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The Industrialization of the Media in Democratizing Indonesia

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This article examines the transition of Indonesia's print media: from operating under a strong, paternalistic, and authoritarian state (roughly until the mid-1990s) to the current situation characterized by liberalization, a highly competitive market, and a significantly subdued state apparatus. The transition has been complicated by two separate factors: the protracted frictions at all levels of the state apparatus and society, and the spread of the Internet. The historical change is attributable to Indonesia's process of industrialization under the New Order government (1966–98). The article focuses on the widespread tension between the increasingly professionalized but poorly organized journalists, on the one hand, and the management of the profit-driven media companies, on the other.

Introduction

The close of the twentieth century witnessed one of the most profound transformations in the history of the mass media in Indonesia. This, in turn, may open the way for a new era in the country's political history. We do not refer to the widely discussed and often overestimated social change brought about by information technology in general and the Internet more specifically. While Indonesia is not immune to some of the symptoms of the Internet fever, another series of developments has taken place in the mediascape, one which has been much less noted by observers. We refer to the social tensions that have accompanied the recent evolution of the mass media, turning it into an industry in its own right.

This article will look at a major transition that the Indonesian mass media has been undergoing under the New Order regime (1966–98) and beyond. Crudely, the media's transition can be described as a process of change from one that personified an idealist force of truth-seeker constantly subjected to state repression to an increasingly autonomous, professionally managed, and essentially self-serving industry. Like all transitions, the case at hand is full of contradictory elements, movements, and tendencies. The ensuing discussion will describe and analyse the various tensions among old and new forces that constitute the case in its specific contexts. The main agent of change in the process is neither the abstract state apparatus, specific state agents, nor crusading journalists. It is the whole network of industrial capitalism at the global, national, and local levels that has been responsible for the transformation of the media as an institution, as well as its relations with other institutions, including the state.

For many decades, relations between the state and the institution of the mass media in Indonesia have been marked by suspicion and tensions. The state has both sponsored and controlled media developments as part of the consolidation of nation-state building and modernization. Today, the Indonesian state has lost nearly all of its paternalistic control of the mass media. And comparable to situations in neighbouring Thailand and the Philippines, state officials and institutions have been regular targets of criticism and derision by the press. Of course, this does not mean that Indonesian journalists have attained full liberty and maturity. New, adventurous, and sensationalist publications have emerged, while the old big companies have maintained their dominance. Overall, however, journalists have found themselves in no more secure situations than in the past because of pressures from two non-state forces: market competition and violent paramilitary groups.

In purely economic terms, journalists working for a media company are industrial employees. However, there is no such thing as purely economic terms in the real world. In the context of contemporary Indonesia, both in ideas and in practice, the status of journalists as industrial employees of a corporate body is something quite novel, and is currently one of the most pressing controversies in the country.

While the process of the industrialization of the mass media is by no means new in Indonesia — in fact, it is part and parcel of the entire history of the press in Indonesia from the very beginning — recent developments in industrialization have reached a scale that has engendered qualitative transformation. For the first time in modern Indonesia, the state has clearly lost all of the old paternalistic and monopolistic control over the mass production and mass circulation of

words and images across the nation. While the state continues to retain some power in regulation and licensing, it has to share, negotiate, and compete with new forces in determining mass media developments.

At more or less the same time, the Indonesian state has also been losing control over several other institutions (including the educational, artistic, and religious) as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and political parties. While journalists, together with others in the intelligentsia, have always occupied strategic positions in the context of Indonesia's body politic, contemporary social conditions have eroded the old bases of such privileged positions, and material benefits, forcing them to imagine, reformulate, and seek to establish new ways of surviving, and to wield new kinds of power.

Democracy and Literacy in Post-Colonial Societies

Typical of many colonial and post-colonial societies, the press in Indonesia carries a moral authority and political weight not seen in many industrialized, First World, countries. This partly explains why there has been much more censorship, and there have been many more "prisoners of conscience" in the formerly labelled Second and Third World countries than in the First World "liberal" societies. There is nothing essential and permanent about the qualities of journalism, or its practitioners, in pre-industrial societies. These qualities are culturally signified values, products of particular social histories, and susceptible to social change from within, as well as external forces. In certain conducive moments, the culturally constructed authority of the press can be converted into material gains. Rapid industrialization, especially in its early stages, constitutes one such moment. It is important to recognize both the distinction and the convertibility between cultural, political, and economic values, as well as between the local and the global contexts.

Until very recently, one of the important bases of this authority was the relatively low level of functional (as opposed to nominal) literacy in a modern phonetic writing system in a society like Indonesia.¹ This can be contrasted with the situation in many highly literate societies where mass-produced and secular printed materials have been widely consumed and taken for granted. Printed messages in Indonesia, even when they are purged of their religious aura, tend to be endowed with more prestige and authority. The social and cultural costs that go with the making of such a scarce and élitist instrument and the competence to read it render significant social respect for the medium, messengers, and mediated messages. In many important ways, they are comparable to the phenomena related to computer literacy and the uses of multi-

media gadgets in seminar presentations during the late twentieth century. Understandably, printed messages often claim more credibility, too, than the spoken word. In some of these situations, power begets truth, or at least is expected to be or perceived as such.

Functional literacy and the privileged access to mass print messages in Indonesia, like elsewhere, have not been and cannot be fully monopolized by the autocratic state, or its official proxies. There is usually a division of labour between those who run the country and those who dominate the production of authoritative writings on the affairs of that country. Consequently, there have been potential and actual tensions between the two, dating back to the tension between aristocrats and court scribes before the many islands along the equator were transformed into the Indonesian nation-state. In the contemporary setting, similar tensions have involved state agents (holders of bureaucratic capital), intellectuals, and artists (owners of cultural capital).²

This media-centric perspective is intended to counter-balance the dominant politico-economic ones that usually fail to take into account the dynamic relations of media and their messages. Political economic analyses usually concentrate on the content of mass communication, institutional repression, and the resistance of selected journalists. In so doing, these sociological and politico-economic analyses render the media as dead instruments in the hands of powerful agents who can do what they like with them. For these reasons, Paul Tickell's critical problematization of relationships between freedom of speech, democratization, and the media in Indonesia is highly innovative and relevant.³ Tickell shows the importance of distinguishing between freedom and democracy, and the problematic correlation between the two. Tickell argues that the widely perceived unfree press of Indonesia in the 1990s under the authoritarian regime of Soeharto's New Order was not any more undemocratic than its counterpart during the liberal and parliamentary democracy of the young Republic in the 1950s. The press in the 1950s was remarkably elitist by virtue of its much smaller circulation, the lower levels of literacy in the society at large, and the public's general lack of familiarity with the newly adopted national language (Bahasa Indonesia) in comparison to the press and its audience in the 1990s. If open and civilized participation as well as contestation of ideas are indispensable elements of democracy, functional literacy and the acquisition of the national language (and, more generally, public education) are prerequisites for engagement in public fora in a modern nation-state, usually through the mass mediation of the press and, more recently, radio, television, and the Internet.

Owing to these culturally and historically specific values of the print media in Indonesia, by definition, the press — as with the Internet in its initial presence — has inescapably been biased towards the urban intelligentsia, especially in Java. It has been noted widely that the press determines what is news, regardless of its smaller readership in comparison with the audience of the electronic media.⁴ This is even stronger in the case of countries like Indonesia.⁵ Despite being small in number, the urban intelligentsia in post-colonial societies, like Indonesia, enjoy more moral authority and political power than is usually understood by political economists and quantity-oriented social scientists, especially foreign observers from industrialized countries where the urban middle class is bigger in size but politically powerless, and ideologically mystified by the rhetoric of individual liberalism, the façade of liberal democracy, and the ostensibly rational and fair market competition in everyday life.⁶

To suggest that the urban intelligentsia in post-colonial societies holds much political power and moral authority does not imply that such privileges are necessarily well-justified or that they have been consistently put to use for a good cause. For many years there has been a general attribution of special virtues to the urban intelligentsia, along with high expectations that they live up to those myths. Although there is plenty of evidence to the contrary, until recently the myth has remained strong. Undoubtedly, the urban intelligentsia are only too happy to help reproduce the familiar myth, and to perpetuate their self-mystification.

As with other ideologies, or journalistic reports for that matter, what is at issue in the myth of the virtues of the urban intelligentsia is not its substantive validity, but its effectiveness in the formation and reproduction of social relations. Analysts in the industrialized West have argued about the importance of the urban middle classes' acquiescence in the maintenance of the status quo in a given regime.⁷ Despite their small size, the middle classes have the resources, and occasionally the interest, to challenge the status quo, more so than those who benefit most or least from it. In Indonesia, the myth of the heroic, justice-reinforcing, and truth-seeking intelligentsia occasionally gives them the commanding authority to mobilize public opinion. The myth was also strong enough to intimidate successive regimes, prompting them to attempt to co-opt, control, or repress the urban middle class intelligentsia.

All dominant narratives on the rise of the nation in Indonesia are inseparable from the history of the press. Key journalists and leading nationalists were closely associated, and they were often one and the same. There has been a sustained reproduction of a romanticized

mythology of writers, intellectuals, and journalists as agents of *pers perjuangan* (the “press of the struggle” for truth and social justice) in public rhetoric and imagination throughout much of the twentieth century. However, as with many slogans and ideological statements, in reality neither the material working conditions nor the practice of journalism necessarily conforms to that idealized image.⁸

During the first twenty-five years of Soeharto’s New Order regime (roughly 1966–90) the press was stripped of its political power, tightly controlled, and blatantly co-opted. It was depoliticized, except in matters such as providing support for the ruling government, and justifying the latter’s use of repression. Most media workers who survived this period learned how to operate in a business enterprise, in a new environment that was characterized by expansive industrialization and crony capitalism. The number of licensed publishers was limited to 289. Bans and repeals of licences took place periodically, in consonance with the political climate of the day. Dissidents who challenged the government’s decisions on matters related to the press were harassed, prosecuted, or even killed. However, as has been well documented, that period actually institutionalized the press, giving birth to a new type of print media.⁹ A few media companies became industrial empires that were too big for the New Order government to control and suppress.

Though largely images of the lost past, the ideals of, and nostalgia for, *pers perjuangan* remained strong in the imagination of journalists and sympathetic observers alike. The appeal of the mass media as a supposedly progressive and modernizing social force persisted precisely because of, rather than in spite of, the repression that prevailed under the New Order. In the absence of any credible venues for political participation and popular representation through formal institutions (political parties, Parliament, and the courts), members of the press, along with other intellectuals (students, academics, artists, religious leaders, and NGO activists), identified with and spoke for aggrieved segments of the population. Although not without qualification and occasional reservations, the aggrieved often welcomed this urban middle class support. Nevertheless, journalist activism had been little more than romanticized fantasy until June 1994, when the old and valorized activism of journalists was forced to confront fatal challenges, and found public support immediately following the last and most dramatic banning by the government of three Jakarta-based weeklies, namely *TEMPO*, *Editor*, and *Detik*.

The 1994 bans drew international attention and provoked angry reactions in Indonesia on an unprecedented scale.¹⁰ Thousands of people from different walks of life took to the streets across the country

in protest. For several months, the government became the target of criticism, and for the first time it quickly promised to reinstate the revoked licences, albeit conditionally. Instead of accepting the apologetic gesture that the government offered, *TEMPO* journalists filed a lawsuit against a government that had won all previous legal disputes. In more or less the same period, a new, oppositional, association of journalists, Aliansi Jurnalis Independen (AJI or Alliance of Independent Journalists), was established in defiance of the legal prohibition to challenge the existing sole and officially-sanctioned PWI (Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia, or Indonesian Journalists Association). Membership in the AJI later resulted in the dismissal, demotion, or removal of journalists from their positions in several media.

The 1994 bans have also become a milestone in the history of Indonesia's mass media in another little-recognized dimension. It is likely to be the last time an authoritarian government in Indonesia closes down a media company with a single stroke of an official's pen. Soon after Soeharto stepped down in May 1998, *TEMPO* regained its licence and re-commenced publishing in October 1998. The transitional government of B.J. Habibie abandoned the notorious licensing regulation, making it possible for the number of licensed print media to grow in a matter of a few months from 289 to more than one thousand. Soon after the newly-elected government of Abdurrahman Wahid assumed office in October 1999, it closed down the Department of Information which had become the main institutional body of state propaganda, surveillance, and intimidation *vis-à-vis* the press during the New Order.

As the state relinquished its century-old paternalistic control of the mass media, the 1994 bans and their aftermath were probably the last case of a major public confrontation between the Indonesian state and the mass media. From now on, journalists would have to take care of their own affairs. In the dramatic disappearance of long-term and well-defined common enemies, namely, the military and the State Department of Information, journalists and publishers have begun to be exposed to a host of internal problems and contradictions within their own ranks and institutions. Many of these problems are greater and more complex than most journalists have been prepared to confront, or even admit.¹¹

The Case of *TEMPO*

The 1994 banning of *TEMPO*, along with *Editor* and *DēTIK*, was remarkable for several reasons, not least for the reaction it provoked, especially among the middle class urbanites. There were no less than

170 reported demonstrations in the months immediately following the bans in towns and cities in Java, Bali, Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi.¹² In all of the New Order's history, no single controversy has forged such broad-based civil protests, cutting across religious, ideological, ethnic, linguistic, gender, and geographical lines. Unlike previous expressions of discontent, this had no central organization, leadership, or agenda.

The immediate historical contexts of the phenomenon need to be understood. The bans and the public protests took place soon after Megawati Soekarnoputri was elected chairperson of the PDI (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia) in the party's congress in Surabaya in late December 1993, in direct defiance of the state. The 1994 banning and its aftermath also took place not long before the government decided to oust Megawati from her party's leadership in July 1996, brutally raiding her party's headquarters after an extended stand-off with her supporters. By this time, Megawati was just too popular for the ruling Golkar party to be assured of continued victory with a majority vote in the elections in 1997. In short, the banning and the public outcry that it provoked took place against a backdrop of political discord and upheaval that eventually led to the fall of the New Order regime. From 1994, anti-government sentiment and movements steadily built up and gained momentum, while the moral and ideological, then economic and political, apparatus of the state collapsed.¹³

Politically, the nation was seething. Against this backdrop, it is not too difficult to understand why many journalists of *TEMPO* decided to take the unprecedented action of confronting the government's ban with a legal battle, while thousands of sympathizers took to the streets to express support, including a peaceful demonstration in Jakarta that encountered a violent response from the security forces. This was despite the government's unprecedented offer of conditionally reinstating the revoked licence to the banned publication. More than a few high-ranking state officials of the New Order expressed public criticism of the ban and support for the protestors. Judges at both the state administrative court and higher administrative court who investigated the case declared the 1994 ban illegal, and the plaintiffs (the journalists and editors of *TEMPO*) won the case before the decision was overturned by the Supreme Court.

While all of the above have been well documented, another series of related events have largely escaped the attention of analysts. Even though the momentum of resistance to New Order authoritarianism was increasing, and the possibility of overthrowing the regime imaginable, about half of those who had been in charge of the production of *TEMPO* decided to disavow their colleagues' efforts to

challenge the dying regime. Instead, they opted to accept the government's conditional offer of a new licence and to publish as a new publication and under a different name, *GATRA*, whose logo, layout and styles, however, were exactly identical to those of *TEMPO*. Mohammad Bob Hasan, one of the New Order's notorious cronies, provided fresh funds for investment in the "new" press, holding more than 50 per cent of the company's shares.

The establishment of *GATRA* was seen by many as an unequivocal act of blatant treachery. With considerable success, a number of high-profile figures launched a nation-wide campaign to boycott *GATRA* (whether as readers, subscribers, interviewees, or opinion column writers). Journalists from *GATRA* were met with indifference or hostility at various social gatherings and official functions. At one press conference with high-ranking government officials, attending journalists demanded that the officials choose between ordering the journalists from *GATRA* to leave the room, or seeing the rest leave and boycott the event. During the first few months of its appearance, *GATRA* became a defenceless target of attack from various directions. To make matters worse, various articles in the pages of *GATRA* were strongly critical of the pro-democracy groups and other critics of the government, prompting many to designate it as *pers intel* (press of the state intelligence office). Some of such coverage immediately preceded state-security actions against pro-democracy activists.

The founding of *GATRA* raised issues beyond ethical questions or ideological conflicts. Legally, the establishment of *GATRA* indirectly undermined the lawsuit that *TEMPO* had already filed. The pro-government spokesperson wished to see it as a formal acceptance (at least by half of the legitimate victims of the banning of *TEMPO*) of a reinstatement of *TEMPO*'s revoked licence, which would render the ongoing legal challenge to the ban and *TEMPO*'s demands redundant. As we have seen, however, both the state administrative and higher administrative courts rejected such logic. Instead, they passed down decisions in favour of the plaintiffs and the public at large.

It would be a mistake to analyse the decision of those journalists who opted to join *GATRA* simply on moral grounds. It is not possible to understand the divisions within *TEMPO* without considering the broader context of national economic growth, particularly in the cities of Java, during much of the 1980s. As Indonesia acquired the status of a newly industrializing nation, several mass media companies became big concerns.¹⁴ In related but distinguishable developments, a new generation of journalists had come to acquire new and very different profiles, ambitions, personal and corporate agendas, and engaged in new social relationships with their employers.

In contrast to the veterans who used to work under what, in retrospect, appeared to be very poor working conditions but which earned them professional gratification, dignity, and high self-esteem, the new recruits were children of the first generation of the urban petty bourgeoisie (sometimes loosely and conveniently called the middle classes) to have benefited from the New Order's industrialization. They had much more resources to work with, not only in comparison to their predecessors in the past but also in relation to other professionals. They enjoyed material rewards but lived in environments where the cost of living was high, and they worked under the pressure of market competition.

In contrast to former generations of passionate journalists, the new generation held university degrees, some even post-graduate degrees, but they did not necessarily have years of practical apprenticeship in or emotional dedication to journalism. In their late twenties to early thirties, and in the burgeoning consumerist environment of Indonesian cities, they wore smart clothes, dined in fancy restaurants, drove cars (their own or their companies'), carried business cards and mobile telephones, and invested in housing, especially during the property market boom of the 1980s. Some of them were well-travelled, and they conducted interviews with some of the richest or politically most influential people in Asia during the height of the "Asian economic miracle".

In one final and important contrast to their predecessors, the new generation of journalists were increasingly linked to their institutions primarily for economic reasons. Indonesia, and perhaps several other Asian nations, had not seen or even imagined this new phenomenon before. Significantly divorced from political activism, for an increasing number of practitioners, journalism became more than just employment. For some, this was not a cause for regret, but a fact of life. While economic rationality may have been an important factor in the decision of those who abandoned the struggle for *TEMPO* and opted to work for *GATRA*, the heroic-sounding struggle for justice and democracy among *TEMPO* supporters did not operate purely on moral or political grounds. It also had its own economic basis and material interests at stake to an extent greater than was usually admitted by these activists or noted by observers.

However, it would be a mistake to equate industrial capitalism with reckless economic opportunism, selfishness, and materialism. In December 1998, in the wake of the *reformasi* movement, about 100 *GATRA* journalists resigned in protest against what they perceived to be the unfair dismissal of their senior directors on 20 November 1998 by the board of shareholders. Many of these journalists argued that the

dismissal was in retaliation for the controversial coverage in *GATRA* on 8 June 1998 of Soeharto's ill-gotten wealth.¹⁵ In this and several other instances, the idealism of *pers perjuangan*, the dull compulsion of economic compromises, and sheer opportunism are not separate and static entities, inherently belonging to one or another social agent or institution.

The banning of *TEMPO*, and the public reaction it created, are inseparable from the economic growth of the nation. No less than thirty other bans had been imposed during the New Order. One of the factors that distinguishes the 1994 bans from their predecessors is their economic significance. In all previous cases, the bans mainly attested to the state's unchallenged power to suppress critical voices. While political reasons were obvious in the 1994 bans, especially in the cases of *Editor* and *Detik*, the instances of banning in the past overshadowed the perspective of analysts of the 1994 incident, blinding many to recognize the difference, reducing the 1994 event to merely another case of political repression and resistance.¹⁶

The 1994 bans, especially that of *TEMPO*, are economically significant. This was not only because it was preceded by *TEMPO*'s coverage of the internal political and economic conflicts within the New Order élite over the purchase, at too high a price, of German ships by B.J. Habibie, President Soeharto's protégé and then Minister for Research and Technology. What also set it apart from the previous victims of the government's banning was *TEMPO*'s substantial economic assets. *TEMPO* was one of the biggest tax-paying publishers in the country.¹⁷ So economically successful had *TEMPO* been in the 1980s that it ran into difficulties managing its financial success in the face of its increasingly professionally-inclined journalists and editors. The old and amateurish dedication to *pers perjuangan* had already dissipated by 1987. The internal conflict was so deep that a good number of the most talented journalists and key figures left *TEMPO* in 1987 and established a rival newsmagazine, *Editor*, which later became a fellow-victim of the 1994 bans.

The 1994 banning of *TEMPO* had enormous financial repercussions unseen in previous bans, leaving thousands of people jobless and agitated. One of the conditions that came with the government's offer to reinstate *TEMPO*'s licence was the creation of a new management and a new composite of shareholders in the company; thus, there was more than just pressure for purely political compliance. This led to strong suspicion among observers that an economic takeover by external parties might constitute part of the motive and expected outcome of the ban. At more or less the same time, the crony capitalists of the New Order were attempting to acquire shares in major media companies.¹⁸

Since the 1987 friction, media companies have learned how to respect their employees better. The management of post-1998 *TEMPO* has strengthened its commitment and secured ideological cohesion among its staff and viability for the institution by allocating 30 per cent of its ownership shares to its employees collectively under an independent in-house trade union. *TEMPO* has made itself one of the first of Indonesia's media companies to be well-prepared to confront further challenges of industrialization in a democratizing Indonesia. In contrast to *TEMPO* is the case of the weekly *Jakarta-Jakarta*.

The Case of *Jakarta-Jakarta*

While *TEMPO* was revived soon after the collapse of Soeharto's authoritarian New Order, *Jakarta-Jakarta* ceased to exist on 23 November 1999. That was the time when press freedom flourished on an unprecedented scale and the number of newly-licensed publications rocketed to around 1,600, although this was immediately followed by the collapse of about half of them for various reasons, but mainly financial difficulties and poor management.¹⁹ Significantly, unlike *TEMPO*, the involuntary martyr of the 1990s, *Jakarta-Jakarta* was closed down by its owners, the Kompas Gramedia Group, the biggest media conglomerate in the country and publisher of *Kompas*, the largest circulation quality daily in Southeast Asia.²⁰

In order to survive in the thorny environment of crony capitalism under the New Order's authoritarianism, those directly responsible for the publication of *Kompas* had been prepared to make many compromises, and obliged to woo a broad range of social forces. In the end, however, *Kompas* could not make everyone happy. Too often associated with the conservative minority Catholics during its early years, the daily has been a constant target of attacks from several sources, but most particularly Islamic militants who came to prominence in the 1990s after Soeharto courted them for political expediency during the last and most difficult years of his reign.

While *TEMPO* has been one of the most successful media companies in respecting their employees by distributing editorial as well as managerial responsibilities, *Jakarta-Jakarta* has been one of several cases of failure. An unresolved industrial dispute had led thirty-one staff of *Jakarta-Jakarta* to found Indonesia's first official union of media employees to be registered with the Department of Labour in November 1999. This union made several demands to the Kompas Gramedia Group management in response to the unilateral closure, with threats of litigation should their demands not be met satisfactorily. As part of the tussle, in May 2000, the newly unionized employees of *Jakarta-Jakarta*

threatened to strike, a threat that found sympathetic followers from other media companies within the conglomerate. In response, the management of the Kompas Gramedia Group quickly raised the salaries of all employees across the board, by increments of 30 to 100 per cent.

To gauge the magnitude of the potential impact of the industrial dispute, it is necessary to consider a number of points. We will proceed with a consideration of the possible motives for the decision to close down the magazine. The cited reason for the closure was financial rationality; the management claimed that it could not afford to continue to subsidize a small-circulation but “prestigious” periodical that showed no prospect of breaking even financially. The affected journalists as well as informed observers rejected this official reason, raising at least two counter-arguments.

First, they argued, the Kompas Gramedia Group was one of the most successful companies in the country. It was one of the publishing companies least affected by the 1997 financial crisis. Even if one accepted that *Jakarta-Jakarta* was running at a loss, this would not have seriously affected the Kompas Gramedia Group’s financial standing. In fact, among journalists working for the Group’s thirty-three print media companies, there had been a general understanding of the distinction between purely profit-making publications and others whose function was to boost corporate image, prestige, and credibility, of which *Jakarta-Jakarta* was one such publication. This second category of publications (called “premium” within the Group) was characterized by glossy pages, better quality and more expensive newsprint, generous colour pages, high sale prices, small circulation, and up-market content. The Kompas Gramedia Group appeared to have no intention of closing down other deficit-running publications, except for another glossy magazine, *Tiara*. The Group had also invested heavily in Kompas Cyber media with no expectation of profit in the immediate future.

Secondly, the aggrieved journalists found the financial argument unacceptable in the face of two other developments. First, thanks to the profile of the magazine and its target audience among Jakarta’s young professionals, advertizing revenue had been sufficient to cover the overhead costs of *Jakarta-Jakarta*’s production. British American Tobacco’s Lucky Strike cigarette company alone had reportedly been willing to sign a long-term contract with the magazine beginning March 2000.²¹ Other major businesses that expressed strong interest in promoting their products in the pages of *Jakarta-Jakarta* included Toyota, Mild Seven, Swatch, Oris, and Christophe Arden.

Furthermore, if the Kompas Gramedia Group’s management had so desired, *Jakarta-Jakarta* could have been financially more

profitable by aiming for a wider circulation, as attested by its performance in the late 1980s and early 1990s. For instance, *Jakarta-Jakarta* reached a circulation of approximately 35,000 when it published news of politically sensitive events, such as the killings of East Timorese during a peaceful rally at the Santa Cruz cemetery on 12 November 1991. However, such coverage provoked the Indonesian armed forces, and, in a show of deference to the military, the management removed three senior editors who were held responsible for the story, and transferred them to less significant positions. Soon afterwards, the management also decided that *Jakarta-Jakarta* had to be reformed radically. Under the leadership of several successive chief editors, *Jakarta-Jakarta* stayed away from political issues and concentrated on entertainment, consumer culture, and Jakarta's celebrities. Just before the actual closure of *Jakarta-Jakarta*, the management had in fact supervised a special project to revamp its format further, including the production of dummy copies, giving no indication of any impending decision to close down.

The decision to close *Jakarta-Jakarta* was thus abrupt, and it might have been hurriedly signed by the management following the discovery that its employees had gone to the Department of Labour to officially register a union. A new chapter in Indonesia's history had begun. Although the idea of unionizing journalists had been discussed or attempted at a preparatory level by a few journalists from other media for several years, it had not materialized until the journalists from *Jakarta-Jakarta* took that step in November 1999. The establishment of this union was a development in the journalists' long-standing struggle and protracted industrial dispute with the management. By the end of 2000, the struggle had run out of steam; one by one, the fledgling unionists accepted monetary compensation, thereby demoralizing the rest. Despite this anti-climax, the event throws some light on critical and complicated issues that have thus far remained largely denied or hidden, namely, economic interests and industrial relations. To these crucial issues we now turn.

The Dilemma of the Industrialized Media

Until the fall of the New Order in 1998, the mass media were under the supervision and strict control of the Department of Information. The Ministry of Information Decree No. 1/1984 required that all print media companies must apply for and obtain the SIUPP (Surat Izin Usaha Penerbitan Pers, or Press Publication Enterprise Permit).²² Article 16 of the Decree stipulates that in order to complete its application for SIUPP, a publishing company must allocate collectively a minimum of 20 per

cent of ownership shares to its employees. With few exceptions (such as found in the post-1987 management of *TEMPO*), none of the media companies have complied with this regulation.

In some media companies, representation of employees was restricted to selected compliant high-level employees. More recently, a few have even opted to sell shares to the public. In most cases, however, a “foundation”, “collective”, “group”, or “association” is established unilaterally by the management, rather than being put forward by the employees. Directors or other high-ranking managerial officials within the company are usually appointed to leading positions in these associations or foundations.²³ The management would then report the establishment of the ostensibly employees’ union to the Department of Information, which would have little interest in ensuring the report’s validity. Although such unions officially have the power to represent employees in negotiations with management, very often the employees are not even aware of the existence of such bodies. This was what happened with *Jakarta-Jakarta*. The newly unionized journalists of *Jakarta-Jakarta* (*Serikat Karyawan Jakarta-Jakarta*, SKJJ) claimed that for seven years their names had been misappropriated by the so-called Yayasan Kesejahteraan Karyawan *Jakarta-Jakarta* (The Foundation for the *Jakarta-Jakarta* Employees’ Welfare), which had been unilaterally established by the management.

The style of management in *Jakarta-Jakarta* reflected the rule rather than the exception in Indonesia’s media industry, though protests against such practices had occurred in other media companies.²⁴ However, the response from the journalists of *Jakarta-Jakarta* was one of the first of its kind in independent Indonesia. For the greater part of its history since the new editorial reforms of the early 1990s, *Jakarta-Jakarta* (like *TEMPO* and several other publications) had accommodated some journalists-cum-political activists. When *Jakarta-Jakarta*’s sister publication *Tiara* was closed down by the management in December 1998, there was no negotiation with the employees, who officially held the legal right to own 20 per cent of the publication’s shares, and consequently the right to be consulted on any deliberations leading to its closure, nor was there any challenge from the affected journalists. There was not even a formal letter of the publication’s termination. Journalists and administrative staff of *Tiara* were transferred to several less attractive posts within the same management of the holding company, Kompas Gramedia Group.

To be sure, the standard practice of non-compliance with the legal requirements concerning the rights of employees in media companies was neither entirely a case of criminal fraud, nor of simple pragmatism on the part of the management. This was also not a case of complete

ignorance and helplessness on the part of the employees. The stipulation of employees' rights to have access to the company's shares was stated, if ambiguously, in the documents co-signed at the start of employment. Yet, employees did not take this procedure seriously. The fact that until very recently, thousands of employees in hundreds of media companies had raised no questions about such organizations, and made no demands for transparency and effective representation, was instructive of the circumstances under which they worked.

The following five related reasons may have been responsible for this general acquiescence and inattention to their rights. Firstly, at the most practical level, the stated stipulation was too ambiguous to be taken seriously by recruits. Secondly, unionization in post-1965 Indonesia was demonized by the anti-left militarist regime of the New Order. Only recently have working class politics and unions entered the public imagination.²⁵ In 1988, a small group of idealistic journalists in *Kompas* proposed forming an independent and union-like in-house organization to represent employees. While this enlightened group received a frosty response from its own ranks, the management was fearful of the prospect, and, as such, it severely penalized the members of the group.²⁶

Unfamiliarity with unionism is especially acute among the younger generation of the urban middle class intelligentsia who grew up in a depoliticized Indonesia, where "the familial style of deliberation and consensus" was prescribed by the state as the only legitimate procedure for conflict resolution. Ironically, the very same state abused this prescription. Nonetheless, in official rhetoric it is propagated as a genuinely Indonesian way of life as opposed to the supposedly conflictual and confrontational style of the West.

Thirdly, as Indonesia's economy was only beginning to grow and show promise from the 1980s, new recruits were usually grateful to be employed in the newly expanding media industry, and were prepared to accept irregular management and mistreatment. After all, journalism under the New Order regime was much more rewarding financially than ever before. Furthermore, the media industry was buoyant with experimentation, new experiences, excitement, and a sense of unexplored possibilities. In situations where industrial disputes became serious, journalists usually opted to leave their current employment and sought new positions elsewhere, rather than pursued justice by confronting management. Collective struggle was too costly financially and emotionally, politically suspect, or simply unimaginable. Fourthly, a number of financially successful companies had in fact been both willing and able to placate occasional expressions of dissatisfaction from employees with a wide range of rewards,

compensations and bonuses, but on an *ad hoc* basis. As noted earlier, the Kompas Gramedia Group resorted to a large-scale financial concession — a substantial salary increment to all its employees — in its attempt to defuse the challenges from the unionized journalists of Jakarta-Jakarta.

All four factors outlined above point to the seriously weak position of employees in the media industry, as in other industries in Indonesia, *vis-à-vis* their companies. These factors have been serious, and it will take an extended time to overcome them. However, we consider the next and the fifth factor to be the most important. It is less tangible, but more insidious, as it is deeply rooted in the public consciousness and that of individual journalists. We refer to the long-standing romanticization of the journalist-as-activist persona. *Pers perjuangan* promotes the notion of the pursuance of various moral virtues supposedly inherent in the journalistic profession (being unselfish, honest, intelligent, and truth-seeking) and proscribes any activities that could be construed as pursuing material gain. It categorically rejects the politics of unionism, whose agenda is to maximize the collective worldly interests.

Compounding the problem is the pride of class (un)consciousness that is part of this mythology. Even when confronted by real situations of victimization in industrial relations, and exposed to a rational proposal for some sort of union activism, many journalists reject the idea of collective rights and struggle, because they conceptualize “unionism” as something downgrading, characteristically belonging to manual wage-labourers. Discursively, they call themselves *kaum profesional*, genteel and gentrified “professionals”, just like doctors, lawyers, or engineers, which is worlds apart from *pekerja* or *karyawan* (workers), or *buruh* (labour). Many would even feel reluctant to regard themselves as *pegawai* (employee). Far from being simply self-inflation or something that exists purely in the mind, this sense of hierarchy has been reinforced for years by the social structures and practices of everyday life. Journalists have enjoyed this status and wish to retain it. Industrialization, and not intellectual enlightenment, is the process that has effectively undermined the existing hierarchy and long-standing privileges of these intelligentsia.

The disadvantaged position of Indonesian journalists under the current situation became obvious in the industrial disputes, termination of contracts, and dismissals that followed the self-dissolution of particular publications.²⁷ Too often, in such situations, the management treated them as employees, and accordingly offered them meagre compensation, or transferred them to less desirable positions. This is ironic when one considers the legal stipulation that

recognizes employees of media companies as shareholders who have the right to be represented and heard in deliberations as serious as those determining the dissolution of the company and the various measures of compensation for employees.

In 1995, when the afternoon daily *Suara Pembaruan* dismissed ten journalists for their critical views of management, seven of them challenged the decision. Partly because of the persistence of these journalists, the Department of Labour, and the court and, more tacitly, the Department of Information, surprisingly sided with them, forcing the management to rescind the decision and renew negotiations with the journalists. However, under the circumstances of that time, the company defied the court decision. The central issue of the dispute was editorial responsibilities and autonomy, but it grew and raised the issue of the right of employees to own 20 per cent of the company's shares. The idea of a union did not come into the picture in any significant way. This is what distinguishes the 1995 case of *Suara Pembaruan* from that of *Jakarta-Jakarta* in 2000. It is also different from the industrial dispute following the self-initiated closure on 25 January 2000 of the magazine *Detektif & Romantika*, another highly politicized publication. In this case, the number of journalists who persisted in the radical challenge to the decision was only two. The other eighty dismissed employees accepted the decision and the compensation package.

The demise of the Department of Information in March 2000 further complicated the matter. For many years, the Department had represented state repression, being the number one enemy of the freedom of expression that the mythologized journalist-as-activist was supposed to epitomize. Paradoxically, the Department of Information was also the only existing agency that had the power and willingness to protect the interests of journalists if they were in dispute with their publication's management. Although the Department never actively enforced the 20 per cent share requirement, in one or two cases it chose to protect the interest of aggrieved journalists in industrial disputes.

Indonesian journalists have consequently become ambivalent towards the now defunct Department of Information and the legally questionable standing of the Ministerial Decree No 1/1984 that stipulated the mandatory 20 per cent ownership share. As conscientious professionals, they resented the Department's far-reaching restrictions and censorship, but in industrial disputes with their employers they had sought assistance from the Department.

The demise of the Department of Information did not put an end to the legal rights of media employees to collectively own 20 per cent of their companies' shares. While the old legal stipulation is still in effect, a new, but even more ambiguous, formulation of the same stipulation has found expression in the new Laws on the Press (No. 40/1999).²⁸

Even when the Department of Information was still in existence, politically-conscious journalists would have to go to the Department of Labour when it came to registering a union to engage their employers in collective bargaining. However, the Department of Labour never recognized the entitlements that the Department of Information did. Thus, there are advantages and disadvantages in dealing with the Department of Labour. For the media companies too, although for different reasons, the Department of Labour is a double-edged sword. The Department does not require them to give 20 per cent of the company's shares to employees. On the other hand, the Department of Labour's regulations oblige the media companies to accept union activities, which they do not like.

New Moneyed Movements, New Social Movements

Indonesia's process of industrialization has given rise not only to the so-called urban middle classes, of which the new generation of journalists are a part, but also to new social conflicts.²⁹ Very similar situations to the one discussed in the previous section have in fact occurred in more or less the same period but in different and seemingly separate places and institutions. One such comparable case that drew nation-wide attention in the early to mid-1990s was the three-year conflict at Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana in Salatiga (Central Java), where more than half of the faculty members and student population held a strike for eight months in 1995. The event was triggered by disagreement over the election of the university's rector in 1993. The basis of the collective action was both moral and industrial.

Just as *TEMPO* and *Kompas* have been two of the most prominent and financially successful media companies since the New Order came to power, so Satya Wacana was one of the most successful academic institutions in the country until the conflict, which was largely a dispute over administrative issues between the incumbent administration and its academic and administrative staff. Institutional growth of Satya Wacana, that came along with its academic credentials, brought political clout; but it also gave rise to two major opposing groups. Significantly, neither group had been anticipated by the founders of this private university in 1956, nor had their presence been noticeable until the mid-1980s.

The first of the two groups was a loose collection of pragmatically-oriented bureaucrats, administrative officials, and academics-cum-consultants. They worked industriously with various private as well as state enterprises in development projects, reaping lucrative benefits. Very quickly, under its ambitious and energetic administration, Satya Wacana came to prominence for its academic

achievements, resources, as well as its involvement with diverse social activities far beyond its campus. The second group, as found in many other societies undergoing major industrial transformation, consisted of somewhat romantic, socially-committed, and politicized academics. While both groups were beneficiaries of the New Order's policies, the latter made itself a critic of the New Order at the international, national, and local levels. Given the long history of intellectual activism (of which *pers perjuangan* was a part), and the heavy-handed governance of the New Order and its industrial projects, these activists-cum-scholars had no difficulty finding supporters in an increasingly divided Indonesian society.

It is not surprising that the 1994 banning of *TEMPO*, *Editor*, and *DĒTIK* was met with a wave of angry protests from many Indonesian academics, including those affiliated with Satya Wacana. Significantly, one of the advocates of the anti-GATRA campaign was Arief Budiman, a lecturer at Satya Wacana. While the conflict in Satya Wacana had no direct links with those of *TEMPO-GATRA* or *Jakarta-Jakarta*, the parallels between them were very striking. One such parallel is of immediate relevance here, and the perceived similarities provide additional context to the questions of industrialization and democratization.

In popular discourses, these internally divided institutions were seen to be commonly torn by conflicts between those representing the new forces of industrial capitalism and those defending the old legacies of intellectual *perjuangan* and *pers perjuangan*. Within this framework, anti-government activists of non-governmental organizations that flourished in the 1980s found an easy place within the broader and loosely structured alliance of pro-democracy movements that challenged Soeharto's authoritarianism. Together they constituted what many have described as part of the global phenomenon of internationally-linked, loosely structured, issue-oriented and urban middle-class-based new social movements.

What was most significant in the case of Satya Wacana was the novel struggle over redefining the nature and future direction of the institution, as well as re-conceptualizing the status and nature of academics: either as independent-minded and truth-seeking "intellectuals", or as employees of a modern institution within an industrializing setting. Despite the pain and material loss that it brought to the institution and individuals involved, the conflict at Satya Wacana was a tremendous learning process for all parties concerned. The administration had to reluctantly give up the old paternalistic mode of leadership and organization, as the bureaucracy imploded, and faculty members were no longer exclusively attached to the institution. The

administration had to learn new ways of managing a modern institution that involved respect for the rights of the new generation of proud and confident professional scholars, strikingly similar to the ways the management of *TEMPO* had successfully adopted, and which the Kompas Gramedia Group is reluctantly learning to do now.

What shocked the administration of Satya Wacana most was the fact that faculty members (including deans) and many students in such a prestigious institution could have taken industrial action, which had been associated with the left and had been demonized by the militarist regime at that time. Likewise, many of these faculty members had to accept (however painfully) their new status as little more than salaried employees. They came to understand that pressures from “intellectuals” towards the university administration in non-violent ways could no longer unequivocally convey a purely *moral* message, deserving an equally moral response. They were now seen as an *industrial* challenge, and accordingly responded with punitive measures, including the termination of employment or salary suspension. While such basic industrial terms and practices were conceptually familiar to many of them, only a few had anticipated that these could become a reality in their immediate environment.

Worse still, outside the academy and publishing companies, an increasing number of dedicated pro-democracy NGOs had been entangled in very similar challenges, and only a few managed to overcome them to the satisfaction of those affected.³⁰ Immediately before and after the economic crisis of 1997 and Soeharto’s resignation in May 1998, enormous sums of foreign aid flowed into Indonesia. NGOs were clearly some of the most credible recipients of this international sympathy and assistance. However, many of the NGOs were founded only recently in haste and out of emotional reactions to the deteriorating conditions in Indonesia. Under the spotlight of national and international media, many of them received financial aid larger than their organizations were prepared or able to manage.

The situation created splits in activist ranks over the issues of programme priorities, division of responsibilities, and material rewards. Worse, it also dramatically transformed the nature and meaning of participation in supposedly activist organizations, rendering most activities as paid “work” and “labour”. Volunteerism had become anachronistic. More and more fellow activists began to demand remuneration for every contribution. They and those who assumed administrative power within their organizations have also adopted employee-employer relationships in ways similar to those who regulated the running of *TEMPO*, *GATRA*, *Jakarta-Jakarta*, or Satya Wacana. Yet, because these NGOs were never intended to be corporate-

like structures, the temptation to operate like professionally-paid organizations was never fully developed or pursued. As a result, many of the tensions and internal conflicts remain disguised, aired only in whisper and gossip, and remaining unresolved in a confusing situation.

The Early Spread of the Internet

The quantitative development of the Internet in Indonesia, as elsewhere, is notoriously difficult to capture in any in-depth or serious analysis. This is due to the rapid pace of its development. The scholarly apparatus of the social sciences is just too slow and unequipped to deal with this development, let alone measure its social impact.³¹ One tempting response to this overwhelming social phenomenon is to leave it unremarked, or wait and assume that there will be a better time when developments are more stable and predictable, when analysis is possible. Against all these odds, we attempt a few remarks that run the risk of becoming obsolete very soon. We will also speculate on the potential relevance of current developments to the core issues discussed in the previous sections.

We began with the argument that highly functional literacy in a largely orally-oriented society generates significant power for the critical minority of the intelligentsia. Indonesia's economic development since the 1980s has, paradoxically, boosted this power and also problematized it. The development of the mass media into a major industry has generated a much greater demand for skilled labour in the urban sector with handsome rewards, both material and non-material. The dramatic growth in all levels of formal schooling has to a considerable degree supplied both the demand for labour and the consumers for mass mediated messages. Under the New Order, however, these developments took place with severe restrictions to the flow of information, and were enmeshed in crony capitalism that, in the later part of the New Order, included a monopoly on distribution and domestic production of newsprint. Journalists have enjoyed some benefits from the recent developments, but only up to a point, beyond which they have discovered a process of reduction in their roles and functions.

The arrival and rapid spread of the Internet have had some important impacts on the existing situation. The Internet has eroded both the effectiveness of state restrictions on the flow of information, and the dependence on the monopolistic distribution of newsprint. By this time, the number of speakers of Bahasa Indonesia, as well as of English, has multiplied several times from the figure in the early years of the twentieth century when newspapers and magazines were first

introduced to the archipelago. Contrary to the wishes of the nationalists of the Revolution and the 1945 Constitution, the idea and practice of foreign investments have now become a reality in the electronic media network, which is appealing for some but appalling to others. However, what difference the Internet makes to the political and economic positions of journalists remains unclear.

When the Internet made its entry to Indonesia in the 1980s, its use was restricted to the Ministry of Research and Technology led by B.J. Habibie, and a few top state universities. It was not available to the public as a commercial service until May 1995, when Radnet became Indonesia's first Internet Service Provider (ISP). Soon afterwards, other ISPs followed. Ironically, none of them were as "socialistic" and "democratic" in practice as the government's Post Office, which was to establish nation-wide ISPs in all the provincial cities in 1996.

State ministries of the New Order were in direct opposition to each other in outlook and practice in response to the power of the Internet. Sen and Hill have compared the activities of the Department of Information, which was keen on controlling and limiting the flow of information, with those of the Department of Industry and Trade, which saw the press as a domestic industry.³² A more important comparison is between the Department of Information and that of Tourism, Post, and Telecommunication that spawned the popular Internet stalls (*warnet*), now in the hundreds, and the earlier facsimile and long-distance telephone stalls (*wartel*) across the archipelago.³³ By mid-2000, there were approximately 13,000 *wartel* and around 400 *warnet* in Indonesia. *Warnet* users accounted for 60–70 per cent of total Internet users in the country.³⁴ There is no way of knowing for sure the number of Internet subscribers, but it would probably have amounted to one or two million in 2000, which is "up from 400,000 the year before".³⁵ This is not a very large figure in terms of Indonesia's total population, which is about 202 million.

A few months following the 1994 bans, several of the affected journalists from *TEMPO* continued their vocation, but this time on the Internet, through their *Tempo Interaktif* website. The style of journalism, and the personnel behind the production of news reports, and analyses on this popular website, were strongly in the mould of the banned *TEMPO*. This news-online service was the earliest public demonstration of the ineffectiveness of the old repressive measure of press banning and censorship. In fact, collections of articles from *Tempo Interaktif* were periodically published in volumes as books of clippings, and were made available in most bookstores in big cities. Unlike newspapers and magazines, the publication of books does not officially require any permit similar to the notorious SIUPP.

The above suggests that, prior to the economic crisis of 1997 and the rapid collapse of the New Order regime in 1998, the electronic media had already allowed pro-democracy movements and the public at large to see that mass communication was possible, and in a remarkably more participatory mode, irrespective of the government's decisions and permits. It is also significant that around the same time that the government banned *TEMPO*, *Editor*, and *DēTIK*, the early spread of the Internet was taking place in Indonesia, with virtually no restrictions from the government, and in some important respects with the sponsorship of the more economically driven state ministries.³⁶

Two years after the euphoria of *reformasi* and government succession, the Internet has evolved and turned into something more, and simultaneously less, than simply a democratizing force. Resonating with the activist journalism of the banned *DēTIK* in 1994, detik.com pioneered the first of Indonesia's "real time" online journalism. Established on 1 July 1998, detik.com was the first to distinguish itself from other print media, whose websites only posted copies of what appeared in their print news. Detik.com reports on the news almost hourly. Reflecting its technological savvy and entrepreneurship, detik.com managed to cover its production costs almost exclusively from advertizing revenue.³⁷ Relying on its ability to produce the earliest news of importance to the borderless cyber world, it grew from an enterprise with one reporter, one tape recorder and one desk to a corporation of forty-six staff in 2000.

In February 2000, detik.com transformed itself into a portal offering free e-mail, chatroom, and directory facilities. This new development was made possible by the injection of US\$2 million from techpacific.com which had bought 15 per cent of detik.com's public listing. In the same month, several other foreign investors set up new portals, for instance, astaga.com, catcha.com, satunet.com. The long-term commercial impact of these portals and other online journalism on existing print media, and the democratization process in Indonesia is far from clear.³⁸ Its immediate tangible impact in February 2000 was more easily gauged. When Astaga Internet Konsulindo invested US\$7.5 million to establish astaga.com (launched on 9 February 2000), seventy-eight of its reporters came from prestigious media companies such as *Kompas* and RCTI (Rajawali Citra Televisi Indonesia), the first private television station in the country. Joining the new Internet company allowed many of these reporters to earn more than triple their previous salaries.³⁹

Conclusion

We have noted that the prominent status of the intelligentsia in Indonesia has its basis in the special status of literacy and the modern production of knowledge. Independent governments sponsored major developments of the mass media as an instrument of modernization and political propaganda. Until recently, the growth of the mass media was under the control of successive authoritarian regimes. Of late, industrial capitalism in general, and the electronic mass media more specifically, have altered the situation in several fundamental ways. They have helped transform a few mass media companies into giant concerns on a scale larger than the state was able to control. Industrialization has also dramatically increased the number of citizens with the skills and accessibility to participate in public debate. The recent spread of the Internet has further removed the possibility of the state to retain its old monopolistic control of the mass-mediated communication. Admittedly, however, it remains to be seen what long-lasting social consequences the Internet will bring to Indonesia and to its fledgling post-1998 democracy.

None of these developments has yet indicated any significant improvements in journalists' working conditions. Journalists have often been the target of assaults by members of society who are unhappy with what appears in the media.⁴⁰ Neither has the position of journalists within the industry of news and information received better protection from the growing corporations. Jose Manuel Tesoro, *Asiaweek's* journalist based in Jakarta, depicts the post-1998 predicament of his Indonesian colleagues succinctly:⁴¹

The Indonesian media is now unfettered. But it is also unprotected. Government restrictions and direction have vanished. But what is left is disturbingly ill-defined. Indonesian journalists and editors have to find out for themselves how far their communities will let them be.

For the future, journalists are likely to give top priority to enhancing their sense of security, both when they go about doing their job and in the terms of employment offered by their companies. This, in turn, will have far-reaching implications for the dynamics of Indonesia's democratization that is still urban and middle-class based.

NOTES

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1. For a discussion of the potentially different implications of these writing systems, see Jack Goody and Ian Watt, "The Consequences of Literacy", in *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, edited by Jack Goody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 27–68, especially p. 38.
2. See Gouldner's concept of critical discourse capital in Alvin Gouldner, *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Middle Class* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979); and Bourdieu's cultural capital in Pierre Bourdieu, *Towards a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977). See also the critical comparative analysis of both Bill Martin and Ivan Széleányi, "Beyond Cultural Capital: Toward a Theory of Symbolic Domination", in *Intellectuals, Universities and the State in Western Modern Societies*, edited by Ron Eyerman, Lennart G. Svensson, and Thomas Söderqvist (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 16–49. While we acknowledge some problems with the terms, they are useful for the present purpose.
3. Paul Tickell, "Free from What? Responsible to Whom? The Problem of Democracy and the Indonesian Press", in *Democracy in Indonesia 1950s and 1990s*, edited by David Bourchier and John Legge (Clayton: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1990), pp. 182–89.
4. Krishna Sen and David Hill, *Media, Culture and Politics in Indonesia* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 51.
5. In July 2000 there were reportedly 1,470 print media titles, of which only 600 were active, printing around 16 million copies per issue (*Kompas*, 2000).
6. Ariel Heryanto, "Public Intellectuals, Media, and Democratization: Cultural Politics of the Middle Classes in Indonesia", in *Challenging Authoritarianism: Connections and Comparison between Indonesia and Malaysia*, edited by Ariel Heryanto and Sumit K. Mandal (forthcoming).
7. Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", *Essays on Ideology* (London: Verso, 1971), pp. 1–60; and Noam Chomsky, "The Responsibility of Intellectuals", *American Power and the New Mandarins: Historical and Political Essays* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967), cited on p. 6 of Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers, "Knowledge, Morality and Hope: The Social Thought of Noam Chomsky", *New Left Review* 187 (May/June 1991): 5–27. See also Nicholas Abercrombie and Bryan S. Turner, "The Dominant Ideology Thesis", in *Classes, Power, and Conflict*, edited by Anthony Giddens and David Held (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1982), pp. 396–414.
8. The epithet *perjuangan* (struggle) has been central to the rhetoric and imagination of the Indonesian public for the greater part of the twentieth century, despite various discursive practices under the New Order regime that ran counter to it. In May 1998, the respected news magazine *Panji* advertized a number of key positions, including editor, reporter, photographer, and promotional manager. The heading of the advertisement read: "Dicari: Pejuang Kebenaran tanpa kompromi" [Wanted: Patriots [who struggled] for truth with no compromise] (*Kompas*, 1998a). *Perjuangan* has acquired the status of a keyword in Bahasa Indonesia that finds no easy equivalent in English, making it difficult to translate the name of the victorious political party in the 1999 general election, Partai Demokrasi Indonesia — Perjuangan (Indonesian Democratic Party – Struggle). In 1996, Soeharto ousted Megawati from the leadership of Partai Demokrasi Indonesia, and made the compliant Surjadi the party's new chairperson. After Soeharto stepped down in 1998, in order to register for the 1999 general election, Megawati's party had to adopt a new name in order to distinguish it from its misnomer under Surjadi. The attached qualifier "*Perjuangan*" came almost naturally to the name of the old PDI.

9. Sen and Hill, op. cit.; and David T. Hill, *The Press in New Order Indonesia* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1994).
10. For details of the scale and political significance of the public reaction, see Yasuo Hanazaki, "Crossroads: Banning, June 1994 and the Aftermath", in "The Indonesian Press in the Era of Keterbukaan" (Dissertation, Department of Asian Languages and Studies, Monash University, Australia, 1996), chapter 6, pp. 199–252; and Ariel Heryanto, "Indonesian Middle-class Opposition in the 1990s", in *Political Oppositions in Industrializing Asia*, edited by Garry Rodan (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 241–71.
11. See three articles by Stanley Yoseph Adi, "Media: Antara Euforia dan Demokrasi", in *Almanak Parpol Indonesia*, edited by Julia Suryakusuma (Jakarta: API, 2000), pp. 91–98; "Amplop-isme dan Moralitas Wartawan", *Amanat* 2, no. 75 (30 March 1999): 18–19; and "Organisasi Pekerja Pers Indonesia: Antara Idealisme dan Kepentingan Praksis" (Paper presented at the seminar on Evaluasi Organisasi Jurnalis, on the occasion of the 6th anniversary of AJI, Jakarta, 7 August 1999).
12. According to one estimate, these demonstrations took place in at least twenty-one cities and towns (Personal communication with Atmakusumah Astraatmadja, 2000 Ramon Magsaysay award winner for his contribution to journalism, and chairman of an independent Press Council in Indonesia, on 12 November 2000).
13. It is indeed curious that most foreign media coverage and scholarly analyses portrayed the fall of Soeharto as a surprise, unexpected, or a rapid process. For more accounts of the broader political circumstances of the time, see the following: Ariel Heryanto, "Indonesian Middle-class..."; and Ariel Heryanto, "Indonesia: Towards the Final Countdown?", *Southeast Asian Affairs* 1997, edited by D. Singh (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1997), pp. 107–26.
14. Sen and Hill, op. cit., pp. 56–64.
15. detik.com, "Majalah Gatra Pecah; Direksi dan Pemred Dicopot", wysiwy://21/http://www.detik.com/berita/199811/981125-1144.html, 25 November 1998.
16. An important exception is Daniel Dhakidae, "Membunuh Modal, Membunuh Kebudayaan", *Bredel*, edited by Ayu Utami et al. (Jakarta: Aliansi Jurnalis Independen, 1994), pp. 48–61.
17. Goenawan Mohamad, chief editor of *TEMPO*, claimed that *TEMPO* paid annual tax of as much as Rp. 5 billion (US\$2.27 million) to the Indonesian Government. See Utami, Ayu, and Santoso, "Goenawan Mohamad: 'Saya Tidak Percaya Revolusi', an interview", *Forum Keadilan* 3, no. 7 (21 July 1994): 32–36.
18. Details of the political and economic conditions for the reinstatement of *TEMPO*'s permit within days of its banning, and the complicity of the first family, were exposed in the editorial of *TEMPO*'s first issue after its rebirth in 1998; see *TEMPO*, "Surat dari Redaksi", 12 October 1998, p. 7. For more on this issue, see Sen and Hill, op. cit., p. 60. Private and separate conversations with senior editors and journalists during that time also led us to believe that there were more attempts at these forced share acquisitions than the actual successful outcomes.
19. P. Bambang Wisudo, "Bulan Madu Pers Telah Berakhir", *Kompas*, 9 February 2000.
20. Sen and Hill, op. cit., p. 57.
21. Riant Nugroho, "Salah Urus di Gramedia Majalah", *Suara Serikat* 2 (20 March 2000), p. 12.
22. Although this permit is officially intended to control the quality of the company's management, any information or opinion in the pages deemed undesirable by the government or military often caused the cancellation of the permit, as happened in 1994 for *TEMPO*.

23. For a list of profiles of the directorships of several bodies claiming to represent the media employees within the Kompas Gramedia Group, see appendix table in Stanley Yoseph Adi, "Organisasi Pekerja Pers Indonesia: Antara Idealisme dan Kepentingan Praksis" (Paper presented at the seminar on Evaluasi Organisasi Jurnalis, on the occasion of the 6th anniversary of AJI, Jakarta, 7 August 2000).
24. For a review of recent cases, see Cahyani, Setiyardi Wicaksono and Hakim, "Wartawan itu Buruh atau Bukan?", *TEMPO*, 14 Desember 1998, p. 65. For a review of the earlier years, see Angela Romano, "Journalistic Identity and Practices in Late New Order Indonesia" (Unpublished dissertation, Queensland University of Technology, Australia, 1999), p. 127.
25. For more on recent working-class politics in Indonesia, see V. Hadiz, *Workers and the State in New Order Indonesia* (London: Routledge, 1997); and V. Hadiz, "Changing State-Labour Relations and the Unravelling of Indonesia's New Order", in *Challenging Authoritarianism: Connections and Comparison between Indonesia and Malaysia*, edited by Ariel Heryanto and Sumit K. Mandal (forthcoming). One of the earliest and most active advocates of unionization for journalists under the New Order is Dhia Prekasha Yoedha; see Dhia Prekasha Yoedha, "Profesionalisme dan Kinerja Organisasi Jurnalis" (Paper presented at the seminar on Evaluasi Organisasi Jurnalis, Jakarta, Aliansi Jurnalis Independen, 7 August 2000).
26. Romano, op. cit., pp. 108–9.
27. When this article was first drafted in September 2000, hundreds of print mass media titles had been closed down by their own management, officially for financial reasons. For further reports and discussions on the fate of employees affected by these conditions, see P. Bambang Wisudo, "Bulan Madu Pers Telah Berakhir", *Kompas*, 9 February 2000; and articles in the first issue of *Suara Serikat* (Jakarta: Serikat Karyawan Jakarta-Jakarta, 2000).
28. Article 10 of the Law, roughly translated, reads as 'The press enterprise provides social welfare to journalists and other press employees in the form of share ownership and/or net dividends, and/or other forms of benefits'.
29. The term "middle classes" has been widely debated upon. For a further discussion of such a debate with reference to Indonesia in the 1990s, see Ariel Heryanto, "Public Intellectuals, Media...".
30. Many of these cases remain unknown to the public. We feel obliged to keep their anonymity and protect the innocent.
31. Sen and Hill, op. cit., is one of the latest books on the media in Indonesia, with one chapter fully devoted to the Internet. The book was a product of long hours of laborious research in 1996, when three new Internet stalls (*warnet*) had just opened in Yogyakarta. This book provides a special section on the event (pp. 198–99). When the book was launched in Melbourne in July 2000, Yogyakarta had almost 100 *warnet*. When this article was first drafted in September 2000, the number had jumped to almost 200.
32. Ibid., p. 62.
33. Ibid., p. 203.
34. The *wartel* figure is from Sigit Widodo and Farida Farid, "Kualitas Internet di Indonesia Buruk", detik.com, 19 June 2000, <http://www.detik.com/net/2000/06/19/2000619-101229.shtml>; and the *warnet* figure is from Onno W. Purbo, "Asosiasi Warnet dan Perjuangan Ke Depan", 26 May 2000, <http://www.detik.com/net/2000/05/26/2000526-170732.shtml>.
35. Dan Murphy and Margot Cohen, "Cyber Dreams", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6 April 2000.
36. The headquarters of the armed forces is apparently the only state apparatus to have attempted any serious measures to counter the outburst of anti-government informa-

- tion on the Internet. Rather than imposing any legal restrictions, which had been characteristic of the pre-Internet regimes, the armed forces set up its own website and propagated ideas more sympathetic to the ruling regime.
37. For more accounts of the success story of detik.com see, "Portal-portal di Medan Laga", *SWA* 16, no. 4 (24 February–8 March 2000): 32–38; and "Berdagang dari Njuwok ke New York", *TEMPO*, 12 March 2000, pp. 63–69.
 38. Murphy and Cohen, op. cit.
 39. According to a survey of 250 journalist respondents conducted in May and June 1999 by the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI), the salary distribution is Rp. 250,000 (5 per cent), Rp.500,000 to Rp.1 million (35 per cent), Rp.1-2 million (30 per cent), and above Rp. 2 million (8 per cent); see "Rendahnya Gaji Wartawan Indonesia (Gamedia Majalah)", *Suara Serikat* 2000 (Jakarta: Serikat Karyawan *Jakarta-Jakarta*, 2000), p. 7.
 40. *Wajah Pers Indonesia 1995* (Jakarta: AJI [Aliansi Jurnalis Independen, 1996]; Sen and Hill, op. cit., pp. 67–69; and Jose Manuel Tesoro, "Indonesia: Learning the Ropes of Press Freedom", *UNESCO Courier* 2 (February 2000): 43–45.
 41. Tesoro, op. cit.

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