agency, 15, 181, 184
- Hunt, 132, 203
- Husain, 141, 196, 210, 213
- Hutchby, 184, 203
- ICG, 154
- ICMI, 100
- ICT, 1, 27, 155, 156
- identities, 2, 4, 5, 6, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 43, 45, 47, 57, 60, 88, 97, 104, 124, 126, 131, 132, 150, 171, 173, 176, 184, 185, 186, 187, 190, 202, 203, 206
- identity, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 32, 33, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 49, 51, 54, 56, 57, 60, 77, 86, 88, 89, 91, 95, 97, 98, 118, 119, 131, 132, 135, 143, 147, 150, 151, 152, 157, 159, 163, 173, 174, 176, 181, 182, 185, 186, 187, 188, 197, 198, 201, 205, 206, 208, 212
- identity filtering, 8, 9, 45, 131, 132, 186, 187, 188
- identity politics, 152, 176, 198
- ideograph, 124
- ideology, 14, 41, 44, 49, 50, 51, 52, 56, 60, 117, 131, 132, 138, 143, 147, 153, 156, 157, 164, 166, 168, 176, 181, 214
- IDS, 100, 101, 203
- IETF, 21, 24, 203
- IGC, 102, 103
- Illich, 3, 18, 28, 183, 203
- image, 57, 59, 60, 96, 149, 156, 157, 159, 160, 166
- imagination, 4, 18, 144, 150, 171, 186, 209, 211
- imagined community, 37
- Independen*, 106, 107
- individual, 3, 13, 18, 24, 28, 29, 32, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45, 56, 68, 89, 105, 129, 143, 191
- Indonesia, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 21, 27, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 81, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 120, 121, 123, 125, 127, 128, 129, 131, 132, 134, 135, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 157, 158, 159, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 171, 174, 176, 179, 180, 181, 183, 184, 185, 186, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214
- Indonesia Baru*, 120, 121, 129, 185, 203
- Indonesian culture, 82
- Indonesian Internet, 7, 49, 50, 64, 65, 66, 74, 78, 79, 87, 88, 90, 101, 123, 126, 150, 180, 190, 192
- Indoz-Net, 99, 103
- Indymedia, 94, 205
- information, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, 16, 21, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 34, 35, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 62, 76, 78, 79, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 91, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 107, 108, 109, 111, 114, 116, 117, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 144, 145, 146, 148, 149, 150, 152, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 162,

- 165, 167, 168, 169, 172, 174, 175, 176, 180, 182, 184, 186, 187, 188, 190, 191, 196, 197, 207, 213
- information flows, 5, 83, 116, 122, 123, 130, 134, 182, 186
- information highway, 13, 35
- infotainment, 16
- infrastructure, 19, 35, 46, 52, 61, 62, 67, 68, 69, 74, 78, 87, 100, 119, 201, 209
- interaction, 6, 15, 17, 33, 36, 50, 77, 129, 147, 175, 185
- intermodal, 48, 119, 134, 185
- intermodality, 118, 129, 131, 133, 134, 135, 165, 175, 182, 184, 185
- Internet, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 137, 138, 141, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 152, 153, 155, 156, 157, 158, 161, 164, 165, 166, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 211, 212, 213, 214
- Internet café, 3, 5, 6, 27, 50, 65, 74, 75, 79, 121
- Internet development, 10, 49, 61, 62, 69, 70, 79, 87, 90, 100, 183
- Internet Protocols, 24
- IP address, 25, 26, 27, 86
- IPTEKNET, 61, 65, 67, 68, 69
- Iraq, 161
- Islam, 39, 55, 56, 60, 78, 100, 101, 138, 140, 141, 155, 156, 158, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 176, 196, 199, 200, 202, 204, 211, 213
- Islamisation, 142, 152
- Isnet, 9, 99, 100, 101, 103, 212
- isolation, 16, 56
- ISP, 62, 63, 64, 65, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 79
- Israel, 153, 155, 170, 172
- ITB, 6, 65, 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 76, 77, 97, 100, 101, 125, 208
- Jakarta, 5, 6, 7, 9, 53, 63, 66, 69, 71, 72, 75, 76, 81, 84, 86, 93, 102, 108, 109, 110, 111, 113, 115, 121, 123, 126, 130, 141, 143, 151, 152, 153, 159, 160, 168, 169, 190, 191, 195, 199, 203, 204, 205, 206, 208, 209, 210, 212, 214
- Jakarta Post*, 102, 108, 109, 111, 151, 212
- Jameson, 187, 204
- Janus, 99, 101, 103, 210
- Japanese, 51, 58, 139, 199
- Java, 5, 50, 55, 62, 63, 66, 76, 77, 105, 109, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144, 147, 148, 166, 170, 171, 172, 173, 186, 189, 190, 191, 198
- Javanese, 120, 139, 176
- Jawa Pos*, 109
- Jemaah Islamiyah*, 145
- Jew, 163, 170, 206
- Jewish, 170, 206
- jihad*, 87, 137, 138, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 175, 176, 187, 190, 191
- Johnston, 41, 201, 203, 204, 207
- Jordan, 13, 94, 204
- journalist, 106, 118, 156
- junction, 39, 135, 186, 192
- Kalathil, 4, 96, 128, 204
- Kamarck, 1, 204
- Kashmir, 161
- Kastor, 156, 162, 167, 168, 204
- Katz, 14, 204
- KdP, 107, 116, 208
- Kecoak, 88
- Kelley, 145, 205
- Kellner, 95, 205
- Kelly, 41, 205
- Kemp, 27, 50, 79, 209
- Kerbo, 41, 205
- Kidd, 94, 205
- King, 144, 205
- Kissinger, 160



- Kitley, 5, 60, 205  
 Klandermans, 41, 46, 129, 133, 201, 205  
 KlikBCA, 89, 210  
 Kling, 13, 15, 197, 205  
 Kluver, 4, 205, 206  
 KNIL, 139  
*Kompas*, 102, 108, 109, 151  
 Koran, 56, 125, 157, 165, 173  
 Kuli Tinta, 107  
 Kurniawan, 113  
 Lanang, 113  
 Lane, 113, 205  
 language, 24, 35, 37, 54, 61, 103, 123, 151, 152, 161  
 Large, 6, 17, 196, 200, 205  
 Laskar Jihad, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 137, 138, 145, 146, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 180, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 190, 191, 196, 200, 202, 203, 212  
 Laskar Jihad Online, 10, 137, 145, 152, 157, 158, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 175, 180  
 Law, 17, 61, 197  
 LBH, 113  
 Lebanon, 161  
 Lefebvre, 5, 190, 205  
 left-wing, 117  
 legitimacy, 4, 14, 16, 52, 131, 174  
 legitimising identity, 38  
 Lerner, 1, 206  
*lesehan*, 80, 81, 83  
 Levy, 13  
 Liebman, 174, 206  
 Lim, 5, 57, 59, 60, 69, 74, 76, 81, 84, 124, 149, 152, 153, 157, 158, 162, 197, 206  
 linkage, 41, 42, 94, 131, 138, 144, 148, 165  
 Loader, 1, 201, 206, 208  
 local, 2, 4, 21, 24, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 46, 47, 55, 58, 67, 71, 73, 77, 81, 82, 84, 95, 113, 124, 128, 129, 134, 135, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 151, 158, 159, 165, 167, 172, 173, 175, 176, 180, 186, 187, 191, 195, 196  
 Locke, 1, 206  
 Logie, 94, 201  
 Luke, 15, 16, 206  
 Lyon, 4, 207  
 Lyotard, 4, 187, 207  
 MacCarthy, 41, 207  
 MacDougall, 99, 102, 103, 104, 108, 117, 118, 119, 123, 207  
 MacKenzie, 17, 207  
*madrakah*, 155  
 Mahdi, 117, 118, 207  
 mailing list, 6, 7, 8, 9, 42, 45, 73, 77, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 106, 108, 116, 119, 120, 123, 125, 126, 127, 146, 149, 150, 151, 152, 157, 161, 162, 164, 165, 174, 176, 182  
 Maluku, 55, 138, 139, 149, 150, 151, 156, 162, 163, 164, 168, 171, 195, 196, 198, 199, 202, 203, 204, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213, 214  
 Manin, 145, 207  
 Manuputty, 163  
 Marcus, 96, 207  
 marginalisation, 56  
 Marsinah, 98, 108, 109, 119, 164  
 Marxism, 113, 117  
 Maryani, 97  
*Masariku*, 145, 150, 151  
 mass media, 16, 46, 47, 197  
 mass mobilisation, 124, 132  
 McAdam, 42, 46, 133, 207  
 McCaughey, 93, 201, 205, 207, 214  
 McRae, 111, 185, 207  
 media, 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, 16, 26, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 52, 54, 60, 61, 62, 79, 90, 93, 94, 95, 97, 98, 102, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 116, 117, 118, 119, 124, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134, 135, 137, 138, 146, 147, 148, 150, 151, 153, 155, 156, 159, 161, 164, 165, 167, 168, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 180, 182, 183, 184, 185, 188, 189, 190, 192, 196, 197, 200, 202, 203, 211  
*Media Dakwah*, 167, 207  
*Media Indonesia*, 108, 109  
 Melucci, 33, 40, 41, 207, 208  
 meta-narrative, 4, 9, 55, 56, 132, 133, 141, 148, 155, 164, 168, 170, 176, 187, 188, 190, 191

- meta-narratives, 4, 38, 40, 52, 54, 55, 124, 132, 140, 147, 162, 164, 165, 167, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 176, 181, 182, 187, 188, 189, 190
- Mexico, 4, 33, 46, 95, 96, 210
- Michaelson, 42
- middle class, 159, 191
- military, 19, 20, 26, 50, 51, 106, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 117, 118, 126, 127, 139, 142, 143, 153, 163, 168, 172, 195
- Miller, 34, 36, 80, 181, 206, 208
- Mills, 186, 208, 214
- mobilisation, 3, 4, 5, 34, 39, 41, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 95, 98, 119, 124, 125, 129, 132, 134, 135, 153, 171, 172, 182, 188
- modem, 68, 71
- Mohammadi, 47, 95, 171, 212
- Moluccan, 2, 7, 9, 10, 55, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 158, 161, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 170, 172, 173, 174, 198, 210
- Moluccas, 5, 55, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 181, 187, 189, 190, 191, 197, 210, 213
- Moore, 2, 208
- Morley, 37, 208
- MP3, 84
- Mrazek, 90, 208
- Muhammadiyah, 153
- Muin, 100
- mujahedeen*, 154, 155
- Mulgan, 1, 14, 208
- Mumford, 11, 12, 208
- Munindo*, 7, 9, 105, 119, 123, 195, 208
- Muslim, 56, 78, 87, 100, 101, 137, 139, 140, 141, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 149, 150, 152, 153, 154, 155, 158, 160, 162, 163, 164, 165, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 176, 186, 202
- Nahdlatul Ulama*, 153
- Napitupulu, 125
- narrative, 4, 6, 61, 75, 120, 140, 155, 163, 171, 172, 179, 188, 189
- narratives, 4, 6, 10, 31, 38, 54, 132, 133, 140, 147, 168, 172, 176, 182, 188, 189
- national, 19, 33, 35, 36, 37, 39, 47, 49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 70, 73, 74, 76, 88, 90, 95, 99, 101, 111, 112, 113, 114, 127, 128, 129, 139, 141, 144, 146, 147, 151, 159, 166, 170, 171, 173, 174, 186, 191, 196, 202, 208, 212
- national unity, 51, 52, 55, 59, 60, 61, 90, 139
- nationalism, 37, 39, 52, 55, 139, 167, 173, 176, 186, 197, 198
- nationalist, 39, 52, 54, 55, 59, 124, 139, 140, 141, 162, 164, 168, 170, 176
- nation-state, 32, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 52, 55, 128, 132, 140, 164, 173, 186, 191
- nation-states, 3, 32, 39, 40, 47, 173
- Negroponte, 1, 14, 208
- Nelson, 50, 208
- network society, 4, 9, 10, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 46, 47, 181, 213
- new media, 95, 98, 146, 202
- New Order, 10, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 90, 96, 97, 103, 104, 110, 116, 123, 137, 142, 152, 167, 180, 183, 186, 188, 192, 197, 205, 214
- newspaper, 9, 28, 95, 105, 107, 110, 118, 121, 124, 130, 168
- non-Western, 4, 179, 192, 193
- North, 55, 66, 83, 85, 141, 191, 192, 198, 200, 213
- Norton, 44, 200, 208
- NSF, 20, 21
- NSFnet, 21
- Nye, 1, 204
- Oesman, 141, 168, 196
- offline, 3, 6, 8, 9, 34, 43, 84, 85, 146, 148, 152, 153, 176, 181, 185
- off-stage, 90
- Ohorella, 140, 141, 208
- online, 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 14, 20, 32, 34, 36, 43, 46, 48, 70, 84, 85, 86, 87, 95, 102, 103, 106, 107, 108, 109, 113, 115, 116, 117, 120, 146, 147, 148, 149, 151, 152, 161, 163, 164, 166, 171, 179, 180, 181, 184, 185, 186, 187, 206, 209, 214
- on-stage, 90
- opposition, 51, 54, 112, 114, 117, 132, 175, 187, 196

- Orwell, 2, 14, 208  
 otherness, 133  
 packet switching, 19, 21, 23, 26  
 Padang, 166  
 Pakkanna, 141, 168, 195  
 Pakpahan, 113  
 Palapa, 53, 59  
 Palestine, 143, 147, 158, 161  
 Panoptic, 1, 49, 180  
 Panopticon, 3, 56, 57, 59  
 Panuju, 97  
 Parapak, 62  
 Parokinet, 9, 99, 100, 101  
*pasar*, 83, 203  
 password, 73  
 patron-client, 143  
 Pattiradjawane, 141, 195  
 Paulsen, 133, 207  
 PAU-Mikro-Net, 100, 103  
 PDI, 76, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 119, 132  
*pela gandong*, 143  
*Pembebasan*, 114, 203  
*pesantren*, 78  
 PGP, 116, 208  
 photocopy, 119, 129, 185, 211  
 PIJAR, 7, 9, 106, 107, 115, 116, 117, 119, 123, 204, 208  
 PIPA, 107  
 PKI, 50, 51, 55, 56, 103, 113, 114, 116, 117, 118, 189, 213  
 platform, 36, 101, 151, 161  
*Pointer*, 76  
 polarisation, 13  
 political, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 29, 31, 32, 37, 38, 40, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 61, 72, 84, 85, 90, 93, 94, 95, 96, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 110, 112, 113, 116, 117, 118, 119, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134, 135, 137, 140, 142, 143, 144, 146, 149, 152, 154, 155, 159, 167, 169, 170, 172, 173, 174, 175, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195, 198, 200, 206, 214  
 political contention, 123  
 political prisoner, 103, 112, 113  
 politics, 1, 3, 11, 13, 14, 16, 29, 42, 46, 49, 50, 51, 52, 56, 60, 61, 64, 82, 89, 90, 93, 94, 98, 101, 108, 113, 121, 128, 130, 131, 133, 135, 137, 143, 152, 167, 176, 180, 182, 183, 184, 189, 190, 192, 193, 198, 202, 207, 214  
 Pool, 14, 127, 209  
 pornography, 85, 87, 108  
 Poso, 137, 154, 158, 199  
 Poster, 13, 209  
 post-national, 37, 39, 186  
 power, 2, 3, 4, 11, 14, 19, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 32, 37, 38, 39, 40, 45, 50, 51, 53, 54, 77, 88, 93, 96, 97, 98, 117, 128, 129, 132, 134, 141, 143, 147, 153, 163, 169, 175, 176, 183, 186, 206, 210  
 power relation, 19, 29, 32, 40, 147  
 PPP, 56, 113  
 Pranowo, 113  
 PRD, 7, 98, 110, 113, 114, 115, 117, 119, 123, 128, 129, 131, 132, 203  
 pro-democracy, 104, 106, 108, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 119, 132, 134, 137, 188  
 project identity, 38, 131, 174  
 pro-labour, 117  
 protest, 34, 46, 77, 95, 96, 109, 111, 119, 133, 171, 190, 201, 205  
 Protestant, 138, 145, 162  
 protocol, 25  
 Puar, 139, 209  
 public, 1, 5, 14, 15, 16, 27, 37, 49, 51, 52, 53, 55, 57, 60, 66, 68, 72, 74, 80, 82, 83, 85, 87, 89, 93, 94, 103, 104, 105, 108, 109, 111, 112, 113, 115, 121, 130, 134, 135, 145, 146, 153, 159, 162, 166, 190, 202, 205, 206, 214  
 public bath, 83  
 public space, 5, 52, 55, 57, 87  
 public sphere, 1, 14, 15, 57, 135, 145, 146, 205, 214  
 Purbo, 65, 68, 59, 70, 71, 76, 77, 78, 79, 87, 88, 90, 99, 125, 179, 180  
 Purwinto, 101  
 PWI, 106  
 Qiu, 4, 205  
 radical, 2, 4, 16, 78, 87, 104, 145, 160, 167, 173, 175, 176, 188, 213

- radical movement, 145, 175, 188  
radio, 1, 28, 60, 66, 68, 69, 70, 71, 76, 77, 78,  
90, 94, 95, 97, 106, 110, 172, 202, 208  
radio mechanic, 90, 208  
radio packet, 68, 78  
Rahardjo, 100  
RAND, 19, 197  
real world, 3, 4, 31, 35, 37, 40, 44, 46, 48, 87,  
147, 148, 152, 180, 186, 188  
real-time, 21, 26, 27  
Rebel-Net, 79  
Reeve, 144, 209  
*reformasi*, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98,  
103, 118, 119, 122, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128,  
129, 130, 131, 133, 134, 135, 137, 142, 180,  
184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 190, 191, 192  
Reid, 185, 209  
religion, 55, 56, 60, 78, 101, 131, 141, 149,  
150, 152, 157, 158, 171, 172, 173, 175, 176,  
186, 198  
religious, 4, 39, 54, 57, 60, 78, 82, 142, 149,  
150, 152, 154, 156, 157, 167, 170, 171, 172,  
173, 174, 175, 176, 187, 197  
*Republika*, 107, 108, 109, 164, 167, 168  
resistance, 2, 4, 13, 31, 33, 34, 38, 55, 77, 78,  
88, 89, 105, 111, 116, 119, 123, 124, 126,  
129, 131, 132, 137, 162, 174, 182, 184, 186,  
187, 206  
resistance identity, 38, 88, 89, 131, 174, 187  
Reuter, 102  
revolution, 1, 14, 17, 35, 47, 96, 127, 134, 196,  
211  
revolutionary, 2, 35, 50, 135, 148, 192  
Rheingold, 1, 4, 14, 37, 94, 186, 209  
riot, 46, 111  
Rip, 27, 50, 79, 90, 127, 197, 199, 209  
ritual, 148  
RMS, 55, 139, 140, 141, 149, 152, 162, 163,  
164, 170, 173, 204  
Robins, 17, 209  
Ronfeldt, 4, 210  
Rothkopf, 186, 210  
RRI, 151  
RT, 58, 78  
Rucht, 46, 205, 207  
rumour, 88, 124, 130, 172, 183, 188, 189, 190  
RW, 58  
*Sabili*, 167, 210  
sabre, 168  
Sachs, 33, 210  
Said, 117, 118  
Salafism, 155, 156, 166, 173, 204  
Salafist, 154, 158, 165  
*Salafy*, 154, 155, 156, 161, 162, 166  
*Salafy jihadis*, 155  
Salampessy, 141, 143, 196, 210, 213  
Samudra, 87, 196, 210, 211  
SARA, 60, 101, 212  
Saudi Arabia, 154, 155, 157, 158, 161, 174  
Schudson, 1, 210  
Schulte Nordholt, 52, 53, 144, 210, 212  
Schulze, 141, 153, 155  
Scott, 51, 89, 96, 203, 210, 211  
secular, 149, 151, 152, 164, 175, 187  
Sembiring, 113  
Shoesmith, 5, 211  
*SiaR*, 7, 106, 107, 117, 119, 211  
Singgih, 105  
Siskamling, 58  
Slama, 84, 85, 211  
Slater, 34, 36, 80, 181, 208  
Slouka, 15, 211  
small media, 46, 47, 48, 95, 171, 184  
Snow, 41, 42, 44, 131, 132, 203, 211  
social fabric, 122  
social interaction, 17, 77, 185  
social movement, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 32,  
33, 40, 41, 42, 43, 48, 49, 89, 93, 94, 127,  
133, 134, 135, 181, 199, 200, 201, 204, 205,  
207, 212  
social relations, 18, 29, 34, 35, 36, 40, 60, 84,  
85, 93, 98, 127, 174  
social relationship, 18, 35, 40, 85, 174  
social shaping, 17  
social space, 36, 79, 82, 83, 87, 99, 101, 150,  
181  
society, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17,  
18, 26, 27, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37,  
38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 49, 52, 54,  
56, 57, 60, 62, 77, 78, 79, 85, 86, 87, 88,  
90, 94, 97, 98, 108, 113, 117, 118, 121, 122,  
128, 129, 131, 132, 134, 135, 137, 141, 146,

- 163, 169, 176, 179, 181, 182, 183, 184, 186,  
187, 188, 191, 193, 213, 214
- socio-technical, 12, 17, 209
- Soedarman, 113
- Soegjoko, 73, 211
- Soerjadi, 109, 110, 111
- software, 19, 24, 25, 29, 66, 70, 71, 86, 101,  
162
- Soros, 16
- South, 55, 100, 139, 141, 162, 191, 193, 213
- space, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 15, 20, 31, 33, 34, 35,  
36, 40, 42, 44, 49, 52, 56, 57, 60, 61, 77,  
78, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 93, 95, 96, 99, 101,  
104, 108, 109, 112, 113, 115, 117, 123, 124,  
127, 128, 129, 131, 132, 133, 135, 138, 146,  
148, 149, 150, 162, 165, 173, 176, 180, 181,  
182, 185, 199, 206
- spaces, 2, 5, 8, 15, 33, 38, 39, 49, 52, 55, 56,  
57, 58, 79, 82, 83, 84, 85, 87, 93, 98, 99,  
101, 118, 134, 135, 137, 146, 149, 176, 181,  
184, 190, 200, 201
- spaces of flows, 184
- spaces of places, 33, 184
- Spyer, 95, 144, 172, 211, 212
- Sreberny-Mohammadi, 47, 95, 171, 212
- status quo, 38, 95
- Stewart, 29, 212
- Stoll, 15, 16, 212
- street, 6, 36, 57, 77, 80, 82, 93, 95, 111, 115,  
117, 122, 125, 126, 127, 148, 153, 166, 172
- Suara Hidayatullah*, 97, 100, 167, 212
- Suara Pembaharuan*, 109
- Suharto, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54,  
55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 67, 72, 88, 93, 96, 97,  
98, 104, 105, 106, 108, 109, 110, 111, 113,  
114, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123,  
124, 126, 127, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 137,  
139, 142, 143, 152, 154, 183, 184, 186, 187,  
188, 189, 190, 192, 195, 197, 206, 207, 211
- Sukarno, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 109, 117, 132,  
139, 142, 189, 211
- Sunggiardi, 75, 76, 212
- Supangkat, 101
- surveillance, 3, 27, 49, 56, 57, 58, 60
- switching, 19, 21, 22, 23, 26, 84, 197
- sword, 156, 168
- Syarifuddin, 110, 156, 166, 202
- tabligh akbar*, 153
- Tabloid Oposisi*, 167, 212
- taboo, 87, 101, 110, 130
- tapol*, 109, 111, 112
- Tarrow, 42, 46, 207, 212
- taxi, 9, 121, 122, 129, 130
- Taylor, 41, 197, 205, 212
- TCP/IP, 25, 26, 66, 68, 209
- techno-landscape, 10
- technological, 53
- technology, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15,  
16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28,  
29, 31, 32, 33, 37, 42, 45, 49, 50, 61, 66,  
67, 68, 70, 71, 75, 76, 78, 79, 81, 82, 84,  
85, 90, 93, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 100, 102,  
103, 106, 107, 108, 117, 127, 128, 134, 135,  
144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 150, 153, 156, 162,  
174, 176, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 191,  
192, 202, 207, 209
- television, 27, 28, 55, 56, 60, 90, 95, 97, 110,  
111, 127, 205
- TelkomNet, 73, 74
- Tempo*, 98, 102, 106, 107, 108, 109, 125, 151
- Tempo Interaktif*, 107
- temporal, 175
- Ternate, 140, 141, 148
- Thalib, 145, 153, 154, 155, 156, 159, 160, 163,  
164, 166, 200, 212
- Thomas, 145, 201, 203, 209, 212
- Thompson, 96
- Thukul, 115
- Tickle, 111, 212
- Ticoalu, 118
- Tidore, 140, 141
- time, 11, 15, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 35,  
37, 39, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 51, 52, 53, 57,  
60, 67, 70, 75, 78, 82, 83, 85, 88, 96, 97,  
98, 99, 101, 102, 103, 104, 107, 108, 110,  
115, 118, 119, 121, 122, 124, 125, 128, 130,  
132, 135, 148, 159, 163, 166, 168, 173, 183,  
185, 186, 191, 192
- time-space compression, 33
- Tiras, 105, 212
- Toer, 113, 118
- Toffler, 1, 2, 14, 16, 200, 212, 213

- Tomagola, 144, 213  
top-bottom, 90  
totalitarianism, 16  
Toulouse, 15, 206  
Trabelsi, 145, 213  
traditional, 20, 34, 35, 43, 47, 48, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 87, 90, 94, 95, 96, 98, 106, 107, 123, 127, 129, 133, 134, 135, 137, 142, 153, 156, 165, 166, 173, 175, 182, 183, 184, 190, 192  
traditional media, 43, 98, 106, 135, 137, 153, 167, 182, 183, 184  
transformation, 2, 42, 50, 79, 191  
transnational, 33, 39, 186, 212  
Tridjono, 141  
Trinidad, 36  
true believer, 135, 187  
truth, 4, 13, 45, 56, 79, 132, 133, 175, 177, 183, 186, 188, 189, 190  
Tsui, 4, 213  
Tuasikal, 141, 213  
Turtle, 39, 185, 213  
TVRI, 127, 151  
*ummah*, 40, 169, 170, 173, 186  
university, 5, 20, 24, 65, 66, 68, 73, 77, 83, 95, 101, 103, 117, 126, 156, 167  
urban, 58, 76, 77, 83, 122, 128, 129, 130, 134, 159, 166, 183, 190, 191, 201, 206  
URL, 84, 107, 112, 116, 117, 149, 150, 151, 165  
utopian, 1, 2, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 29, 32, 146  
van Bruinessen, 153, 154, 155, 167  
van der Meulen, 199  
van Dijk, 34, 46, 93  
van Klinken, 105, 110, 143, 144  
Verbeek, 47  
video, 47, 161, 172  
vigilante, 137  
violence, 2, 8, 87, 88, 127, 137, 138, 141, 142, 143, 147, 148, 152, 154, 158, 170, 172, 176, 189, 195, 198, 202, 203, 211, 214  
virtual, 7, 35, 37, 77, 85, 95, 161, 176, 185, 199, 206, 207, 213  
*Visi N21*, 62  
Wacjman, 17  
Wahyono, 100  
WALHI, 113  
Ward, 14, 214  
*warnet*, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 50, 65, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 98, 114, 116, 121, 123, 128, 129, 130, 134, 148, 180, 181, 185, 190, 191, 192, 206  
warrior, 154, 162  
*warung*, 9, 74, 75, 80, 81, 82, 83, 85, 122, 129, 130  
Waskul, 185, 214  
Weber, 174, 214  
website, 89, 99, 108, 112, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 120, 121, 126, 129, 145, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 166, 168, 174  
Webster, 17, 209  
Western, 57, 156, 163, 186, 205  
Westfall, 185, 214  
Whittier, 41, 212  
Widjojo, 93, 214  
Widodo, 101  
Wilhelm, 2, 214  
Winner, 11, 12, 16, 214  
Winter, 50, 208, 214  
wireless, 78  
W-Net, 61, 73, 75, 76, 88  
Woods, 107, 214  
Wright, 13, 200, 214  
WWW, 31, 99  
Xinhua, 102  
yahoo, 150, 199  
yahoogroups, 67, 68, 73, 77, 101  
Yemen, 154, 158  
Yin, 6, 215  
YLBHI, 109  
Zald, 41, 200, 207  
Zapatista, 4, 33, 46, 95, 96, 210  
Zimmer, 14  
Zionist, 163  
Zionists-Crusaders, 163, 167, 174

---

## SUMMARY

This dissertation tries to provide insights into the dynamics of Internet-politics relations by looking at how the Internet was used in transition period — within two different political circumstances: the late period of Suharto and the post-Suharto period — for political activism. Using Indonesia as a local site of the nexus struggles over the choice, use and transformation of the Internet, this dissertation attempts to show how the Internet interplays with power struggles, and how the creation and assertion of identity become a focal point of contests over power. Two case studies are examined that view these processes of localisation and identity formation. The first case study is the uses of the Internet in facilitating the May 1998 *reformasi*. This study shows how the Internet was instrumental in facilitating political activism that contributed to establishing collective action and popular social movement that led to the downfall of Suharto in May 1998. The second case study concerns the uses of the Internet by *Laskar Jihad* (Jihad Troopers), a radical militia group involved in the Moluccan conflict. This case shows how the Internet became a site for reviving of primordial, ethno-religious, and communal identities that then supported the collective act of violence.

This dissertation shows how political activism on the Internet is linked to non-computer based activities. Using the Indonesian situation, this dissertation demonstrates that in studying Internet-society relations, one cannot stay only within the ethereal realm of cyberspace, nor isolate the Internet as a secluded space that is separated from any activities in a real world setting. Further, in facilitating political activism, as the case studies show, the Internet is not detached from the non-cyberspace realm but, rather, corresponds with it. In addition, this dissertation also demonstrates that while the Internet does change the global-local dynamics of political activism, the Internet also corresponds with the socio-political terrain of nation-states and other localities.

The main intended contribution of this dissertation is to explain the relationship between the Internet and political activism by means of four key perspectives. Here, in this dissertation, the focus is on a brief moment of history covering just less than one decade. In investigating the interplay between technology and society during this period, the analysis reveals that the dynamics of social change do not form linear pathways, but pathways are instead marked by breaking points and disjuncture that have no pre-conceived or necessary future destinations. In the milieu of politics, culture and economic

structures, the Internet as technology is found to play a critical yet ultimately indeterminate role.

The reasons for its particular role in society are partly explained by the first perspective, namely, the **conviviality** of the Internet. This endows it with certain characteristics that make it less amenable to domination by a small number of elites or, for that matter, any fraction of society. Linking the question of conviviality with the phenomenon of cyberactivism, this dissertation argues that while the Internet has potential for supporting and generating collective action, the Internet cannot and will not replace the importance of prevailing cultural and interpersonal linkages in collective actions.

Thus, **intermodality**, the second perspective, is needed to link the Internet and other networks, 'the more traditional media' and non-media social networks, especially if it is to support the generation of inclusive collective action that includes ordinary citizens in addition to the elites. Insights from the third perspective, **identity formation and filtering**, come into play in showing the ways in which information flows in the Internet and other networks and is directed and targeted at building identity for collective actions. Identity filtering and the capacity to transform identity from resistance to social projects are key elements that reveal how the Internet is implicated in changing alliances and forms of social mobilisation.

The final key perspective is the idea of **meta-narratives**. As a convivial space for certain groups of people to direct and target information flows for collective identity formation, the Internet can be a tool to amplify collective actions and the narratives of resistance created by a group. The amplified narratives have the potential to be meta-narratives, which are often constructed as a non-negotiable truth that can mobilise collective power beyond an initial episode.

In addition to these four key perspectives, and drawing from two case studies this dissertation also posits two additional insights that are specific to case studies, namely: (1) the Internet and the politics of rumour and (2) Internet-enabled collective activism as an urban phenomenon.

Additionally, this dissertation also shows that the 'context' makes the outcomes of the development and the use of a technology of the Internet differ from place to place. Context is on the 'where' and the 'when' of the Internet being introduced, reinvented, developed and used (and perhaps re-introduced, re-developed and used in new ways). The 'where' and the 'when' do matter, and these make the case of Indonesia different from other cases, even in Southeast Asia. The task of research is not to fit all experiences into a single glass slipper, but to explain differences as well as similarities based on rigorous theoretical and methodological approaches that can abstract from history but without falsifying it.

The Indonesian situation analysed in this dissertation is not presented as universal. To gain a rich understanding of the complex dynamics of relationships between the Internet and politics, much more comparative research in other settings is needed. The Indonesian situation provides a contrast to many Western-centric/global North



works that often unconsciously or implicitly claim to be the general case. Yet, while this dissertation may represent one ‘developing country’s’ case as a sort of antidote to the over-generalisations in mainstream literature, it of course does not represent all of developing countries or the so-called South.

While this dissertation posits general implications and gives a general validation of the usefulness of the analytical concepts it pulls together, more research in non-Western contexts is needed to understand better how the Internet unfolds under various historical, social, political and cultural dimensions. Only then can the classic dichotomy in ways of knowing between descriptive case studies and abstract theoretical constructs be bridged in a manner that avoids the excesses of each alone. This dissertation can be used as one possible step toward fruitful comparative research. The methods and concepts used in this dissertation can be applied to study the relationship of the Internet and society (politics) in other places, not only to find similarities — and thus perhaps can draw general patterns — but also to hopefully help show differences.



---

## SAMENVATTING

Deze dissertatie beoogt inzicht te bieden in de dynamische relaties tussen het internet en de politiek door te analyseren hoe internet werd gebruikt voor politieke actievoering in twee verschillende politieke episodes, namelijk de nadagen van Soeharto en de periode na Soeharto. Door Indonesië te gebruiken als de lokale plaats van handeling voor de strijd over de keuze, de toepassing en de verandering van het internet, probeert deze dissertatie te laten zien hoe internet functioneert in deze machtsstrijd en hoe de vorming en consolidatie van identiteit centrale punten worden voor die strijd. Twee casussen worden onderzocht om deze processen tussen lokale plaats en identiteitsvorming te bestuderen. De eerste casus gaat over het gebruik en het profijt van internet tijdens de *reformasi* in mei-1998. Deze studie laat zien hoe internet instrumenteel gebruikt kon worden voor politieke acties die bijdroegen aan gezamenlijke actievoering en een door het volkgesteunde sociale beweging die leidden tot Soeharto's aftreden in mei 1998. De tweede casus richt zich op het gebruik van internet door de *Laskar Jihad*, een radicale militia groepering die betrokken was bij het conflict in de Molukken. Deze casus toont aan hoe het internet de ruimte werd waar primordiale, etno-religieuze en gemeenschapsidentiteiten zo konden herleven dat zij bijdroegen aan collectieve daden van geweld.

Deze dissertatie toont aan hoe politiek activisme op het internet verbonden is met politieke activiteiten die niet aan de computer zijn gebonden. Door de Indonesische situatie te onderzoeken, toont deze dissertatie aan dat men bij de bestudering van internet-samenleving relaties zich niet kan beperken tot de buiten de werkelijkheid staande cyberspace, noch dat men het internet als een aparte ruimte kan isoleren van andere activiteiten in de aardse werkelijkheid. Verder blijkt het internet, doordat het politieke activiteiten vergemakkelijkt zoals de casussen aantonen, niet los te staan van de niet-cyberspace ruimte, maar daar eerder mee verbonden is. Bovendien laat deze dissertatie ook zien dat, hoewel internet de globale-locale dynamiek van politieke actievoering verandert, het ook verbonden is met sociaal-politieke domeinen, zoals de natiestaat en andere administratieve eenheden.

De belangrijkste bijdrage die deze dissertatie beoogt, is de relatie uiteen te zetten tussen internet en politieke actievoering aan de hand van vier hoofdperspectieven. Hierbij ligt in deze dissertatie de nadruk op een korte historische periode van iets minder dan één decade. Een analyse van het onderzoek naar de wisselwerking tussen technologie en

samenleving onthult dat de dynamiek van sociale verandering niet langs rechte paden verloopt, maar in plaats daarvan gekenmerkt wordt door lijnen met breek- en omslagpunten die niet noodzakelijkerwijs tot tevoren vastgestelde toekomstige bestemmingen leiden. Binnen de politieke, culturele en economische structuren blijkt internet een cruciale, maar uiteindelijk niet een beslissende, rol te spelen.

De reden voor deze bijzondere rol binnen de samenleving kan gedeeltelijk verklaard worden door het eerste perspectief, namelijk de *conviviality* ['gezelligheid'/gebruiksvriendelijkheid] van internet. Dit verleent het internet bepaalde kenmerken waardoor internet minder makkelijk door kleine elite groepen binnen de samenleving of om dezelfde reden, door welke groepering binnen de samenleving dan ook, kan worden gedomineerd. Door dit perspectief van *conviviality* te combineren met cyberspace actievoering, stelt deze dissertatie dat hoewel internet de mogelijkheden heeft om collectieve actie te ontketenen en te ondersteunen, het internet het belang van bestaande culturele en persoonlijke relaties binnen dit gezamenlijke actievoeren niet kan en niet zal vervangen.

Daarom is het tweede perspectief, de *intermodality* [de onderlinge verbondenheid van verschillende netwerken], nodig om het internet te koppelen aan andere netwerken, de 'meer traditionele media' en de non-media sociale netwerken, vooral wanneer het gaat om het ondernemen van acties waarbij naast de elite ook gewone burgers zijn betrokken. Inzichten verkregen uit het derde perspectief, *identity formation* en *filtering*, [identiteitsvorming en het uifilteren daarvan], zijn van belang omdat daardoor duidelijk wordt op welke wijze informatie verloopt binnen het internet en binnen andere netwerken en hoe deze informatie wordt gericht op en gebruikt voor het vormen van identiteit ten behoeve van gezamenlijk handelen. Het uifilteren van identiteiten en de mogelijkheid tot het omvormen van identiteit van verzetsacties tot sociale projecten zijn sleutelementen die openbaren op welke wijze het internet betrokken is bij de verandering van samenwerkingsverbanden en vormen van sociale mobiliteit.

Het laatste sleutelperspectief is de idee van *meta-narratives*. Het internet kan, als een gebruiksvriendelijke ruimte voor bepaalde groepen mensen, door een gerichte sturing van informatiestromen in het belang van collectieve identiteitsvorming, een instrument worden dat die gezamenlijke acties en de verhalen van verzet, door een groep bedacht, uitvergroot. Die uitvergroete verhalen hebben het vermogen uit te groeien tot *meta-narratives*, vaak ontworpen als een niet-onderhandelbare waarheid die, ook na het eerste begin, gezamenlijke macht kan mobiliseren.

Naast deze vier sleutel perspectieven, en gebaseerd op de twee casussen, bevat deze dissertatie nog twee inzichten die specifiek zijn voor casussen, namelijk: (1) het internet en de politiek van het gerucht en (2) het door het internet veroorzaakt gezamenlijk handelen is een stedelijk verschijnsel.

Bovendien, toont deze dissertatie ook aan dat de 'context' het resultaat van de ontwikkeling en het gebruik van de technologie van internet doet verschillen van plaats tot plaats. Context betreft het 'waar' en het 'wanneer' het internet wordt geïntroduceerd,

opnieuw uitgevonden, ontwikkeld en gebruikt (en misschien opnieuw geïntroduceerd, herontwikkeld en gebruikt op een nieuwe manier). Dit 'waar' en dit 'wanneer' zijn van belang, en hierdoor verschilt de casus van Indonesië van andere casussen, zelfs in Zuidoost Azië. De taak van onderzoek is niet om alle ervaringen die zich kunnen voordoen te willen vatten in één glazen miltje, maar om verschillen en overeenkomsten te verklaren op grond van grondige theoretische en methodologische benaderingen die historische feiten kunnen abstraheren zonder de geschiedenis te vervalsen.

De in deze dissertatie geanalyseerde Indonesische situatie is niet gepresenteerd als universeel geldig. Om een diepgaand begrip van de complexe dynamiek van de relaties tussen het internet en de politiek te verkrijgen, is veel meer vergelijkend onderzoek in andere situaties noodzakelijk. De Indonesische situatie verschaft echter wel een contrast met de vele op het Westen/ 'global North' gerichte studies die vaak onbewust en impliciet pretenderen algemeen te zijn. Maar ook al geeft deze dissertatie bij wijze van contrapunt voor de generalisaties binnen de hoofdstroom van de literatuur een casus weer van één 'ontwikkelingsland', is deze studie vanzelfsprekend daarmee niet representatief voor alle ontwikkelingslanden of het zogenoemde Zuiden.

Hoewel deze dissertatie algemene implicaties bevat en een algemene geldigheid biedt ten aanzien van het nut van de analytische concepten die bijeen zijn gebracht, is meer onderzoek in niet-Westerse contexten noodzakelijk om beter te begrijpen hoe internet zich onder de diverse historische, sociale, politieke en culturele dimensies ontplooit. Alleen op die manier kan de klassieke dichotomie van de wijzen van kennisvorming tussen de beschrijvende casussen en de abstracte theoretische constructies worden overbrugd op een manier die de uitwassen van ieder afzonderlijk vermijdt. Deze dissertatie kan worden gebruikt als een mogelijke stap voorwaarts naar vruchtbaar vergelijkend onderzoek. De methoden en concepten die in deze dissertatie zijn gehanteerd, kunnen worden toegepast om de relatie van het internet en de samenleving (politiek) in andere plaatsen te onderzoeken; niet alleen om overeenkomsten te vinden – op grond waarvan dan misschien algemene patronen kunnen worden ontwikkeld – maar hopelijk ook om verschillen te helpen aantonen.