



# Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs

---

OKAMOTO, Masaaki (2014), Jakartans, Institutionally Volatile, in: *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, 33, 1, 7–27.

URN: <http://nbn-resolving.org/urn/resolver.pl?urn:nbn:de:gbv:18-4-7357>

ISSN: 1868-4882 (online), ISSN: 1868-1034 (print)

The online version of this article can be found at:

[www.CurrentSoutheastAsianAffairs.org](http://www.CurrentSoutheastAsianAffairs.org)

---

Published by

GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Institute of Asian Studies and Hamburg University Press.

The *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* is an Open Access publication. It may be read, copied and distributed free of charge according to the conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.

To subscribe to the print edition: [ias@giga-hamburg.de](mailto:ias@giga-hamburg.de)

For an e-mail alert please register at: [www.CurrentSoutheastAsianAffairs.org](http://www.CurrentSoutheastAsianAffairs.org)

The *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* is part of the GIGA Journal Family which includes: Africa Spectrum ● Journal of Current Chinese Affairs ● Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs ● Journal of Politics in Latin America ●

[www.giga-journal-family.org](http://www.giga-journal-family.org)



# Jakartans, Institutionally Volatile

OKAMOTO Masaaki

**Abstract:** Jakarta recently has gained even more central political attention in Indonesia since Joko Widodo (Jokowi) and Basuki Purnama (Ahok) became, respectively, the province's governor and vice-governor in 2012. They started a series of eye-catching and populist programmes, drawing popular support from not only the people of Jakarta, but also among Indonesians in general. Jokowi is now even the most popular candidate for the presidential election in 2014. Their rise is phenomenal in this sense, but it is understandable if we look at Jakartan voters' behaviour and the institutional arrangement that leads to it. Jakarta, as the national capital, has a unique arrangement in that the province has no autonomous regency or city. This paper argues that this arrangement causes Jakartans to be more politically volatile and describes how this institutional arrangement was created by analysing the minutes of the meeting to discuss the laws concerning Jakarta Province.

■ Manuscript received 6 March 2014; accepted 17 May 2014

**Keywords:** Indonesia, Jakarta, urban politics, decentralisation

**Dr. OKAMOTO Masaaki 岡本正明** is an associate professor at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, Japan. His scientific disciplines are Area Studies and Political Science and his current research covers urban politics in Southeast Asia and the political economy of oil palm plantation expansion in Southeast Asia.  
E-mail: <okamoto@cseas.kyoto-u.ac.jp>

## Background: The Phenomenal Rise of Jokowi and Ahok in 2012

Even as recently as a year before the vote, no one had expected Joko Widodo (Jokowi) and Basuki Purnama (Ahok) to pair up and stand in the 2012 gubernatorial election in metropolitan Jakarta. While Jokowi and Ahok had achieved some prominence for their good local governance, their success and reforms then had been limited to smaller, more provincial areas, considered vastly different from a mega-urban, metropolitan city such as Jakarta. Jokowi was then the mayor of Solo in Central Java, well known for his successful governance and casual, communicative approaches to the people. Ahok was then the regent of East Belitung Regency in Sumatera – and notably also the first Chinese regent in Indonesia – before becoming a member of national parliament representing the Golkar party. As I have noted elsewhere, he had bluntly criticised the local bureaucracy of his small regency for its inefficiency and corruption and introduced innovative, no-nonsense policies during his time in office (Okamoto 2009).

Six months before the election, however, the two opposition parties, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, PDIP) and the Greater Indonesia Movement (Gerakan Indonesia Raya, Gerindra) party decided to appoint these two local leaders as governor and vice-governor candidates to compete with the incumbent, Fauzi Bowo, a member of President Yudhoyono's Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat, PD).

Both Fauzi Bowo and his vice-gubernatorial candidate, Nachrowi Ramli, had the advantage of being ethnic Betawi – the native *putra daerah* identity of Jakarta – and they were able to mobilise local bureaucracies because Fauzi Bowo was the incumbent. Jokowi and Ahok were outsiders with no established political base in Jakarta, but it was their newness itself that proved beneficial to them. The economy in Jakarta was growing under Fauzi Bowo, but during his term, chronic problems such as annual floods, worsening traffic congestion and stark inequality continued to plague the city, even exacerbated. These unsolved problems, and his lack of communicative approaches with the people, degraded his popularity.

As such, Jokowi and Ahok offered both an attractive possibility and hope for change with their casual communicative skills and good reputation as local leaders. They had taken a populist approach by criticising the local bureaucracy and the elite-oriented economic development scheme and by frequently making impromptu visits popularly known as

*blusukan* to meet with and listen to voices from poor communities. (See Hamid, this issue, for a discussion of their populist approach.) Their unconventional, populist approach and the clean reputation they have engendered greatly contributed to their eventual election victory, as Jakartans were desperately seeking changes to the staid management of the capital city of Indonesia.

## Change: A Normal Political Pattern in Jakarta?

The success of Jokowi and Ahok seems unbelievable, but it is not as surprising when we examine the trajectory of Jakarta politics. A sudden political change (of actors) is not a rarity and is even a frequent phenomenon in Jakarta. Table 1 shows the results of general elections in Jakarta and all over Indonesia from 1999 to 2009, and it clearly demonstrates the Jakartan predisposition to frequent political changes. In the first general election in 1999, after the fall of the authoritarian Suharto regime, the PDIP, a nationalist party led by a staunch anti-Suharto leader, Megawati Sukarnoputri (who is also the daughter of the first president, Sukarno), garnered the largest support with 33.8 per cent of the votes at the national level. The voters in Jakarta enthusiastically supported the PDIP with an even larger percentage: 39.5.

A similar kind of support for change occurred in the 2004 election and the 2007 gubernatorial election (Table 2). The prominent new political trend in the mid-2000s in urban Indonesia was the rise of the Islamist party, the Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera, PKS). The PKS successfully established its image as a clean and anti-corruption party upholding Islamic ethics and moral. It rapidly gained support, from receiving 4.9 per cent in Jakarta Province (1.4 per cent of the votes at the national level) in 1999 to getting 23 per cent of the total votes in Jakarta (7.3 per cent at the national level) and becoming the largest party in Jakarta (Ujang 2010). In the gubernatorial election in Jakarta in 2007, the candidate solely supported by the PKS lost but had the support of a larger base than expected against the vice-governor at the time, Fauzi Bowo, who was supported by twenty parties, including major parties.

The victorious party in Jakarta changed again in the 2009 election. The Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat, PD), led by the popular President Yudhoyono, successfully presented itself as a centrist, catch-all party and obtained the largest share of votes, with 20.4 per cent across the nation. Again, it gained far more popularity in Jakarta itself, where it garnered 34 per cent of the vote.

In short, voters in Jakarta have demonstrated that they are not immutable. In 1999 the party that received the most votes was a nationalist party, in 2004 an Islamist party led in the polls, and 2009 saw a centrist party take the lead. In the two gubernatorial elections in 2007 and 2012, they positively voted for newly emerging candidates that they believed could quickly bring about some changes. This political trend in Jakarta is similar to the larger trend in Indonesia as a whole, but the fluctuation of voting behaviour seems to be far more amplified in Jakarta.

Table 1: Percentages of Votes Obtained in Three Elections in Indonesia and in Jakarta

Year	The leading party	National	Jakarta
1999	PDIP (nationalist)	33.8%	39.5%
2004	PKS (Islamist)	7.3%	23.0%
2009	PD (centrist)	20.4%	34.0%

Source: Aris Ananta et al. 2004: 276; Matsui and Kawamura 2005: 428–429; Honna and Kawamura 2010: 178–188.

Table 2: The Result of the Jakarta Gubernatorial Election in 2007

Year	Candidates (above: governor below: vice-governor)	Supporting parties	Share of votes obtained
2007	Fauzi Bowo (incumbent)	20 parties (incl. major parties)	57.90%
	Prijanto		
	Adang Darajatun	PKS	42.10%
	Dani Anwar		

Source: Komisi Pemilihan Umum DKI Jakarta 2007.

## Volatile Voters as a Decisive Mass

The data on general elections present us with a number of intriguing peculiarities. First, the low re-election rate shows that the turnover was quite high in Jakarta. In 2004, there were 22 members of the national parliament (MPs) representing Jakarta, and only two of them were re-elected in 2009. No one has ever served for more than two consecutive periods in the national parliament. Of the provincial MPs in 1999, 22.7 per cent were re-elected in 2004, and 24.4 per cent of the provincial MPs in 2004 were re-elected in 2009 (Suprpto et al. 2004; DPRD DKI Jakarta 2009). This might be partly due to the extremely tough competition among the candidates. Surprisingly, 2,268 candidates ran for 90 provincial parliamentary seats in 2009 (Komisi Pemilihan Umum 2009).

Second, primordial social cleavages such as religion and ethnicity, while often important and decisive factors in other parts of Indonesia, play less critical roles in Jakarta. They still have some importance in Jakarta, as the contributions by Miichi and Wahyu in this issue suggest, but ethnic cleavages are becoming less and less decisive in gubernatorial elections. The people of Jakarta, of which the indigenous ethnic Betawi make up only 28 per cent, are generally ethnically and religiously heterogeneous. Even if a candidate has the support of most ethnic Betawi, most of whom are considered to be pious Muslims, victory is not guaranteed.

Third, voters decide relatively late who they are going to vote for. Table 3 shows when voters decided to support a certain pair of candidates<sup>1</sup> in the first round of the 2012 gubernatorial election. Approximately 30 per cent of the respondents made up their minds less than a week before election day.

Table 3: When Did You Choose the Candidate in the First Round of Election?

<b>After opening the ballot paper in a voting booth</b>	<b>7.9%</b>
In the morning before going to a voting place	7.5%
One day before the election	5.6%
One week before the election	8.8%
One month before the election	22.1%
A few months before the election	28.5%
More than a year before the election	19.7%

Note: Based on respondents who said that they voted in the first round.

Source: Lembaga Survei Indonesia and *Majalah Tempo* 2012: 21.

The above data thus suggest the importance of volatile voters as the decisive mass in Jakarta elections. These metropolitan volatile voters have neither strong political networks nor any staunch ideological background. They tend to give their votes to a party or a candidate that is able to sincerely or shrewdly present itself or himself/herself as an agent

---

1 According to Law No. 29/2007 on Jakarta government, a pair of gubernatorial and vice-gubernatorial candidates can win the election if the pair gains more than 50 per cent of the total votes. If no pair gains more than 50 per cent of the votes, the second round of the election is to be held between the two pairs with the largest number of votes. In the 2012 gubernatorial election, since no pair obtained more than 50 per cent of the total votes, the second round of election was conducted between the pairs of Foke–Nachrowi and Jokowi–Ahok. The Jokowi–Ahok pair won the second round.

for change. This mass is large enough to be a determining factor in any of Jakarta's elections.

The question is why is the percentage of volatile voters so high in Jakarta as to be decisive in a series of elections? Since the platform differences among political parties are becoming increasingly ambiguous as they morph into more or less centrist parties, voters are more impelled to choose a party not based on the programme or the platform, but on the popularity of party leaders and cadres. At the same time, keeping voters loyal to certain political leaders or cadres proves challenging. Although political machines and patronage politics exist in Jakarta, with some supported by strong political bailiwicks,<sup>2</sup> the number of politicians with such strong political bases is limited, as demonstrated by the low turnover rate of national and provincial MPs. It is thus not easy to keep a significant number of voters loyal to a certain party or candidate.<sup>3</sup>

There are plenty of social organisations that function as political machines or mediators between politico-bureaucrats and communities in Jakarta. One of the typical examples is the ethnicity-based Betawi Brotherhood Forum (Forum Betawi Rempug, FBR), Indonesia's largest organisation of, and an interest group representing, the ethnic Betawi (for studies on the FBR, see Untung 2005 and 2006; Wilson 2006). The FBR has deployed coercive measures to achieve its purposes, but its political behaviours are quite often dependent on the financial benefit that it can reap in exchange for supporting a party or a candidate. Support from the FBR is not a guarantee that votes for the party or candidate will increase: In the 2012 gubernatorial election, FBR strongly supported Fauzi Bowo, but Fauzi failed to be elected.

The existence of volatile voters is not a phenomenon unique to Jakarta. In general, metropolitan areas tend to have a significant portion of volatile voters due to weaker social ties among the urban mass along with heavy exposure to the media and information that can easily and constantly sway them toward alternative choices. However, these volatile

---

2 For example, Achmad Suaidy, from an Islamic party, the United Development Party (PPP) has been quite well accepted in his West Jakarta constituency, and he was a provincial and national parliamentarian from 1977 to 2009. His son has since succeeded his strong political bailiwick, having become a member of the regional legislature (DPRD) in the 2009 election (Rizal et al. 2008: 17–25).

3 *G 20 S/DKI*, a novel based on the experiences of volunteers for Jokowi–Ahok in 2012 vividly shows us how apolitical urban middle and lower people were motivated and organised to support the Jokowi–Ahok pair just in a short period of time. It turned out to be a mass movement to defeat Fauzi Bowo (Mufallah and Toto 2013). This implies the wider political space and demand for instant change in Jakarta.

voters do not always play a determining role, and here we need to look at the institutional settings. For example, the area and population of metropolitan Manila are similar in size to those of Jakarta Province, but the volatile voters in Manila do not play the decisive role in elections. Instead, in Manila, In Manila, clientelism politics is still the key to win the elections.<sup>4</sup> Metropolitan Manila is divided into 17 local government units, and local oligarchs easily control small local governments by patronage.

On the other hand, Jakarta, as a special capital region, is officially a province with a special capital city status. It thus has just one autonomous government at the provincial level, but no political autonomy below it. I argue that this particular institutional setting in Jakarta cultivates more volatile voters eager for constant and instant political changes. I will elaborate this further in the next section.

## An Institutional Setting for Volatile Voters: No Electoral Politics at the City Level

As the national capital, Jakarta is a special autonomous region. The first law regulating Jakarta in the era of democracy was Law No. 34/1999, which was revised in 2007 as Law No. 29/2007. The major difference between Jakarta and other parts of Indonesia is the number of tiers of autonomous regions. Jakarta has just one tier of autonomy, at the provincial level, while other parts of Indonesia have two tiers – provincial and city/regency levels.

Jakarta has five cities (Central Jakarta, North Jakarta, East Jakarta, West Jakarta, South Jakarta) and one regency (Kepulauan Seribu), but they are not autonomous regions. The elected provincial governor appoints five mayors and one regent. These five cities and one regency have assemblies, but these assemblies are just consultative bodies of “working partners” (*mitra kerja*) to the mayors and regent. For cities, this body is referred to as the Dewan Kota (City Council); for the regency, it is called the Dewan Kabupaten (Regency Council). For each type of council, the number of members is equivalent to the number of districts (*kecamatan*) that each city or regency contains. Each of the five Dewan Kota in Jakarta has six to ten members, and the Dewan Kabupaten has just two members (please see Table 4 on the number of members for each city/regency).

---

4 According to Shatkin (2000: 2365), local politics in Metro Manila evinced a combination of clientelism, populism and grassroots political mobilization.

Table 4: Number of Dewan Kota/Kabupaten Members and Representation Rate

City or re-gency	Number of De-wan Kota/Kabu-paten members	Population (2010)	Representa-tion rate
North Jakarta	6	1,645,659	274,277
West Jakarta	8	2,281,945	285,243
Central Jakarta	8	899,515	112,439
East Jakarta	10	2,693,896	269,390
South Jakarta	10	2,062,232	206,223
Kepulauan Seribu	2	21,082	10,541
Total	44	9,604,329	218,280

Source: BPS Provinsi DKI Jakarta 2011: 80.

By-law No. 7/2001 on the Dewan Kota/Kabupaten stipulates the selection process as follows: Below a city or regency, there are districts (*kecamatan*), below which are subdistricts (*kelurahan*) for urban areas or villages (*desa*) for rural areas. Each *kelurahan* has a consultative assembly called the Dewan Kelurahan (town council) and each Dewan Kelurahan elects one informal leader (*tokoh masyarakat*). The provincial parliament convenes all the elected *tokoh masyarakat* and, after assessing their visions and missions, is supposed to choose one *tokoh masyarakat* from each district as the member of the Dewan Kota/Kabupaten by voting. The by-law stipulates that these members do not represent any political parties, but in reality, provincial MPs tend to pay less attention to the visions and missions elaborated by the candidate, and instead choose those affiliated with the existing political parties based on the voting percentage in the city or regency. For example, Central Jakarta’s Dewan Kota has eight members, and based on the voting percentages in the 1999 election, four seats were given to the PDIP, two seats to an Islamic party called the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP), and the remaining two were given to the state ruling party under the New Order, the Functional Group (Golongan Karya, Golkar) Party.

When they started their activities as members of Dewan Kota/Kabupaten in 2003, some of the Dewan members readily listened to the communities’ aspirations and communicated them to the city governments; at the time, the mayors, regent and local bureaucrats were still willing to communicate with them. However, these activities faltered before long. Since Dewan Kota/Kabupaten are only “working partners” for mayors and regents and lack any legislative or budgeting powers, mayors and regents have no impetus to work in partnership with them.

The members of the Dewan Kota that I interviewed were quite disappointed with the position of the council, as its role is unclear, its efforts ineffectual, its authority diluted, and as the mayors and regent pay such little attention to its opinions.<sup>5</sup>

The visibility of Dewan Kota/Kabupaten has also dissolved among the Jakartans. The office of Central Jakarta's Dewan Kota is located within a small room in a city government building that is far smaller than the buildings set aside for city assemblies in other Indonesian cities (see Photo 1). The members of Dewan Kelurahan and the regional parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, DPRD) might know the members of Dewan Kota/Kabupaten, but most Jakartans are hardly aware of them or their activities. A member of Dewan Kota himself self-mockingly said that the Dewan is "*antara ada dan tiada*" ("between existing and not existing").<sup>6</sup>

Photo 1: The Room of the Dewan Kota of Central Jakarta City



Source: Photo taken by author.

It could be said that the Jakartans have political representatives only at the provincial level – the governor, the vice-governor and 90 regional

5 Interview with six members of the Dewan Kota/Kabupaten of five cities and one regency on 14, 15, 16 and 17 February and 15 and 19 March 2012.

6 Interview with Ichasan (Head of the Dewan Kota of Central Jakarta) on 17 February 2012.

MPs, elected by the votes of approximately seven million people. These 92 politicians are accountable to almost ten million people in Jakarta. In other parts of Indonesia, regencies and cities under a province are autonomous. The regents, mayors and local parliamentarians are directly elected by the constituency. These autonomous regencies and cities are increasingly controlled by local oligarchs. The number of swing voters is becoming less decisive, especially for the direct local head elections because oligarchic rule is becoming common in many parts of Indonesia. Furthermore, dynasty politics is becoming entrenched at the local level. The incumbents have high chances of getting re-elected. Excluding Jakarta, in Java in 2011, 51 out of 112 regents/mayors (45.5 per cent) were incumbents as regent/mayor or vice-regent/vice-mayor. They wield strong political-economic influence, which allows them to concede their positions to their family members or loyalists. The politics of clan is emerging: There were at least 11 regencies/cities where a family member succeeded the father or uncle as regent/mayor in Java in 2011.<sup>7</sup> However, Jakarta has no autonomy at the regency/city level, which institutionally weakens the possibility of the emergence of well-entrenched local oligarchs. Actually, Fauzi Bowo, the Jakarta provincial governor from 2007 to 2012, successfully garnered the support from all the major parties and established himself as a strong oligarch, but even he failed to be re-elected in 2012. This peculiar institutional setting enhances the share of swing voters among metropolitan Jakartans. The next section will discuss why and how this institutional setting came to be in Jakarta.

## Autonomy Only at the Province Level: The Legacy of the Suharto Regime

This legacy of autonomy only at the province level within the current institutional framework for Jakarta can be traced back to the New Order. It was different from the local government frameworks for other parts of Indonesia under Law No. 5/1974, which granted autonomous status both to the province and to the city/regency except in Jakarta Province, though the autonomy was quite limited. Each province and city/regency had its own local parliament where the elected parliamentarians sat. Each local parliament chooses the governor and mayor/regent, though the intervention from the central government in the process was quite strong. This rule applied to all of Indonesia except Jakarta. The law only stated a

---

7 These data were collected by the author from several sources, such as Dirjen Otda: 2011a; 2011b; 2012.

vague specification of local government organisation in Jakarta, as declared in Article 6:

The national capital of the Republic of Indonesia, Jakarta, can have a different form of government administration within its region because of its growth and development, but the form is to be in conformity with the regulations in this law as much as possible. And the regulations [concerning Jakarta, added by author] are to be stipulated in a law.<sup>8</sup>

Fifteen years later, in March 1989, the Department of Home Affairs submitted a draft law on Jakarta administration to the national parliament (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, DPR). The draft became Law No. 11/1990 in October 1990. It is unclear why it took sixteen years to create a more specific law on Jakarta administration, but keeping the Jakarta government authority ambiguous might have been advantageous for the central government, as the latter could more easily intervene in the affairs of the Jakarta government for any reason.

The minutes of the law-making process in the DPR, accessible from the library of DPR, revealed that one of the main discussions concerned the status of cities in Jakarta Province (DPR 1990a, 1990b).<sup>9</sup> However, the Department of Home Affairs rejected autonomy for Jakartan cities in submitting the first draft law on Jakarta administration for the following reasons:

Complexities of issues facing Jakarta are closely related to the limited but densely populated territory, which impacts residential areas, transportation, communication and other aspects. All these demand the synchronisation of Jakarta development administration from planning and implementation to control. The problems facing Jakarta should be dealt with in a quick, integrated and controllable manner. Based on these considerations, the Special Capital Region of Jakarta is not divided into lower autonomous regions. The creation of lower autonomous regions in Jakarta will result in the birth of different authorities and that could disturb the uniformity in dealing with the problems of Jakarta and delay the decision-making in tackling the problems facing Jakarta (Menteri Dalam Negeri 1989: 19; translated by author).

---

8 Translated by author.

9 In 1990, Jakarta Province had just five cities, Central Jakarta, North Jakarta, West Jakarta, South Jakarta and East Jakarta. Kepulauan Seribu became a regency in 1999 after democratisation.

The stakeholders involved in the discussion were limited in the New Order era. The discussion was conducted by the government and the following four factions of the DPR: (1) Fraksi Karya Pembangunan (F-KP, 294 members), a faction of the governing party, Golkar; (2) Fraksi ABRI (F-ABRI, 99 members), a faction of the military/police; (3) Fraksi Persatuan Pembangunan (F-PP, 59 members), a faction of an Islamic opposition party, the United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, PPP); and (4) Fraksi PDI (F-PDI, 40 members), a faction of the Indonesian Democratic Party (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia, PDI). In contrast to the two opposition parties, Golkar and military/police factions supported the government draft that would not bestow autonomous status on cities in Jakarta. The F-PDI campaigned for city councils to be established (F-PDI 1989: 2), while the F-PPP presented two alternatives – city councils or local advisory boards (Badan Pertimbangan Daerah), either of which would represent the constituencies democratically (F-PP 1989: 10).

Unwilling to admit authorities in Jakarta outside of the provincial government, the Minister of Home Affairs was initially against the demands of the F-PDI and the F-PPP. In order to avert the deadlock, the DPR organised a special committee to discuss the draft law, and the committee members intensely discussed the issue of autonomous cities. Finally, the committee proposed to establish a kind of assembly called the City Consultative Assembly (Lembaga Musyawarah Kota, LMK). With members comprising socio-political organisations, the military/police and government officials, the LMK was expected to play a role similar to the one the DPRD had in other cities and to communicate the aspirations of Jakartans to the executive.

Unexpectedly, despite being part of the authoritarian regime, the Minister of Home Affairs accepted this committee's proposal to establish an LMK at the city level "in order to listen to the people's aspiration and as an organisation for mutual communication at city level"<sup>10</sup> although the city was not considered to be an autonomous region (Sekretariat Jenderal DPR RI 1990: 74). In their final remarks, F-PPP and F-PDI welcomed the government's readiness to allow an LMK at the city level, and all the factions together passed the draft law on 12 October 1990.

However, the article dealing with the LMK did not clearly specify its composition, which was later regulated by the Minister of Home Affairs which did not consult the DPR in so doing. In the final debates over the

---

10 Translated by author.

specifics of the draft law, the F-PDI fought to have more than twenty of its members in the LMK, but the Minister of Home Affairs decided that each political party – Golkar, PDI and PPP – would be allowed just one representative in the LMK, in addition to one representative from the military/police and the mayor himself. Ultimately, the LMK was just a small, emasculated forum stripped of any meaningful authority. The LMK was expected to be a democratic organisation for Jakartans, but it had been castrated from the start, and in the end was almost completely useless.<sup>11</sup>

With the institutional setting of “no autonomy” for cities, all the local politics in Jakarta tended to be provincial politics. All six governors under the New Order were from the military, and the government party, Golkar, was dominant in the parliament. Opposition parties such as the PDI and especially the PPP had strong support bases in some areas,<sup>12</sup> but their voices at the provincial level were quite weak. Generally speaking, Jakartans were politically less organised, more volatile, and felt politically suppressed. The continuous economic development accelerated the rise of the middle class as a mass in Jakarta. The middle class in Jakarta were, however, politically conservative (Robison 1996: 85). They enjoyed the benefits of the economic development prompted by the Suharto family and his cronies, including the non-political Chinese conglomerates and foreign companies. The middle class had little reason to organise themselves politically just before the Asian economic crisis in 1997.

## Autonomy Only at the Provincial Level under the Democracy

The Asian economic crisis in 1997 hit Indonesia the hardest, finally bringing an end to the 32-year Suharto regime and ushering in democratisation and decentralisation in 1998. In the era of democracy and autonomy, the demand to revise Law No. 11/1990 on the government of Jakarta rose, and the DPR began to revise it, finally passing it as Law No. 34/1999 in August 1999. The minutes concerning Law No. 34/1999 revealed the involvement of the central and provincial government and the four factions of the DPR in the discussion. Similar to the case of Law No. 11/1990 analysed in the previous section, one of the most

---

11 Interview with Arifin (Division Head of Government Empowerment, Bureau of Government Management of Jakarta Provincial Government) on 11 March 2011.

12 See Cribb (1984: 663) on the existence of stronghold of PPP in Jakarta.

heated discussions was again about whether autonomous status should be conferred to the city/regency in Jakarta (Sekretariat Jenderal DPR 1999a and 1999b).<sup>13</sup>

The meeting to discuss the draft law at the Second Commission of the DPR started on 23 June 1999 and ended approximately one month later, on 19 July. On the first day of the meeting, the Minister of Home Affairs, Syarwan Hamid and the then governor of Jakarta Province, Sutiyoso, requested that the commission members not give autonomous status to Jakarta's cities for the following reasons: First, since Jakarta is the national capital and in that role assumes substantial responsibilities and needs to take rapid, appropriate and accurate decisions, if its cities or regency are given autonomous status, narrower views could destabilise and retard decision-making processes. Autonomy only at the provincial level was regarded as more efficient and effective in achieving implementation of administration. Second, autonomy only at the provincial level was also deemed more suitable for the empowerment of the people, more conducive to achieving tranquillity and order (*rust en orde*) and to implementing development activities.

This unwillingness to encourage dynamic growth of local politics at the city level is the legacy of the Suharto regime, but the contemporary resistance was understandable, as they remembered the riots and demonstrations that had resulted in the breakdown of the Suharto regime a year before. The major factions, the F-KP, F-ABRI and F-PDI, agreed with the autonomous status only at the provincial level in Jakarta. One unique exception was the Islamic F-PPP, which strongly advocated granting autonomous status to the cities and regency within Jakarta Province, following the new law on local governments, Law No. 22/1999, which had replaced the previous Law No. 5/1974. Law No. 22/1999 stipulated wider autonomy not only for the provinces but also for the cities and regencies in the belief that the principal local governments of city should be more accessible. The F-PPP argued that there was no special reason

---

13 Another major issue was how to empower the subdistrict (*kelurahan*). Indonesia has four layers of government, from the province, the city/regency and the district (*kecamatan*) down to the subdistrict (*kelurahan*) in urban areas, or village (*desa*) in rural areas. A *kelurahan* is created in urban areas and a *lurah*, a head of a *kelurahan*, is a bureaucrat appointed by the regent or mayor. In rural areas, a *desa* is equivalent to *kelurahan*, and a *kepala desa* is an administrative village head elected by the villagers. So, the issue is how to democratise the *kelurahan* despite the fact that the *lurah* is not elected. Law No. 34/1999 stipulated the establishment of a Dewan Kelurahan, an assembly similar to a Dewan Kota, so that the voices of the people in the *kelurahan* could be heard. See, on the role of Dewan Kelurahan: Lukman 2003.

not to give autonomy to cities in Jakarta Province, and that the regime would remain centralistic if the autonomy was limited to the province (Sekretariat Jenderal DPR 1999a; 1999b).

PPP was one of the two opposition parties that had faced restrictions and suppression by the central and Jakarta provincial governments during the New Order. It continued to lose the elections during the New Order (except for the 1977 election) even though it had a strong support base among the pious Muslims in Jakarta. The PPP might have opposed the idea of no autonomy at the city level because of this lingering trauma, and might have thought that the party would win the majority of seats in some cities where it had a strong support base even though it could not win the provincial election.

The consensus among the factions on provincial autonomy was not achieved until 6 July 1999, while the intense lobbying between factions, which averted the deadlock, lasted for 75 minutes just before the start of the meeting the next day on 7 July 1999. In the end, they agreed to confer autonomy only to the provinces in Jakarta and to empower the role of Dewan Kota and mayors instead. The discussion moved to their roles afterwards.

## The Ambiguity of the Dewan Kota/Kabupaten

The Ministry of Home Affairs proposed to establish the Dewan Kota to replace the LMK and promised to give it more authority. At first, the F-PPP criticised the proposed the Dewan Kota merely as an embellishing addendum (*embel-embel saja*) – even the F-KP was afraid that the Dewan Kota would be just a symbolic concession – and emphasised the importance of giving clear roles and authorities to it.

After the discussion in the meeting, each faction and the central government agreed on the importance of the empowerment of the Dewan Kota. The law decided its roles as follows in Article 26 of Law No. 34/1999:

1. In order to assist the mayor/regent in the government activities of a city/regency, the Dewan Kota/Kabupaten are established.
2. Dewan Kota/Kabupaten are working partners of the city/regency government in deciding the operational policies of city/regency government.
3. Dewan Kota/Kabupaten have a duty to accommodate the people's aspiration, give input to the city/regency government, explain the

government policies to the people and monitor the activities of city/regency government.

4. In order to implement the roles as described in Article 3, Dewan Kota/Kabupaten have a right to submit questions and interpellations.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, as explained earlier in the article, the Dewan Kota/Kabupaten followed the same path as the LMK and as of today can boast no significant achievement. According to the current members of the Dewan Kota/Kabupaten, the mayors and the regent have been unwilling to let the less powerful Dewan Kota/Kabupaten intervene, while on the other side, the provincial MPs have been unwilling to give up their political power by empowering the Dewan Kota/Kabupaten. The first members of the Dewan Kota/Kabupaten in Jakarta were chosen in 2003 and should have ended their terms in 2008, but they were in office until late 2013, each receiving a monthly salary of two million IDR since the provincial government did not start the selection process of new Dewan members in accordance with the new Law No. 29/2007 that replaced Law No. 34/1999 on Jakarta. This was a clear sign that the provincial government and parliament hardly pay attention to, let alone expect any significant work from, the Dewan Kota/Kabupaten.

## A Separate but Similar Law on Jakarta in 2007

Law No. 32/2004 replacing Law No. 22/1999 on local administration introduced the direct elections of local heads and made major changes to the local government frameworks. DPR voices emerged from there, advocating a revision of Law No. 34/1999 on Jakarta administration. The DPR initiated the draft law replacing Law No. 11/1999, which became Law No. 29/2007 on Jakarta after a discussion of more than two years from June 2005 to late July 2007. There were two substantial changes in the new law: the introduction of direct gubernatorial election, and the special article on the preservation of Betawi culture in Jakarta. As far as the status of the cities and regency and the role of Dewan Kota/Kabupaten were concerned, however, the new law has made no substantial change.<sup>15</sup>

---

14 Translated by author.

15 The Jakarta provincial government issued By-law No. 6/2011 on Dewan Kota/Kabupaten based on Law No. 29/2007. According to the by-law, the selection process of Dewan Kota/Kabupaten members involved more stakeholders, such as university lecturers and NGO activists, and put more emphasis on the

The two-year discussion about the revision in the DPR had involved a number of stakeholders, including not only representatives from the regional legislature (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, DPRD) and the Regional Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah, DPD), but also representatives from universities, ethnic Betawi organisations, Hawkers' Association. The demand for autonomy on the city and regency level in Jakarta came from an Islamic faction, the National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional, PAN), university lecturers, the DPD, Hawkers' Association and some Betawi organisations. A provincial MP from the PAN rightly stated that 75 provincial MPs were barely enough to listen to the aspirations of all Jakartans (Sekretariat Jenderal DPR 2008c: 505).<sup>16</sup> A lecturer from the University of Indonesia and a representative from the DPD argued that giving autonomy to cities and regency was in accordance with the Constitution (Sekretariat Jenderal DPR 2008b: 82–84; 2008c: 680–681). The Hawkers' Association criticised the fact that all the decision-making powers were in the hands of the governor, and the mayors were just implementers with no authority to solve problems or responsiveness to the people's requests (Sekreatriat Jenderal DPR 2008c: 703–704).

However, the majority of factions in the DPR, the central and provincial governments and some Betawi organisations were against these suggestions and requests, for reasons similar to the ones given for the previous two laws on Jakarta that I discussed earlier. Instead of conferring autonomous status to cities and regency to promote vibrant local politics, the DPR decided to strengthen the provincial government by increasing the number of provincial MPs from 75 to 90.

Additionally, the major issues on the draft law no longer concerned the autonomy in the cities and regency, but the idea of a metropolitan Jakarta whose administrative coordination between Jakarta Province and its surrounding local governments would be smoothed. The DPR hardly allocated enough time to discuss the issues of autonomy at city/regency level, and the role of Dewan Kota/Kabupaten again became peripheral (Sekretariat Jenderal DPR 2008a–e). Ultimately, even in the era of democratisation and decentralisation, the DPR decided to keep its hold on

---

capacity of candidates. The provincial DPRD has no right to choose the candidates any longer. A mayor or a regent is now obliged to respond to questions and inquiries from Dewan Kota/Kabupaten, but the Dewan still has no budgeting or legislative powers.

16 The number of provincial MPs in Jakarta was still 75 in the period from 2004 to 2009.

an authoritarian institutional arrangement for the sake of integrated development and *rust en orde* of the national capital of Jakarta.

## Conclusion

A year and a half has passed since Jokowi and Ahok took office. In the meantime, they have launched some radical reform programmes. The strength and popularity of Jokowi and Ahok have depended on their direct, unmediated appeal and their constant and well-received communication with the Jakartans, as well as their incessant exposure of themselves and their achievements to the Jakartans. Democratically elected mayors, regent and Dewan members thus might present themselves as unwelcome mediators to the direct communication of Jokowi and Ahok. Keeping the most local, direct (electoral) politics at the provincial level benefits them.

Granted, they have launched a series of programmes and shown some concrete achievements. They are quite popular now, but some have started to call attention to their unfulfilled promises. Considering the trajectory of voting behaviour in Jakarta discussed earlier, whether this popularity will last remains to be seen. It is highly probable that the metropolitan volatile voters will seek out different actors for change in the next gubernatorial election if Jokowi and Ahok fail to hold onto their power and popularity, which will ultimately depend on constantly reminding Jakartans their achievements and shrewdly managing the fragile hopes and expectations of the masses. If Jokowi is successfully elected as the next president in this July and Ahok leads the Jakarta provincial government, Ahok is still expected to fulfil these hopes and expectations.

It was found out that the metropolitan volatile voters were again the decisive factor for the 2014 election. The PDIP became the largest party with 19.0 per cent at the national level while the party obtained the higher votes with 27.1 per cent in Jakarta. This mass is powerful in Jakarta,<sup>17</sup> although in general Jakartans – who enjoy the highest education level and income in Indonesia – do not recognise that their strength partly depends on the New Order-style institutional arrangement entrenched in

---

17 It is especially true for the gubernatorial election if the new Law No. 29/2007 is still in effect because this law stipulates that a pair of governor and vice-governor candidates need to obtain more than 50 per cent of the votes to win the election. The support of some segments of society is surely not enough to obtain more than 50 per cent of the votes in the heterogeneous Jakarta. Winning the votes of the volatile mass is thus crucial to winning the gubernatorial election.

Jakarta. The city's Dewan Kota/Kabupaten members, appointed mayors and regent have no political power, and almost all local politics in Jakarta is provincial. This institutional setting has caused Jakartans to be volatile voters.

## References

### Government Documents

- Fraksi Persatuan Pembangunan (F-PP) (1989), *Pemandangan Umum Fraksi Persatuan Pembangunan DRR-RI terhadap Rancangan Undang-Undang Susunan Pemerintahan Daerah Khusus Ibukota Negara Republik Indonesia Jakarta*.
- Fraksi Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (F-PDI) (1989), *Pemandangan Umum Fraksi Partai Demokrasi Indonesia atas Rancangan Undang-Undang Susunan Pemerintahan Daerah Khusus Ibukota Republik Indonesia Jakarta*.
- Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Republik Indonesia (DPR RI) (1990a and b), *Proses Pembicaraan Rancangan Undang-Undang tentang Susunan Pemerintahan Daerah Khusus Ibukota Negara Republik Indonesia Jakarta: Undang-Undang Nomor 11 Tahun 1990: Jilid 1 and 2*, Jakarta: DPR RI.
- Komisi Pemilihan Umum (2009), *Profil Calon Anggota DPR, DPD dan DPRD Provinsi DKI Jakarta Pemilu Tahun 2009*, Jakarta: Komisi Pemilihan Umum.
- Komisi Pemilihan Umum DKI Jakarta (2007), *Pemilu 2007 Pemilukada Perolehan Suara Provinsi*, online: <[http://kpujakarta.go.id/content\\_here/pdf/PEROLEHAN-SUARA-PROVINSI.pdf](http://kpujakarta.go.id/content_here/pdf/PEROLEHAN-SUARA-PROVINSI.pdf)> (11 June 2014).
- Menteri Dalam Negeri Republik Indonesia (1989), *Penjelasan Pemerintah atas Rancangan Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia tentang Susunan Pemerintahan Daerah Khusus Ibukota Negara Republik Indonesia Jakarta pada Rapat Paripurna DRP-RI Tanggal 9 Maret 1990*.
- Sekretariat Jenderal Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Republik Indonesia (Sekjen DPR) (1990), *Risalah Rapat Paripurna Terbuka ke-10 Masa Sidang I Tahun Sidang 1990-1991*.
- Sekjen DPR (1999a and b), *Proses Pembahasan Rancangan Undang-Undang tentang Pemerintahan Ibukota Negara Republik Indonesia Jakarta: Buku 1 and 2*, Jakarta: Sekjen DPR.
- Sekjen DPR (2008a–e), *Proses Pembahasan Rancangan Undang-Undang tentang Pemerintahan Daerah Khusus Ibukota Negara Republik Indonesia Jakarta: Buku 1–5*, Jakarta: Sekjen DPR.

## Articles and Books

- Aris Ananta, Evi Nurvidya Arifin, and Leo Suryadinata (2004), *Indonesian Electoral Behaviour: A Statistical Perspective*, Singapore: ISEAS.
- Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) Provinsi DKI Jakarta (2011), *Jakarta dalam Angka 2011*, Jakarta: BPS Provinsi DKI Jakarta.
- Direktorat Jenderal Otonomi Daerah, Kementerian Dalam Negeri (2012), *Profil Kepala Daerah Hasil Pemilukada 2011*, Jakarta: Matte Creative Bowl.
- Direktorat Jenderal Otonomi Daerah, Kementerian Dalam Negeri (2011a), *Profil Kepala Daerah Hasil Pemilukada 2010: Buku 1*, Jakarta: Matte Creative Bowl.
- Direktorat Jenderal Otonomi Daerah, Kementerian Dalam Negeri (2011b), *Profil Kepala Daerah Hasil Pemilukada 2010: Buku 2*, Jakarta: Matte Creative Bowl.
- Dirjen Otda see Direktorat Jenderal Otonomi Daerah, Kementerian Dalam Negeri
- Honna Jun, and Kawamura Koichi (eds) (2010), *2009 Nen Indonesia no Senkyo (The 2009 Elections in Indonesia)*, Tokyo: IDE-Jetro.
- Lembaga Survei Indonesia and Majalah Tempo (2012), *Pilkada DKI Jakarta, Protes Kelas Menengah: Temuan Survei: 2-7 September 2012*, Jakarta: LSI.
- Lukman F. Mokoginta (2003), *Peran Dewan Kelurahan dalam Penyelenggaraan Otonomi Daerah di DKI Jakarta* (Thesis, University of Indonesia).
- Matsui Kazuhisa, and Kawamura Koichi (eds) (2005), *Indonesia Sosenkyo to Shinseiken no Shido: Megawati kara Yudboyono e (The Elections and Start of the New Government in Indonesia: From Megawati to Yudboyono)*, Tokyo: IDE-Jetro.
- Mufallah, Abdul, and R. Toto Sugiharto (2013), *G 20 S/DKI*, Pamulang: Pusaka Bambooina.
- Okamoto, Masaaki (2009), Populism under Decentralization in post-Suharto Indonesia, in: Mizuno Kosuke and Pasuk Pongpaichit (eds), *Populism in Asia*, Singapore: National University Press, 144–164.
- Rizal, Maulana Malik et al. (2008), *Macan-Macan Kebon Sirih: Mengupas Sepak Terjang Politis Jakarta*, Jakarta: RMBOOKS.
- Robison, Richard (1996), The Middle Class and the Bourgeoisie in Indonesia, in: Richard Robison and David. S. Goodman (eds), *The New Rich in Asia, Mobile Phones, McDonald's and Middle-class Revolution*, London: Routledge, 79–104.
- Shatkin, Gavin (2000), Obstacles to Empowerment: Local Politics and Civil Society in Metropolitan Manila, the Philippines, in: *Urban Studies*, 37, 12, 2357–2375.

- Suprpto et al. (2004), *Sosok Parlemen Jakarta 2004-2009*, Jakarta: Komisi Pemilihan Umum DKI Jakarta.
- Ujang Komarudin (2010), *Strategi PKS Putihkan Jakarta*, Yogyakarta: Buku Litera.
- Untung Widyanto (2006), Jagoan Betawi dari Cakung, in: Okamoto Masaaki and Abdur Rozaki (eds), *Kelompok Kekerasan dan Bos Lokal di Era Reformasi*, Yogyakarta: IRE Press, 45–66.
- Untung Widyanto (2005), *Antara Jago dan Preman: Studi Tentang Habitus Premanisme pada Organisasi Forum Betawi Rumpug (FBR)*, MA Thesis, University of Indonesia.
- Wilson, Ian Douglas (2006), Continuity and Change: the Changing Contours of Organized Violence in Post-New Order Indonesia, in: *Critical Asian Studies*, 38, 2, 265–297.