Unity and Diversity: National Identity and Multiculturalism in Indonesia

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Abstract

In adherence to its national motto, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity), Indonesia maintains a narrative of a culturally plural but unified nation. The government represents a people of over 1,000 ethnic groups across six nationally recognised religions, spread across more than 17,000 islands. Within the context of the national motto, people are expected to share a similar civic Indonesian national identity regardless of their ethno-regional or religious backgrounds. At the same time, Indonesia’s approach towards multiculturalism extends various degrees of recognition, accommodation, toleration and even discrimination towards different socio-cultural groups in conjunction with the diverse ethnographic landscapes across regions in the country.

Using theories of identity, nationalism and multiculturalism, this thesis examines how the Indonesian national identity is interpreted, experienced and understood both by elites and the people, particularly in consideration of the country’s ethno-regional, cultural and religious diversity. It begins with an explanation of the mixed methods within a qualitative paradigm used for this research and continues with an examination of the historical and constitutional framework for national identity and diversity in Indonesia. I then analyse the opinions of the people from Aceh, Jakarta, Maluku and West Java on the aspects of their identity pertaining to the ethno-regional, cultural and religious diversity in Indonesia, using information gained through individual in-depth interviews with laypeople as well as questionnaires and focus group discussions with university students. The different demographics in each region provide a good comparison between more homogeneous and heterogeneous populations, as well as between Muslim-majority and Christian-majority areas. To add other perspectives, I also examine the opinions of various types of elites on issues pertaining to identity and diversity in Indonesia gathered through individual interviews.

I argue that in its attempt to maintain national identity and unity, the Indonesian state has adopted an unequitable framework for multiculturalism. While its design is intended to safeguard diversity, this framework has fostered an environment which normalises privileges for Indonesia’s Muslim majority and disadvantages for minorities. This framework corresponds with the relationship between national, ethno-regional and religious identities in Indonesia. Participants tend to describe the Indonesian national identity in civic and cultural terms, such as the shared history of struggle against colonialism and values such as diversity and tolerance. Participants further share the
narrative of the subordination of their ethno-regional identity to the Indonesian national identity. In contrast, religious identity is largely regarded as the most paramount: for the general population, religion is perceived as a fundamental source of moral guidance and more salient than national identity. This salience of religion helps explain the continued Islamist demands for more accommodation for Islam and Islamic law within the state, which in some instances include demands for a constitutional status for Islam. Indonesia’s framework for multiculturalism mollifies these demands but has detrimental side effects for minority groups; this framework thus safeguards and challenges diversity at the same time. Ultimately, I argue that the Indonesian state has to strike a better balance in accommodating various identities in the nation while maintaining its unity.
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# Table of Contents

Abstract ........................................................................................................................................... i
Acknowledgements ......................................................................................................................... iii
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................................. iv
List of Tables ..................................................................................................................................... vi
List of Figures ..................................................................................................................................... vii
List of Abbreviations ........................................................................................................................ viii
List of Appendices ............................................................................................................................ x

Introduction ...................................................................................................................................... 1

1 Research Methodology ................................................................................................................ 13
    1.1 Research Methods for Studying Politics ............................................................................. 13
    1.2 Mixed methods within a primarily qualitative methodology .......................................... 16
    1.3 Designing Fieldwork ............................................................................................................ 19
        1.3.1 Determining Locations ............................................................................................... 19
        1.3.2 Elites and Laypeople: Semi-structured One-on-one Interviews .............................. 24
        1.3.3 Tertiary Students: Questionnaires and Focus Groups ............................................. 32
        1.3.4 Participant Observation ............................................................................................ 36
    1.4 Ethical Considerations .......................................................................................................... 38
    1.5 Conclusion .............................................................................................................................. 40

2 Theoretical Framework ................................................................................................................. 42
    2.1 Identity ................................................................................................................................. 43
    2.2 Nationalism .......................................................................................................................... 51
    2.3 Multiculturalism .................................................................................................................... 62
    2.4 Conclusion .............................................................................................................................. 71

3 The Challenge of Identity Making, Nation Building and Cultural Pluralism in Indonesia ......... 74
    3.1 The ‘National Awakening’ .................................................................................................... 75
    3.2 The Revolutionary Years ..................................................................................................... 82
    3.3 The New Order ..................................................................................................................... 92
    3.4 The post-1998 Reform Era ................................................................................................. 103
    3.5 Conclusion ............................................................................................................................ 105

4 Multiculturalism in post-1998 Indonesia .................................................................................. 107
    4.1 Multiculturalism in Indonesia’s Constitution ..................................................................... 108
List of Tables

Table 1.1: Comparison of demographics in the locations for this research ......................20
Table 1.2: Laypeople participants ..................................................................................29
Table 1.3: Questionnaire Participants.............................................................................33
Table 5.1: University student participants’ feelings about their Indonesian identity...151
Table 5.2: Laypeople participants’ feelings about their Indonesian identity ..........151
Table 5.3: University student participants’ feelings about their ethno-regional identity
........................................................................................................................................157
Table 5.4: Laypeople participants’ feelings about their ethno-regional identity........157
Table 5.5: University student participants’ primary language use in different situations
........................................................................................................................................165
Table 5.6: University student participants’ strength of attachment towards Indonesia170
Table 6.1: Ranking of university student participants’ aspects of identity in order of
importance (1=most important, 5=least important).........................................................185
Table 6.2: Laypeople participants’ feelings about their religious identity ............187
Table 6.3: University student participants’ feelings about their religious identity ......187
Table 6.4: Laypeople participants’ feelings about their religious identity (by religion)
........................................................................................................................................203
Table 6.5: University student participants’ feelings about their religious identity (by
religion) ..............................................................................................................................203
List of Figures

Figure 3-1: Monumen Pancasila Sakti ................................................................. 95
Figure 3-2: Indonesia's National Monument .................................................... 98
Figure 4-1: Garuda Pancasila ........................................................................ 109
Figure 4-2: the Wonderful Indonesia logo ...................................................... 133
## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMAN</td>
<td>Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara</td>
<td>(Indigenous Peoples’ Alliance of the Archipelago)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CERITA</td>
<td>Community Empowerment in Raising Inclusivity and Trust through Technology Application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPI</td>
<td>Front Pembela Islam</td>
<td>(Islam Defenders Front)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAM</td>
<td>Gerakan Aceh Merdeka</td>
<td>(Free Aceh Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBHN</td>
<td>Garis Besar Haluan Negara</td>
<td>(Outline of the State’s Direction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISDV</td>
<td>Indische Sociaal-Demokratische Vereeniging</td>
<td>(Indies Social-Democratic Association)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JIL</td>
<td>Jaringan Islam Liberal</td>
<td>(Liberal Islamic Network)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNIU</td>
<td>Komisi Nasional Indonesia untuk UNESCO</td>
<td>(Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MORA</td>
<td>Ministry of Religious Affairs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUI</td>
<td>Majelis Ulama Indonesia</td>
<td>(Indonesian Council of Ulamas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NII</td>
<td>Negara Islam Indonesia</td>
<td>(Indonesian Islamic State)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NKRI</td>
<td>Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia</td>
<td>(Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU</td>
<td>Nadhlatul Ulama</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
OPM  Operasi Papua Merdeka  (Free Papua Operation)
PKI  Partai Komunis Indonesia  (Indonesian Communist Party)
PKS  Partai Keadilan Sejahtera  (the Prosperous Justice Party)
PNA  Partai Nasional Aceh  (Aceh National Party)
PNI  Partai Nasional Indonesia  (Indonesian National Party)
PPP  Partai Persatuan Pembangunan  (United Development Party)
PPPKI  Permufakatan Perhimpunan-perhimpunan Politik Kebangsaan Indonesia  (Agreement of Indonesian People’s Political Association)
RIS  Republik Indonesia Serikat  (Republic of United States of Indonesia)
RMS  Republik Maluku Selatan  (Republic of South Maluku)
TMII  Taman Mini Indonesia Indah  (Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park)
UN  United Nations
UNESCO  United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VOC  Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie  (United East Indies Company)
WNA  Warga Negara Asing  (Foreign Citizen)
WNI  Warga Negara Indonesia  (Citizen of Indonesia)
WNK  Warga Negara Keturunan  (Citizen of Foreign Descent)
List of Appendices

Appendix 1: List of laypeople participants ................................................................. 253
Appendix 2: Sample interview questions for laypeople participants ....................... 258
Appendix 3: Demographic of university student participants ................................. 259
Appendix 4: Questionnaire template for university students ................................. 261
Appendix 5: List of focus group discussion participants ........................................... 265
Appendix 6: Guiding questions for focus group discussion ....................................... 270
Appendix 7: List of elite participants ........................................................................ 271
Appendix 8: Sample interview questions for elite ..................................................... 273
Appendix 9: Information sheet for individual laypeople participants ...................... 274
Appendix 10: Consent form for individual laypeople participants ............................ 278
Appendix 11: Information sheet for university student participants ....................... 282
Appendix 12: Consent form for university student participants ............................... 285
Appendix 13: Information sheet for focus group discussion participants .................. 290
Appendix 14: Consent form for focus group discussion participants ....................... 294
Appendix 15: Information sheet for elite participants ............................................. 298
Appendix 16: Consent form for elite participants ..................................................... 302
Appendix 17: Letter of ethics approval .................................................................... 306
Introduction

Indonesia is one of the most culturally plural countries in the world. According to the most recent national census in 2010, Indonesia is host to a population of over 260 million with more than 1,300 ethnic groups.¹ In the Indonesian context, the term ‘ethnic group’ refers to local ethno-regional groups such as the Javanese, Sundanese, Acehnese or Moluccan rather than races such as Asian or Caucasian. The Indonesian word for ‘ethnic group’ is suku bangsa, which is applied to all types of ethno-regional groups, large and small, including traditional indigenous groups. In English, suku bangsa literally means ‘sub-nation’. The narrative implied in this term portrays these ethnic groups as smaller groups which, together, make up the larger Indonesian nation. For this research, I decided to use the term ‘ethno-regional groups’ because it encompasses different dimensions of the Indonesian term ‘suku bangsa’ without the implication of its literal translation into English. My usage of this term further encompasses the cultural dimension of these groups. Furthermore, the explicit mention of the regional dimension of identity indicated that people in a certain region do not have to belong to the local majority but still share some local idiosyncracies with them.

This thesis follows the classification of ethno-regional groups as defined by the 2010 national census, according to which the Javanese constitute the largest ethno-regional group in Indonesia, making up 40.2 percent of the population, followed by the Sundanese with 15.5 percent and the Batak with 3.6 percent.² There are smaller ethno-regional groups within larger ones. For instance, in the census, the term ‘Javanese’ also includes the Osing, Tengger, Samin, Bawean/Boyan, Naga and Nagaring, which share some significant characteristics with the Javanese in language or customs.³

Ethno-regional groups across Indonesia have their own languages. Depending on the exact criteria used to classify languages and dialects, there are between 550 and 700 languages spoken in Indonesia.⁴ Communication across the archipelago is enabled through Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian), the country’s official language. Historically,

² Ibid., 9.
³ Ibid., 8.
⁴ James N. Sneddon, The Indonesian Language : Its History and Role in Modern Society (Sydney, NSW: UNSW Press, 2003), 196.
Indonesian was derived from a form of Malay used by seafarers and traders who roamed the archipelago. The language was first called Bahasa Indonesia formally in 1928. Formal language planning then began in 1942, and through various channels of dissemination including education and mass media, a standardised form of the language has been spread around the country. Nowadays, it is used as the primary language of instruction in schools and universities, in official communication, as well as in the national mass media. Meanwhile, regional languages continue to be taught in their respective areas of origin; they are mainly used in private circles and regional mass media.

In addition, Indonesia is religiously diverse. Within the legal system, Indonesia recognises six religions: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism. The holidays of these six religions are celebrated as national holidays and houses of worship can be found across the country. Furthermore, there are over 100 so-called indigenous faith groups (kepercayaan), which are smaller, localised faith groups not affiliated with the aforementioned world religions. These faith groups do not enjoy the same privileges as the world religions but continue to exist locally.

Over 87 percent of Indonesia’s population are Muslims; however, Islam is not a state religion. Instead, Indonesia adopts a set of principles as its ideology – the so-called Pancasila (Sanskrit for ‘five principles’). The Pancasila consists of five principles representing the values to be shared among people of all walks of life across Indonesia: belief in God, a just and civilised humanity, national unity, democracy and social justice. Indonesia’s national motto, ‘Bhinneka Tunggal Ika’, written in ancient Sanskrit, translates into ‘Unity in Diversity’. Together, these values are supposed to reflect the Indonesian national identity.

The diverse population of present-day Indonesia lives in relative peace across the country, with the exception of ongoing separatism in West Papua. Nevertheless, the issue of national identity and its relationship with ethno-regional and religious identities

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5 Ibid., 7-9.
6 Ibid., 10-11.
remain salient. For instance, it has remained challenging to define the Indonesian national identity beyond the idea of ‘diversity’. Furthermore, people across Indonesia experience diversity in different manners, which in turn plausibly affects individual perceptions of identity, including how people interpret their own identity, the Indonesian national identity, and multiculturalism in the country.

The inspiration for this research emerged during an intergovernmental meeting in Indonesia which I attended in my capacity as a government official in 2014. In this meeting, government officials discussed the selection of cultural heritage sites to be promoted internationally. Ethno-regional sentiments came into play as officials accused each other, even though half in jest, of favouring particular heritage sites solely due to their ethnic ties to the site. The awkward atmosphere that ensued following this exchange indicated that ethno-regional identity was still a point of contention in Indonesia. This situation contradicted the expectations of the government for public servants to let go of their own particular ethno-regional identity during service. Furthermore, this situation suggested that ethno-regional identity was competing with people’s shared national identity. The situation brought into question to what extent national identity was shared by the population, and to what extent other aspects of identity affected the former. More importantly, this encounter made me wonder about the factors that maintain the Indonesian national identity and unity.

There is a considerable amount of previous research done on nationalism, national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia. Some literature focuses on particular periods in Indonesia’s history of nation-building. For example, R.E. Elson argues that the Indonesian national identity was initially born out of the people’s shared experience of Dutch colonialism. The shared struggle for independence thus encouraged various ethno-regional groups to subjugate their respective identity for a newly created Indonesian nation. Benedict Anderson similarly argues that the Indonesian national identity was born out of the common plight of Dutch colonialism. Anderson further argues that the way Indonesian elites imagined their state-in-the-making in the last

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10 In this thesis, the term ‘multiculturalism’ refers to a state’s policies pertaining to diversity, while cultural plurality or cultural diversity describes the situation of the population in itself.
decades of colonialism was not only shaped against, but also by the colonial powers. For example, in the era of Indonesia’s ‘national awakening’ in the 1920s, the mobilisation against colonial powers was led by the educated youth who were exposed to Dutch education and European ideas of nationalism, which first sparked the idea of an archipelago united under one administration. 13 Meanwhile, James Peacock argues that ethno-regional groups in Indonesia usually share some similarities with each other in their cultural and social features, so that ‘no large group is divided from any other large group by all features’ which produces a ‘loose integration’ within the larger nation. 14 In addition, Ian Chalmers argues that religious affiliations which cut through different ethno-regional groups in Indonesia provide social cohesion across them, as their members feel a sense of belonging to the same faith. 15

Literature on the period since Indonesia’s declaration of independence in 1945 and President Soekarno’s take on nation-building typically focuses on his tendency towards syncretism; such as his attempts to consolidate nationalism with Islamism and communism as the three major political strands in the country. 16 In addition, the literature on this period typically highlights the challenges for nation-building in a vast territory without adequate infrastructure for communication and governance, so that the idea of ‘Indonesia’ was only circulated in limited circles and only gradually reached the grassroots of the population. 17 There were contestations against the recently constructed Indonesian national identity from both ethno-regional and religious movements. 18 As the political situation started to settle down, the Indonesian national identity, including Indonesian, was spread more systematically across the country through education and various cultural programmes. 19

13 Ibid., 119-22.
17 Tod Jones, Culture, Power, and Authoritarianism in the Indonesian State: Cultural Policy across the Twentieth-Century to the Reform Era (Brill, 2013), 71.
19 Jones, Culture, Power and Authoritarianism in the Indonesian State, 110-11.
Literature on the following period of President Suharto’s New Order era between 1966 and 1998 typically focuses on his centralistic and authoritarian approach towards nation-building. In this period, the Indonesian national identity was introduced systematically throughout the country, including through a standardised national curriculum which included exact instructions on the interpretation of the Pancasila. Through his endorsed interpretation of the Pancasila, Suharto sought to ‘Indonesianise the Indonesians’. At the same time, movements along ethno-regional lines, religious lines and competing political ideologies were restricted, effectively limiting any contestations on the government’s narrative of the Indonesian national identity.

There is a wide range of research done on Indonesia’s national identity, unity and diversity following political reforms and democratisation in 1998. For instance, Robert Elson argues that the idea of Indonesia as a nation born out of the shared experience of Dutch colonisation remained relatively undeveloped until the post-1998 era. Meanwhile, Krystian Wiciarz argues that the formation and maintenance of Indonesian national identity are attributed to four main factors: nationalism and national discourse, the modern nation-state, religion as well as the pervasive, if banal, symbols of the nation in daily life.

At the same time, the post-1998 democratisation in Indonesia has been accompanied by a ‘rise in regional sentiments and more strident assertions of regional identity’ which have ‘thrown into doubt the commitment of the diverse Indonesian peoples to live together in one nation’ and potentially ‘threatened the very future of the unitary republic’. For instance, Indonesia has faced challenges such as separatism in Aceh and West Papua, as well as the secession of Timor Leste following a referendum in 1999. Ted Gurr argues that a sufficiently prolonged frustration produces anger and violence; in this regard, the strong government and military presence during the New

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23 Elson, “Constructing the Nation.”
Order have caused outbursts of violence post-1998.26 Ian Chalmers similarly argues that the weakening military presence in the country encourages the proliferation of conflict and rebellions.27 Melani Budianta, meanwhile, argues that Indonesia’s ‘weak governance of cultural diversity’ is a result of historical forces, including the colonial and Cold War era, as well as the New Order’s repressive approach towards diversity.28 The introduction of post-1998 regional autonomy laws addresses the demands for more room for the expression of regional sentiments; however, there are concerns that the proliferation of regional laws has caused significant confusion within Indonesia’s legal system.29

Meanwhile, a study by John Gerring et al. suggests that religious diversity constitutes a greater challenge to democracy compared to ethno-regional diversity.30 In the Indonesian context, Islamist demands for more accommodation of Islam within the state challenge Indonesia’s framework for national identity and multiculturalism as enshrined in the Pancasila.31 Jeremy Menchik argues that religious organisations, and particularly Muslim organisations, have evolved together with the Indonesian state; however, they prefer principles of deliberation and consensus drawn from Islamic traditions to liberal democratic ones.32 Religious identity thus remains relevant in the discourse of the state. In addition, post-1998 interreligious conflicts, such as the 1999 violent conflict in Maluku, further indicate the salience of religious identity.33

With regard to the Indonesian political landscape, Edward Aspinall argues that the post-1998 era is marked by an absence of divisive ideological cleavages, with no significant differences in policy and mobilisation strategies across various major political parties. Within this environment, nationalism is more likely to be used as a means for politicians to build popular support as a ‘useful legitimating device’ regardless of their

27 Chalmers, Indonesia, 30.
31 Shah, Constitution, Religion and Politics in Asia, 55-59.
actual position on the political spectrum. Marcus Mietzner, by contrast, argues that the nationalist and Islamist cleavage between political parties in Indonesia continues to be relevant to the present day. Hence, instead of a left-right political spectrum, the main ideological cleavage in Indonesian politics continues to be constituted by differing opinions on the ideal relationship between the state and religion.

Despite the abovementioned challenges of diversity, Indonesia has remained largely united to the present day. This thesis thus aims to contribute to the literature on Indonesia’s present-day nation-building by examining the conditions pertaining to national identity and multiculturalism in the country. In this regard, the term multiculturalism in this thesis refers to policies adopted by the state in dealing with its cultural plurality. This thesis focuses on ethno-regional and religious diversity as two aspects of identity that have remained salient within the framework of the Indonesian state. The primary research question of this thesis is ‘How are the Indonesian national identity and unity presently maintained, considering the country’s internal cultural diversity and post-1998 democratisation?’

Given the focus of Indonesia’s constitution on ethno-regional and religious diversity, this research question is dissected into the following two questions:

- How do national, ethno-regional and religious identities relate to each other in Indonesia?
- How multicultural is the framework for diversity in Indonesia?

To address these questions, this thesis first outlines its methodology, discussing the relevant methods for my fieldwork, data collection and its subsequent interpretation and analysis. Chapter One discusses the necessity to use a mixed-methods approach within a qualitative methodology to address the research questions at hand. The methods used for this research include the examination of literature, laws and regulation pertaining to national identity, cultural diversity and multiculturalism in Indonesia. In addition, information is gathered through individual interviews with relevant elites, including policy makers, religious leaders and academics, as well as laypeople of varying

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backgrounds. This two-pronged approach helped identify discrepancies between the perceptions of laypeople and those of elites in some instances. In total, 73 individual interviews were conducted: 56 with laypeople and 17 with elite participants. To identify larger trends, questionnaires were distributed to and returned by 237 university student participants. They also enabled comparisons in trends between older and younger participants. The questionnaires are further complemented by focus group discussions.

Chapter One further explains the selection of appropriate locations for data collection for this thesis: Jakarta, West Java, Aceh and Maluku. These locations provide a good combination of central and peripheral locations in Indonesia, with a good variety of demographics between them. Jakarta and West Java are centrally located in Indonesia on Java, the most populated island in Indonesia, have large urban areas and are quite heterogeneous in terms of demographics. Meanwhile, Aceh and Maluku are provinces salient to the issue of identity, as both have undergone relatively recent violent conflict and periods of separatism. Aceh is a province with special autonomy that allows it to install partial Sharia law with its 98 percent Muslim population. By contrast, Maluku is one of Indonesia’s few Christian-majority areas.

The selection of fieldwork locations presented the most significant limitation of this research. To begin with, there were limitations in time and budget. It was impossible for me as a single researcher to explore all of the 34 provinces of Indonesia within the time frame of a PhD project. In West Java, Aceh and Maluku, furthermore, my data collection was mostly contained to the capital area of each province due to limitations in the travel budget. Other interesting provinces in terms of identity, such as Bali, Indonesia’s only Hindu-majority province, or other Christian majority areas could not be covered due to these restrictions in time and budget. West Papua, with its ongoing issue of separatism, was not included in this research, as its inclusion would constitute significant security risks for the researcher. The paperwork required to obtain all the necessary permits and clearances to conduct a research of this kind in West Papua also would have been a significant and time-consuming hurdle. As a consequence, this research is by no means exhaustive, and its results cannot completely account for the entirety of Indonesia. However, the careful selection of variety in fieldwork locations and the amount of information gathered are sufficient to provide an in-depth insight into the state of national identity, diversity and multiculturalism in Indonesia, particularly in terms of ethno-regional and religious diversity.
Following the methodology, Chapter Two discusses the theoretical framework for this research, highlighting relevant theories of identity, nationalism and multiculturalism. This chapter argues that all social groups experience varying degrees of internal diversity and that internally diverse groups face more challenges in maintaining their cohesion. My analysis of nationalism, in turn, emphasises the interplay between different factors that contribute to the foundation of nations and states, including ethnic, cultural and civic factors and discusses the influence of colonialism on the formation of post-colonial nations and states. Afterward, the section on multiculturalism underlines the need to adequately recognise and accommodate particular identities in culturally plural societies, which is necessary to ensure the contentment of the people with the state. On a theoretical level, this thesis thus argues that a culturally plural state has to manage a delicate balance between unity and diversity by accommodating various identities while also maintaining its own cohesive narrative of a shared national identity.

Drawing from the literature on multiculturalism, I propose three dimensions through which multiculturalism in a state could be measured to help answer my main research question. The first dimension is the historical context of the state’s foundations for multiculturalism. The second dimension is the extent of legal pluralism in a state, and the third dimension is the nature of the interaction between different cultural groups, including their perceptions of each other. To give an illustration, for example, countries which require their citizens to adhere to uniform standards that apply to everyone, regardless of their cultural background, are not multiculturalist countries. By contrast, multiculturalist countries recognise and respect the varying cultural needs within its population, allowing cultural diversity to flourish.

Chapter Three then discusses the nation-building process in different periods of Indonesia’s history, focusing on the creation and maintenance of the Indonesian national identity. This chapter examines the way Indonesia’s elites frame the issue of diversity to proliferate their desired understanding of the Indonesian national identity. As such, this chapter also serves as the historical framework for this thesis, highlighting Indonesia’s ‘National Awakening’ period in the 1920s, the years around the 1945 declaration of independence, as well as Soekarno’s and Suharto’s respective presidencies. These periods in Indonesia’s history show the primarily top-down approach to nation-building in the country. Furthermore, these periods demonstrate the persisting salience of religion and religious identity in Indonesia. This chapter closes with Indonesia’s transition into
the post-1998 reform era, during which democratisation processes revealed the ongoing salience of ethno-regional and religious identities.

Chapter Four analyses the framework for diversity in present-day Indonesia, with a focus on ethno-regional and religious diversity. This chapter examines the interpretation of national identity in Indonesia’s constitution as well as relevant laws and regulations pertaining to ethno-regional and religious identity. This analysis is further complemented with information gathered from elite fieldwork participants. This chapter argues that ethno-regional identities enjoy more recognition and accommodation in comparison to religious identities, such as seen in laws pertaining to regional autonomy. Expressions of ethno-regional identities are encouraged because they do not pose a considerable challenge towards the Indonesian national identity, in accordance with the narrative which presents them as Indonesia’s sub-nations; instead, the room provided for their expression enhances the people’s contentment with the state.

The expression of religious diversity, by contrast, is limited, as evident in Indonesia’s laws against blasphemy, which restrict the way established world religions can be interpreted and practised in public. Furthermore, the state extends considerable privileges towards Islam in an attempt to mollify the demands of political Islamists in order to safeguard Indonesia’s overall framework for diversity. These privileges have become perceived as normal, creating an environment which challenges the very framework for diversity that the state aspires to maintain. There are systematic disadvantages experienced by religious minorities, as minority world religions do not enjoy the same degree of accommodation as the Muslim majority. In addition, adherents of Indonesia’s indigenous faith groups face significant hurdles to be recognised and accommodated on the same level as world religions.

Information gathered from laypeople and university student participants is then presented in Chapters Five and Six. Where appropriate, the information is complemented by or juxtaposed with relevant laws and the opinions of elite participants. Chapter Five argues that the Indonesian national identity is considered more salient than various ethno-regional identities. Participants’ positive feelings about their ethno-regional identity do not rule out a similar, if not stronger, positive association with their Indonesian identity. In addition, these two facets of identity play different, yet complementary roles: the Indonesian national identity translates into a primarily civic attachment while ethno-regional identity translates into a combination of ethnic and cultural attachments. There
are cultural elements in both national and ethno-regional identity, and they are further connected through the narrative of a joint effort in Indonesia’s history of struggle against colonialism. As such, ethno-regional identity does not act as a significant barrier to the formation of meaningful interpersonal relationships, including romance and marriage, particularly for younger generations. However, some issues with ethno-regional diversity remain, including persisting prejudices and unaddressed grievances between different ethno-regional groups, as well as the proper alignment of national, regional and traditional laws.

In contrast, Chapter Six argues that religious identity is considered to be more salient than both national identity and ethno-regional identity. Participants consider religious identity to be profoundly fundamental as their primary moral compass, which will continue to affect them beyond death. There is no significant difference between the opinions of Muslim participants and those of minority religions. However, adherents of minority religions are far more likely to experience ongoing intolerance and discrimination, causing them to feel less than positive about their religious identity, and by extension, about their Indonesian national identity. Furthermore, differences in religious identity continue to be a significant barrier to courtship and marriage, thus contributing to the continued separation between religious groups.

Overall, this research shows that while ethno-regional identities have become less salient, religious identities continue to be a significant marker of difference for the people in Indonesia. The same situation applies to the Indonesian state: the prevalent narrative of Indonesia as a culturally diverse nation which consists of various sub-nations decreases the salience of ethno-regional identities. However, the long-standing debate on the ideal relationship between the state and religion remains, turning religious differences into a hotbed for political contestations, particularly between political Islamists and secular nationalists. The Indonesian state provides privileges for Islam in order to safeguard its overall framework for diversity, resulting in varying degrees of accommodation, restrictions and even discrimination to various religious groups in the country. In turn, Indonesia’s approach to multiculturalism has resulted in an environment which normalises privileges for its Muslim majority, as well as disadvantages on the part of religious minorities, which threatens the very framework for diversity that the state seeks to maintain. Ultimately, the Indonesian state has to better manage the delicate
balance between maintaining its unity and celebrating its internal diversity, as reflected in the national motto: Unity in Diversity.
1 Research Methodology

This chapter explains the methodology used in this research project, including the methods used for data collection on the field. Section one introduces qualitative and quantitative methodologies within political studies and explains the reasons behind choosing a qualitative methodology for research on the topic of identity. Section two addresses the main research question in this project, including its derivatives, and argues about the appropriateness of using mixed methods within a primarily qualitative methodology for answering the questions.

In addition to discussing relevant research methods, this chapter discusses the selection of fieldwork locations, which consists of four different locations across Indonesia: Aceh, Jakarta, Maluku and West Java. The chapter then discusses snowball sampling as the primary recruitment method for participants. Subsequently, this chapter explains four methods of data collection used in this research: in-depth semi-structured individual interviews, self-administered questionnaires, focus groups and participant observation. Each method is discussed along with their advantages and challenges. Finally, this chapter concludes by outlining the ethical considerations of this research.

1.1 Research Methods for Studying Politics

Within social and political studies, there is an ongoing debate between proponents of quantitative and qualitative methodology, both with distinctive ontological and epistemological characteristics. Ontology is concerned with assumptions on the nature of the social world. While the realist or objectivist paradigm claims that there is a ‘real’ world independent of our knowledge, the constructivist paradigm claims that the so-called truths of the social world are constructed by the actors within it.\textsuperscript{36} Meanwhile, epistemology is concerned with the character of knowledge, specifically with ‘what can be known’ and whether the observer is independent of the observed.\textsuperscript{37} In other words, epistemology determines whether a researcher can produce genuinely ‘objective’ results. The relation between ontology and epistemology is a contested issue; however, most


\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
agree that consistency between the two must be observed.\textsuperscript{38} For example, the assumption that the social world is socially constructed implies that there can be no completely objective knowledge of it either. In order to do research, one must identify one’s place in the debate on both questions prior to determining a suitable methodology and research methods.\textsuperscript{39}

A realist or objectivist ontology and epistemology is most commonly associated with quantitative methodology, which is often considered more scientific compared to its qualitative counterpart.\textsuperscript{40} Within the quantitative paradigm, researchers are seen as ‘dispassionate’ and ‘objective,’ and research is mostly in the spirit of testing theories empirically.\textsuperscript{41} To do so, quantitative research uses the ‘observation and measurement of repeated incidences’ of a social phenomenon, often with the help of certain kinds of surveys, questionnaires and various statistical tools.\textsuperscript{42} Because of their frequent usage of large datasets, quantitative methods are often associated with topics such as elections, voting systems and political attitudes, as well as other issues that concern public attitudes.\textsuperscript{43} However, a positivist epistemology is not exclusive to quantitative research; there is plenty of qualitative research based on positivism. Typically, such research takes place when qualitative information is required in a primarily quantitative environment such as medicine. For example, qualitative research can be used to examine the sociological aspects of certain practices of medicine, including the behaviour and relationships between recipients and providers of various health care services.\textsuperscript{44}

Qualitative research methods, meanwhile, are more commonly associated with a constructivist worldview. Within this paradigm, the social world cannot be captured into objective ‘universal truths’, because actors situated in particular conditions build their

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 187.
\textsuperscript{39} Peter Burnham et al., \textit{Research Methods in Politics}, 2nd ed. (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 31.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 216.
own perspective by attaching subjective meaning to their actions and surroundings. This paradigm is concerned with understanding and explaining those subjective meanings in people’s actions and experiences according to their own context. This paradigm is thus better suited to identify and explore the perspective of the people to analyse ‘the complexities of social and political life.’ However, researchers also have to be aware of their own biases and perceptions of normalcy, as these biases can affect their interpretation and analysis. Qualitative methods include ‘observation, participant observation, intensive individual interviews and focus group interviews’ which require in-depth exploration of the issues at hand.

Quantitative and qualitative methodologies have opposing epistemologies as described above. Beyond epistemological incompatibilities, however, on the technical level, the two methodologies are not always antagonistic. Debates between supporters of the respective methodologies should be viewed as healthy exchanges that can further enrich social and political studies. Each method is indeed more suitable for examining different aspects of the social world, and as such can complement each other to gain a more holistic understanding. This complementarity gives an important position to the intentions of individual researchers. As stated previously, a qualitative methodology can be used to explain the state of things and generate theory. Meanwhile, a quantitative methodology, with its deductive approach, can be used to test existing theories and explain causality between things. To achieve this, each methodology has its own set of preferred research methods with varying suitability for different purposes. Ultimately, it should be decided by each researcher which methodology and methods are the most suitable for the purposes of their research.

In addition to the traditional division between qualitative and quantitative methodology, a third approach has also emerged, combining aspects of quantitative and

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46 Ibid.
47 Pierce, Research Methods in Politics, 45.
49 Devine, “Qualitative Methods,” 197.
52 Ibid., 163.
53 Ibid., 625.
qualitative approaches towards research. While some may believe that research methods carry irreconcilable epistemological commitments, this strategy allows researchers to capitalise upon the best of both worlds.\textsuperscript{54} Furthermore, upon further inspection, quantitative and qualitative methods are not exclusively tied to a particular ontology and epistemology.\textsuperscript{55} Therefore, it is possible for a researcher to be consistent in their epistemological persuasion and consciously apply technical methods usually associated with the other methodology. Indeed, there is now an increasing number of social and political researchers who employ mixed methods in their work.\textsuperscript{56}

There are multiple ways to employ mixed methods. Alan Bryman has identified nine ways to classify mixed methods by determining the order of priority of each methodology in the sequence of data collection. One of these nine ways to use mixed methods in a research project is by using a qualitative methodology with both qualitative and quantitative data collection taking place concurrently.\textsuperscript{57} This is the approach that I have chosen for my research.

1.2 Mixed methods within a primarily qualitative methodology

There are three main reasons that led me towards using mixed methods within a primarily qualitative methodology. First, the ontology of qualitative methodology, which perceives the social world to be actively constructed by actors within it, lines up with the definition of the main concept in this research: identity. As explained later in my theoretical framework, identity is neither rigid nor value-free. Identity is constantly constructed and interpreted both by the self and the other and plays a significant role in the operation of the social world.\textsuperscript{58} Hence, in studying identity, people’s role as ‘agents of self-definition’ has to be taken into account.\textsuperscript{59} The goal is to understand how the research participants, as agents in their own right within their particular setting, make sense of their identity and how this identity, in turn, affects their actions. This constructivist worldview lines up with the ontology of qualitative methodology.

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 636.
\textsuperscript{55} Read and Marsh, “Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Methods,” 234.
\textsuperscript{56} Bryman, Social Research Methods, 656.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 638.
\textsuperscript{59} Taylor, “Understanding and Ethnocentricity,” 117.
Secondly, qualitative methods are better at facilitating the study of complex issues.\textsuperscript{60} Studying national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia requires the consideration of an array of factors such as local ethnography, social dynamics, multifaceted identities and disparities in development, which can be examined in-depth through a qualitative lens. There is an interplay of all these factors that must be examined in their entirety as much as possible, and the isolation of insulated factors cannot present a comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand.

Thirdly, the nature of the questions that drive my research is inductive. They seek to explore and describe existing situations and build a theory out of observations and findings. As mentioned in the introduction, the main research question in this thesis is ‘How are the Indonesian national identity and unity presently maintained, considering the country’s internal cultural diversity and post-1998 democratisation?’ This research question is then dissected into the following questions:

- How do national, ethno-regional and religious identities relate to each other in Indonesia?
- How multicultural is the framework for diversity in Indonesia?

In answering the abovementioned questions, this thesis examines three aspects of identity, which are national, ethno-regional and religious identity. The differentiation between the three aspects of identity does not mean that they are separate or independent of each other. However, the differentiation is useful for focusing on particular aspects of the participants’ identities, and they correspond to the categorisation of identities prevalent in Indonesia’s legal system.

These questions are answered by analysing the existing literature on Indonesian history and the relevant Indonesian laws and regulations, as well as by gathering information on the field from elites and laypeople participants. The attempt to provide a more holistic view of the current state of multiculturalism in Indonesia necessitates using mixed methods. In addition to in-depth individual interviews, self-administered questionnaires with a larger number of participants provide an insight into the more general attitudes among the people.

\textsuperscript{60} Pierce, \textit{Research Methods in Politics}, 41.
To capture the subjective views of participants, the questions used during the fieldwork revolved around participants describing themselves and what values they attached to that description. The questions were also designed to be straightforward enough to be answered by participants and to limit elaborations on my part which could affect the participant. These questions included:

- What characteristics do people think make Indonesia distinct?
- How do people feel about being Indonesian?
- How do people feel about being a part of their ethnic group?
- How do people feel about being part of their religious group?
- Which aspect of people’s identity takes precedence over others?
- How do people display their respective identities through language and clothing?
- Do ethnic or religious differences become an obstacle to various aspects of social interaction?
- To what extent does discrimination occur, and what causes it?

Both qualitative and quantitative methods are required to fully address these questions: qualitative methods provide depth in understanding, while quantitative methods provide insight into overall attitudes of the population. In this case, the qualitative methods are represented by in-depth individual interviews and quantitative methods by self-administered questionnaires. A mixed methods research approach must be mindful of this distinction between quantitative and qualitative data. In the individual interviews, the exploration of people’s interpretation of their national identity requires dynamic open-ended questions. The open-ended nature of the interview allows for different themes to be brought up by participants, which are analysed for their meaning. At the same time, the frequency of the themes is quantified to identify trends. Another example is the use of the Likert scale on the self-administered questionnaires, which is a distinctly quantitative method. The Likert scale is a psychometric tool which allows participants to choose between five response categories such as ‘very positive’, ‘positive’, ‘indifferent’, ‘negative’, and ‘very negative’ to indicate their opinion on a topic. It is particularly useful for finding out the larger trend of how positive or negative

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people are feeling about various aspects of their identity. Participants then explained why they chose a particular option on the Likert scale, which provided meaningful themes and a better understanding of why they felt a certain way.

To give another example, the question on the extent of discrimination can be seen as a quantitative one at first glance. Participants could say whether or not they had personally experienced discrimination due to their ethno-regional or religious identity, choosing between ‘yes’ and ‘no’, providing a readily quantifiable answer. However, this range of options does not present a full picture of their experience of discrimination in Indonesia. The question is thus accompanied by an open-ended one that allows participants to describe their individual experience in depth. Furthermore, as the interpretation of discriminative behaviour can vary from person to person, the local context provides more guidelines of what constitutes permissible social behaviour.

Mixed methods can be interpreted as a way of doing triangulation, which is traditionally concerned with the confirmation of the results of a particular method through another, including the checking of qualitative results against quantitative results. In this research, triangulation is a means towards more reflection and knowledge in a qualitative study beyond confirming the validity of results. More specifically, the intention of using mixed methods in this project is to gain a more comprehensive understanding and not exclusively to check the results of respective methods against each other. For example, the information gathered from different groups of participants is compared with each other to check for similarities and discrepancies.

1.3 Designing Fieldwork

1.3.1 Determining Locations

This research project started in July 2016. The fieldwork itself was carried out in five months between January and May of 2018, which allowed me to move between four different locations across Indonesia with a reasonable amount of time in each location. Prior to the fieldwork, the first task was to determine these locations. Uwe Flick uses the term ‘sampling’ for the selection of cases, groups and material to be studied in qualitative research.

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63 Uwe Flick, Doing Triangulation and Mixed Methods (Sage, 2018), 88.
64 Ibid., 6-7.
65 Ibid., 24.
research.\textsuperscript{66} While the term ‘sampling’ may suggest a quantitative approach, Flick contends that there are similarities in how researchers must select suitable ‘cases, groups and materials’ to construct a ‘study with limited resources, from a more or less infinite horizon of possible selections’ in order to ‘make statements that we can generalise in one way or the other.’\textsuperscript{67}

In this regard, Flick supports a deliberate selection of locations that can construct a ‘corpus of empirical examples for studying the phenomenon in the most instructive way.’\textsuperscript{68} Several considerations to be taken are ensuring maximal variations in the sample, including politically important or sensitive cases (while also considering safety), as well as convenience. Maximal variations and politically important cases ensure range and depth, while convenience considers the ease of access towards desired data.\textsuperscript{69} Convenience, however, must never be the first criterion for sampling. Researchers have to be rigorous in finding meaningful and valuable samples while remaining realistic about their ability to access data. I decided to conduct my fieldwork in four different provinces which provided both variety as well as significance to the issues of national identity and multiculturalism: Aceh, Jakarta, Maluku and West Java. The variation in the demographics of each of these locations and its comparison with Indonesia as a whole are shown in Table 1.1 below.

\textit{Table 1.1: Comparison of demographics in the locations for this research}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Jakarta</th>
<th>West Java</th>
<th>Aceh</th>
<th>Moluccas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Largest ethnic groups</td>
<td>Javanese (40.2%) Sundanese (15.5%) Batak (3.6%)</td>
<td>Javanese (36%) Betawi (28%) Sundanese (15%) Chinese (6.5%) Batak (3.3%) Minang (2.8%)</td>
<td>Sundanese (71%) Javanese (13%) Betawi (6.2%) Cirebon (4.2%)</td>
<td>Acehnese (85%) Javanese (8.9%) Batak (3.3%)</td>
<td>Moluccans (74%) Javanese (5.2%) Bugis (1.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Largest religious groups</td>
<td>Muslims (87.2%) Christians (6.7%) Catholics (2.9%)</td>
<td>Muslims (85%) Christians (8%) Buddhists (3.3%) Catholics (3.2%)</td>
<td>Muslims (92%) Christians (5.4%) Catholics (2.2%)</td>
<td>Muslims (98%) Christians (1.1%) Buddhists (0.2%)</td>
<td>Protestants (58%) Muslims (39%) Catholics (2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jakarta and West Java are centrally located in Indonesia. Both provinces are located on Java, the most densely populated island of the country. Both provinces have

\textsuperscript{66} Uwe Flick, \textit{Designing Qualitative Research}, 2nd ed. (Sage, 2018), 48.

\textsuperscript{67} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{68} Ibid., 50.

\textsuperscript{69} Uwe Flick, \textit{Managing Quality in Qualitative Research}, 2nd ed. (Sage, 2018), 82-83.
well-developed metropolitan areas. Jakarta in particular, as both the political and economic capital of Indonesia, is a melting pot for the many ethnic and religious groups of the country. The latest national census in 2010 indicated that 85% of Jakarta’s population are Muslims, followed by Protestants (8%), Buddhists (3.3%) and Catholics (3.2%).\textsuperscript{70} Its largest ethnic groups are Javanese (36%), Betawi (28%), Sundanese (15%), Chinese (6.5%), Batak (3.3%) and Minang (2.8%).\textsuperscript{71}

West Java is not as diverse as Jakarta; however, Bandung, its capital area, was selected as one of the locations of the fieldwork because it is the third-largest urban area in Indonesia with prominent universities attracting students from all around the country. According to the 2010 national census, the largest religious groups in West Java are Muslims (92%), Protestants (5.4%), and Catholics (2.2%).\textsuperscript{72} Its largest ethnic groups are Sundanese (71%), Javanese (13%), Betawi (6.2%), Cirebon (4.2%), Batak (1.1%) and Chinese (0.6%).\textsuperscript{73}

Meanwhile, Aceh is the western-most province of Indonesia, and fieldwork was conducted in Banda Aceh, its capital city. Aceh’s population is largely homogeneous in ethnic terms, consisting of diverse tribes within the Acehnese ethnic group. The 2010 national census shows the largest ethnic groups in Aceh to be Acehnese (85%), Javanese (8.9%) and Batak (3.3%).\textsuperscript{74} Aceh is also associated with a strong Islamic identity and a special autonomy which allows it to partially implement laws based on Sharia (Islamic law). 98 percent of Aceh’s population are Muslims.\textsuperscript{75} Politically, Aceh is significant due to its history of separatist movements, which was resolved comparatively recently through a peace agreement between the government of Indonesia and the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (GAM/Free Aceh Movement) in 2005.\textsuperscript{76}

Maluku is an archipelagic province in the eastern part of Indonesia. Fieldwork was conducted in Ambon, its capital, a Christian-majority area. The 2010 national census shows Maluku’s largest religious groups to be Protestants (58%), followed by Muslims

\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., 36-41.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., 44-45.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid., 36-41.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 44-45.
Its largest ethnic groups are Moluccans (74%), Javanese (5.2%) and Bugis (1.7%). In terms of political significance, Ambon is interesting because of two things. Firstly, Maluku had a history of separatism in the 1950s, which could affect its population’s perception of identity and belonging. Secondly, Maluku underwent a large-scale violent religious conflict in 1999 between its Christian and Muslim population, which could affect the salience of religion in the identity of its population. Present-day Maluku is in peaceful conditions but it is interesting to explore how its history might affect its population’s understanding of national identity and multiculturalism.

The diversity of potential fieldwork locations in Indonesia has its own advantages and disadvantages for the researcher. Many researchers of social and political studies choose to conduct their study in locations they are familiar with, with the advantage that there is minimal resistance to them entering the field. This familiarity significantly reduces the need to learn a new language or to become acquainted with local norms and customs. At the same time, this familiarity poses its own challenges for the researcher. This situation applies well to me and was considered in the designing of my fieldwork. On the one hand, my interest in studying multiculturalism in Indonesia stems from my direct experience with it. On the other hand, there is a risk of being too familiar or involved with the research topic. There is also a tendency not to notice subtle things about the cultures of one’s own background. Furthermore, a researcher within a familiar surrounding must be aware that despite a seemingly common background between researcher and participants, experiences may differ greatly between individuals. Thus, shared implicit meanings and values of socio-cultural labels cannot be assumed. Another challenge is to let go of preconceived understandings of the state of things within

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78 Ibid., 36-41.
82 Ibid., 124-25.
familiar surroundings, starting by recognising the researcher’s own assumptions that are sometimes based on stereotypes.\textsuperscript{83}

The dichotomy between the role of the researcher as an insider or outsider is not always useful, as a researcher is never completely one or the other; however, awareness of the complexity of the relationship between researcher and participant is necessary to conduct qualitative research. This awareness enables the researcher to anticipate how participants might react to him or her, and also to anticipate the least disruptive way to approach participants.\textsuperscript{84} In my case, I was never completely an insider or an outsider to my participants, even though to some, I was more of an outsider. My position relative to each participant certainly affected the way I interacted with each individual. While I had visited many places in Indonesia prior to this research, including Aceh, I have only lived for long periods in two areas, namely Bandung and Jakarta. This situation has both its advantages and disadvantages. For one, with regard to communication, I am fluent in Indonesian, the national language of the country. However, I only speak my own regional language, and my Indonesian has an accent which tells which part of the country I am from, which in turn indicated my other-ness to locals as I travelled to other regions. As such, participants from regions other than my own might be warier to answer my questions. With regard to social norms and customs, I am well versed in norms that have been accepted across Indonesia, such as using proper honorifics to indicate respect when addressing people. However, specific local customs must be learned and sometimes adopted quickly in the field. By contrast, subtle cultural traits of other regions become apparent more easily in my observations.

During the fieldwork, people in Aceh and Maluku easily recognised that I was not a local through my accent, which was usually confirmed by my personal introduction to potential participants. As a result, some participants offered me their account of the way of things in Aceh or Maluku without prompting. The opposite happened in Jakarta and West Java, as participants assumed I knew the region well and did not require explanations. It occurred less naturally for participants to explain implicit meanings attached to local terms, and sometimes I felt that the participants found it strange for me to ask for explanations on such things. Instead, it was a task for me to remind myself that

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., 128-29.
the participants’ understanding of familiar local labels varied and could not be taken for granted.

During the fieldwork, I felt that participants from Aceh and Maluku were more careful in voicing their opinion. A similar level of hesitation was not detected in Jakarta and West Java, as I was viewed as more of an insider by participants. Furthermore, as a Muslim woman who wears a headscarf, my religious identity was always visible to my participants. My visible religious identity made it more comfortable for Muslim participants to speak about their religious identity; reversely, with non-Muslim participants, more time was required to build confidence between the participants and myself. For example, it helped to mention my familial relation to someone of their own faith. Ultimately, my familiarity with Indonesia did help with choosing the actual locations for my fieldwork, and my connection with local figures and laypeople helped me to gain access to participants.

1.3.2 Elites and Laypeople: Semi-structured One-on-one Interviews

After selecting the appropriate locations for the fieldwork, I had to determine the appropriate methods and potential participants. One way to collect qualitative data is in-depth interviewing, which allows one to explore others’ thoughts and feelings about their understanding of the world. The researcher guides participants through a number of pre-determined topics and questions in what is called ‘semi-structured interviewing’. Participants are expected to answer the questions and discuss the topics in-depth by elaborating, providing examples and clarifying meanings behind terms.\(^{85}\)

The criteria for the most salient participants for this research were derived from the aforementioned research questions.\(^{86}\) Drawing from the research questions, there are at least two groups in Indonesia that needed to be examined on their understanding of national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia: the elites and laypeople. Uwe Flick suggests that if a research project concerns institutional decision-making, experts and authorities should be sought out as prospective participants.\(^{87}\) They can provide the view


\(^{87}\) Flick, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 50.
of an institution, including its policies and future plans, ‘albeit from their own limited
and bounded perspective.’\textsuperscript{88} Thus, the first kind of participants under the elite category
were government officials. They needed to be higher-echelon officials within
government institutions that dealt with either national identity or multiculturalism. In
Indonesia’s bureaucracy, there are four echelons within higher-ranking officials. For the
purposes of this study, I targeted those with actual decision-making authority, namely
the first and second echelons of the relevant ministries. I conducted one interview at the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, two interviews at the Ministry of Tourism and one interview
at the Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO, which is attached to the Ministry
of Education and Culture. All interviews involved officials in a position related to
Indonesia’s national identity and image. These officials provided information on how
they defined the Indonesian national identity, as well as the image of Indonesia that their
institution sought to project.

To acquire different perspectives on Indonesia’s national identity and
multiculturalism, I also sought the perspective of non-governmental organisations
(NGOs) and intellectuals known for their engagement with the issues at hand. Three
NGOs provided their insight. The first was the Wahid Foundation, an NGO aiming to
promote ‘the development of a tolerant, multicultural society in Indonesia.’\textsuperscript{89} The Wahid
Foundation is particularly known for its promotion of a moderate and pluralistic stance
on religion. The second one was the Habibie Centre which aims to ‘promote the
modernization and democratization of Indonesian society based on the morality and
integrity of sound cultural and religious values.’\textsuperscript{90} It is known for its adoption of science
and technology in its work and has a significant number of in-house researchers. The
third one was Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (Alliance of Traditional Societies of
the Archipelago/AMAN) which works to advocate for the rights of traditional local
communities.\textsuperscript{91} These NGOs shared stories about their work and their opinions on the
challenges of diversity in the country.

\textsuperscript{88} Marshall, \textit{Designing Qualitative Research}, 105.
\textsuperscript{89} “About Wahid Foundation,” Wahid Foundation,
http://wahidfoundation.org/index.php/page/index/About-Us.
\textsuperscript{90} “About the Habibie Center,” The Habibie Center, http://thcasean.org/about/thc.
\textsuperscript{91} “Profil Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara (Aman),” AMAN, http://www.aman.or.id/profil-
aliansi-masyarakat-adat-nusantara/.
After initial data collection indicated the salience of religion to the identity of Indonesians, I decided to add a third category, namely religious leaders who are in the capacity of leading a congregation or managing a place of worship. It was particularly interesting to explore the experiences and opinions of leaders of minority religions because they are less likely to have a platform in the national mainstream media. There were four religious leaders who granted me interviews: the manager of the Buddhist Vihara Dharma Bakti in Banda Aceh, the Parishioner of the Catholic Parish of the Holy Heart in Banda Aceh, the Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Amboina in Ambon, and a Minister from the Protestant Church of Maluku in Ambon. They provided insights on the activities of their respective house of worship, managing a congregation and issues relating to cultural diversity in Indonesia, particularly religious diversity.

Challenges in finding elite participants primarily lay in getting access and finding time in their schedule.\footnote{Flick, \textit{Designing Qualitative Research}, 68.} Institutional bureaucracy also meant that significant time was required for an interview request letter to be processed and answered, if it was answered at all. I found it particularly challenging to pursue the status of my interview requests in large institutions where I did not have any internal connections with enough traction within them. Some of my interview request letters, indeed, went unanswered. Some requests were declined on account of busy or conflicting schedules. One official granted me a meeting and answered my questions in an informal conversation, but declined to sign any consent forms and be recorded, citing the sensitivity of some of the issues at hand.

In addition, I used a snowball sampling technique. In this technique, participants were requested for information on other relevant potential participants for my research, which enabled me to meet with unforeseen figures with valuable insight. For example, I initially sought out local experts on Islamic law and identity in Aceh. However, one of my laypeople participants in Banda Aceh offered me their connection to two previously high-ranking persons within Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement/GAM). While this type of elite participant was not foreseen in the initial research design, their position as ex-separatists provided a rare insight into their motivations. Excluding the meeting in which the official declined to sign a consent form and be recorded, I conducted
seventeen interviews with elites. The complete list of elite participants can be found in Appendix 7.

The interviews were designed to be semi-structured in-depth interviews and typically more like conversations. There were several guiding questions and general topics as listed in Appendix 8 to shed light on the participants’ views on the research topic, but the interview process also followed the responses of the participant and the themes that they brought up. This method is based on a fundamental assumption of qualitative research, namely, that the participants’ valuable perspective on the issue at hand should unfold along their own line of thought instead of that of the researchers.93 At the same time, some systematisation in the questioning enabled the drawing of comparisons, analysis and interpretation of the answers given by multiple participants.94

Questions directed at elite participants were concerned with their area of work. Elite participants were asked to describe their institution’s understanding of national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia, its related policies and programmes, as well as challenges faced in their execution. They were also asked to describe their institution’s vision for Indonesia’s multiculturalism. In the case of the Free Aceh Movement, participants were asked to describe their motivation towards separatism and their terms of negotiation towards the peace agreement with the Indonesian government, as well as their current aspirations for Aceh.

Meanwhile, in the case of laypeople, interviews allow an insight into the meanings that everyday activities hold for them.95 The term ‘laypeople’ in this research encompasses people beyond the age of eighteen who live in the aforementioned regions in Indonesia and were willing to share their understanding and experiences relating to national identity and multiculturalism. To avoid conflicts of interest, these participants could neither actively work for the government nor hold the position of community leaders. In addition, to avoid preconceptions about their person on my part, none of the interview participants were my own relatives, friends or other people with whom I had been personally acquainted in any capacity prior to this research.

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93 Marshall, Designing Qualitative Research, 101.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid., 102.
However, this quest for previously unknown participants posed a challenge, as in-depth interviews require trust and direct personal cooperation. Participants must be comfortable to share their personal thoughts and experiences with the researcher. Meanwhile, within Indonesia culture, personal connections are often important in building rapport and trust. Particularly older participants who experienced the New Order era as adults were often wary because of their experience with authoritarianism, in which researchers were often thought of as government agents. Initially, I tried to approach people in public places such as the local marketplace in Bandung, but this proved to be a difficult undertaking despite my familiarity with the local language and customs. After two unfruitful days, I had to abandon this recruitment method and I did not attempt it again in other locations. Most potential participants I approached were put off by the prospect of being interviewed and recorded on a political topic, some claiming no knowledge of politics, even though I emphasised that the questions only revolved around the participants and did not require specialised knowledge. Potential participants who were still listening at this point were discouraged by having to sign a consent form, citing privacy issues or fear of fraud. The use of written consent forms is unusual within Indonesian culture, particularly among the grass-roots, where an oral expression of consent is often considered sufficient. The grass-roots were also unfamiliar with academic standards of providing explicit written consent. Elite participants who were aware of the practice of using participant consent forms in research were more receptive to them.

This situation required me to use a snow-ball sampling for laypeople participants, using my existing connections to introduce me to potential participants. In lieu of information sheets on the letterhead of an unfamiliar institution, potential participants were more trusting towards personal introductions by someone familiar. This personal warranty made them willing to sign the consent forms as well. As a result, my laypeople participants consisted of friends, neighbours, employees or colleagues of my personal acquaintances, who in turn ensured the former of my reputability. Sometimes participants referred me on to their own acquaintances.

This sampling technique caused my laypeople participants to vary widely in terms of age, education level and occupation as shown in Table 1.2 below, which limits the

96 Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 2.
generalisability of my findings onto particular groups within the population. More
detailed information on each participant, including their individual ethnicity, religion and
occupation is available in Appendix 1. The variations in the participants’ identity were
also considered in terms of their effect on the lived experiences of participants. The
participants’ diversity in age and education provided a good variation in their experience
and stories. One issue in the sample is the imbalance in the number of males and female
participants, with more females than males. However, the analysis of the interviews did
not show significant differences between the answers of female and male participants.
Participants also did not frame their stories as gender-specific. As such, variation in
gender had minimal salience, and this imbalance in the gender of participants did not
have a negative impact on the results of this research.

Table 1.2: Laypeople participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Amount of participants</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Gender ratio</th>
<th>Highest level of education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21 – 58 years old</td>
<td>5 males, 7 females</td>
<td>Senior high school: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Academy/polytech: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Java</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21 – 39 years old</td>
<td>10 males, 6 females</td>
<td>Senior high school: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Academy/polytech: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate: 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aceh</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>30 – 64 years old</td>
<td>5 males, 10 females</td>
<td>Senior high school: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Academy/polytech: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate: 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maluku</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18 – 73 years old</td>
<td>4 males, 9 females</td>
<td>Senior high school: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Academy/polytech: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>18 – 73 years old</td>
<td>24 males, 31 females</td>
<td>Senior high school: 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Academy/polytech: 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate: 22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to their recruitment, there were other challenges to the interviewing of laypeople. Just like their elite counterparts, laypeople participants were tied to busy schedules. Most of them were employed in some capacity or ran their own business. To avoid impeding the participants’ work, interviews had to be conducted outside their working hours. Finding interview locations was sometimes also a challenge. In contrast to their elite counterparts, most laypeople participants did not have an office space in which they could receive guests, much less conduct an interview with privacy. Some participants welcomed me into their homes. But with most participants, I had to be more creative and find a suitable space that was culturally appropriate yet still gave enough privacy for the participant and had a relatively low noise level such as cafés or public courtyard.

After logistical arrangements were agreed upon, there were further challenges. Some participants either did not want to elaborate on their answers or lacked the skill to describe their thoughts and experiences in detail; they provided very short answers to my questions. Some were talkative while others were more reserved. This resulted in some variation in the lengths and depth of the interviews. I was, however, wary of explaining the aims of my questions too much or providing examples on how they should be answered, as I might have injected my own perspective in my attempt to coax more elaboration on their part. Sometimes participants gave short answers when they were uncomfortable with addressing certain topics such as past violent conflicts, in which case I refrained from causing them unnecessary emotional distress. In such cases, the researcher has to develop empathy for the participants.

Understanding the participants was sometimes a challenge on account of the linguistic diversity in Indonesia. All interviews were conducted in Indonesian, the country’s national language, but regional languages have an influence on the usage of the language, such as by including local terminology. Some terminologies included suitable honorifics for communicating with participants, and their correct usage was vital in establishing mutual respect between the participants and me. Prior to my fieldwork, I had never spent substantial time in Aceh, and I had never been to Maluku. Therefore, I had to familiarise myself with the local accents to better conduct and understand the

98 Rubin and Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing*, 11.
99 Ibid., 12.
interviews. As anticipated, some participants had a heavy local accent and occasionally used local terms. Spending longer times (eight weeks each) in Aceh and Maluku allowed me to take the first couple of weeks to adjust to their local accent and terms. Sometimes I had difficulty understanding the participants’ answers during an interview. However, the immediacy of interviews enabled ‘immediate follow-up and clarification’ on the participants’ answers to avoid misinterpretations.  

The right formulation of questions was particularly crucial for laypeople interviews. Firstly, the questions had to acknowledge the complexity of the issue of identity. For example, research has shown that people can develop similarly strong attachments to different aspects of their identity. At the same time, people may also associate entirely different feelings with different aspects of their identity; for instance, a person may think their ethno-regional identity is important because of its connection to their ancestry and at the same time think their national identity is important because of public services received from the state. Despite this complexity, questions have to be easily understood and answerable by participants. However, an oversimplification of sociocultural terms has to be avoided. Terms that describe ethno-regional or religious groups, in particular, may hold different meanings and values for different people. Thus, questions should not assume a similar understanding between researcher and participants. Instead, participants should be allowed to coin terms on their own and be asked to reflect on their meanings or value for themselves. To achieve this objective, my questions did not refer to any particular ethno-regional or religious group. If participants brought up certain terms or labels, they were asked to explain what they associated with those terms.

As Appendix 2 shows, my questions for laypeople participants started with some personal information such as their age, occupation, religion, ethnic group, area of origin, and marital status. These details provided an idea of their background and how it might affect their answers to further questions as shown in Appendix 2. Participants could

101 Marshall, Designing Qualitative Research, 102.
102 Rubin and Rubin, Qualitative Interviewing, 7.
104 Marshall, Designing Qualitative Research, 101-02.
describe their feelings in their own individual way, but a Likert scale was also used to help attain comparable results between participants, who could choose between ‘very positive’, ‘positive’, ‘indifferent’, ‘negative’ and ‘very negative.’ Then the participants were asked to explain why they chose a particular answer. They were also asked to explain which one was the most important to them among their national, ethno-regional and religious identity. Even though they might feel equally positive about these three aspects of their identity, these aspects of their identities might hold different importance or salience for them. In addition, as the fieldwork was conducted in 2018 in the months leading up to regional elections, participants were asked to describe the characteristics they would like to see in their provincial governor. Participants were specifically asked to explain to what extent the candidates’ religious or ethno-regional identity affected their choice in the elections. Lastly, they were asked to describe their hopes for Indonesia in the future and whether they had anything else they would like to add on the topic of diversity in the country.

Audio recordings were taken and notes were made of non-verbal observations during all interviews. The recordings were subsequently transcribed and annotated. Transcripts were made verbatim in sections that were particularly salient to the findings. The findings from the laypeople interviews provide insight into how participants understand their identity and how identity manifests in their social life. They were grouped under themes such as ‘recollection of feeling Indonesian’, ‘feeling like part of ethnic/religious group’, ‘importance of different affiliations’, ‘intermarriages’, ‘languages used’, and ‘political representation’. Each theme was divided into sub-groups according to the diverse answers given by the participants. In contrast, findings from elite interviews were grouped under themes such as ‘definition of Indonesian identity’, ‘vision for multiculturalism in Indonesia’ and ‘institutional features’. Together, the interviews shed light on both the elite’s and laypeople’s understanding of identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia.

1.3.3 Tertiary Students: Questionnaires and Focus Groups
In an effort towards a more comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand, I wanted to see patterns of attitudes among a larger number of participants. For this purpose, I needed another group of participants which could be efficiently recruited in a larger number and controlled more easily in terms of age and occupation. To address time
limitations, these participants also had to be able to fill out a self-administered questionnaire.\textsuperscript{106} For this purpose, questionnaires (shown in Appendix 4) were distributed to tertiary students in similar locations to the interviews with laypeople: Aceh, Jakarta, Maluku and West Java.

In order to access student participants, I had to establish contact with relevant universities to gain their permission to recruit student participants on campus. Some students were approached by me outside of class and some were sitting in a classroom. The latter were students of lecturers who allowed me to use some of their teaching time to explain my research and to ask for their participation. Students who were interested to participate were provided with an information sheet and a consent form. Student participants were allowed to fill out the questionnaire on the spot or finish it somewhere else and return it to me on the same day to minimise the risk of lost questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed to and returned by 237 participants across eight different universities; two universities in each region, as displayed in Table 1.3 below. A more detailed demographics of the university student participants, including their ethnicity and religion, are provided in Appendix 3.

\textit{Table 1.3: Questionnaire Participants}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Gender ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>Jakarta A</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18 – 22 years old</td>
<td>9 males, 21 females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jakarta B</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18 – 20 years old</td>
<td>9 males, 21 females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Java</td>
<td>West Java A</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19 – 23 years old</td>
<td>14 males, 16 females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Java B</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18 – 22 years old</td>
<td>11 males, 19 females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aceh</td>
<td>Aceh A</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18 – 24 years old</td>
<td>15 males, 17 females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aceh B</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>18 – 24 years old</td>
<td>9 males, 18 females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maluku</td>
<td>Maluku A</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18 – 25 years old</td>
<td>15 males, 11 females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maluku B</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18 – 23 years old</td>
<td>11 males, 15 females</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were noticeably more female than male university student participants. I attribute the tendency of having more female participants to my own gender, as gender contributes to the insider or outsider status between social researchers and participants. Thus, female students might have felt more compelled to respond to my request for them

\textsuperscript{106} Marshall, \textit{Designing Qualitative Research}, 125.
to participate. There was some initial concern that the imbalance between the number of male and female participants might skew the results. However, the analysis of the findings did not show significant differences between the attitude of males and females after the answers were controlled for gender.

The questionnaires provided a good overview of general attitudes among the participants, but in themselves they were not ideal for examining ‘tacit beliefs and deeply held values’. Thus, focus groups were conducted with tertiary students in addition to the questionnaires. The guiding questions for the focus groups can be seen in Appendix 6. The focus groups provided more depth to the findings from the questionnaires by engaging in-depth with some of the questionnaire participants and thus helped in interpreting the questionnaire results. The focus groups also provided more ‘illustrative material’ for direct quotations in addition to the questionnaires. According to David L. Morgan, it is common to combine focus groups with other methods such as individual interviews or surveys; his content analysis of Sociological Abstracts, the international literature of sociology and related disciplines in the social and behavioural sciences, showed that a majority of published research articles utilises this combination.

Focus groups suit a qualitative methodology particularly well because they assume that ‘people’s attitudes and beliefs do not form in a vacuum’. Instead, focus groups have the potential to encourage ‘exchanges between participants as they co-construct perspectives and responses’ as the researcher provides topics and questions that can be discussed by participants. By observing group dynamics, the researcher can pick up on how communities form a consensus or deal with competing views. This strategy allowed me to see how openly students could discuss their opinion among peers and how they dealt with dissent. Focus groups also provided room for participants to elicit responses that could not be articulated as well on the written questionnaires, and they shed more light on themes that were important to the student participants.

However, due to logistical limitations, only one focus group was conducted in each university. The focus groups required a conducive space, and within a campus, the

107 Ibid.
109 Ibid., 133.
110 Marshall, Designing Qualitative Research, 114.
111 Rosaline S. Barbour, Doing Focus Groups, 2nd ed. (Sage, 2018), 2.
112 Morgan, “Focus Groups,” 22.
most reasonable space for this purpose was a classroom. It was, however, a challenge to find free classrooms, as they were mostly already allocated to certain papers at any given time. Furthermore, there had to be a sufficient number of students who could participate. The groups’ sizes ranged from eight to twelve participants. Most participants were recruited from among the students who had already completed the questionnaire. This recruitment method enabled the focus group to directly discuss issues that required more exploration without spending substantial time on the participants’ own identities again.

In addition to eight general focus groups, specialised focus groups with minority students were also conducted for several reasons. Rosaline Barbour argues that the engagement with marginalised or otherwise ignored groups can be empowering as it can ‘give voice’ to their experience. However, minority students might not feel comfortable to speak about the discrimination they face in front of peers from majority groups. Setting up a smaller group exclusively consisting of minority students created a safer space for them to discuss these issues. The recruitment of minority students was done by snowball-sampling. At each university, I asked the faculty member who liaised with me if they could introduce me to a minority student who then, in turn, gathered their peers. This familiarity between participants for the groups contributed to a more intimate situation as the participants seemed to trust each other. Due to challenges in finding participants and logistics, only two focus groups of this kind were conducted: one focus group in Banda Aceh at University Aceh A with three students and one in Bandung at University West Java A with four students. In both focus groups, all participants were double-minorities, meaning that they belonged to a minority ethno-regional group as well as a minority religious group.

For this type of focus group, questions were specifically directed towards their experience as minorities within the university. For instance, the participants were asked to describe whether the university facilitated their religious practices; whether they felt any disadvantage in their studies for being minorities; how their peers from majority groups behaved towards them; and whether their peers had ever shown concern for potential differential treatment faced by them. These questions elicited answers from a different perspective than the general focus groups and enabled a more comprehensive understanding of multiculturalism in Indonesia.

113 Barbour, Doing Focus Groups, 17-18.
All focus groups were recorded and subsequently transcribed. The transcripts were analysed for the language and themes used by participants, as well as how their interaction created ‘the construction and reinforcement of discourses’. The transcripts were not always verbatim, as only certain sections were considered to be particularly salient. Themes were then grouped under headings such as ‘ideas on Indonesian identity’, ‘personal experience with diversity’, ‘tolerance’ and ‘unity’. Some themes were derived from the research questions while some emerged from the participants. Participants’ behaviour during the discussions such as the expression of assent, dissent, long silences that signalled hesitation or particularly palpable emotions were also noted. Findings from the focus groups were subsequently used to help explain the findings from the questionnaires.

1.3.4 Participant Observation

The last method used in the fieldwork was participant observation, which stems from the field of anthropology and was originally used to study cultures other than the researcher’s own. It requires researchers to live within the social setting of their interest and participate in the daily activities of its inhabitants, producing field notes from observations and conversations with the locals. The researchers’ immersion in the local social setting enables them to ‘learn directly from […] experience.’ This method is considered an essential element of all qualitative studies, as attempts to organise interviews or other research methods on the field undeniably involves observation of the local surrounding. There is a broad spectrum of participant observation, from the so-called ‘full participant’ who lives and works as an active member of the observed community over an extended period, to a ‘mute observer’ who stays in the background without any actual involvement. My own participant observation lay more closely to the latter, in what is called a ‘limited observer’ role. In this role, the researcher lives among the local community but does not have ‘any public role other than researcher’.

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114 Ibid., 35.
115 Devine, “Qualitative Methods,” 197-98.
116 Marshall, Designing Qualitative Research, 100-01.
117 Ibid.
118 Ely, Doing Qualitative Research, 45.
119 Ibid.
During my fieldwork, I lived among and regularly interacted with the local community during daily commutes and activities such as shopping for groceries or meals. I made notes of observations and conversations which were of interest to my research topic. These notes complemented the findings from the interviews, questionnaires and focus groups. Often, the observations revealed things that were not disclosed by participants in any of the aforementioned methods, such as off-hand remarks that suggested intolerant views against minority ethno-regional or religious groups. These observations allowed me to analyse topics considered too sensitive or embarrassing to be discussed in a formal interview but still acceptable or common enough to take place within society. The observations also allowed me to pick up on infrastructure and non-verbal signals that communicated local understandings on identity, such as graffiti or physical displays of religious faith.

During the fieldwork, my relatively undistinctive appearance compared to the local population helped me in being unobtrusive, thus minimising disruptions to the behaviour of the locals. Even in Ambon, where the majority of the population is Christian, there were plenty of local Muslim women with headscarves in public spaces, so that I did not particularly stand out from the crowd. In Banda Aceh, I had to adjust my way of dressing to appear more similar to local Muslim women. Local Muslim women in Banda Aceh tended to wear longer headscarves and looser clothing than I would normally, and wearing trousers in public was quite unusual. Meanwhile, particularly in Jakarta and Bandung, where I had lived before, I practically blended in among the locals, but this situation posed its own challenges. For instance, it was more difficult for me to label social situations as ‘remarkable’ because I was already very familiar with both locations. Situations that overtly involved aspects of multiculturalism such as remarks on politics or exchanges on topics relating to social identity were easier to pick up. In Aceh and Maluku, regional traits were more easily observable for me because they were ‘different’ from what I was used to. In some situations, I openly told people that I was not originally from the region, which often led them to explain what they thought was remarkable about it and what they thought non-locals should know. The notes produced from my observations added another layer of findings and contributed a more holistic picture of diversity in Indonesia.

\[120\] Ibid., 42-43.
1.4 Ethical Considerations

Permission for this fieldwork was granted by the University of Otago’s Human Ethics Committee in September 2017, as shown in Appendix 17. Some main concerns of ethical considerations for social research include the protection of the researcher, protection of the reputation of involved institutions, and, most importantly, protection of the participants.\textsuperscript{121} With the application of institutional standards of ethical conduct and paired with the ‘good conscience’ of social researchers, most social research has minimum risk for the parties involved.\textsuperscript{122} The University of Otago has its own guidelines in this regard, which include standards in research design, informed and voluntary consent of participants, protection of vulnerable participants, privacy, minimising the risk of harm, limitation of deception, attention to cultural sensitivity and limiting conflicts of interest.\textsuperscript{123} The overall research design, attention to cultural sensitivity and limiting conflicts of interest have been addressed in previous sections of this chapter. For the participants involved, the most important aspects to consider were making sure that they were sufficiently informed about the research and voluntarily gave consent to participate. Subsequently, the risk of harm towards participants has to be minimised by protecting their privacy and anonymity.\textsuperscript{124}

To ensure informed consent, all prospective participants were provided with an information sheet and a consent form, individually adapted to their position. The information sheets and consent forms for all types of participants are provided in Appendices 9 to 16. For this project, rewards for participation were given in the form of souvenirs, and the type of souvenir varied according to the type of participants. Elite participants were all given a notebook. Student participants were given stationery while laypeople participants were asked to choose between items such as prayer mats, scarves or food items. The information sheet also stated that participants could withdraw from the project at any time with no disadvantage on their part, and they were given an opportunity to ask questions about the project. If prospective participants were satisfied with the information provided, they were asked to sign the consent form.

\textsuperscript{122} Ibid., 170.
\textsuperscript{123} “Ethical Practices in Research and Teaching Involving Human Participants,” University of Otago, https://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/academiccommittees/otago015522.html.
\textsuperscript{124} Flick, \textit{Designing Qualitative Research}, 85.
The only situation when obtaining informed consent was impractical, if not impossible, was during participant observation. Within open and public spaces, it was impossible to obtain informed consent from everyone in my surroundings and requesting informed consent had the potential of significantly altering their behaviour.\textsuperscript{125} Certainly this posed a dilemma concerning the principle of ‘no deception’ within research ethics, but in this case, valuable data to complement other findings could not be obtained otherwise.\textsuperscript{126} However, there was neither any risk of harm to those observed nor disruptions to their activities. Most importantly, the identities of the observed were not essential to the findings, and thus the privacy of those observed was still upheld and their anonymity protected.

The protection of the participants’ anonymity had to be handled differently for elites, laypeople and university students. For elites, the inclusion of their respective position gives considerable weight and adds value to the information they provided. As such, elites were requested to give consent, at least, to be identified by association. If the elite participants consented, their individual position and their names could also be made identifiable. However, identifying information of individual laypeople and student participants was not salient to research and confidentiality was important to gain their participation. Hence, field notes and recordings did not include any such information. Laypeople participants were instead given codenames, for example, the first participant from West Java is only identified as WJ-01. Similarly, after the collection of questionnaires from participants, consent forms were separated from answer sheets to minimise the possibility of identification. Tertiary student participants were also given codenames such as WJA-01; their respective universities are only identifiable by general location, such as West Java A and B. This inclusion of location in the codenames is prompted by the salience of the diversity of locations of the fieldwork, including the different characteristics of each region.

During the data collection process, it was important to minimise the risk of harm to participants. While there were practically no physical risks in participating in this research project, participants could have been exposed to emotional stress or embarrassment, for example, by reactivating painful or upsetting memories.\textsuperscript{127} Therefore,

\textsuperscript{125} Managing Quality in Qualitative Research, 112.
\textsuperscript{126} Ransome, Ethics and Values in Social Research, 46-47.
\textsuperscript{127} Flick, Designing Qualitative Research, 89.
questions were limited to what was necessary for the project. If participants expressed discomfort in answering any question, they were given apologies and I offered to skip the question or even end the interview process or I informed them that they could leave the focus group. With regard to the questionnaires, participants could leave empty any questions they did not want to answer.

After the collection process, all data was stored on a computer with a backup on an external drive. The computer and external drive are protected by passwords and encryptions, to which only my supervisors and I have access. Consent forms are stored separately from data to avoid the identification of the participants. At the end of the project, any personal information will be destroyed except that, as required by the university’s research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for five years in the Politics Department, after which it will be destroyed. The overall results of this project are published in the form of this thesis and will possibly form the basis of journal articles, but information which can individually identify participants other than consenting elites will not be released in any way.

1.5 Conclusion

A good research design is essential for the success of any proper research project. The research design begins with the researcher’s view on the nature of the social world and the particular research topic. A constructivist worldview is particularly suitable for studying issues pertaining to identity as a concept that is constantly constructed and interpreted by actors in the social world. This constructivist worldview leads to a qualitative methodology. To adequately address the main research question which examines the construction and maintenance of national identity and unity in present-day Indonesia, mixed methods are required. Analysis of existing literature as well as laws and regulations pertaining to identity in Indonesia is thus complemented by information gathered on the field. In this case, the fieldwork involved interviews with laypeople and elites; questionnaires and focus group discussions with university students as well as participant observation in Aceh, Jakarta, Maluku and West Java.

In each location, elites provided an insight into the way they interpret national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia through their respective institutions.
Meanwhile, laypeople and student participants provided an insight into their experience and understanding of national identity and multiculturalism. Appropriate methods of data collection were tailored to each type of participant and the kind of desired data, for instance, one-on-one interviews for individual elites and laypeople; self-administered questionnaires for university students; and focus groups to add more depth to the questionnaires. Participant observation on the field added another layer of information to the data.

Furthermore, the ethical considerations for doing research must be upheld. In this regard, the participants’ confidentiality must be protected, particularly for laypeople and university student participants. The researcher also has to be aware of their position relative to the participants. For example, the extent to which the researcher is considered an insider or outsider by the participants may well affect their sincerity in providing information. By following the aforementioned guidelines, the research can achieve good, accountable and relevant results.
2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework of this research and serves as the foundation for the analysis in upcoming chapters. Using existing literature on issues relating to identity, nationalism and multiculturalism, this chapter argues that the governance of a culturally plural state requires a balance in the recognition and accommodation of the collective rights of various cultural groups. This balance, in turn, helps with preserving the overall unity and integrity of the state. The chapter is divided into three sections, focusing on identity, nationalism and multiculturalism.

Section one argues that social groups are inherently internally diverse in varying degrees. Identity is complex and multi-dimensional, and a person holds multiple aspects of identity concurrently and can thus belong to multiple social groups simultaneously. In turn, no social group is truly uniform. Identity theories on in-groups and out-groups examine how similarities and differences as well as their perception cause people to distinguish between the self and the other. While people behave differently towards their perceived in-groups and out-groups, according to theories on intergroup relations, internally diverse social groups can be united by a narrative which emphasises their shared similarities or one that construes diversity as strength.

Section two outlines theories on nationalism which deal with one particular type of group identity: the national identity. This section highlights the prevalence of top-down and elite-led nation-building processes aiming to spread a uniform identity across the population of a demarcated state with varying degrees of pre-existing internal diversity. Traditionally, two main types of attachment can establish the people’s identification with the state. Firstly, a civic one, consisting of shared values and a shared sense of citizenship, and secondly, an ethnic one, consisting of kinship, common descent and culture, which includes similarities in language and customs. The distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism is not always clear-cut, as there are cultural elements in both. Nonetheless, the distinction itself acknowledges the underlying variety of factors in people’s identities that can be used for nation-building.

Due to the inherent diversity within social groups, nations experience varying degrees of internal diversity. A common national identity is essential for the functioning of a coherent state, and a top-down approach to nation-building is effective for the systematic spread of this national identity. The simultaneous need for recognition and
accommodation of various socio-cultural groups through relevant rules and regulations in order to ensure contentment and identification with the state and nation, however, requires balance between a systematic top-down and an inclusive bottom-up approach to nation-building.

Section three examines in more detail varying interpretations of multiculturalism as a means for governing culturally plural states. The term multiculturalism, while often interpreted as cultural plurality, refers here to a state’s policies pertaining to diversity; meanwhile, cultural plurality or cultural diversity describes the situation of the population in itself. Culturally plural states deal with their internal diversity in varying manners, depending on the way the state interprets the relationship between the overarching national identity and potentially conflicting diverse identities within the population. As a result, culturally plural states are not necessarily multiculturalist. The emphasis on uniformity typically stems out of the state’s desire to maintain their unity and integrity and simultaneous underestimation of the need to ensure the contentment and allegiance of its people by extending appropriate recognition and accommodation of their identities.

2.1 Identity

Identity is a widely used term in politics and political studies. An increase of interest in identity within political studies reflects a greater acknowledgement of particularities, the shifting away from one-size-fits-all universalistic theories and norms. Traditional value systems and power relations, which have caused or justified the marginalisation of different groups of people, are increasingly being questioned.¹

Different disciplines place their individual focus on different aspects of identity. For example, according to psychologist Erik Erikson, identity can be divided into three categories, namely, ego identity, personal identity and social identity.² The more individualist and intrinsic nature of the ego and personal identity makes them more suitable for psychology, whereas a focus on social identity is more suitable for the social sciences, including political studies. This does not mean that personal identity is not of

interest at all for political studies. For instance, the idiosyncratic factors of political figures play an important factor in their decision-making. Social identity, however, is more appropriate for examining intragroup and intergroup relations.

According to Brubaker and Cooper, there are at least five dimensions of identity as an analytical tool; one of these dimensions views identity as a tool for ‘particularistic self-understanding’. People use identity to make sense of themselves as well as their surroundings, and to differentiate between the self and the other. Henri Tajfel argues that the distinction between the self and the other is related to the universal need of human beings to make sense of the world and to put things into categories. This differentiation involves a process in which individuals assess what traits define themselves – the ‘self’ – and what traits define the ‘other’. Through the recognition of particularly remarkable or meaningful traits in the self and in others, people create categories for social groups. This categorisation can be useful, such as in the distinction between teachers and students which determines the rights and responsibilities attached to each role within the setting of a classroom.

Nevertheless, the categorisation of people is challenging because each person has multiple aspects of identity, derived from various factors such as place of birth, language, religion, gender, age, economic class, level of education and occupation, as well as a variety of less transient ‘cultural factors and social roles’ such as ancestry or ethnicity. These aspects of identity can become dominant interchangeably, depending on the situation at hand. For example, a person can act as part of a congregation at church, a parent or partner at home and as an employee at work, bringing particular aspects of their self to the front in different situations. The liberal paradigm argues that identities are acquired according to a person’s individual will and ‘based on choice rather than duty and obligation’. However, identity is socially embedded and does not form in a vacuum; therefore, a person’s agency, including the choices underlying their identity, is shaped by

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4 Tajfel, Human Groups and Social Categories, 147.
6 Cote, Identity, Formation, Agency and Culture, 8.
7 Brubaker and Cooper, “Beyond "Identity"," 8.
8 Cote, Identity, Formation, Agency and Culture, 15.
the norms and values of their social environment. Social interaction continuously shapes people’s identities, causing identity to constantly develop as a psycho-social reflection of a person’s experiences. Once identity is realised and projected by the individual, it continues to redefine itself in accordance with feedback from its environment. Thus, the only constant thing about identity is its performance as ‘a process of performative repetition of continuous instability’.

People interpret different aspects of their identity differently and attach varying degrees of salience to them. For example, a person can attach different meanings and degrees of importance to their national, ethno-regional and religious identity. While these aspects of identity can affect each other, the relationship between these aspects of identity is not predetermined. For instance, a strong national identity does not automatically negate a person’s ethno-regional identity. Therefore, different aspects of a person’s identity should be examined individually, including the meanings that people attach to them. Gary S. Gregg describes different aspects of a person’s identity as spheres or layers laid out in a concentric circle. Within this circle, aspects of identity represented by spheres closer to the centre are more important than outlying ones and are thus less likely to change or be suppressed. In this regard, Charles Taylor argues that identity can stem out of theistic sources, usually in the form of religious beliefs, which can be particularly central to a person’s value system and their understanding of the world. As such, religious identity can be very difficult to alter. Its central position further indicates that

10 Josselson and Harway, “The Challenges of Multiple Identity,” 5.
the management of religious groups constitute one of the central challenges for culturally plural societies.

Despite the challenges of creating social categories related to the diversity of aspects contributing to identity, the categorisation of people continues to take place both in everyday life and within the political sphere. By recognising a ‘common quality’ possessed by a large majority of a particular group, group identities can be developed. However, as identity is developed on a social plane, self-recognition becomes insufficient. The self needs another to associate with or to distinguish itself from, as well as to perform for or react to. On occasion, some traits of the self may not become obvious until they are confronted by a social other. The self therefore requires foreign traits in the social other to demarcate its own identity. For example, people may not feel particularly aware of their own nationalism until they encounter foreigners or travel abroad. Similarly, people may only begin to question their own social practices when the relative strangeness of the said practices is pointed out by foreigners.

There are at least three steps in the creation of social groups: a categorisation which is accepted internally and externally, identification with the said categorisation, and social comparison between groups. Once social groups have formed, group membership creates an emotional attachment towards the group. People who recognise themselves as part of a group will develop an in-group solidarity, and attach meanings and values to the group. More commonly, group members will attach positive meanings and values to their own in-group. However, social identification does not instantly generate in-group favouritism or the attribution of positive traits towards the in-group. For the positive or negative evaluation of the in-group, a comparison with other social groups (out-groups) is necessary.

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The comparisons produced between social groups affect the way these groups interact with each other. For instance, a social group’s similarities with out-groups tend to be downplayed, while differences tend to be exaggerated. However, just as group membership does not always translate into positive associations with the in-group, neither do differences between groups, on their own, translate into negative associations. Ted Hopf, for instance, rejects the notion of automatic, inevitable ‘conflict and subordination’ in identity difference. The differentiation between teachers and students can serve as an example here too. The two groups are distinct from each other and the interaction between them may be positive or negative, depending on the immediate circumstances. At the same time, circumstances are affected by prejudice, which is created through ‘socially derived value connotations which are directly associated with intergroup categorisations’.

It is possible for an in-group to view itself as less valuable than an out-group, when out-groups display traits considered more desirable. Similarly, prejudice and devaluation can take place towards the in-group. An example would be when people project idealistic images of a foreign country and only focuses on the negative aspects of their own home country. Franz Fanon indicates that the experience of colonialism can perpetuate inequality in intragroup relations through an internalised inferiority on the side of the colonised and internalised superiority on the side of the colonisers.

As shown by the example of colonisation, the nature of the interaction between groups is affected by its setting. Muzafer Sherif created an experiment in which two groups of boys were asked first to compete against each other and then work together to solve a task that was otherwise unmanageable. This experiment showed that a competitive environment causes more negative sentiments towards the out-group vis-à-vis a cooperative environment. However, because Sherif’s experiment used temporary and arbitrarily formed groups, a different result may appear when the groups in question

25 Ibid., 70-72.
29 Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 222-23.
are less transient. For example, membership in political parties indicates a competition between differing political perspectives that cannot always be reconciled in facing common challenges. The relationship between less transient groups thus depends on their understanding of their supposed relationship with each other.

The widespread understanding of the relationship between social groups is referred to as a ‘narrative’. Within a narrative, a group of people selectively attach salience to particular events and values to construct a particular story which then acts as a social glue. The creation of narratives also includes the selective ‘forgetting’ or repression of events or ‘episodes’ that do not support the coherence of the overall narrative. Margaret Somers defines narratives as a ‘constructed configuration or a social network of relationships […] composed of symbolic, institutional, and material practices’. Narratives are also described as a ‘socio-historical positioning’ or ‘cultural and ideological imprinting’ of events and phenomena, providing awareness of their particular, perspective-dependent value. Thus, narratives arbitrarily assign roles of good and bad, affecting people’s understanding of values and their biases in interpreting or retelling social cues, including identity. For example, a person is not simply recognised as having a certain gender or ethnicity; instead, their gender or ethnicity may be valued differently within different narratives.

Narratives affect not only the relationship between social groups, but also the coherence within them. Tajfel argues that within in-groups, social identity is a ‘self-concept’ which an individual derives from ‘their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance of that membership’. Hence, an individual’s identity depends on their awareness of a group membership and how they value this membership, effectively producing a narrative of that membership. In addition, narratives play a significant role in linking different aspects of identity within a person. Narratives can combine seemingly contradictory traits into a coherent whole. For example, Markel Verkuyten argues that Polish Tatars are able to

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32 Ibid., 616. Emphasis in original.
34 Tajfel, Human Groups and Social Categories, 255.
reconcile the Polish, Tatar and Muslim aspects of their identity as the result of a widespread narrative of their compatibility with each other.\textsuperscript{35}

In this regard, the formation of social groups does not imply a universal uniformity among its members. Within a group, there is a so-called ‘prototype’ who embodies most traits considered typical of the group at hand.\textsuperscript{36} A claim to group membership can then be made upon the identification of the typical traits in the self. The more sameness is found between the self and the prototype, the more likely a person will be admitted to the group.\textsuperscript{37} However, internal variations can be found in any social group, small or large, such as citizens of a country who share the same nationality and speak the same language but are otherwise different.

Diversity within a social group can be recognised through descriptors which capture existing variations in identity, for example, by using compound nouns such as ‘African-American’ or ‘French-Canadian’. However, there is sometimes a lack of proper adjectives, labels or conceptual narratives which can capture the entirety of identities and keep up with the recognition of increasingly complex combinations of identities. Ruthelen Josselson and Michele Harway ascribe this lack of complex ‘sociocultural categories’ or ‘categories of identity’ to the need to simplify categorisation of people, particularly in the media.\textsuperscript{38}

Thus, members of one in-group can have an infinite number of variations in their traits and actions relative to the prototype of the group. The diversity within in-groups raises the issue of what factors contribute to a group’s cohesion and what factors challenge it. Tajfel argues that in-group similarities tend to be marked up while in-group differences tend to be disregarded.\textsuperscript{39} For example, a person from ethnic group A could share the same religion with a person from ethnic group B, creating a multi-layered network of relationships. This overlap between group A and B can contribute to the creation of a unifying narrative in which actual differences are less significant than the intangible values attached to the attributes of out-groups which shape intergroup

\textsuperscript{38} Josselson and Harway, “The Challenges of Multiple Identity,” 3.
\textsuperscript{39} Tajfel, \textit{Human Groups and Social Categories}, 70-72.
relations. In other words, a blind eye can be turned to differences within the in-group as long as these do not challenge the fundamental similarities shared by group members. The way members choose to display their divergence from the prototype and how other group members perceive this divergence is key. A person’s divergence from the group’s prototype can decrease the value their group membership, but if the divergence is not considered threatening to the group’s narrative, it will not significantly affect a continued group membership.

A continued cohesion within internally diverse social groups can be managed by adequately recognising and accommodating their differences instead of suppressing them. According to Charles Taylor, the misrecognition of identities may cause discontent and, within a culturally plural state, may cause feelings of belonging towards the state to wane. The correct recognition of identities has to include the interpretation of identity of the identified person, including the correct attribution of positive or negative value connotations. Furthermore, the recognition and evaluation of identity plays a significant role in ensuring functional relations between individuals as well as groups. For example, within a group of people where the majority adheres to religion A, religious minorities may be discontented if they are not allowed to freely express or practice their religion. The minority groups may also feel discontent if their religion is given negative value connotations by the majority, which in turn highlights the importance of self-identification and evaluation for diverse cultural groups.

Alternatively, an internally diverse group requires a persuasive shared narrative to maintain its cohesion, for example, the narrative of a threatening out-group. This narrative of threat strengthens both the in-group’s cohesion as it faces a common challenge and projects a negative image towards the out-group. For example, a diverse group of people colonised by the same foreign power can unite to expel their common oppressor. In these situations, the prevailing narrative is typically created by a narrator, generally taking the form of political elites, as a ‘representational form/method of

43 Tip et al., “Is Support for Multiculturalism Threatened By...Threat Itself?,” 28-29.
presenting social and historical knowledge’. The narrator may choose to emphasise episodes of joint efforts in history rather than those of internal strife. A narrative of sameness and unity can further construe a national identity between people of different personal backgrounds who share one citizenship within the same state.

2.2 Nationalism

Nationalism is primarily concerned with the construction, socialisation and maintenance of the national identity. National identity, in turn, incites emotions, attachment and loyalty in a very large group of people on a state-wide scale. Within this thesis, national identity is interpreted as the connection between the people as a nation with the state, as the formal apparatus governing above them and legitimises common legal rights and duties, thus complementing the ‘legal and bureaucratic ties of the state’ to the people. This identification between the people and the state positions the state as the people’s representative, as opposed to their oppressor, as the sole holder of power and ‘legitimate violence’. National identity further serves to ‘define and locate individual selves’ in the world, positioning one nation vis-à-vis others.

Nationalism, in this regard, is the desire of a group of people with a shared national identity to have their own state. It is a form of allegiance to the state which implies an ‘emotive presence’ that deeply affects people. Nationalism is thus more a form of social or political movement than an ideology. Different ideologies can, in fact, be used in conjunction with nationalism. Nationalism has been given a pejorative connotation in political studies, as an irrational and fanatical attachment to the nation and state which can easily turn into violence and warfare. This image of nationalism implies

48 Smith, National Identity, 22.
that it is not desirable and has caused considerable criticism against nation-building processes for having enabled the oppression of cultural minorities for the sake of creating an idealised homogeneous nation. In addition, contesting narratives of nationalism between social groups have been the cause for violent conflict in various places throughout history. Elie Kedourie, for instance, argues that nationalism can easily turn into xenophobia when loyalty and affection towards one’s own state is accompanied by suspicion or dislike towards others.

In contrast to the negative connotations of nationalism, ‘patriotism’ is often construed as the good and rational kind of attachment to the nation and state. However, the term ‘patriotism’ has also been used to describe an uncritical support for the nation; therefore, the distinction between nationalism and patriotism is contestable. Michael Billig, for instance, rejects this distinction between nationalism and patriotism. Michael Hechter further argues that the term ‘patriotism’ is often used to disguise and ameliorate the interest of particular groups ‘at the expense of others’.

The expression of nationalist sentiments is not always violent or confrontational. For example, Billig acknowledges that a person’s identification with the state can be expressed in a wide range of manners. National identity, for instance, can manifest in a person’s membership in a state’s military and their involvement in warfare; at the same time, national identity can manifest in the most ubiquitous, banal manners, such as in a person owning a national identification document. Furthermore, a stable national identity in a population enables a conducive environment for peace and welfare. While most people would not describe themselves as nationalists, national identity manifests itself in more ways than people may be aware of. Nationalism is thus more pervasive

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57 Hechter, *Containing Nationalism*, 17.
59 Ibid., 39-43.
than assumed because its manifestations are seen as commonplace. The reproduction of the nation can be found everywhere, such as in the production of national newspapers and other forms of mass media.

National identity, therefore, acts as a social glue which turns a people into a nation. Put differently, a nation is as a large group of people with sufficient similarities to provide them with a common national identity. However, there are debates regarding the primary factors that create this national identity, most commonly between proponents of ethnic nationalism, cultural nationalism and civic nationalism.

In ethnic nationalism, membership in a nation is determined by ethnic descent or blood ties. Solidarity among members of the nation is taken to be a natural condition, just like the way family ties are based on blood relations. Ethnic nationalism has some cultural dimensions, such as commonalities in traditions, language, geographic proximity and idiosyncrasies. Clifford Geertz, for instance, argues that sameness in language and culture are part of the ethnic factors that build a nation. These cultural dimensions can evolve with time but nevertheless have identifiable characteristics for the members of the groups as well as their social others.

In comparison, theories of cultural nationalism argue that nationalist sentiments are born out of cultural identification among the people, as well as between the people and the state. It relies on commonalities in culture, language, or ethnicity to create a sense of belonging among the community, which in turn translates into their loyalty to the state. In turn, people use cultural expressions, including clothing, to express their sense of belonging. Nations are thus a product of a distinctive course of history with a particular culture and geographic condition. John Hutchinson argues that cultural nationalism requires the existence of a migration story, a founding myth, a golden age, a

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61 Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 16.
period of decay and a promise to re-establish the aforementioned golden age.\textsuperscript{70} Thus, cultural nationalism has some overlaps with ethnic nationalism in highlighting ethnic and cultural features as the primary factors which make a nation stand out from other nations.\textsuperscript{71}

By contrast, according to civic nationalism, members of the nation share the common values embedded in the legal foundations of the state.\textsuperscript{72} Civic nationalism stresses the need for a ‘civic polity’ made of educated citizens who abide by the same rules and values, seeking a supposedly universal humanity which can transcend particularities.\textsuperscript{73} This civic understanding of nationalism is particularly important for culturally plural states, as it enables national membership without ethnic or cultural homogeneity.\textsuperscript{74} However, the civic values of a state are typically the product of a particular culture in itself, thus limiting its claim to universality.

While the distinction between ethnic, cultural and civic nationalism is useful for academic discourse, the distinction is not clear-cut.\textsuperscript{75} For instance, civic nationalism appeals to a sense of common history and purpose among the people, similar to the claims of cultural nationalism to a common past and destiny.\textsuperscript{76} Anthony D. Smith acknowledges that both ethnic and civic forms of nationalism can be found in most states.\textsuperscript{77} For example, politicians can campaign on civic values while appealing to particular ethnic groups.\textsuperscript{78} In order to thrive and reaffirm their legitimacy, political nationalists adopt ‘ethnic-historical identities’ to promote people’s identification with the state.\textsuperscript{79} A nation thus possesses a set of civic ideas and values, and at the same time can utilise its ethnic or cultural uniqueness to evoke a sense of national identity, where the state assumes the role of the ‘guardian of the [nation’s] culture’, as is the case in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{80}

\textsuperscript{70} Hutchinson, “Cultural Nationalism and Moral Regeneration,” 123.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid., 122-23.
\textsuperscript{72} Özkırımli, Contemporary Debates on Nationalism, 23.
\textsuperscript{73} Hutchinson, “Cultural Nationalism and Moral Regeneration,” 122.
\textsuperscript{74} Özkırımli, Contemporary Debates on Nationalism, 23.
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 24.
\textsuperscript{76} Hutchinson, “Cultural Nationalism and Moral Regeneration,” 129.
\textsuperscript{77} Smith, National Identity, 9-13.
\textsuperscript{79} Hutchinson, “Cultural Nationalism and Moral Regeneration,” 122.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., 129.
Nationalism also has a contestable relationship with religion. On the one hand, nationalism has been described as a logical outgrowth of the Enlightenment, as a secular alternative to religion which shifted authority and meaning from religions towards polities. The concept of nationalism as a secular take on group identity which replaces religion is, among others, supported by Elie Kedourie. On the other hand, scholars such as Craig Calhoun argue that religion and religious rhetoric continue to be intertwined with politics, and thus with the formation and maintenance of nations. Religious identity has indeed been a strong source of motivation for political movements throughout history, including nationalist ones. In addition, many modern-day states adopt religious values as national values, such as the case of Malaysia or Brunei Darussalam. Hence, religion continues to be a relevant dimension in studying nationalism, as a source of identity on its own accord and a powerful motivation for nationalist movements.

Meanwhile, the nation-state is ‘the forum or shell within which national identity can be articulated, represented and legitimated.’ While the terms ‘state’ and ‘nation’ are sometimes used interchangeably, the two refer to different things. Conceptually speaking, the ‘state’ refers to the formal apparatus performing governance over a people or a ‘nation’. For instance, states can act as protectors and providers of convergent goods such as infrastructure and education for the nation. The interchangeability of the terms of ‘state’ and ‘nation’ in their common usage implies a widespread assumption of a congruity between the state and the nation.

The concept of the nation-state can be traced back at least to the era of the French revolution and ideas of the people’s right to self-determination. The nation-state is thus a relatively recent social invention. The concept of the nation-state then spread from

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82 Kedourie, “Nationalism and Self-Determination,” 50-51.
84 Özkirimli, Theories of Nationalism, 67.
85 Liow, Religion and Nationalism in Southeast Asia, 137-38.
86 Vincent, Nationalism and Particularity, 38.
88 Hechter, Containing Nationalism, 113-15.
89 Hearn, Rethinking Nationalism, 39.
Western Europe to North America and to other parts of the world. Partha Chatterjee argues that the present ubiquity of the nation is a result of long-lasting effects of colonialism, which cause post-colonial nations to continue operating under the influence of past colonisers while rebelling against them. This influence causes post-colonial nations to adhere to borders drawn by colonial powers despite their disregard of traditional local cultural or ethnic boundaries, in turn creating a fertile ground for future conflicts. Post-colonial states also tend to adopt the model of governance previously imposed by colonial powers, as leaders of nationalist movements in post-colonial states tend to operate within the framework of nationalism socialised from Western Europe.

In this regard, Liah Greenfeld distinguishes between pristine and secondary nations. The pristine nations were the first wave of nations to establish themselves, while secondary nations followed later on. Secondary nations are thus imitations of the former, such as post-colonial nations which adopt the Western model of the nation-state as displayed by their colonisers.

The continued appeal of the concept of the ideal homogeneous nation-state can be observed in the continued existence of various separatist and nationalist movements. However, the spread of nationalism and the concept of the nation-state across the world, particularly in post-colonial nations, are also problematic for several reasons. For example, nationalism can be a liberating movement towards anti-colonialism and political independence. Srirupa Roy describes nationalism as a way to mobilise previously relatively divided groups of people into one nation as a means to overthrow colonial power. At the same time, the spread of nationalism among post-colonial countries constitutes an imposition of the model of the nation-state as displayed by colonial powers. In turn, the supposedly liberating quest of political elites to establish

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94 Hearn, Rethinking Nationalism, 100-01.
their own state have led to new orders of power and suppression, as elites seek to homogenise the population within their territory to emulate the Western model of the homogeneous nation-state.

Furthermore, the concept of the homogeneous nation-state is theoretically problematic because it contradicts the inherent diversity within social groups. Because of this inherent diversity, nationalism is more of a top-down nation-building process seeking to create homogeneity and cohesion among a population, as opposed to the awakening of a dormant pre-existing national identity. Walker Connor has pointed out that there are only a small number of states which can really claim to really be nation-states. In a survey in 1971, Connor identified only 12 out of 132 states as nation-states. Despite the emergence of post-colonial states and separatist movements around the twentieth century, with the increasing mobility of people in the present day, this number might have decreased further.

Effectively, the nation-state is an idealised concept claimed by elites to justify their political motives. For example, Johnathan Hearn describes nationalism as a top-down ‘making of combined claims, on behalf of a population, to the jurisdiction over a common identity within a distinct territory’. Eric Hobsbawn similarly views nationalism as a process in which traditions are invented in a top-down manner, with repeated performances of public ceremonies and the production of public monuments. In this regard, Ernest Gellner provides a simple, if narrow definition for nationalism: as a search for congruency between the cultural group and the political unit. Gellner’s modernist approach to nationalism is also a constructivist one, which depicts present-day nations not as naturally occurring, but as intentionally constructed social units, moulded by processes in the organization of polities as well as economic activities which have evolved over time. Typically, the borders of the cultural unit is made to fit those of the political unit to ensure effective interactions within society.

97 Connor, Ethnonationalism, 96.
98 Hearn, Rethinking Nationalism, 38.
101 Özkırımlı, Theories of Nationalism, 72.
Nevertheless, cultural homogeneity has to be complemented by a self-awareness through which people declare their belonging to a nation. Walker Connor argues that a nation is ‘self-defined’, suggesting that cultural homogeneity is not always necessary if there is a shared sense of belonging among its members. This understanding of the nation enables the existence of culturally plural nations, provided that the members of the nation recognise themselves as such, effectively creating a narrative of a shared sense of belonging.

The modernist approach to nationalism does not dismiss the idea that the sense of belonging to groups within a common territory have existed much longer than the modern nation-state; however, this sense of belonging is not similar to ‘nationalist sentiments’. Furthermore, such past groups would be largely different to present-day nations in terms of size, spatial distribution, or intragroup interactions. Jonathan Hearn argues that the assumption that members of present-day nations feel attached to each other as they would in a smaller social group overestimates the human capacity of empathy. Hearn particularly highlights that people do not act towards strangers the same way they would towards family and close friends. Similarly, Hopf argues that social groups in the past would have developed and construed themselves according to their own context, unlike the prevalent understanding of nations and states existing in the present.

The modernist approach to nationalism has, however, received some criticism for being too utilitarian and for failing to explain ‘the passions generated by nationalism’. For example, Gellner argues that nations are born out of the necessities of social organization in response to the demands of modernity, such as for the enhancement of industrial productivity. While Gellner’s argument is not entirely incorrect, it does not address the historical significance of ethnic ties and their influence on the present.

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102 Connor, Ethnonationalism, 18.
104 Özkirimli, Theories of Nationalism, 194.
105 Hearn, Rethinking Nationalism, 49.
106 Hopf, Social Construction of International Politics, 3.
107 Özkirimli, Theories of Nationalism, 194.
108 Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 54-55.
109 Özkirimli, Theories of Nationalism, 122-23.
The ethnosymbolist approach to nationalism creates a bridge between the ethnic groups of the past and modern-day nations. Proponents of this approach argue that past ethnic groups can be predecessors to nations; however, nations are still a modern-day phenomenon. Under this assumption, national identity stems from a combination of the recognition of shared commonalities and a sense of belonging between members of the same group. Therefore, nations are shaped by long-standing, relatively unaltered social groupings even if the structure of those groups have evolved over time. Smith argues that the combination of a shared heritage of homeland, history and culture in a nation in the modernist sense can create a sense of solidarity among its members. In other words, the emotional bond between individuals and the nation is constructed based on a pre-existing heritage.

The nation and the national identity thus posses an inter-subjectivity which requires the same narrative of the nation to be spread widely and effectively among a large number of people most of whom never actually interact or meet with each other. In this regard, Benedict Anderson argues that the existence of print media has propelled the dissemination of the national identity, allowing people across large geographical areas to share common information and thus common understandings of the social world. This process of constructing a national identity is called ‘imagining’ by Anderson, who thus describes nations as ‘imagined political communities’.

The role of mass communication in disseminating national identity implies the necessity of a shared language within the population. Thus, the existence of mass media has to be complemented by the spread of a national language, for instance, through a state-wide education system. However, a common language is not only a means for communication, but also a way of expressing people’s identity and a marker of ‘cultural membership’. People who use a national language are thus, in effect, declaring their cultural membership to the nation. Johann G. Herder views language as the means for

111 Özkırımlı, Contemporary Debates on Nationalism, 35.
113 Anderson, Imagined Communities, 43-46.
114 Ibid., 7.
115 Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 54-55.
shaping human consciousness and transmitting cultural values.\textsuperscript{117} Taylor similarly argues that the transfer of language abilities takes place together with the transfer of implicit values.\textsuperscript{118} Meanwhile, Tajfel views ‘linguistic distinctiveness’ as one of the most important factors in creating a national identity.\textsuperscript{119}

The dissemination of national identity through mass media and the education system in conjunction with a standardised national language imply a top-down approach to nation-building, with elites defining the ideal national identity. However, in the elite’s attempt to define national identity, the plurality within the population can become neglected.\textsuperscript{120} There may be discrepancies between the vision of elites and the complexity of identities among the people. Hopf argues that a bottom-up approach to nation-building is better because national identity is found at the ‘level of domestic society’.\textsuperscript{121} Smith similarly describes the bottom-up approach to nation-building as a process of rediscovery and repossessions of a people’s communal history.\textsuperscript{122} Fanon argues that nationalism takes place when a previously colonised people collectively rejects the suggestion of their inferiority and pushes back against their colonisers.\textsuperscript{123} Karl Deutsch views nationalism as the alignment of the people towards ‘regional centres’ and ‘leading social groups’ through communication and economic interaction.\textsuperscript{124} The Marxist approach to nationalism views the civil society, particularly the middle class, as key agents who utilise nationalism to achieve social cohesion in facing uneven development.\textsuperscript{125} Michael Hechter, meanwhile, argues that nationalism is in essence a separatist movement; a response of minority groups to economic disparities or injustice inflicted upon them by a majority group.\textsuperscript{126} Thus, nationalism can also manifest as separatism.

These conflicting views show that nationalism involves both top-down and bottom-up processes. For example, Tom Nairn argues that nationalism is a means for

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\textsuperscript{118} Taylor, “Lichtung or Lebensform: Parallels between Heidegger and Wittgenstein,” 74-75.
\textsuperscript{120} Bhikhu C. Parekh, \textit{Rethinking Multiculturalism : Cultural Diversity and Political Theory}, 2nd ed. (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 231.
\textsuperscript{121} Hopf, \textit{Social Construction of International Politics}, xiv.
\textsuperscript{122} Smith, \textit{Nationalism in the Twentieth Century}, 95.
\textsuperscript{123} Fanon, \textit{The Wretched of the Earth}, 223.
\textsuperscript{125} Hobsbawm, “The Nation as Invented Tradition,” 77-78.
\textsuperscript{126} Hechter, \textit{Containing Nationalism}, 145-46.
underdeveloped peripheries to motivate mass mobilisation; at the same time, nationalism serves as a means for the political centre to subordinate peripheries. As such, nationalism is not a static phenomenon, and its manifestation depends on the particular context of each state.

In the context of culturally plural states, the process of nation-building faces the challenges of diversity in defining their national identity. Culturally plural states are therefore more likely to undergo a top-down nation-building process, under the direction of elites who have a concrete vision for the state and its narrative. However, the centralistic approach to diversity tends to sweep difference under the rug and discount the salience of identities. In turn, this situation can lead to the repression of identities and breed discontent among groups in the population whose identities are not recognised or accommodated. By contrast, a democratic environment can be more conducive for the accommodation of diverse identities, as diverse groups are allowed to express their aspirations. However, opinions are divided over the relationship between democracy and diversity. For instance, the room provided by democracy for dissent and political contestations enables potential conflict and disintegration within the nation, as particular identities strive for their own ‘nation-state’. Democracy can also provide a platform for undemocratic groups to gather popular support, which in turn may constitute a threat to the expression of diverse identities. John Gerring et al. argue that different types of diversity have different effects on democracy, suggesting that religious diversity constitutes a greater challenge to democracy compared to ethnic diversity. Therefore, states should tailor their approach to diversity according to the specific situation at hand.

While nationalist movements in post-colonial states have been somewhat problematic, there are benefits to having a stable national identity within internally diverse countries. For instance, an established nation allows political stability, which in turn supports, among other things, industrial productivity and economic development.

132 Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 54-55.
By contrast, continued nationalist/secessionist movements may cause violent conflicts which impede people’s welfare. Therefore, it is important for existing states to establish an adequate balance between the maintenance of a stable national identity and the accommodation of various identities within the state.

2.3 Multiculturalism

The recognition and accommodation of various identities within the state are issues central to multiculturalism. In essence, multiculturalism deals with ‘culturally derived differences’ that stem from communal religious and/or ethnic identities, as well as the implication of the value connotations attached to those differences. While ‘cultural plurality’ or ‘cultural diversity’ are descriptive words for the given condition within a population, ‘multiculturalism’ itself holds a normative position. A state can be culturally plural but not multiculturalist depending on the extent to which it provides collective rights for its various national minorities or ethnic groups. An internally diverse state may well have an assimilationist as opposed to a multicultural approach to its national identity.

Multiculturalism can thus be understood in two ways. First, multiculturalism is the normative view that societies benefit from the recognition and accommodation of cultural diversity and the ‘proper terms of relationship between different cultural communities. Second, multiculturalism refers to the varying policies made by states in recognising their internal cultural diversity. In this regard, multiculturalism shifts away from the traditional assumptions of homogeneity within nations and states. Instead, it supports ways of ‘pluralising the state without undermining its unity and the ability to act decisively in the collective interest’. In summary, multiculturalism supports the recognition and accommodation of cultural diversity within states, believing that diversity does not threaten the integrity of the state and has beneficial effects on the state.

It has already been established that all social groups, including states, experience varying degrees of internal diversity. Despite this inherent diversity, states still require their population to have a national identity which constitutes the emotive bond required between the two. Therefore, culturally diverse states are tasked with creating a

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133 Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism*, 2-6.
134 Ibid., 13.
135 Ibid., 193-95.
136 Ibid., 219.
coherent narrative for their population which enables a shared national identity in spite of the present diversity. These states are also tasked with managing the collective rights of all their citizens, with potentially conflicting demands from different cultural groups, in a ‘stable and morally defensible’ way.\(^{137}\)

A state’s interpretation of its national identity and the implementation of identity-related policies can shed light on its stance towards cultural diversity. Ideally, the provision of collective rights pertaining to ethnic, cultural or religious identities should be the result of the state’s recognition of the salience of these identities for the population. In this case, the primary goal of multiculturalist policies is the recognition of identities. However, states may also choose to provide different collective rights to their various cultural groups to further the states’ own agenda, such as the maintenance of the states’ own integrity by ensuring the allegiance of various cultural groups. In practice, there can be a synthesis between these two positions, as states provide recognition and accommodation towards selected cultural groups which are considered to be particularly important for the states’ narrative of national identity.

Differing philosophical approaches also result in different kinds of multiculturalism. For instance, one liberal approach to multiculturalism considers differences between individuals as the primary basis for diversity. This approach emphasises the ‘de-politicisation’ of differences and toleration of diversity.\(^{138}\) This approach to multiculturalism further emphasises the agency of the individual in making identity-related choices; cultural groups exist but they are not particularly salient. This approach views that states should not facilitate the limitations imposed upon individuals by cultural groups; instead, states should enable the people’s emancipation from their cultural constraints.\(^ {139}\) This approach to multiculturalism, however, tends to hold an implicit moral monism, claiming that its values are universally applicable to all citizens of a state and endorsing one particular ‘good’ way of life which is usually that of the majority cultural group.\(^ {140}\) This universalist assumption leads towards the granting of

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\(^{140}\) Parekh, *Rethinking Multiculturalism*, 365.
similar rights to all people, irrespective of cultural diversity.\textsuperscript{141} However, the attempt to impose one value system upon everyone, albeit a liberal one, tends to neglect the rights of minority cultural groups, and in so doing can be intolerant and oppressive.\textsuperscript{142} For example, strict secularism in France does not allow the display of religion within state schools. This regulation creates a challenge for Muslim girls who consider it important to wear a headscarf.\textsuperscript{143} This liberal approach to multiculturalism, which prescribes for minority cultural groups to conform to the majority, does not consider this prescription as a significant deprivation of rights. Hence, this approach is also more ‘likely to provoke resistance’, particularly on the part of minority groups who feel deprived of their salient cultural practices.\textsuperscript{144}

Meanwhile, the multicultural approach views cultural groups as the most salient source of identity; people’s identities are rooted in cultural groups. Cultural membership is seen as something inherent in a person, and hence cannot be taken away from a person without causing significant discontent.\textsuperscript{145} Within this perspective, cultural groups have to be allowed to exercise their cultural traditions, and states are expected to recognise and accommodate group differences.\textsuperscript{146} This approach argues that different cultural groups can coexist in a functioning state while maintaining salient aspects of their particular identities; these groups only need to share the fundamental tenets of the state.\textsuperscript{147} Furthermore, minority groups are supposed to be given affirmative action to provide them with equal opportunities with the majority. Minority groups can be given protection from the ‘economic or political decisions of the majority’ through adequate political representation or the ability to veto decisions which may discriminate against them.\textsuperscript{148} Differential treatment, as opposed to identical treatment, is necessary to avoid superfluous discrimination or privilege between cultural groups.\textsuperscript{149}

While the equal recognition and accommodation of identities for all cultural groups is ideal in theory, in practice, multiculturalism faces challenges in trying to be

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{141} Ibid., 239-40.
\item \textsuperscript{142} Ibid., 170-71.
\item \textsuperscript{143} Kymlicka, \textit{Multicultural Citizenship}, 107-08.
\item \textsuperscript{144} Parekh, \textit{Rethinking Multiculturalism}, 197.
\item \textsuperscript{145} Dusche, “Radical Multiculturalism Versus Liberal Pluralism,” 247-48.
\item \textsuperscript{146} Verkuyten, “Multiculturalism and Tolerance: An Intergroup Perspective,” 147.
\item \textsuperscript{147} Kymlicka, \textit{Politics in the Vernacular}, 60-61.
\item \textsuperscript{148} \textit{Multicultural Citizenship}, 126.
\item \textsuperscript{149} Parekh, \textit{Rethinking Multiculturalism}, 242.
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thoroughly equitable. It is challenging to reconcile different value systems within one coherent overarching system, especially when some value systems fundamentally contradict each other, such as faith-based ideologies and strictly secular ones. The full accommodation of both value systems can lead to a dysfunctional state where cultural groups exist parallel to, but separate from, each other.

In this regard, multiculturalism faces some criticism, such as for allegedly being incompatible with principles of liberalism and democracy, because it constrains individual liberties within group norms and encourages disparities and conflict between groups. However, Will Kymlicka argues that it is possible to reconcile the accommodation of group rights with the maintainance of an overall national cohesion under the tenets of liberalism. Furthermore, multiculturalism is possible when the people’s attachment to particular cultures do not become so overbearing that it impedes their attachment to the state.

Multiculturalism is also accused of undermining women’s rights, as it enables cultural practices that can be considered detrimental towards women, such as traditions of veiling or conventional gender expectations that restrict women’s activities. Multicultural is thus said to enable varying gender expectations, some of which include oppressive gender and sexual norms. However, this criticism has in turn been accused of harbouring a sense of cultural superiority and racist sentiments against minority cultures without having any real concern for women’s rights.

In consideration of the expectations and limitations of multiculturalism, balance is required between the quest for a coherent state and society and the quest for the accommodation of various cultural groups. The central challenge for a culturally diverse and multicultural state is thus the establishment of a composite common culture aiming for the equitable treatment of all cultural groups. This challenge entails reflections on unconscious cultural bias, as policies contain implicit unequal power relations between

151 Kymlicka, Politics in the Vernacular, 60-61.
153 Gender and Culture, Gender & Culture (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 16.
155 Phillips, Gender and Culture, 28-30.
156 Parekh, Rethinking Multiculturalism, 222.
majority and minority groups which could be exacerbated if minority groups do not have equal access to the law-making process within the state. Policies and legislations are more likely to contain the biases and prejudice of the elites and/or the majority, which in turn can cause significant discontent among minority cultural groups. Therefore, the culturally plural state has to be considerate of various cultural groups within it.

At the same time, various ethnic and cultural groups co-exist and compromise within the structure of a state ‘in favour of superficial cohesion and networking processes’.\textsuperscript{157} To establish a coherent governance, the state has to set limits to the values that can be accepted and tolerated within it.\textsuperscript{158} Here, toleration is defined as ‘a deliberate choice not to interfere with conduct of which one disapproves’.\textsuperscript{159} In the case of toleration, the state acknowledges the existence of some cultural groups and value systems, but do not provide complete accommodation for them. Toleration can be limited, particularly when discrepancies between value systems become too disruptive for the coherence of the state and society.\textsuperscript{160} As an implication of the limitations of toleration, the practices of particular cultural groups and value systems are formally restricted to better enable more acceptable ones.

Multiculturalism is thus a balancing act between laying out the foundations of the state and the day-to-day implementation of multiculturalist policies. In other words, multiculturalist states seek to transcend communal differences within its population without imposing uniformity, while recognising the need for coherence. Parekh argues that the first step towards this transcendence is the attainment of ‘emotional sympathy’ among different cultural groups through a consciousness of history.\textsuperscript{161} In other words, there needs to be a common narrative which enables the relationship among cultural groups, as well as the relationship between various cultural groups and the state. A narrative which emphasises similarities among a diverse population is conducive for a multicultural state, particularly when diversity is presented as a strength. This narrative

\textsuperscript{157} Braedel-Kühner and Müller, “Introduction: Re-Thinking Diversity from a Cultural Science Perspective,” 11.
\textsuperscript{158} Annamari Vitikainen, \textit{The Limits of Liberal Multiculturalism : Towards an Individuated Approach to Cultural Diversity} (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 69.
\textsuperscript{161} Parekh, \textit{Rethinking Multiculturalism}, 51.
may appeal to abstract civic values which can be shared more easily among various cultural groups. The narrative of a diverse but united nation can be spread among the population through the contents of mass media as well as the education system. For example, school subjects such as citizenship and history show the worldview that students are expected to have. These subjects further disseminate the state’s desired understanding of national identity and narrative of diversity. Furthermore, the state can disseminate its narrative of national unity through the dissemination of a national language which ensures effective communication among the population.162

The state’s chosen narrative further determines the nature of the relationship between majority and minority cultural groups. Different types of minority groups can be given different types of treatment by the state, depending on how they are perceived within the state. In this regard, Kymlicka differentiates between what he calls multi-national and poly-ethnic states.163 Multi-national states are defined as states in which smaller cultural groups become ‘national minorities’. Multi-national states can be the result of invasions, where a cultural group’s homeland is, for instance, colonised by settlers. Multi-national states can also be the result of the mutual agreement between different cultural groups to live together within one state.164 Meanwhile, poly-ethnic states are defined as those with a number of ‘ethnic’ or cultural groups which have immigrated into them without any particular delineated territory for themselves.165 As an example, the United States of America is both multi-national (due to the existence of Native-Americans and pre-independence settlers) and poly-ethnic (due to various post-independence immigrant ethnic communities).166

The distinction between ‘national minorities’ and ‘ethnic groups’ is useful, but is not always applicable in practice. For instance, historically, Indonesia better befits the description of Kymlicka’s multi-national state, as various cultural groups declared themselves as part of the same nation. However, in the Indonesian context, the term ‘ethnic group’ is more commonly used for all types of cultural groups, including the majority cultural groups. Furthermore, the majority ethno-regional group in Indonesia, the Javanese, are not settlers, as is the case in Kymlicka’s example of settlers in the USA.

162 Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 33.
163 Kymlicka, Multicultural Citizenship, 10.
164 Ibid., 11.
165 Ibid., 17.
166 Ibid., 22.
Kymlicka’s use of ‘national minorities’ fits better in describing what are known as ‘traditional societies’ or ‘indigenous peoples’ in Indonesia, which are smaller ethno-cultural groups that continue to live traditionally. Meanwhile, Kymlicka’s term of ‘ethnic groups’ is more suitable for cultural groups such as Chinese-Indonesians which have settled prior to Indonesia’s political independence, yet are regarded as newcomers and have no particular territory in which they constitute the local majority. Despite this prevalent narrative of Chinese-Indonesians as ‘foreign’, in the Indonesian context, they are also often described with the term ‘suku bangsa’ (sub-nation) just as any other ethno-regional groups in the country.

The distinction between different types of cultural groups within states implies different approaches to the accommodation of their cultural rights. The understanding of the roles of various cultural groups is part of the narrative of a state and nation. For example, multi-national states are more likely to grant ‘self-government rights’ to distinct cultural groups within delineated territories, which among other things, can be achieved by federalism or regional autonomy. A multi-national state can also utilise ‘intermediate levels of government’ on the ‘principle of subsidiarity’.167 Kymlicka provides Quebec as an example for a federate state with extensive cultural rights in Canada which predominantly uses French as its official language, with both English and French having official federal status throughout the country.168 Meanwhile, poly-ethnic states can accommodate the cultural rights of their ethnic minorities by providing the latter with exemptions from regulations that can disadvantage them, for example by allowing Sikh men in Canada to wear their turban in place of other head coverings, such as hats which are part of the local police uniform.169 Multi-national and poly-ethnic states can similarly accommodate the rights of minorities by providing them with rights to political representation, even though these rights are rarely extended to recent immigrants.170

In consideration of the varying approaches to multiculturalism, I am proposing three dimensions of multiculturalism that can be examined within a state. Firstly, multiculturalism can be measured based on its historical context, particularly the spirit in which elites have laid out the foundations for multiculturalism. There is always a political dimension to culture and cultural change, and the re-invention of traditions and ideals by

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169 Ibid., 30-31.
170 Ibid., 31-33.
elites reflect the interest and significance attached to such traditions.\footnote{Paul R. Brass, “Elite Competition and Nation-Formation,” in \textit{Nationalism}, ed. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 83-89.} Hence, the intentions of elites in designing the framework for multiculturalism must be taken into account. For example, a multi-national state can be multiculturalist if, from the outset, this state has the intention of creating differentiated rights for national minorities. In contrast, multiculturalist policies can be seen as an afterthought, as a way of dealing with later additions to the population or sporadically managing challenges of diversity as they come. It is also possible that elites allow the recognition of minority rights to create a narrative that serves their own interests in building or maintaining existing power structures.\footnote{Avigail Eisenberg and Will Kymlicka, “Bringing Institutions Back In,” in \textit{Identity Politics in the Public Realm: Bringing Institutions Back In}, ed. Avigail Eisenberg and Will Kymlicka (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 3.} By analysing the context of a culturally plural nation, one can examine whether the accommodation of particular group rights are established in the spirit of celebrating diversity or as concessions to inhibit or minimise discontent on the part of minorities.

Secondly, multiculturalism can be examined through the extent of legal pluralism in a state. Ideally, legal pluralism should allow all cultural groups, including minorities, to define and pursue their conception of the good life.\footnote{Will Kymlicka, \textit{Liberalism, Community, and Culture} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 199-200.} For example, countries such as Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia accommodate the practices of multiple religions through the celebration of their holidays as national public holidays.\footnote{Robert W. Hefner, \textit{The Politics of Multiculturalism : Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia}, ed. Robert W. Hefner, Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001).} To begin with, legal pluralism can be examined through the range of policies and legislation which actually involve the recognition of particular group rights. One can further examine whether differentiated group rights only constitutes a jargon or are actually implemented through tangible laws and regulations. Then, one can examine whether legal pluralism is present in a wide range of sectors, including sectors that are not directly associated with identity, such as the relationship between laws on forestry and indigenous rights. In addition, one can examine to what extent a state’s policies and institutions address the issue of diversity and multiculturalism. For example, policies dealing with diversity may...
provide tokenistic rights to minority groups without addressing deeper social problems that can be the result of longstanding discrimination towards minorities.

Legal pluralism can be further examined through the range of particular groups who get to experience the recognition and accommodation of their group rights, such as which cultural groups have their particular identities recognised and accommodated. Some states only recognise and accommodate cultural groups that are large enough or have significant political leverage, but not smaller minority groups. A state can be considered more multiculturalist when smaller groups in the population that have little political leverage are provided with adequate group rights. Then, legal pluralism can be examined through how it enables interaction between different cultural groups. A state can, for example, establish differentiated rights for different cultural groups in its population but practice segregationist policies or establish ranks between different cultural groups to the disadvantage of those with lesser political leverage. Along similar lines, legal pluralism can be examined through the extent of its facilitation of the perpetuation of group differences and the hardening of identities.

Thirdly, multiculturalism can be examined through the way cultural groups perceive themselves and each other within a state’s population or, indeed, within a nation. Certain cultural groups may view themselves as more valuable than others, producing an implicit hierarchy between different cultural groups. Furthermore, there can be residues of past conflicts and grievances that must be overcome in order to establish trust between groups. While various cultural groups can co-exist within a state with minimum interaction and trust among themselves, a state is more multiculturalist when there are sustained meaningful and positive interactions between its various cultural groups. These interactions between cultural groups can be governed by existing laws and regulations of the state, but they also have a private aspect to them. In turn, the established practices in the interactions between various cultural groups can become the source of public regulations.

The ways through which multiculturalism can be measured provide an insight into the limitations of multiculturalism. For instance, it is challenging to create inclusive foundations for a state and to determine which core values should be adopted. It is equally

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175 Kymlicka, Politics in the Vernacular, 125-26.
176 Ibid., 56-57.
177 Parekh, Rethinking Multiculturalism, 268-70.
challenging to define which groups of people make up national minorities or ethnic groups, and even more challenging to determine whether significant internal variations within those groups should be accorded their own group status. Furthermore, there is the challenge to determine which particular norms and values are salient enough to warrant their legal recognition and accommodation by the state. All these decisions involve judgement on which values are considered good and salient; in most cases, a group of elites makes these decisions, with the possibility that the perceptions and concerns of minority groups are not sufficiently taken into consideration.

2.4 Conclusion

If the nation is broadly understood as a large group of people with sufficient similarities to provide them with a common identity who vie for their own state, while multiculturalism is understood as a quest for the recognition of particular cultural groups within a heterogeneous society, a ‘multicultural nation’ can be an oxymoron. At the same time, theories of identity indicate that there is always internal diversity or variations within social groups, including nations and states. The vast majority of present-day states do not constitute traditional ‘nation-states’; instead, states are internally diverse to varying degrees and face the challenge of maintaining their unity and salient commonalities among their citizens.

Some states like Indonesia are more diverse than others, which makes the balancing between unity and diversity more challenging. The recognition and accommodation of particular identities should prevent discontent associated with the misrecognition of identities. The recognition and accommodation of identities in the public discourse can reaffirm the membership of particular groups in the nation and ensure their continued loyalty to it. However, to have a coherent state, all citizens must also share some common values. In addition, the culturally plural state has to build a narrative in which its various cultural groups can find themselves represented adequately.

One possibility would be for states to promote a narrative on national identity with a strong emphasis on civic elements of identity, which can be shared more easily among people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds. According to theories of civic nationalism, people can ‘shed’ particular identities related to ethnicity and religion and instead adopt a civic identity. However, since people are socially embedded, a
complete shedding of cultural identity would be difficult, if not impossible. The extent to which people can ‘shed’ particular aspects of their identity would depend on how salient those aspects are to them. The way particular aspects of identity are socialised, understood and experienced by the people affect the former’s centrality for the people.

Therefore, a narrative which solely promotes civic elements of identity but ignores the salience of cultural and ethnic elements of identities is more likely to encounter resistance. In contrast, particular cultural identities that are considered less salient could be left out of the narrative of national identity with less consequence. A simplified narrative of national identity could aid its promotion among the population, but such simplification often takes place to the detriment of minority groups left out of the narrative. Instead, in the face of a high internal diversity, the perceived threat from a common other can be easier to construct in the narrative of national identity in order to boost internal cohesion within the nation and state. For example, a shared history of colonialism can be a cultural dimension shared by an otherwise diverse population, creating both a common enemy and a common purpose of joint self-determination.

Once political elites have decided upon a narrative for their country’s national identity, they may still have to adjust the narrative according to the country’s dynamic internal and external conditions. Adjustments to the narrative of national identity may be necessary to ensure its preservation in the long run. Hence, alterations to previously established narratives are possible. The nation and its national identity, particularly in culturally diverse ones, need to be actively reasserted and reproduced over time. Elites play an important role in this reproduction of identity, having the resources and opportunity to set the public agenda and influence public opinion. Elites affect the reproduction and dissemination of nationalist symbols and actions among the wider population. The choice of the kind of identity to be portrayed, ultimately, may hold the deciding role in ensuring the unity and durability of a culturally plural nation. Furthermore, across different periods, elites may choose to employ varying degrees of multiculturalism; in a country’s history, there may be periods when the state takes on a more assimilationist stance on diversity and periods when the state is more multiculturalist.

In the end, the management of a culturally plural society is a balancing act between national unity and uniformity and the celebration of particular identities. I propose three dimensions through which a state’s multiculturalism can be measured: the
historical context of the state’s foundations for multiculturalism; the extent of legal pluralism in the state; and the way cultural groups relate to each other. Bearing in mind the uniqueness of each state in terms of history and demographic makeup, there is no single solution to determine how a balance between unity and diversity can be achieved. Instead, one has to look into the factors that are of particular salience for each state and develop a distinct approach. For any particular state, the emphasis may be on the civic, ethnic or cultural dimension of identity, or a combination of them. In order to identify which dimensions of identity are of particular salience, one has to examine the historical and constitutional framework of the state, as well as the perception and understanding of identity on the part of the country’s population.
3 The Challenge of Identity Making, Nation Building and Cultural Pluralism in Indonesia

This chapter introduces significant periods in Indonesia’s history through existing literature on identity making, nation-building and multiculturalism in the country: the period of National Awakening, the years around Indonesia’s declaration of independence, and the New Order period. This chapter thus serves as the historical framework for this research. By highlighting the distinguishing features of the chosen historical periods, this chapter argues that nation-building in Indonesia has been a predominantly top-down process, as elites faced the challenges of diversity in realising their vision of Indonesia’s national identity. Furthermore, while elites have adopted varying approaches to cultural diversity and national identity, the narrative of Unity in Diversity and the Pancasila have persisted throughout different periods with varying interpretations of it.

Section one examines the period known as Kebangkitan Nasional (national awakening) in the early 20th century. In this period, youth groups started to organise themselves around the idea of an Indonesian nation which was shaped both against and by colonialism. Elites leading the nationalist movement construed colonising powers as a common other to be overcome together; at the same time, elites’ understanding of identity and nationalism was significantly influenced by Western political thinking. Furthermore, the organisation of political organisations along ethno-regional and religious lines laid out the framework for Indonesia’s cultural diversity.

Section two discusses the period around the inception of the Indonesian state in 1945, including the early years of Soekarno’s1 presidency up to the early 1950s. This period is known for debates between secular nationalist leaders and political Islamists as well as Soekarno’s syncretic approach to national identity. This period displayed the

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1 Soekarno (1901-1970) was the proclamator of Indonesia’s independence in 1945 and Indonesia’s first President. He was born the son of a school teacher. Soekarno studied in Surabaya, East Java, and later on in the Technical College in Bandung (presently Institut Teknologi Bandung) where he co-founded an overtly political study group which which later would become Partai Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Party/PNI). During his studies, Soekarno met many other early political leaders of Indonesia. He joined the youth group Jong Java in 1918 and began to express his nationalist views publicly. He was arrested by the Dutch for his nationalist activities in 1929 and sent into exile to Flores and Bengkulu. Soekarno was released during the Japanese occupation of Indonesia and resumed his political activities. B. B. Hering, Soekarno : Founding Father of Indonesia, 1901-1945 (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002).
range of possibilities available for identity making and managing a culturally plural state in its embryonic stage through Soekarno’s attempt to reconcile the interests of various political and social movements across the archipelago.

Section three examines President Suharto’s² authoritarian and assimilationist approach towards nation-building the New Order era (1966-1998). In this period, Indonesia’s cultural diversity was treated as a national asset; however, the government was heavily centralised, leaving little room for the expression of ethno-regional identities. Furthermore, Suharto repressed political competition with his regime, including that of political Islam. At the same time, colonialism continued to shape Indonesia’s nation-building, as the government aspired to cement the image of a modern nation on a par with developed Western nations. This focus on urbanisation and modernising the nation put the expression of ethno-regional identities in the backseat of Indonesia’s cultural diversity as they were associated with backwardness.

Section four provides a brief introduction to the post-1998 era of reform and democratisation in Indonesia, particularly highlighting the transition from the New Order and the succession of presidencies since 1998. It sets the stage for Chapter Four, which examines in more detail Indonesia’s current framework for diversity.

### 3.1 The ‘National Awakening’

In the 1920s, ‘Indonesia’ used to be known as the Dutch East Indies, a cluster of more than thirteen thousand islands spanning the territory of present-day Indonesia. The word ‘Indonesia’ itself was originally coined by an English naturalist to ‘classify the distinctive ethnic and geographical identity of the archipelago’.³ Its first usage in the political sense was found in a journal called Hindia Poetra (Sons of the Indies) in April 1917 in the Netherlands.⁴ In its political organisation, the Dutch East Indies was a hybrid of a private

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² Suharto (1921-2008) was Indonesia’s second president. Suharto received military training both under the Dutch and Japanese occupation of Indonesia. He held the rank of brigadier-general when he rose to power following an attempted military coup in 1965. Suharto was officially inaugurated as acting-president in 1968 and held the position until 1998. Suharto resigned from his presidency following allegations of corruption and increased political pressure. Elson, *Suharto*.
There was a network laid down by the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (United East Indies Company/VOC) which enabled regular interaction between the different islands across the archipelago. Parts of the Dutch East Indies’ territory were overseen by the Dutch Crown. Meanwhile, governance on the local scale was overseen by a Dutch governor-general, with regents and middle- to low-ranking officials who were typically appointed from local aristocratic families.  

The 1920s is known as the era of Kebangkitan Nasional (National Awakening), marked by ‘the emergence of novel ideas of organisation and […] more sophisticated definitions of identity’ related to developments in the ‘religious, social, political and economic environment’ of Indonesia. Literature on this period in Indonesia’s history commonly focuses on the existence of a common enemy which served as a force of cohesion for various ethno-regional groups in the Dutch East Indies. For instance, R.E. Elson argues that during the Indonesian struggle for independence, various ethnic groups were willing to subjugate their regional identity for a newly created Indonesian nation to overcome a common enemy. Benedict Anderson similarly argues that the common plight of colonialism shaped the Indonesian national identity for people who were otherwise scattered across thousands of islands. The subordination of ethno-regional identities to the Indonesian national identity was considered a necessity to have enough combined leverage against colonial powers. At the same time, the common denominator of ‘the Dutch East Indies’ helped develop the idea of the archipelago as one single entity.

The Indonesian national awakening culminated in two Youth Congresses in 1926 and 1928 which were attended by various youth groups organising along ethno-regional or religious lines. The 1928 Youth Congress resulted in the Sumpah Pemuda (Youth Pledge) which contained a joint declaration of a common homeland, nation and language. The most well-known and most recited part of the Youth Pledge consists of the following three sentences:

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5 Steven Drakeley, The History of Indonesia (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2005), 34.
6 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 156-60.
7 Ibid., 163.
8 Elson, “Constructing the Nation.”
9 Anderson, Imagined Communities, 121.
Firstly, we, the sons and daughters of Indonesia, acknowledge one homeland: the homeland of Indonesia. Secondly, we, the sons and daughters of Indonesia, acknowledge one nation: the nation of Indonesia. Thirdly, we, the sons and daughters of Indonesia, uphold the language of unity: Bahasa Indonesia.\textsuperscript{11}

The notion of homeland and nation, in combination with the term ‘sons and daughters’, indicates the construction of an ethnic attachment in the Youth Pledge. The adoption of a ‘language of unity’ indicated a cultural element within the commonly civic modernist approach to nationalism.\textsuperscript{12} In addition, the 1928 Youth Congress witnessed the first public performance of the song ‘Indonesia Raya’ which would later become Indonesia’s national anthem.\textsuperscript{13} Similar to the Youth Pledge, the lyrics of the song include terms such as homeland and nation, as well as references to a figurative mother.\textsuperscript{14}

Following the Youth Pledge, political leaders notably started to demand the usage of the term ‘Indonesian’ instead of the term ‘inlander’ (natives), thus declaring themselves part of a larger nation.\textsuperscript{15} This insistence on being recognised as ‘Indonesians’ showed that they considered themselves part of a distinct nation, displaying a self-awareness of their membership in the nation as described by scholars of ethno-symbolism such as Walker Connor.\textsuperscript{16}

The message contained in the Youth Pledge appealed to the people to put their Indonesian identity ahead of their ethno-regional or religious identities. However, the Youth Pledge was not accompanied by a detailed definition of what it meant to be Indonesian beyond the common desire for decolonisation. This situation reflects Ernest Gellner’s argument that ‘doctrinal elegance’ with a minimum of ‘frills’ works best to unite diverse people, as too many details may complicate the attainment of unity.\textsuperscript{17} However, the simplicity of the Youth Pledge signalled future challenges in managing the cultural diversity of Indonesia.

\textsuperscript{12}Anderson, Imagined Communities, 43-46.
\textsuperscript{13}Wisnu Mintargo, “Kontinuitas Dan Perubahan Makna Lagu Kebangsaan Indonesia Raya,” Jurnal Kawistara 2, no. 3 (2012): 310.
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15}Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 194.
\textsuperscript{16}Connor, Ethnonationalism, 18.
\textsuperscript{17}Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 80-81.
The Youth Congress’s decision to declare a national language was arguably the most tangible part of the Youth Pledge. For instance, despite similarities between the languages used in present-day Indonesia and Malaysia, Indonesian had started to be actively standardised on its own, and intellectuals stopped referring to the language as Malay. In 1925, there were around two hundred newspapers published in less standardised forms of Indonesian. By 1938, there were over four hundred publications in the language, and the language was becoming more standardised.

The growth of the Indonesian language was a top-down process, aided by the government-sponsored printing house Balai Pustaka (Office for Literature) which published Indonesian literature and also translated Western literature into Indonesian. The usage of printed media in the national language aided the spread of national consciousness, serving as Anderson’s ‘national print-languages’ which were ‘of central ideological and political importance’ for successful national movements. Furthermore, this ‘print capitalism’ gave a fixity to the language and created the impression of a long-standing nation. The dissemination of the Indonesian language reflected Gellner’s modernist argument that cultural homogeneity, including a standardised language, is required to ensure effective interaction within society to form a nation.

While the Indonesian language provided a method of communication that was distinct from Dutch, significant Dutch influence could be found in various dimensions of the development of nationalism in Indonesia. Literature on post-colonialism in Indonesia highlights the way colonisation has shaped nationalism in the country. Even though elites claimed to build a nation as a move against Western colonialism, their understanding of

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18 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 185.
19 Ibid.
20 Balai Pustaka was established in 1908 as the Commissie voor de Volkslectuur (Commission for Popular Literature). The name ‘Balai Pustaka’ was officially coined in 1917. At first, it served to disseminate select publications as a means of education for the Indonesian people with its publications of translations of popular Western literature. After the formal transfer of authority from the Dutch to Indonesia, Balai Pustaka became a state-owned publishing house.
21 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 186.
22 Anderson, Imagined Communities, 67. According to Anderson, Indonesia is the only known case of a large ex-colonial state in which a non-European language became the national language. Anderson attributes this both to the lack of confidence on the part of the Dutch of the significance of their language compared to English, French, German, Spanish or Italian, as well as to the relatively minuscule percentage of local elites allowed to attend Dutch education, as formal education was limited to the upper classes in society. Ibid., 110.
23 Ibid., 44.
24 Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 54-55.
nations was heavily influenced by Western political thinking, as a large majority of Indonesian elites were educated in the fashion of the colonial power.\textsuperscript{25} Therefore, while education was considered as a means towards political emancipation,\textsuperscript{26} it confined the development of political thinking to established practices.\textsuperscript{27} For example, Soekarno’s writings revealed significant influence from the likes of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Otto Bauer, Karl Kautsky, Jean Jaurès, Pieter Jelles Troelstra and Henriette Roland-Holst.\textsuperscript{28}

The influence of education in Indonesia’s nation-building was also apparent in the way mass organisations started as student organisations which later developed into political ones. For example, a student organisation called \textit{Budi Utomo} was established in Batavia (present-day Jakarta) on 20 May 1908. Its members were primarily university students of various disciplines, as well as students of various teacher-training, agriculture and veterinary schools around Batavia. By the end of 1909, \textit{Budi Utomo}’s membership had grown to ten thousand, even though its membership was mostly limited to local elites and intellectuals in Java and Madura.\textsuperscript{29} Other examples include the \textit{Indische Vereeniging} (Indies Association), which was established by students from the Dutch East Indies in the Netherlands in 1908, and the \textit{Indische Partij} (Indies Party), which was founded in 1911 on the basis of an ‘Indies’ nationalism.

The main ideologies in the early days of Indonesian politics, nationalism and communism, also spread through mass organisations. In 1914, the \textit{Indische Sociaal-Democratische Vereeniging} (Indies Social-Democratic Association/ISDV) was established.\textsuperscript{30} In 1924, the ISDV became \textit{Partai Komunis Indonesia} (Indonesian Communist Party/PKI) with the aim of establishing an independent communist state in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{31} Ideologically, the PKI shared the Marxist view on imperialism which views colonialism as the stripping away of the local population’s ownership of their means of

\textsuperscript{27} Ricklefs, \textit{A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300}, 164.
\textsuperscript{29} Ricklefs, \textit{A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300}, 165-64.
\textsuperscript{31} Ricklefs, \textit{A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300}, 174.
production for the benefit of colonisers. Meanwhile, nationalist political thought was spread by the *Indische Vereeniging* which changed its name into Indonesian in 1922. The organisation decided to call itself *Perhimpunan Indonesia* (Indonesian Association) as it became more active in the proliferation of nationalist ideas. In 1927, *Perhimpunan Indonesia* was transformed into *Partai Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesian National Party/PNI), a nationalist party which aimed for independence by ‘non-cooperative methods and mass organisation’ led by Soekarno. While PNI was not explicitly socialist, Soekarno’s leftist leanings still influenced its ideology.

At the same time, mass organisations developed along ethno-regional lines, including the *Sarekat Ambon* (1920) in Ambon, *Jong Java* (1918) in Central and East Java, *Pasundan* (1914) in West Java, *Sarekat Sumatra* (1918) in Sumatra, *Jong Minahasa* (1918) in North Celebes, *Timorsch Verbond* (1921) in Timor and *Kaum Betawi* (1923) in Batavia. Their members were typically young and educated local elites who either studied in the Netherlands or schools fashioned after the Dutch model, which again indicated that their political thinking was shaped by a Western-style education. The development of ethno-regional organisations reflected the continued salience of ethno-regional identities for the people in Indonesia.

In contrast to ethno-regional organisations, large religious organisations were able to establish networks that spanned larger areas of the archipelago. Muslim organisations, in particular, portrayed themselves as a resistance against Christian Dutch colonialists. For example, *Muhammadiyah* was established in 1912, focusing on the education and welfare of its members while resisting the Christianising efforts of Western missionaries. In 1917, *Muhammadiyah* established *Aisyiyah* as its women’s chapter, thereby explicitly including women into the proliferation of mass organisations. By 1938, *Muhammadiyah*’s membership had grown to over 250,000, indicating its significant impression on the local Muslim population. This growth showed the salience of religion and how religious identity was able to transcend ethno-regional differences among the people. *Muhammadiyah* then became more involved in politics, primarily seeking social

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32 Ibid., 184.
33 Ibid., 171-72, 84.
36 Ibid., 168.
37 Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia*, 58.
justice and the revitalisation of Islam in the archipelago. Religious mass organisations developed within other religious groups, as demonstrated by the Pakempalan Politik Katolik Jawi (Javanese Catholics Political Association), established in 1925.

Meanwhile, the development of Sarekat Islam, a large Islamic mass organisation, shed light on another conflict of identity. The organisation was initially set up as a trade cooperative among Muslim batik traders in 1909, called Sarekat Dagang Islamiyah (Islamic Commercial Union). It was established as a response to business competitions among local and Chinese batik traders across Java which caused sporadic outbursts of violence against the Chinese. In turn, the differentiation and othering between locals and ‘the Chinese’ was a by-product of the 1642 Bataviasche Statuten, a Dutch legal code which classified the Dutch East Indies population into Europeans, Inlanders (natives) and Vreemde Oosterlingen (Foreign Orientals), which included people of Chinese descent, even though some had settled in Indonesia for generations. The differentiation between ‘native’ Indonesians and Chinese-Indonesians remains salient to the present.

All these mass organisations show that the largest social movements were run on the platform of Islam, nationalism or communism. While all movements sought independence from colonial powers, they had different visions of the state that was to emerge out of the Dutch East Indies. To overcome their ideological differences, in 1926, Soekarno published a series of articles in which he argued that Islam, communism and nationalism had to unite in the cause of independence. For Soekarno, imperialism was the source of the oppression of the Indonesian people, regardless of their particular political convictions or class interests. To rally support from diverse groups, Soekarno portrayed imperialism as both an enemy of socialism as well as Islam. An independent state was the ultimate requirement for realising any vision of an ideal polity beyond

39 Lamoureux, Indonesia, 33.
40 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 168.
41 In 1912, Sarekat Dagang Islamiyah (Islamic Commercial Union) changed its name to Sarekat Islam (Islamic Union), abandoned its commercial nature and placed more emphasis on its Islamic identity as a contrast to the Dutch Christian colonialists. By 1919, Sarekat Islam had gained approximately five hundred thousand members and spread beyond Java to the outer islands of Indonesia. Ibid., 166-67.
42 Ibid., 167.
44 Paget, Indonesia Accuses!, 49-53.
colonialism. This syncretic approach was a trademark of Soekarno’s political thinking.

The reconciliation of different value systems is part of the challenge of cultural plurality. Despite Soekarno’s efforts to reconcile different ideologies, debates on the relationship between the state and religion, particularly Islam, remained a point of contention. For a short time in 1929, PNI, Sarekat Islam, Budi Utomo and various other organisations, including Chinese and Arabic communities across the archipelago, united under the banner of the *Permufakatan Perhimpunan-perhimpunan Politik Kebangsaan Indonesia* (Agreement of Indonesian People’s Political Association/PPPKI). Nationalists and minority organisations in PPPKI sought the formation of a secular state that was more inclusive toward its citizens. However, due to the perceived salience of Islam for Sarekat Islam, in a matter of months after PPPKI’s inception, Sarekat Islam withdrew from the organisation as it became increasingly dissatisfied with the idea of a secular country. This disagreement over the foundations of the would-be Indonesian state persisted through different eras in the country’s history.

Following this era of National Awakening, the Dutch colonial government entered its most repressive phase in retaliation to the nationalist movements. The colonial government disbanded nationalist organisations, detained their leaders and sent some into exile. In 1931, PNI was dissolved by the colonial government. In 1933, Soekarno was arrested and exiled from Batavia; many other political leaders of Indonesia met the same predicament. The resumption of their political activity would only take place significantly after the surrender of the Netherlands’ authority over Indonesia to Japan in 1942.

### 3.2 The Revolutionary Years

Literature on Indonesia’s so-called revolutionary years typically focuses on Soekarno’s syncretic attempts to formulate and propagate ‘Indonesian’ values vis-à-vis the various

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46 Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia*, 63.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid., 181.
51 Ibid., 195.
ideological strands in the country. At the same time, events leading up to 1945 were influenced by developments of World War II. On 7 December 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbour; the following day, the Dutch Governor General in Indonesia declared war on Japan. Following this war, in March 1942, Japan drove out the weakening Dutch forces from Indonesia.

Initially, Japan portrayed itself as the liberators of ‘fellow Asians’; thus, their fight against the Dutch forces was aided by the local population who initially welcomed the Japanese administration. As part of their effort to eliminate Western influence in Indonesia, the Japanese forces banned the use of Dutch and English. They renamed places and streets, including renaming Batavia as Jakarta, which would later become Indonesia’s capital city. This situation showed how the perception of a common other or enemy can result in the unity of otherwise different groups of people. However, resistance against Japan soon built up as its exploitation of local natural resources became apparent along with the institution of forced labour and internment camps.

In September 1944, as American forces started to capture Japanese bases around the Pacific, Japan promised that it would grant political independence to Indonesia. This promise was intended to gain favour from Indonesia’s nationalist leaders as well as to frustrate the Netherlands, should it decide to re-conquer its former colony. To this end, Japan funded speaking tours around Indonesia for Soekarno. In so doing, Japan aided the spread of the idea of the Indonesian nation across the archipelago in accordance with the modernist view that nations require the advancement of communication technology to disseminate a sense of belonging. In Indonesia’s pre-independence years, Soekarno’s speeches were often aired through the radio and broadcasted through loudspeakers in the centre of many villages across Indonesia.

In March 1945, Japan established the Investigating Committee for the Preparation of Indonesia’s Independence, which was tasked with preparing a constitution and an

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54 Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300*, 199.
57 Ibid., 85.
59 Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia*, 72.
independent government for Indonesia. The Japanese filled the Committee with members they thought would be more cooperative towards Japan, including Soekarno. The members of the Committee were predominantly of Javanese descent with varying political ideologies. It therefore displayed early signs of Java-centrism in Indonesian politics, which would persist to the end of the New Order in 1998, and continues to a lesser extent today.\textsuperscript{60}

Debates within this Committee reflected the challenge of reconciling different political and religious value systems in culturally plural societies, which in this case remained significant despite the existence of a common enemy. This situation suggests that a common other only functions as a unifying factor when it is more salient than the differences between the concerned social groups. In this case, various political factions in Indonesia still faced the common enemy of colonialism; however, their ideological political and religious differences could not be put aside entirely. Within the Committee, true to his secular nationalist background, Soekarno pushed for a religiously neutral Indonesian state by employing countries such as Egypt and Turkey as examples where ‘religion and the state were being separated in the name of modernity’.\textsuperscript{61} However, political Islamists continued to vie for a state based on Islamic law or, at least, a state with Islamic law in effect for the Muslim population.\textsuperscript{62}

Soekarno utilised civic values in his effort to reconcile various identities and political ideologies under the \textit{Pancasila} (Five Pillars). On 1 June 1945, Soekarno delivered a speech to the Committee, proposing the \textit{Pancasila} to be included in the constitution as the founding principles of Indonesia. The five principles consisted of nationalism, humanitarianism, social welfare, consensus through a representative government and belief in God.\textsuperscript{63} Soekarno explained his interpretation of the principles in inclusive and syncretic terms. For example, Soekarno linked traditions of consensus within Islam with local traditions of consensus in Indonesia. He further linked traditions of consensus with the idea of a representative democracy and an electoral system. He introduced the principle of ‘belief in God’ to portray the Indonesian people as a religious people regardless of their individual religion. In addition to the \textit{Pancasila}, Soekarno promoted the concept of \textit{gotong-royong} (mutual cooperation) as a prerequisite towards

\textsuperscript{60} Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, \textit{The Indonesia Reader}, 305.
\textsuperscript{61} Ricklefs, \textit{A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300}, 184.
\textsuperscript{62} Ramage, \textit{Politics in Indonesia}, 14-17.
\textsuperscript{63} Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, \textit{The Indonesia Reader}, 307.
successfully creating an independent Indonesian state, calling for cooperation ‘between
the rich and the poor, between the Muslim and the Christian, between non-Indonesians
and those of foreign descent who became Indonesians’. Hence, Soekarno tried to
construct a common civic identity which transcended religious and ethnic differences
and accommodated a remarkably diverse in-group.

Despite Soekarno’s efforts, Islamist leaders still demanded a more fundamental
role for Islam in Indonesia, as they considered religion to permeate every aspect of life,
including statesmanship and law. Theories on multiculturalism suggest that values which
are particularly salient for a significant part of the population should not be left without
adequate recognition; thus, a reconciliation was needed to bridge the demands of
Islamism and secular nationalism. A compromise was reached through the Jakarta
Charter on 22 June 1945. This charter amended the Pancasila and stated that the
Indonesian state would be based upon ‘belief in God, with the obligation for adherents
of Islam to carry out Islamic law’. In addition, the principle of ‘belief in God’ was
promoted from the last to the first place in the version of Pancasila that is adopted into
Indonesia’s constitution. Political Islamists initially sought to add the stipulation that
the President of Indonesia had to be a Muslim, but this stipulation did not make it into
the constitution, as nationalist leaders feared that this stipulation would disenfranchise
the Christian-majority eastern part of Indonesia. These significant concessions showed
how Islam had significantly more political sway in comparison to other religious groups
in Indonesia. The concessions set a precedence for further privileges for Islam that would
be given by the government throughout various periods of administration.

While the Pancasila was promoted as embodying uniquely Indonesian values,
Soekarno’s ideas of nationalism were significantly influenced by Western political
thought, which in turn contributed to the construction of the Indonesian national identity.
For example, Soekarno quoted Ernest Renan in one of his speeches, saying that the
‘requirement for a nation is the desire to be united’. Soekarno also quoted Otto Bauer
in saying that a nation is a ‘community of character which has grown out of a community

64 Feith and Castles, Indonesian Political Thinking 1945-1965, 40-49.
66 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 209.
67 Drakeley, The History of Indonesia, 74.
68 Ramage, Politics in Indonesia, 14-15.
69 Feith and Castles, Indonesian Political Thinking 1945-1965, 40.
Soekarno’s claims of unearthing principles which were authentic and native to Indonesia implied his narrative of Indonesia being a long-existing nation with a shared history. Hence, Soekarno appealed to a sense of cultural nationalism among the people in conjunction with the civic nationalism instilled through the Pancasila.

Developments in World War II further propelled Indonesia’s move towards political independence. On 6 and 7 August 1945, two atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. On 8 August 1945, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan and invaded Manchuria, which at that point was under Japanese occupation. Following this development, Japan transformed the aforementioned Investigatory Committee into a Preparatory Committee for the Indonesian Independence to expedite its work. This time, the members of the Committee included more representatives from outside Java, signalling an effort to be more inclusive and reflecting the success of Soekarno’s campaign for support from across Indonesia. The Japanese administration gave a promise to grant Indonesia its independence in due course; however, there were no signs of a transfer of authority by the time Japan capitulated on 15 August 1945. Facing this uncertain situation, youth groups who were dissatisfied with waiting for the formal transfer of authority from Japan pressured Soekarno into unilaterally declaring independence before the Allied Forces could arrive in Indonesia. Soekarno proceeded with the declaration of independence after receiving a guarantee from the Japanese administration that they would not object to it.

On 17 August 1945, Soekarno proclaimed the independence of Indonesia in front of a small audience in Jakarta. This proclamation of independence was broadcast through the radio across the archipelago, showing how technology and modern communication help in creating and maintaining a nation by spreading messages to a large number of people over a vast territory. Soekarno was set to be Indonesia’s first president.

The territory of Indonesia was the entirety of the Dutch East Indies, spanning from the western tip of Sumatra to West Papua (then called Irian). The Preparatory Committee which set up the Indonesian government decided to remove the words ‘with the obligation for adherents of Islam to carry out Islamic law’ in the Jakarta Charter from

70 Ibid., 41.
71 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 209-10.
72 Drakeley, The History of Indonesia, 75.
73 Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, The Indonesia Reader, 292.
74 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 213.
the *Pancasila*.\(^75\) Soekarno convinced Islamists that this was a necessary ‘temporary measure’ which could be altered after independence if the Indonesian people wanted Islam to have a more fundamental role in the country through democratic process.\(^76\) This compromise helped retain the support of Christian-majority areas in the archipelago for the Indonesian state. At the same time, this reversal from the Jakarta Charter was interpreted as a betrayal by Islamists and caused a rift between secular nationalists and them.

Another challenge surrounding Indonesia’s declaration of independence was that news of it did not reach some remote areas of Indonesia until late in 1945.\(^77\) Consequently, the local population of these remote areas were not aware of their ‘independence’, and they were possibly foreign to the idea of ‘Indonesia’. This uneven spread in the awareness of nationhood across Indonesia recalls modernist theories which stipulate that technology, whether printed or electronic media, is a prerequisite for spreading the idea of nationhood among large numbers of people. This situation further demonstrated that the formation of the Indonesian nation was largely an elite-driven top-down process; the idea of the nation and the subsequent state that would become its vessel was discussed and agreed upon by a relatively small number of people.

Following the declaration of independence, Soekarno’s government, also known as ‘the Republican government’, still had to secure recognition from the international community, particularly the Dutch, whose armed forces were trying to reinstall colonial government in the archipelago. In this phase between 1945 and 1949, Soekarno’s government had to concede to some terms of settlement that were required by the Netherlands. For example, on 14 November 1945, Soekarno, who the Dutch did not trust, had to rescind his authority over Indonesia’s cabinet as President; this authority was transferred to the newly installed Prime Minister Sjahrir as part of Indonesia’s agreement with the Dutch government.\(^78\) Within this setting, Indonesia entered into negotiations with the Dutch. It was agreed on 12 November 1946 through the Treaty of Linggarjati that Indonesia’s sovereignty would be recognised in Java, Madura and Sumatra under a

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\(^75\) Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia*, 75.
\(^76\) Ibid., 74.
\(^77\) Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300*, 214.
\(^78\) Ibid., 216.
federal government, in lieu of a centralised government; meanwhile, the authority over
the eastern part of Indonesia remained with the Netherlands.79

As these negotiations took place, some regions within Indonesia’s supposed
territory declared their own independent states, which called into question Soekarno’s
influence throughout the archipelago, particularly beyond Java and Sumatra. The eastern
parts of Indonesia, for example, created a federal state called Negara Indonesia Timur
(State of East Indonesia) in June 1946 under the auspices of the Netherlands.80 Another
state declared itself in West Borneo. The Republican government opposed the declaration
of both states; in the narrative of the Republican government, they were puppet states of
the colonial forces and were meant to sow conflict between regions in Indonesia.81 These
declarations of ‘new’ states recalled the salience of ethno-regional identity and the
wariness of some regions of the tendency towards Java-centrism in Soekarno’s
government. They also reinforced the long-standing fears of the ‘divide et impera’
policies of Dutch colonialism, reflected in Soekarno’s rhetorics that a divided Indonesia
would not be able to survive.82

While ethno-regional differences became a platform for dissidence in various
parts of Indonesia, the Netherlands’ pressure on the Republican government inspired
some Islamist leaders in Indonesia to work closely with secular nationalists, reflecting
the theory of the unifying effect of a salient common other on a diverse social group.83
However, Islamist leaders did not show universal support for Soekarno. In this regard,
Clifford Geertz argues that Islam in Indonesia (particularly in Java) can be largely
divided into two streams: santri and abangan.84 Santri Muslims have a more conservative
perspective on religion, often adopting Arabic clothing to express their religious identity.
Abangan Muslims, by contrast, have a more syncretic approach to religion, allowing
Islam to add another layer of religious practices on top of the influences of local faiths

79 Ibid., 224.
80 Ibid.
81 Ibid., 224-25.
82 Anthony Reid, “Remembering and Forgetting War and Revolution,” in Beginning to
Remember: The Past in the Indonesian Present, ed. Mary S. Zurbuchen (Singapore: Singapore
83 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 217.
and other world religions. Santri leaders particularly insisted on the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia. In May 1948, Kartosuwirjo, an Islamist leader from West Java, proclaimed himself as the leader of the so-called Negara Islam Indonesia (Islamic State of Indonesia/NII), more commonly known as Darul Islam. NII was never recognised by Soekarno, and Kartosuwirjo was eventually captured and executed in 1962.

Communist leaders posed their own challenge to Soekarno’s Republican government. Musso, the leader of the Indonesian Communist Party, led a rebellion against Soekarno in September 1948 and announced the establishment of a National Front Government. The rebellion seized government offices and other strategic points in Madiun, while Musso encouraged farmers and peasants to seize their landlords’ fields. Allegedly, Musso acted under instructions from Moscow to align Indonesia with the Soviet Union in the Cold War. On 19 September 1948, Soekarno publicly denounced the rebellion and suppressed it through military combat. Musso was killed on 31 October 1948 while trying to avoid capture, and several other leaders of the party escaped to China and Vietnam.

Throughout the various uprisings across Indonesia and ongoing tension with the Dutch forces, military and diplomatic efforts were pursued by the Republican government to attain international recognition of Indonesia’s independence. It took an intervention by the United Nations (UN) for Indonesia and the Netherlands to reach a truce through the Renville Agreement in January 1948. Following the Renville Agreement, Republik Indonesia Serikat (Republic of United States of Indonesia/RIS) was formally founded on 1 January 1949 as a federal state under Dutch control with Soekarno

85 Ibid.
88 Ibid., 228.
89 Ibid., 229.
90 Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, The Indonesia Reader, 321.
91 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 229.
92 Drakeley, The History of Indonesia, 79-80.
93 Ibid., 88.
as President. The formal transfer of authority from Dutch powers to RIS took place on 27 December 1949 in The Hague.

The structure of RIS did not correspond with Soekarno’s ideas of nationhood and sovereignty. Firstly, Soekarno considered RIS’ federal structure to be fragile and prone to disintegration. Secondly, RIS was under significant Dutch control and hence not as independent as envisioned by Soekarno. The continued presence of the Dutch as a common other compelled federal members of RIS to dissolve themselves into Soekarno’s central government as early as January 1950. According to H.S. Nordholt, this unification, which he considered a landmark for Indonesian nationalism, was propelled by the proliferation of Indonesian through educational institutions and the media, as well as new revolutionary songs that inspired nationalist sentiments. As such, the modernist take on the spread of nationalism can be observed once more. As a culmination of the absorption of federal states into a centralised government, on 17 August 1950, Soekarno formally dissolved RIS and declared the establishment of Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia (Unitary Republic of Indonesia/NKRI).

However, challenges to Soekarno’s vision for Indonesia did not end with the establishment of NKRI, as ethno-regional and religious differences again became salient in separatist movements. In the eastern parts of Indonesia, separatist movements were inspired by the opinion that Soekarno’s government was too dominated by the Javanese and Muslims, again indicating the salience of both ethno-regional and religious identity. Soekarno responded by installing more centralistic governance, using military force to assert authority and reinforcing the narrative of common others. Yet, challenges to Soekarno’s authority continued to question the success of oppressive approaches to diversity.

As an illustration of discontentment with Soekarno’s regime, the Maluku Islands were a Christian-majority area with local customs distinct from the Javanese where separatist leaders declared the independence of the so-called Republik Maluku Selatan

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96 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 232.
98 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 237-56.
(Republic of South Maluku/RMS) on 25 April 1950. In a 1950 publication, the RMS argued that people in Maluku differed in terms of culture, origin, development and religion from the rest of Indonesia. In addition, the RMS considered itself distinct from ‘Indonesia’ as it remained under the Netherlands’ control during the period of Japanese occupation of Indonesia in 1942-1945. In fact, plenty of RMS followers considered themselves to be ‘pro-Netherlands members of the Royal Netherlands Indies Army’. The RMS further reasoned that because the Japanese occupation did not reach as far as Maluku, Indonesia’s proclamation of independence following Japanese capitulation in 1945 did not include Maluku.

In facing various uprisings, Soekarno proclaimed martial law on 14 March 1957 to ensure his influence over the military and display his political power over the population. This political move set the precedence for the involvement of the military in Indonesian politics. To further strengthen his hold on the political system, on 5 July 1959 Soekarno established the so-called Guided Democracy, which he promoted as a ‘modernised, authentically Indonesian method of governance’ and gave himself the role of life-long president who had ultimate authority over the country. Similar to the time he introduced the Pancasila, Soekarno claimed to have unearthed principles that were truly Indonesian in the Guided Democracy, appealing to the imagined perpetuity of the Indonesian nation throughout history. In addition, Soekarno continued to use the rhetoric of common others. For instance, Soekarno devised confrontational policies towards Malaysia, accusing the latter of supporting rebellions against Soekarno’s government in West Sumatra and Sulawesi in the 1950s and thereby threatening the integrity of Indonesia. This so-called policy of Konfrontasi (confrontation) created a relatively tangible other against which Indonesia had to be defended. The Konfrontasi was further declared as a response to the incorporation of Singapore and Northern Borneo into Malaysia, which Soekarno considered to be against the spirit of anti-colonialism.

99 Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, *The Indonesia Reader*, 293.
100 Ibid., 321.
101 Ibid., 321-27.
102 Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia*, 102.
103 Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, *The Indonesia Reader*, 331.
The fiery rhetoric used by Soekarno in introducing the *Konfrontasi* policy was meant to stoke nationalist and anti-colonial sentiments in Indonesia itself.\(^{105}\)

Towards the end of Soekarno’s presidency, his policies became more affected by developments in the Cold War and focused on the position of Indonesia in the international arena. As such, the construction of the Indonesian identity of this time was more outward than inward-looking, positioning Indonesia as a nation that was strongly anti-colonialist, and, by extension, averse to liberalism. In his policies and rhetoric, Soekarno argued that liberalism had enabled imperialism, which in turn had led to the exploitation of colonies around the world. Therefore, anti-colonialism should be equally opposed to liberalism, so that Soekarno increasingly embraced socialist ideologies in addition to his secular nationalist convictions.\(^{106}\)

In 1955, Soekarno launched the Asian-African Movement as a platform for anti-colonialism, which later on resulted in the 1961 Non-Alignment Movement, distancing its members from the conflicting blocs of the Cold War.\(^{107}\) At the same time, Soekarno withdrew Indonesia’s membership from the UN and the International Monetary Fund, citing dissatisfaction with the institutions as instruments of liberalism. These moves increased Soekarno’s implicit preference for the Eastern bloc. In August 1965, Soekarno announced an anti-imperialist Jakarta-Phnom Penh-Hanoi-Beijing-Pyongyang axis, making his preference more explicit.\(^{108}\) Within Indonesia’s domestic politics, there was a sentiment that Soekarno’s aversion towards liberalism had caused economic distress in the country, as it experienced an extreme inflation with prices rising at an estimated five hundred percent annually.\(^{109}\) The severe economic conditions set the stage for the end of Soekarno’s presidency in 1966.

### 3.3 The New Order

The rise of Suharto in the New Order in 1966 marked another era in the history of Indonesia’s nation-building and multiculturalism. Suharto’s New Order employed a primarily top-down approach to nation-building in a more systematic manner compared

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\(^{105}\) Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia*, 108.

\(^{106}\) Paget, *Indonesia Accuses!*, 49-52.

\(^{107}\) Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, *The Indonesia Reader*, 329.


\(^{109}\) Ibid.
to previous periods in Indonesia’s history. The New Order had a decidedly more assimilationist approach to diversity, in tune with Suharto’s authoritarian and centralistic style of governance.\(^\text{110}\)

Suharto repressed rival ideologies to his *Pancasila Democracy*, particularly communism and political Islam.\(^\text{111}\) The elimination of the political left and its demonization in Indonesia under Suharto’s leadership started with events unfolding on 30 September 1965, when an attempted coup took place against Soekarno. This coup was led by a faction of presidential guards who took over the presidential palace and a radio station in Jakarta. On the following day, Suharto, then a brigadier general in the army, took over the command of the larger part of the military to crush the coup.\(^\text{112}\) There are multiple accounts of the sequence of events surrounding this coup, and opinions differ on the motives and perpetrators behind it. Nevertheless, the PKI and communists in general were blamed for instigating the coup. Under Suharto’s military command, their vilification was done systematically in a top-down manner and reached the grassroots level of society.\(^\text{113}\) This narrative caused a surge of violence against PKI members, left-wing sympathisers as well as their family members both by the military and parts of the general population. Within six months, this violence caused the death of an estimated 500,000 people, mostly in Central and East Java.\(^\text{114}\) In addition, around 250,000 people were held as political prisoners for their alleged association with the PKI.\(^\text{115}\)

Suharto was promoted to the Army’s Chief of Staff by Soekarno within two weeks of the attempted coup. On March 1966, Suharto was given ‘supreme authority’ over the army ‘to restore peace and order’ by Soekarno.\(^\text{116}\) Using his authority over the military, Suharto purged the government and military of PKI members and communist sympathisers; some pro-Soekarno figures were removed from office in the process for their supposed leftist political leanings. In 1966, the parliament ratified the banning of the PKI and outlawed the spread of Marxism and communism in Indonesia, effectively eliminating the political left. The parliament then stripped Soekarno of his title as life-

\(^{110}\) Mackie and MacIntyre, “Politics,” 2-4.

\(^{111}\) Elson, *Suharto*, 176-77, 83-86.

\(^{112}\) Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300*, 281.


\(^{114}\) Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, *The Indonesia Reader*, 347.

\(^{115}\) Ibid., 331.

long President for his leftist tendencies, making Suharto the de-facto leader of the government. The following year, Suharto was officially inaugurated as President on 12 March 1967, a position he would hold until 1998.

Suharto called his presidency the New Order, while Soekarno’s presidency was to be known as the Old Order. Suharto thus distanced himself and his take on the Indonesian national identity from Soekarno’s regime. For example, there were significant changes in terms of Indonesia’s attitude towards socialism and communism, as Indonesia renewed its membership in the UN and the IMF, and embraced a liberal economic position.

Despite his reversal of Soekarno’s socialist tendencies, Suharto kept Soekarno’s Pancasila as fundamental principles for Indonesia’s nation-building while applying his own interpretation to them. Suharto’s continuation of the Pancasila’s narrative as authentic Indonesian values signalled its position as the supposed legacy of a long-existing nation, evoking a sense of both ethnic and cultural nationalism. Suharto referred to his government as the Pancasila democracy, thereby connoting that his ways of governance reflected authentic Indonesian values. In addition, Suharto portrayed himself and the military under his command as protectors of the Pancasila since his rise to power after the 1965 coup attempt. This narrative was translated into a monument called the Monumen Pancasila Sakti (Sacred Pancasila Monument) which depicted the generals killed in the coup as heroic figures in valiant poses, protecting a Garuda Pancasila behind them. The image of the monument is shown below.

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117 Ibid., 289-90.
118 Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, *The Indonesia Reader*, 352.
This monument depicted the juxtaposition of the communist threat and the government as protectors of the _Pancasila_ through physical buildings. Right across from the Sacred _Pancasila_ Monument, the New Order regime built the Museum of PKI’s Treachery which contained dioramas and life-sized wax figures depicting the atrocities allegedly perpetrated by the members of the PKI. Both the monument and museum were built close to Lubang Buaya, the site of the killing of abducted generals in the 1965 coup attempt. The design of both the monument and the museum supported the narrative of communism being a threat to Indonesia and the _Pancasila_.

Suharto also adopted an authoritarian approach to national identity, taking on a tokenistic and assimilationist approach to diversity. Indonesia’s national motto of _Bhinneka Tunggal Ika_ (Unity in Diversity) was propagated as a centralising slogan, and the country’s cultural diversity was celebrated as a rich legacy from a glorious past. However, this celebration remained at a perfunctory level. Instead, his government systematically sought cultural homogeneity throughout the country as suggested by modernist theories on nationalism. Education was an important tool in this approach.

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123 Lena Tan, _Metropolitan Identities and Twentieth-Century Decolonization_, Metropolitan Identities and 20th Century Decolonization (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 95.
to nationalism. For example, school children were required to memorise a standardised version of ethno-regional cultural heritage which included traditional clothing, song and dance ascribed to each administrative province of Indonesia, even though the borders of these provinces did not always consider cultural boundaries. At the same time, public discussions on ethno-regional rights such as regional autonomy were taboo. Instead, cultural diversity and heritage were used to justify ‘hierarchical relationships of power’ presented as a legacy of a glorious past.

A particularly illuminating physical legacy of Suharto’s take on the Indonesian national identity was the Taman Mini Indonesia Indah (Beautiful Indonesia in Miniature Park/TMII), which further showed his modernist approach to nationalism. TMII, a recreational complex near Jakarta, is part theme-park and part museum and displays cultural heritage from all provinces across Indonesia. This park still operates and is open to the public in the present day. The idea of TMII was conceived by Suharto’s wife in 1970; its construction was explicitly backed by Suharto as a means to raise national consciousness as well as to promote Indonesia to the international world. TMII primarily consists of provincial pavilions, each one dedicated to a particular province of Indonesia, with each provincial pavilion displaying buildings and cultural artefacts associated with a particular province. The park thus reinforces the administrative division of regions and superimposes this division on constructed cultural boundaries. For instance, the items on display in the pavilions have been chosen arbitrarily, without involving the grassroots of society. Michael Hitchcock describes the establishment of the TMII as a means of nation-building, consistent with the character of propaganda during the New Order era. According to Hitchcock, the point of TMII was to underline the position of various ethno-regional groups as sub-nations of a greater Indonesian nation. Similarly, Reimar Schefold argues that the New Order treated ethno-regional diversity as sub-parts of a greater nation and primarily as a commodity for tourism.

126 Jones, Culture, Power and Authoritarianism in the Indonesian State, 148.
127 Anderson, Language and Power, 176.
130 Schefold, “The Domestication of Culture: Nation-Building and Ethnic Diversity in Indonesia.”
Suharto wanted Indonesia to be seen as a modern nation. The international economic aid received through the IMF sped up urban development, particularly in Java, and created a growing middle-class. This growing urban and educated middle-class was in line with Suharto’s vision of Indonesia as a modern, developing nation, which in turn reflects some legacies from the colonial period, where the local population was often portrayed as rural, uneducated and ‘backward’. Therefore, the desire of Indonesia to be seen as modern and educated reflected the wish to be seen as equals of its past colonisers.

The utilisation of public monuments as an effective form of political communication which shows the state’s desired narrative of national identity has a long tradition in Indonesia. Suharto built monuments that signified Indonesia’s direction of nation-building and national identity. The most famous example of architecture meant to portray Indonesia’s civic national identity is Indonesia’s National Monument in Jakarta. The construction of this monument begun during Soekarno’s government in 1961 but was only completed in 1976. As shown on the next page, the National Monument is a tall, obelisk-like monument in the shape of a torch, surrounded by extensive grounds. Underneath the monument is a museum containing dioramas of distinctive periods of Indonesia’s history, particularly its fight against colonialism. This continuation of the building of dioramas across two different administrations signalled an overall agreement on the narrative of Indonesia’s fight against colonialism; the dioramas depict various scenes along the canonised history of Indonesia, such as the depiction of a peaceful people prior to colonialism, the arrival of colonialists and the people’s resistance against them.

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131 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 290.
133 Anderson, Language and Power, 173-75.
The promotion of civic elements of national identity was not, however, limited to grand monuments and installations. During the New Order, countless entranceways to townships and villages were flanked by miniature monuments which were either a replica of larger monuments, reliefs of certain episodes in Indonesia’s history, particularly the fight against colonialism, or numbers signifying the date of Indonesia’s Independence Day of 17 August 1945. These ubiquitous reminders of the civic and cultural elements of the Indonesian national identity, such as its shared history of fighting against colonialism, reflected how much the government sought to invoke nationalist sentiments among the general population, including the rural population who were without regular access to the grander monuments.

In addition to using various memorials and monuments for fostering national identity, the New Order promoted a primarily civic sense of nationalism through the commemoration of numerous national days. The national days included Independence Day (17 August), National Awakening Day (20 May), Sacredness of Pancasila Day (1 October), Armed Forces Day (5 October), Youth Pledge Day (28 October) and Heroes Day (10 November). Typically, these national days were celebrated with flag-hoisting.

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ceremonies across the country, in government offices, public schools and other sites. On Independence Day, flag-hoisting ceremonies were held at the grassroots level, where neighbourhoods would congregate for the ceremony. The national holidays and the significance attached to them reflected the narratives endorsed by the government, both those adopted from previous periods such as the Youth Pledge Day and those especially construed by the New Order, such as the Sacredness of Pancasila Day. The aforementioned national days, for instance, reflected both the salience of Indonesia’s struggle against colonialism as well as the role of the military in its fight. The heightened importance attached to the military, in turn, elevated Suharto’s standing as a military general. On National Awakening Day and Youth Pledge Day, in particular, people were asked to reflect on the country’s common historical struggle against colonialism and its common destiny, as the cultural dimension of Indonesian nationalism. The appeal to history further demonstrated the connection between civic and cultural elements within nationalism.

Reflecting the role of education as an instrument for propagating uniformity among the population of a modern state, Indonesia’s education system was utilised by the New Order as a tool for instilling civic nationalism among the population. Primary and secondary education to the ninth grade became compulsory, with a nationally standardised curriculum on subjects including history and citizenship studies. Standardised national examinations for entry into high schools and universities further exemplified the effort to build ‘national homogeneity’. In addition to school children, tertiary students and civil servants had to study the New Order’s interpretation of the Pancasila ideology. The New Order’s take on the Pancasila introduced it in a mythicized narrative which painted the Pancasila authentically Indonesian values inherited from a long-existing nation.

The importance of instilling a sense of shared destiny among the Indonesian population was visible in how history was taught. Since the early 1980s, the school curriculum in Indonesia contained the subject ‘History of the National Struggle’ spanning

136 McGregor, History in Uniform, 9-10.
137 Gellner, Nations and Nationalism, 57.
138 Drakeley, The History of Indonesia, 127.
139 Peacock, Indonesia, 142-43.
140 Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, The Indonesia Reader, 366.
141 Anderson, Language and Power, 185.
the time from colonial occupation towards Indonesia’s independence. The subject particularly highlighted the unified struggle of the country towards independence with an emphasis on physical wars and the role of the military; in contrast, diplomatic efforts and the international situation of the past were hardly discussed. The emphasis on the importance of the military was meant to further solidify Suharto’s leadership position as a former army general.

Narratives that competed with that of the New Order were systematically weeded out. As mentioned previously, communism was now outlawed in Indonesia. In addition, students and scholars had to comply with limitations on freedom of speech and critical thinking. Student protests and demonstrations against corruption by political elites were frequently met with harsh measures including arrests and jail terms. The state censored publications, television and radio. The strict control on the media reflected how the government wanted to secure its own narrative on the country by creating a ‘cultural and ideological imprinting’ and suppressing competing or contradictory narratives.

Despite continued suppression of political expressions of ethno-regional identities, the New Order faced challenges in the form of ethnic conflicts, particularly as the country sought to deal with rapid urbanisation in Java. A census in 1971 classified 17.3 per cent of Indonesia’s population as urban with over 4.5 million people living in Jakarta. In the same year, 60.4 per cent of Indonesia’s population lived in Java. This figure was striking, as the Java Island only made up 7 per cent of Indonesia’s territory. To control urbanisation, the government implemented the so-called transmigration policy which saw people from Java resettled to other, less populated islands. Transmigration was often regarded as the ‘largest voluntary land settlement scheme in the world’ with ‘reasonably good but uneven success’ and as a positive solution for distribution of the population and economic activity in Indonesia. The transmigration was also a means for assimilating various ethnic groups across the archipelago. It was designed to lessen

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142 Tan, *Metropolitan Identities and Twentieth-Century Decolonization*, 97.
144 Ibid., 146.
145 Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia*, 129.
ethnic cleavages across regions; however, the programme backfired and caused a resistance towards a perceived ‘Javanisation’ by the local population of other provinces.\textsuperscript{149} Transmigration was thus perceived by them as an effort to create Javanese hegemony across Indonesia, with side-effects that later on sparked interethnic conflicts in some areas.\textsuperscript{150}

One ethnic group in particular was actively construed as a common other by the New Order regime: Chinese-Indonesians, who had already endured an othering due to their classification as ‘foreign orientals’ in the colonial era.\textsuperscript{151} Recalling Kymlicka’s definition of ‘national minorities’ and ‘ethnic groups’, Chinese-Indonesians are classified as the latter; they are considered to have ‘arrived’ in Indonesia after the ‘locals’ and do not have a particular territory in which they make up the local majority.\textsuperscript{152} During the New Order, Chinese-Indonesians were subjected to systematic discrimination, particularly as they were portrayed as ‘foreigners’ vis-à-vis ethno-regional groups in Indonesia that were considered ‘indigenous’.\textsuperscript{153} They were given the status of \textit{Warga Negara Keturunan} (WNK/Citizens of Foreign Descent) in contrast to ethno-regional groups which held the status of \textit{Warga Negara Indonesia} (WNI/Citizen of Indonesia). In December 1966, the New Order attempted to erase Chinese identity in Indonesia through a ‘name-changing declaration’ which required Chinese-Indonesians to change their Chinese names into Indonesian-sounding ones.\textsuperscript{154} Public displays of the the Chinese language, religion and customs were prohibited. A Presidential Instruction in December 1967 stated that ‘Chinese religion, beliefs, and customs [in Indonesia] originated in their ancestral land and their various manifestations may generate unnatural influence on the psychology, mentality, and morality of Indonesian citizens and therefore impede natural propensity [for assimilation]’.\textsuperscript{155} In addition, Chinese-Indonesians were often associated

\textsuperscript{152} Kymlicka, \textit{Multicultural Citizenship}, 17.
\textsuperscript{153} Ricklefs, \textit{A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300}, 166.
\textsuperscript{154} Hellwig and Tagliacozzo, \textit{The Indonesia Reader}, 376-77.
\textsuperscript{155} Ibid., 357.
with communism due to their assumed ties with China, further putting them in a pejorative position.

Meanwhile, the continued salience of religious identity, in particular that of political Islamism, prompted the New Order to restrict mobilisations along religious lines. Military interventions were employed against any instigator of religious violence or religious political movements; this approach saw religious violence decline quite rapidly as soon as 1967. However, Suharto had an ambivalent and fluctuating attitude towards Islam. On the one hand, Suharto allowed the wearing of Islamic headscarves in public schools and supported the creation of an Islamic banking system. On the other hand, personnel of the military, police and civilian government institutions were discouraged from wearing religious attires such as headscarves at work. Furthermore, Islamic organisations with any history of political activity throughout Indonesia were required to gather under one single party called Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party/PPP), which was heavily regulated by the government. At the same time, Suharto allowed the establishment of the Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals Association, a gesture considered to be favourable to Muslim leaders. However, this association was also intended to monitor the activities of Muslim intellectuals in the country.

Despite Suharto’s uneasy relationship with political Islam, there was an overall increase in religious adherence in Indonesia. People declared their adherence and displayed a more regular practise of religion partly to avoid being perceived as an atheist, which was strongly associated with communism. Hence, while religious piety in the private sphere was considered virtuous, religious activism particularly in the political arena was a taboo. Religious identities thus experienced more toleration instead of accommodation.

The last years of Suharto’s presidency were marked by considerable turmoil. Particularly the younger population grew more disenchanted with Suharto’s repressive policies and corruption. The wider population were becoming dissatisfied with

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156 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 294.
157 Bertrand, Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia, 83.
158 Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 284-85.
159 Drakeley, The History of Indonesia, 121.
160 Bertrand, Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia, 74.
Indonesia’s economic conditions in the 1997 Asian financial crisis. Allegations of corruption against Suharto and his cronies further fuelled this discontent. Unrest across the country increased while Jakarta was embroiled in large-scale demonstrations that demanded Suharto’s resignation. After several students were killed by army snipers during a demonstration, the pressure for Suharto to resign became even more intense and he resigned his presidency on 21 May 1998.

3.4 The post-1998 Reform Era

Following the collapse of Suharto’s New Order, significant changes took place in the discourse of national identity and cultural diversity in Indonesia, including various amendments to the constitution, such as the introduction of regional autonomy laws. The Pancasila was kept as Indonesia’s ideological foundation, with a greater emphasis on its fourth principle: democracy. Indonesia’s democratisation saw the proliferation of new political parties, with forty-eight parties taking part in the 1999 elections, a huge increase from the three acknowledged political parties of the New Order. This large number of parties was celebrated as a triumph of democracy, but at the same time it reflected the many competing visions people had for the country.

The relationship between democracy and internally diverse states is a contestable one. In Indonesia, renewed freedoms of expression and association presented a challenge to the overall integrity and unity of Indonesia. In 1999, a referendum was held in Timor Leste, resulting in its independence and indicating the salience of identity, particularly ethno-regional identity. At the same time, the secession of Timor Leste, a former Portuguese colony annexed by Indonesia in 1976, highlighted its difference from the rest of Indonesia with its common history of Dutch colonialism.

While regional autonomy laws accommodate the expression of particular ethno-regional identities within provinces, in the capital, the Indonesian political landscape continues to display a tendency towards Java-centrism. After having had only two

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161 Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia*, 139.
162 Ibid., 140.
163 Ibid., 145.
165 Damien Kingsbury, *Guns and Ballot Boxes: East Timor’s Vote for Independence* (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 2000), 19-20, 41.
presidents between 1945 and 1998, Indonesia has had three different presidents between 1998 and 2004. Since 2004, the transition between presidencies have become more regular and stable, with two presidents elected directly between 2004 and the present. Nevertheless, other than President Habibie who came from South Sulawesi, all Indonesian presidents have been of Javanese descent, indicating the political sway of the Javanese as Indonesia’s largest ethno-regional group.

Political Islamists who were suppressed during the New Order also resumed their activism in varying manners, including by forming political parties. Pluralist Islamist parties such as Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (National Awakening Party) and Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party) accepted the Pancasila as Indonesia’s ideological foundation; however, other Islamist parties such as Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Prosperous Justice Party) have been campaigning for more accommodation for Islamic laws within the Indonesian state. Through the election of Islamist parties into parliament, since 1998, there have been three unsuccessful attempts to give Islamic law a constitutional status within the parliament, respectively in 2000, 2001 and 2002. The increasing presence of political Islamism, meanwhile, has caused considerable concern on the part of minority religious groups.

Challenges emerging from Indonesia’s democratisation process have shown the complexity of accommodating various identities within a nation. The underlying change from an authoritarian, top-down approach to nation-building to a democratic one that allows the bottom-up expression of identities has further emphasised this challenge.

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166 Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie was born in South Celebes to an agriculturist from Gorontalo. He studied aviation and aerospace engineering in the Netherlands and Germany towards a doctoral degree. Habibie worked for several German companies before returning to Indonesia in 1974 on Suharto’s request. In 1976 he became the Chief Executive Officer of the new state-owned aerospace engineering company. Habibie was appointed Vice-President in March 1998, only months prior to the end of Suharto’s regime and ascended to the presidency upon Suharto’s resignation. Sulfiqar Amir, “Symbolic Power in a Technocratic Regime : The Reign of B. J. Habibie in New Order Indonesia,” Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia 22, no. 1 (2007).


169 Arskal Salim, Challenging the Secular State: The Islamization of Law in Modern Indonesia (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2008), 87-88.
Indonesian state thus has to find a better balance between accommodating diverse identities and maintaining its overarching national unity.

3.5 Conclusion

The Indonesian national identity has been contestable since its very inception. While elites were initially united under the banner of anti-colonialism, salient group identities, particularly ethno-regional and religious identities, have continued to shape the discourse of national identity in Indonesia. In particular, debates on the ideal relationship between the state and religion have remained significant to the present day. Another common thread across the different historical periods was the combination of the civic and cultural understandings of the Indonesian national identity, including its narrative of a common history of colonisation and of the Pancasila as inherent Indonesian values.

In the past, elites tended to adopt a predominantly top-down approach to nation-building, including intellectuals during the National Awakening, Soekarno’s Guided Democracy and Suharto’s New Order. This top-down approach has ensured the effective spread of their narrative of the Indonesian nation throughout the archipelago. There have been some uprisings and attempts of separatism, but they were typically quelled swiftly by force. The expressions of ethno-regional and religious identities were thus limited to the channels allowed by the state.

By contrast, post-1998 institutional changes have allowed more bottom-up and democratic expressions of group identities, including ethno-regional and religious identities. However, Indonesia’s democratisation process has brought its own challenges, as the state tries to preserve its overall identity and unity while accommodating the expression of various identities. This process has resulted in a particular framework for national identity and cultural pluralism that is examined in detail in the following chapter.

The comparison between different periods of nation-building in Indonesia has shown that a top-down approach to nation-building tends to be more straightforward and decisive; however, it is also more exclusive and repressive, as shown particularly in the New Order period. In the long run, the top-down approach is thus more likely to cause discontent and dissent. Meanwhile, the bottom-up approach to nation-building tends to be more sporadic, but it is also more inclusive, as shown particularly in the Reform Era. Considering the importance of the correct recognition and accommodation of identities,
the bottom-up approach to nation-building is more sustainable for an internally diverse society.

Having analysed the relevant periods in Indonesia’s history, this chapter contributes to the literature on nationalism and nation-building by showing that present-day ‘nations’ are the socially constructed product of nation-building processes. As such, their form is dependent on the understanding and perceptions of elites. The Indonesian nation is hence a socially constructed entity, as shown by its founding history as well as the reinterpretation of Indonesia’s motto of Unity in Diversity and the *Pancasila* throughout different eras.
This chapter examines Indonesia’s present framework for diversity and argues that this framework is intended, above all, to preserve the integrity of the state. To this end, Indonesia’s framework for diversity extends varying degrees of recognition and accommodation towards different socio-cultural groups. Yet, there are also discriminatory measures which put into question Indonesia’s commitment to diversity. Section one examines Indonesia’s constitution and the way it highlights ethno-regional and religious identities. Section two further examines laws and regulations related to ethno-regional diversity, while section three focuses on religious diversity. These sections show that ethno-regional diversity and religious diversity are treated differently. The expression of ethno-regional identities is accommodated more equitably while religious minorities do not enjoy the same degree of accommodation as Indonesia’s Muslim majority. In addition, Indonesia’s marriage laws encourage the perpetuation of religious cleavages within society. Indonesia thus uses multiculturalism as a means towards maintaining overall national identity and unity, balancing between celebrating the narrative of Indonesia as a culturally plural nation and mollifying demands from Islamist political movements.

The analysis on laws pertaining to identity and diversity in Indonesia shows that ethno-regional and religious identities, while often portrayed as separate aspects of identity, are interrelated. For instance, there is a majority religious group within each ethno-regional group, showing that the two often go hand-in-hand. There are also combinations of ethno-regional and religious identities which allow a person to part of the majority or minority in different situations; for instance, a person from a minority ethno-regional group can belong to the Muslim majority, and a Muslim person can be part of an ethno-regional minority. This intersection between ethno-regional and religious identity, as shown in this thesis, means that a discussion on either aspect identity cannot be completely separated from the other.

The condition of multiculturalism in Indonesia, with its push and pull on the accommodations and restrictions on expressions of particular identities, reflects the challenges of reconciling different value systems within culturally plural societies. Value systems consistent with that of the state are more likely to be recognised and accommodated, while other value systems are merely tolerated, or even left out of the
narrative of the state. In Indonesia’s case, the state has adopted a particular understanding of cultural diversity which limits its toleration of identities which endangers the overall integrity of the state: overall cultural diversity is protected by limiting the expressions of diverse identities.

4.1 Multiculturalism in Indonesia’s Constitution

All government policies reflect the value system adopted by the state.\(^1\) Hence, all regulations relating to culture, such as language and public holidays, reflect the state’s position towards the cultural groups within it.\(^2\) In turn, in Indonesia, laws and regulations are based on the constitution. Indonesia’s present constitution is an amended version of the country’s original 1945 Constitution. Despite the amendments, the name ‘1945 Constitution’ is retained, communicating that the state’s narrative of national identity is in line with the vision of Indonesia’s founding fathers.\(^3\) The current version of the 1945 Constitution cements Bhinneka Tunggal Ika as Indonesia’s national motto, as stated in Article 36A:

The National Coat of Arms is the Garuda Pancasila with the motto Bhinneka Tunggal Ika.\(^4\)

The Garuda Pancasila, as shown below, is a mythical bird not unlike eagles found in Western-style heraldry, with a shield on its chest decorated with symbols representing the Pancasila, the five pillars of the Indonesian state as developed by Soekarno. In its talons, the Garuda holds a banner inscribed with the words ‘Bhinneka Tunggal Ika’, which is commonly translated into English as ‘Unity in Diversity’. This national motto, written in Ancient Sankrit, implies the existence of a nation predating the colonial era, as Sankrit was the predominant language used by the Srivijaya and Majapahit empires which spanned most of the archipelago in the twelfth century.\(^5\)

\(^2\) “The Politics of Recognition.”
The Garuda Pancasila contains references to the civic elements of the Indonesian national identity: the number of its feathers represents the date of Indonesia’s declaration of independence, 17 August 1945 (17 feathers on each wing; eight tail feathers; and 45 feathers on the torso). The shield on the bird’s chest carries five symbols, each one representing a principle of the Pancasila: the star represents belief in God; the ring of chains represents humanity; the banyan tree represents national unity; the buffalo head represents democracy; and the sprigs of rice and cotton represent social justice. The national coat of arms thus represents the unifying civic values of Indonesia, while the national motto emphasises the narrative of Indonesia being a culturally plural but united country.

The constitution highlights two types of identities, the first of which is ethno-regional identity. Ethno-regional identity is recognised through the provision of regional autonomy which explicitly recognises the ‘particularities’ of regions, as stated in Chapter VI on Regional Government, Article 18A (1):

The formal relations between the central government and the regional authorities of provinces, regencies and municipalities, or between provinces, regencies and municipalities, shall be regulated by law with regard to the regional particularities and diversity of each region.  

And further in Articles 18B (1) and (2), it is stated that

(1) The state shall recognise and respect the units of regional authorities that are special and distinct as regulated by law.

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6 The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, my translation.
(2) The state shall recognise and respect traditional communities including their traditional customary rights, providing they remain in existence and are in conformity with societal development as well as with the principles of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia as regulated by law.\(^\text{7}\)

These articles were introduced at the second amendment of the 1945 Constitution in 2000.\(^\text{8}\) This amendment followed the post-1998 spirit of political reform and the subsequent renewal of the freedom of expression. These articles indicate a significant shift from past laws on the devolution of power which only gave regional governments the responsibility to carry out decisions that had been made by the central government.\(^\text{9}\)

The second type of identity highlighted by Indonesia’s constitution is religious identity, as stipulated in Article 29 on Religion:

(1) The state is based on Belief in God.

(2) The State shall guarantee all persons the freedom of worship, each according to their own religion or faith.\(^\text{10}\)

This recognition is further implied by the existence of a religious court as stipulated in Chapter IX on Judiciary Authority, Article 24 (2) as follows:

The judiciary authority is held by a Supreme Court and other judicial bodies beneath it in the form of public courts, religious affairs courts, military courts, state administrative courts and the Constitutional Court.\(^\text{11}\)

Thus, the state recognises value systems other than a secular nationalist one. However, the religious affairs court, which allows Indonesia’s Muslim population to settle matters such as marriage, divorce and inheritance in accordance with Islamic traditions, does not exist for religions other than Islam. Hence, the court’s existence signifies Islam’s considerable traction in Indonesia’s politics, which at the same time indicates that other world religions in Indonesia are not on an equal footing with Islam.

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\(^\text{7}\) Ibid.
\(^\text{9}\) Mark Turner et al., *Decentralisation in Indonesia: Redesigning the State* (Canberra: Asia Pacific Press, 2003), 2.
\(^\text{10}\) The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, my translation.
\(^\text{11}\) Ibid.
4.2 Framework for Ethno-Regional Diversity in Indonesia

Indonesia’s framework for ethno-regional diversity mainly addresses regional autonomy as a means to express unique ethno-regional identities. In the Indonesian language, these ethno-regional groups are known as *suku bangsa*, literally meaning sub-nation: the smaller groups that make up the larger Indonesian nation.

The law stipulates that new regions could be formed on the basis of ‘economic capacity, regional potentials, socio-political conditions, the size of population, the area of the region concerned and other considerations’. In practice, the formation of new administrative provinces have primarily emerged from ethno-regional movements. Thus, administrative provinces in Indonesia can better reflect cultural or ethnic fault lines within the country. In Indonesia, only insular provinces like Bali have natural boundaries in the form of the sea, and such provinces are more the exception than the rule. After the instalment of regional autonomy laws, many regions experienced a bottom-up demand to restore older boundaries. Interestingly, the establishment of new administrative provinces is called ‘*pemekaran daerah*’ in Indonesian, which translates into ‘regional blossoming’ as if implying a dormant identity bursting into bloom.

Since 1998, eight new provinces have been established largely on the basis of ethno-regional identity. Even though there is also a religious dimension to ethno-regional identity, the proliferation of new provinces have not been framed as a religious movement. These provinces are Banten, Gorontalo, North Kalimantan, Bangka Belitung Islands, Riau Islands, North Maluku, West Papua and West Sulawesi. To give an illustration, the Gorontalo province was established on 22 December 2000. The people of Gorontalo (predominantly Muslim) used to be a minority in the Minahasa-majority province of North Sulawesi (predominantly Christian). In addition to differences in ethnicity and religion, the people of Gorontalo claim their regional history to be unique from that of North Sulawesi, including a more fervent resistance against colonial forces in the past.

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12 Turner et al., *Decentralisation in Indonesia*, 16.
14 Ibid., 66-67.
15 Ibid., 73-74.
Despite Gorontalo’s ‘secession’ from North Sulawesi, there are no conflicts between Gorontalo and the Indonesian state, as Gorontalo’s regional narrative situates it as a part of the Indonesian nation. For instance, Gorontalo celebrates Patriot Day to commemorate declaring freedom from colonialism on 23 January 1942, prior to Indonesia’s declaration of independence itself. Yet Patriot Day is traditionally celebrated with Indonesia’s national symbols such as the national flag and the national anthem, hence aligning regional sentiments with national ones.16

Political decentralisation in Indonesia has also enabled the revival of ethno-regional identity through a reversal towards traditional forms of local governance.17 For example, the West Sumatra provincial government has reorganised its regional governance into a more traditional system.18 In the New Order era, West Sumatra was divided into small administrative units called desa (village) which were modelled after a Javanese tradition. However, pre-colonial West Sumatra used to be divided into much larger units called nagari with sub-units called jorong.19 Thus, the reinstatement of the nagari in 1999 was a move towards traditional revitalisation in West Sumatra.20 The resurgence of local traditions in regional governance can also be observed in Tana Toraja of South Sulawesi.21

In addition, regional autonomy has enabled local direct elections for governors, regents and mayors which have shown the salience of ethno-regional identity through the people’s preference for local leadership. For example, long-lasting allegiances to traditional royal houses became apparent as their descendants successfully ran for office in local elections.22 Thus, the impact of regional autonomy has revealed the people’s allegiance to traditional royal houses beyond provinces like Yogyakarta which has long

16 Ibid., 66-67.
17 Drakeley, The History of Indonesia, 169.
19 Ibid., 301-06.
20 Ibid., 321.

Furthermore, the results of the past local direct elections have shown a preference for candidates who are considered to be \textit{Putra Daerah} (Child of the Region).\footnote{‘Putra’ is the formal Indonesian word for ‘son’, whereas ‘putri’ translates into ‘daughter’. However, the word ‘putra’ can also be used in a gender neutral manner, making it the equivalent of ‘child’. The gender-neutral Indonesian word for ‘child’, ‘anak’, is considered less formal and so less likely to be used in jargons such as \textit{Putra Daerah}.} The term \textit{Putra Daerah} is typically used for people with ancestral ethnic ties to a certain region. The term itself is ethnically neutral and used colloquially across the country by all ethno-regional groups. A study conducted by the Centre for International and Strategic Studies (CSIS) in Jakarta in 2001 showed that 57.9\% out of 1092 respondents prefer to have a \textit{Putra Daerah} as their regional leader.\footnote{“Kemampuan Politik Lokal Untuk Pelaksanaan Otonomi Daerah,” (Jakarta: Centre for International and Strategic Studies, 2001), 27.} In the context of local elections, it is often argued that a \textit{Putra Daerah} will have a better understanding of local needs and challenges compared to newcomers or migrants.

In addition, regional autonomy allows regional governments to inject the national curriculum with more local content pertaining to ethno-regional identity. For example, schools are free to teach local languages, customs and arts.\footnote{Edward Aspinall, “Democratization and Ethnic Politics in Indonesia: Nine Theses,” \textit{Journal of East Asian Studies} 11, no. 2 (2011): 300.} As education is an important means towards shaping the national identity of citizens from a young age, the content of school curriculums can influence the sense of belonging of students.\footnote{Parekh, \textit{Rethinking Multiculturalism}, 228-29.} Therefore, allowing schools to teach local languages and culture implies confidence on the part of the central government that the accommodation of ethno-regional identities in the education system does not challenge the Indonesian national identity. However, the addition of local content into the local curriculum remains varied from region to region, which suggests that the recognition of individual ethno-regional groups within the education system was not a priority for all regions in Indonesia.\footnote{Carole Faucher, “Popular Discourse on Identity Politics and Decentralisation in Tanjung Pinang Public Schools,” \textit{Asia Pacific Viewpoint} 47, no. 2 (2006): 274.} The lack of demand
for more local content within the education system instead indicates a strong and lasting influence from the nationalist narrative.29

4.3 Challenges of Ethno-Regional Diversity in Indonesia

4.3.1 Separatism

Indonesia’s framework for ethno-regional diversity has shown an increase in the recognition of particular ethno-regional identities which should increase the people’s contentment with the state; however, plenty of challenges remain. For instance, Indonesia continues to face the challenge of separatism, such as Operasi Papua Merdeka (Free Papua Operation/OPM) in West Papua. While there was no opportunity to get first-hand accounts of the motivations of OPM, some perspective into separatism was provided by former high-ranking members of Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement/GAM), a now disbanded Acehnese separatist movement.

GAM was established in 1976 and disbanded in 2005 following a peace agreement with the Indonesian government which grants Aceh special political autonomy.30 Bakhtiar Abdullah, a former spokesperson of GAM, explained that GAM’s main goal was to attain independence for Aceh from Indonesia to enable governance that was more suitable for the Acehnese people and would allow Aceh to manage its own natural resources without any exploitation from the Indonesian central government in Java.31 Thus, following GAM’s dissolution, regional autonomy has served as a means to curb disparities between the capital and the outlying provinces.32

Saifuddin Bantasyam, a law professor from Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, confirmed that separatism in Aceh stemmed from the discontent of local leaders with the misrecognition of Aceh’s identity and its related cultural rights.33 According to Abdullah, Aceh wanted to receive “proper treatment” as a resource-rich region as well as for Aceh’s “exceptional” role in the struggle towards the Indonesian independence from colonialism. Furthermore, Abdullah expressed clear pride in Aceh’s “unquestionable past glory and grandeur” as a historic trading port and the point of entry

30 Schulze, “From Colonial Times to Revolution and Integration,” 77.
31 Bakhtiar Abdullah, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 13 February 2018.
32 Bertrand, Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia, 185.
33 Saifuddin Bantasyam, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 2 February 2018.
of Islam into Indonesia, which explained Aceh’s demand for the establishment of Sharia in the province.\(^{34}\) This role of Islam in Aceh’s history exemplifies the intersection between ethno-regional and religious identities. Munawar Liza Zainal, a former high-ranking member of GAM, similarly stated that GAM’s past demand for independence was an ethno-regional movement, triggered by Aceh’s past unfair exploitation by the central government in Indonesia, unbefitting to the former’s significant role in Indonesia’s struggle against colonialism. Zainal described the Acehnese people as a strong and resilient people, again giving an ethno-regional nuance to their movement.\(^{35}\)

Prior to 2005, there was already some degree of special autonomy for Aceh, but it was not enough for GAM, as they were not granted significant political rights.\(^{36}\) Bantsayam explained that the 2005 peace agreement included provisions which have allowed Aceh to establish local political parties that are not affiliated with any national parties seated in Jakarta, as opposed to most other provinces, as a form of recognition for Aceh’s ‘special’ and ‘unique’ position in the country.\(^{37}\) Stipulations in the 2005 peace agreement have also allowed Aceh to create more bylaws on the basis of Islamic religious texts without bureaucratic barriers from the capital. These bylaws are called *Qanun*, derived from an Arabic word for ‘canon’ or ‘law’.\(^{38}\) This aspect of regional autonomy in Aceh again shows the intersection between ethno-regional and religious identities; the religious dimension of Aceh’s identity is discussed further in the section on Indonesia’s framework for religious diversity.

4.3.2 Discrimination and prejudice

Persisting prejudices and discrimination between ethno-regional as well as religious groups constitute another challenge to ethno-regional diversity in Indonesia. Alamsyah Djafar, a senior researcher of the Wahid Foundation\(^{39}\) explained that a 2016 research project showed that almost all Indonesians had some sort of dislike for social groups different than themselves.\(^{40}\) This research involved 1,520 participants from all 34

\(^{34}\) Abdullah, interview by Sidi.
\(^{35}\) Munawar Liza Zainal, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 13 February 2018.
\(^{36}\) Ibid.
\(^{37}\) Bantsayam, interview by Sidi.
\(^{38}\) Ibid.
\(^{39}\) “About Wahid Foundation”. The Wahid Foundation primarily works to promote a pluralistic and peaceful stance in Islam, but it is also interested in interethnic relations in Indonesia.
\(^{40}\) Alamsyah Muhammad Djafar, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 31 January 2018.
provinces of Indonesia who indicated whether they disliked any ethno-regional or religious group other than themselves. Participants then described how they would feel if a person from social groups they disliked were to become their neighbour, or a teacher in a public school, or a public official. In the end, only 0.6 percent of participants were determined to be completely tolerant, while 43.3 percent of participants were considered ‘somewhat tolerant’, 7 percent considered ‘somewhat intolerant’, and the largest group at 49 percent was considered ‘intolerant’.

Similarly, The Habibie Centre believes that there are plenty of unresolved issues and remaining prejudices to be addressed between different ethno-regional groups. Wirya Adiwena, a researcher from the Habibie Centre, stated that describing Indonesia as a diverse but tolerant country is not false, yet it oversimplifies the issue at hand significantly. Adiwena stated that while statistics often looked at the frequency of cases of intolerance or discrimination, they could not capture the deeper concerns within society, such as residues of fear and anxiety between ethno-regional groups that can be roused to spark future conflicts. He said:

The fact is that even though Indonesia is largely fine, the fact is, there are people who are restless, there are people who are angry, there are people who are sad, disappointed, be it because of the economy, or history, or old wounds that haven’t healed properly.

The Habibie Centre has conducted research on identity politics and reported the state of violent incidents related to issues of governance, security, identity, vigilantism and crime across the country. According to the report, there were 601 separate violent incidents relating to differences in identity in 2014. These incidents together resulted in 117 fatalities, 1179 injuries and 442 cases of damage to property. Identity-related incidents made up only 2.2 percent of all violent incidents recorded in the country, the bulk of which were made up of crime and vigilantism-related violence. However, these

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42 Ibid., 7.
43 The Habibie Centre is an independent non-profit and research institution founded in 1999, working on issues related to democracy, human rights and as well as science and technology. “About the Habibie Center”.
44 Wirya Adiwena, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 7 May 2018.
45 Ibid.
identity-related conflicts also include conflicts pertaining to fights between locals and migrants, gender identity, as well as clashes between youth gangs, schools and sports teams’ supporters.\(^47\) Unfortunately, the raw data of this survey was not accessible at the point of interview and it could not be determined how many incidents were particularly related to ethno-regional or religious identity. For instance, the province reported to have the highest number of identity-related incidents was West Java with 81 cases; however, West Java is known for avid hooliganism in the Indonesian football scene, and plenty of these identity-related incidents may well have taken place among tribal football fans.\(^48\)

Nurina Vidya Hutagalung, another researcher from the Habibie Centre, said that the Habibie Centre had established a correlation between increases in identity-related conflicts and political events such as regional elections. This correlation again indicates the salience of interethnic relations that continue to pose a challenge in the country. Hutagalung further stated that the government has a tendency to downplay the residues of past grievances, which in turn affects their readiness in facing potential future conflicts.\(^49\)

The effect of lasting grievances and prejudice is particularly observable among Chinese-Indonesians who are often considered foreign despite having lived in Indonesia for generations. The term ‘Cina’ (Chinese) has derogatory connotations in Indonesia.\(^50\) Teuku Kemal Pasha, an anthropologist from Universitas Malikussaleh, stated that the othering of Chinese-Indonesians is the legacy of the past segregation between ‘natives’ and ‘foreign Orientals’ during Indonesia’s Dutch colonial past. This past segregation was reinforced during the New Order period through Suharto’s differentiation between ‘native Indonesians’ and ‘Indonesians of foreign descent’.\(^51\) Despite their smaller numbers compared to other ethnic groups, Chinese-Indonesians have significant economic power in the country. While they make up only 1.2 percent of the Indonesian

\(^{47}\) Ibid., 12-17.
\(^{48}\) Ibid., 12.
\(^{49}\) Nurina Vidya Hutagalung, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 7 May 2018.
\(^{50}\) Charles A. Coppel, “Introduction: Researching the Margins,” in *Chinese Indonesians: Remembering, Distorting, Forgetting*, ed. Tim Lindsey and Helen Pausacker (Singapore: ISEAS Publications, 2005), 1-2. ‘Cina’ can refer to a Chinese person or China (the country) and has a condescending connotation. ‘Tiongkok’ or ‘Tionghoa’ is considered as the politically correct term to refer to China or Chinese people.
\(^{51}\) Kemal Pasha, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 9 February 2018.
population, eight out of ten of Indonesia’s richest persons in 2018 were of Chinese descent. According to Djafar, this disproportion in wealth distribution was a source of social envy and added to the stereotypes that fuelled discrimination against Chinese-Indonesians.

Policies to end the systematic discrimination of Chinese-Indonesians after the New Order included an amendment which erased the stipulation that a presidential or vice-presidential candidate had to be a ‘native Indonesian’. In the context of the past classification of Chinese-Indonesians as ‘Indonesian citizens of foreign descent’, this clause barred them from running for the aforementioned offices. In addition, Chinese-Indonesians are allowed to use Chinese names again. However, previous research by Chang-Yau Hoon has shown that Chinese-Indonesians still did not feel like full Indonesian citizens and have thus refrained from participating in politics. Hoon indicates that young Chinese-Indonesians require empowerment to be confident in fully exercising their citizenship rights and to develop a sense of belonging.

There has been more accommodation for Chinese-Indonesians, but there has also been some pushback against them. In 1998, the Partai Bhinneka Ika (The Unity in Diversity Party) was founded by a Chinese-Indonesian and subsequently participated in the 1999 elections. However, two other political parties founded by Chinese-Indonesians were dissolved not long after their foundation in 1998 as their leaders thought it was more viable to join larger, mixed-ethnicity parties. In 2014, Grace Natalie, a Chinese-Indonesian, led the establishment of the Partai Solidaritas Indonesia (Indonesian Solidarity Party), campaigning mostly for the repeal of discriminatory laws. Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, a Chinese-Indonesian, became the Vice-Governor of Jakarta in 2012 and became Governor in November 2014, when Joko Widodo, the former Governor,

54 Djafar, interview by Sidi.
57 Ibid.
became Indonesia’s President. However, in July 2017, Purnama was forced to resign his position due to a controversial blasphemy case in which he was indicted for desecrating a verse from the Qur’an.\textsuperscript{59} His indictment reflected a remaining sense of wariness that an excessive display of Chinese identity may backfire and cause a return to discriminatory actions against Chinese-Indonesians.\textsuperscript{60}

4.3.3 ‘Indigenous people’

Another challenge to ethno-regional diversity in Indonesia is the lack of inclusivity for smaller, traditional ethno-regional groups. David Maybury-Lewis argues that ‘tribal people’ in Southeast Asia, including the indigenous, traditional peoples of Indonesia, are seen as outsiders whose way of life does not conform to the national narrative; hence, their ways of life are not being accommodated by the state.\textsuperscript{61} However, Kenji Tokawa argues that the recognition of indigenous legal traditions supports the process of nation-building, because the accommodation of identities makes it easier for different groups to develop a sense of belonging to the state.\textsuperscript{62} Therefore, the Indonesian state needs to better accommodate the rights of its indigenous people.

Rukka Sombolinggi, the Secretary-General of an NGO called the Indigenous Peoples’ Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN/Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara), indicated the complexities of reconciling numerous cultural groups under one coherent legal system.\textsuperscript{63} The usage of the term ‘indigenous peoples’ in this context does not imply that other Indonesian ethno-regional groups do not originate from the archipelago, unlike

\textsuperscript{59} Celeste Kennel-Shank, “Indonesian Christian Leader Jailed under Blasphemy Law,” \textit{The Christian Century} 134, no. 12 (2017): 16-17. During his tenure as governor and campaigning for a second tenure, Purnama made a controversial speech in which he referenced a verse from the Quran to not vote for a non-Muslim as a leader. He said something to the effect of ‘Do not be deceived by politicians whose campaign is only based on that verse. Some Muslim communities perceived this speech as blasphemous and reported him to the police. Under Indonesia’s law against blasphemy, he was later convicted and sentenced to two years imprisonment.


\textsuperscript{63} Rukka Sombolinggi, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 14 May 2018.
the juxtaposition of ‘indigenous peoples’ with ‘settlers’. Instead, Sombolinggi explained that ‘indigenous people’ was the term that AMAN has determined to be most suitable for their purpose. Furthermore, in the Indonesian language, ‘masyarakat adat’ does not carry the same connotations with the English term ‘indigenous groups’. Etymologically, ‘masyarakat adat’ translates into ‘traditional society’ and reflects the strength of tradition within these groups, including their relative seclusion from urban areas.

Within Indonesia’s legal system, AMAN campaigns for a comprehensive national law in which indigenous groups are acknowledged as an inherent part of the Indonesian nation, with their traditional rights ‘recognised, respected and fulfilled’. AMAN has successfully advocated for 20 separate regional laws pertaining to the rights of indigenous peoples, with 40 more underway. Nationally, there were 50 politicians across Indonesia who had pledged to work with AMAN for the aspirations of the indigenous peoples.

AMAN wants to see the Indonesian legal system grant a substantial increase in recognition and accommodation for traditional ethno-regional laws, particularly within the national laws on forestry, agriculture and mining, where pre-existing traditional laws of various ethnic groups in the archipelago were often overlooked in the devising of national laws. The regional autonomy laws, such as the Law No. 32 of 2004 on Regional Autonomy recognised some cultural rights through political decentralisation, but it did not address traditional rights to natural resources. Instead, natural resources were kept largely nationalised, with concessions for extraction of resources granted to public and private companies at the expense of the traditional rights of the indigenous inhabitants of related areas, such as regulated by the Law No. 5 of 1960 on Agriculture and the Law No. 44 of 1999 on Forestry. In addition, some areas inhabited by indigenous peoples had been turned into conservation areas which inhibited the indigenous people’s access to their traditional livelihood based on small-scale mining or agriculture. Under these laws, indigenous groups were usually uprooted and resettled in areas as determined suitable by the government. Only in 2012 did the Constitutional Court issue the ruling number

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65 Sombolinggi, interview by Sidi.
66 Ibid.
67 Ibid.
35/PUU-X/2012 that acknowledged the rights of indigenous peoples to their ancestral territories. This ruling differentiated between what would be known as ‘national forests’ and ‘traditional’ or ‘indigenous forests’, allowing indigenous groups access to their traditional living space. However, the forest area in question first has to be legally identified as ‘traditional’ or ‘indigenous forest’. In this regard, since 1999, AMAN has mapped the locations and boundaries of the territories of indigenous peoples across Indonesia; the resulting maps are submitted to the government periodically. By 2018, AMAN had identified over 10 million hectares of indigenous people’s territories within 190.5 million hectares of Indonesia’s entire territory, with 2,261 communities consisting of circa 15 million people.

4.3.4 Departicularisation and representation of culture

The ‘Indonesianisation’ or ‘departicularisation’ of local cultures constitutes another challenge to ethno-regional diversity in Indonesia. Departicularisation happens when cultural arts such as regional ‘dances, music, costumes, handicraft and architecture’ are selected and packaged as national commodities for tourism. The line between recognition and praise is blurred with the appropriation of local cultures for economic gain. At the same time, cultural acts are required to conform to and preserve a certain image for an extended period. In Indonesia, ethno-regional diversity is often presented as a national wealth and a valuable commodity, particularly in relation to tourism. The preamble of the Indonesian Law on Tourism states that ‘ancient relics, historical artefacts, arts and culture belonging to the Indonesian nation are the resources and assets for the development of tourism for the improvement of the prosperity and welfare of the people.’ In this regard, departicularisation takes place for the sake of a viable representation of culture for tourism or promotional purposes.

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69 Sombolinggi, interview by Sidi.
Departicularisation can be physically observed in the *Taman Mini Indonesia Indah* (TMII), the cultural park built by Suharto during the New Order, in which cultural elements are moulded to fit into the national narrative, often stretching or distorting local cultures to fit into administrative provincial borders. Kemal Pasha, the anthropologist from Universitas Malikussaleh said when interviewed that the present narrative of Indonesian national identity still carries the influence of the New Order, which normalised a ‘shallow multiculturalism’ unconcerned with the recognition of the ethno-cultural rights of Indonesia’s diverse peoples. This approach to diversity only displays Indonesia’s cultural heritage as a national wealth with no proper accommodation of ethno-regional rights. 

At the same time, the tendency towards Java-centrism in politics has spilled over into cultural representation. Arief Rachman, the chairperson of *Komisi Nasional Indonesia untuk UNESCO*77 (Indonesia’s National Commission for UNESCO/KNIU), addressed some of the imbalance of the representation of the diverse cultural groups in Indonesia.78 At the time of interview in May 2018, Indonesia had eight items listed on the World Heritage list79 and nine on the Intangible Cultural Heritage list.80 Out of the total of 17 items, ten originate from or are located in Java, the most densely-populated and developed island in Indonesia. Rachman stated that the Committee did not have a grand design on which elements it wanted to propose to UNESCO. Instead, interested parties that want to be nominated to UNESCO had to come forward to the Committee. The nomination process largely depended on the initiative of regional governments and community leaders. In turn, this meant that the local communities’ awareness of UNESCO and its programmes was crucial for their involvement.81 Therefore, the inequity in the nomination of various ethno-regional groups was not only a question of representation, but also of equal access to information.

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75 Hitchcock, “We Will Know Our Nation Better,” 45-56.
76 Jones, *Culture, Power and Authoritarianism in the Indonesian State*, 141-42.
77 “Komisi Nasional Indonesia Untuk Unesco,” KNIU, [http://kniu.kemdikbud.go.id/](http://kniu.kemdikbud.go.id/). KNIU’s task is to coordinate the liaison between UNESCO and various governmental institutions within Indonesia.
78 Arief Rachman, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 3 May 2018.
81 Rachman, interview by Sidi.
Meanwhile, officials from the Ministry of Tourism stated that it is challenging to properly capture Indonesia’s ethno-regional diversity into a communicable brand for the purposes of promoting tourism. Martini Paham, Director for Marketing Strategy and Communication at Indonesia’s Ministry of Tourism said that multiculturalism in Indonesia had ‘a very large potential’ as the nation’s ‘wealth’; however, it was hard to define the essence of the Indonesian national identity beyond the slogan of ‘diversity’. Paham stated that choosing individual regions to feature on campaigns was a challenge, as more developed areas with adequate infrastructure were usually more ready to be marketed with pre-existing accessibility, amenities and attractions. Regions wanting to be featured had to first further develop their existing tourism facilities. Therefore, it was not only a question of representation, but also a question of more equitable development. Java-centrist tendencies in Indonesia’s politics thus affect the representation of the country in terms of tourism because better developed regions are more likely to be viable for tourism promotion.

4.4 Framework for Religious Diversity in Indonesia

Compared to the legal framework for ethno-regional diversity, the framework for religious diversity in Indonesia shows more contradictions and loopholes. Despite being a Muslim-majority country, the state seeks to legally accommodate other faiths within the country. This attempt is a good step towards multiculturalism, however, there are various limitations to the recognition and accommodation of minority religions in Indonesia.

The first principle of the Pancasila, ‘Belief in God’, uses a religiously neutral term for ‘God’. Indonesia thus provides room for different faiths and beliefs in the country. However, there are competing interpretations of the first principle of Pancasila which results in a paradox. In Indonesian, ‘Belief in God’ is ‘Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa’. ‘Esa’ is most commonly translated as powerful or omnipotent; however, it has also been interpreted as ‘one’ or ‘singular’ due to its similarity to the Sanskrit word for ‘one’: ‘Eka’. These differing interpretations are particularly problematic for polytheistic traditional local beliefs, but also for Hinduism and Buddhism, which are officially

82 Martini Paham, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 9 May 2018.
recognised by the state but are sometimes interpreted as polytheistic by the people, because they do not always give the impression of having the principle of singularity or monotheism.\(^{84}\)

Article 29 of the Indonesian Constitution further shows this contradiction:

(1) The State shall be based upon *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*.

(2) The State shall guarantee all persons the freedom of worship, each according to their own religion or faith.\(^{85}\)

The first paragraph sets a pan-religious principle as the foundation of the state. Meanwhile, the second paragraph guarantees freedom of worship; however, it is strongly implied that religions and beliefs in question have to be in line with the principle contained in the first paragraph. Therefore, the freedom of religion is not absolute; the religions in question have to fit into the narrative of *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*. It is particularly problematic when this principle is interpreted as monotheism, as the related narrative then excludes polytheistic faiths.

The religions explicitly acknowledged by the state (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism) are specified in an addendum of the Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS/1965. This decree is colloquially known as the law against blasphemy, whose main purpose is the prohibition of the defamation of religions in Indonesia.\(^{86}\) This law criminalises the interpretation of religions outside their ‘true’ teachings as well as acts that mimic an established religion but deviate from its core teachings. In addition, this law makes it illegal for people to persuade others to renounce their faith towards Indonesia’s acknowledged religions.\(^{87}\) The law states that the state does not forbid religions other than the six acknowledged ones to exist in Indonesia, as long as they do not perform their religion in public or proselytise. The constitution, in combination with the law against blasphemy, shows that the state both accommodates and restricts religious practices by setting out which religions are legally acknowledged,

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85 The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, my translation.
87 Ibid.
and which ones are only tolerated. Furthermore, the recognition given to a select few religions is a cause for the projection of a negative image on other, non-recognised religions and faiths.

Meanwhile, the state displays the narrative of interfaith harmony through the strategic placement of houses of worship. For example, the Istiqlal Mosque and the Jakarta Cathedral are located just across the street from each other in the centre of Jakarta. The Immanuel Church, one of the oldest Protestant churches in Indonesia, is only a few blocks away, all within walking distance from Indonesia’s National Monument and the central train station in Jakarta. Passengers of trains pulling into the Gambir station in Jakarta are greeted with the sight of these houses of worship upon arrival. While the Cathedral and the Church were built in the colonial era, the Istiqlal Mosque was purposely built in the vicinity to display the narrative of interreligious harmony after Indonesia’s independence. This display of religious buildings reflects the narrative that the government wants to tell: that of a harmonious nation with high religious tolerance. The extent to which this display reflects the true conditions of interreligious harmony in Indonesia, however, remains contested.

There are implications to the strategic positioning of these houses of worship around Jakarta. For instance, the Istiqlal Mosque, the Jakarta Cathedral and the Immanuel Church represent the three largest religious groups in Indonesia and their significance to the state’s narrative by their central positioning. At the same time, the lack of similar display in the area for the three other recognised religion (Buddhism, Hinduism and Confucianism) is questionable. The most famous Buddhist temple in Indonesia is the Borobudur temple complex in Central Java, built in the eighth century. While Borobudur is still used for religious purposes, presently it is mostly known for tourism. The largest Hindu temple in the country is the Prambanan temple complex, located in Central Java and built in the ninth and tenth centuries. Similar to Borobudur, presently

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89 Dahles, Tourism, Heritage and National Culture in Java, 35.
the Prambanan temple complex is known mostly for touristic purposes. The largest houses of worship for Buddhists and Hindus in Jakarta, respectively the Dharma Bakti Vihara and the Aditya Jaya Temple, are located in less prominent and by far less symbolic locations compared to the aforementioned mosque and churches. Their locations are not obvious to visitors to Jakarta.

The varying degrees of recognition extended towards different religions in Indonesia are further reflected in the structure of the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) which plays an important role in nationally directing, regulating and promoting all kinds of religious activities. MORA is often regarded as a channel for the aspirations of Islamists within the framework of a multicultural state. The overwhelming portion of the MORA dedicated to Islam in comparison to other religions in Indonesia makes this situation even more obvious. Currently, aside from its General Secretariat and Inspectorate, MORA consists of nine directorate-generals, four of which are dedicated to the Islamic faith:

- Directorate-General for Islamic Education (363 staff)
- Haj and Umrah (pilgrimage) Organising Body (284 staff)
- Directorate-General for Islamic Community Development (236 staff)
- Directorate-General for Protestant Community Development (114 staff)
- Directorate-General for Catholic Community Development (95 staff)
- Directorate-General for Hindu Community Development (76 staff)
- Directorate-General for Buddhist Community Development (66 staff)
- Policy Analysis and Development Agency (390 staff)
- Halal Produce Assurance Agency (107 staff)

In addition, the number of personnel allocated to each directorate general indicates a further imbalance between the treatment of Islam vis-à-vis other religions in Indonesia, with a total of 990 staff in Islamic-oriented units. In comparison, the units dedicated to other religions have a significantly lower number of personnel. In April 2020, there are 114 staff for Protestantism, 95 staff for Catholicism, 76 staff for Hinduism and 66 staff for Buddhism. Altogether, the number of personnel in non-Islamic oriented

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units makes up a total of 351, or 35.5 percent of the amount of staff in Islamic-oriented units.

The recognition of religious diversity through national holidays again highlights the privileges Muslims enjoy in Indonesia. In present-day Indonesia, national holidays are announced annually through a joint decree signed by the Minister for Religious Affairs, Minister for Manpower and Minister for State Apparatus and Bureaucratic Reform. The involvement of the Minister for Religious Affairs further cements the role of religion in determining the holidays. In 2019, the observed national holidays were:

- New Year, 1 January
- Chinese New Year, 5 February
- Day of Silence/Hindu New Year, 7 March
- Ascension of Muhammad, 3 April
- Good Friday, 19 April
- Labour Day, 1 May
- Vesak, 19 May
- Ascension of Jesus Christ, 30 May
- Pancasila Day, 1 June
- Eid al-Fitr, 5-6 June
- Eid al-Adha, 11 August
- Independence Day, 17 August
- Islamic New Year, 1 September
- Birth of Muhammad, 9 November
- Christmas Day, 25 December

While all six religions have at least one nationally recognised holiday, the most holidays are Islamic (five holidays) followed by Christian holidays (three holidays). Other religions only have one nationally observed holiday. This discrepancy in the number of nationally observed holidays reflects the majority and minority status of the religions. This regulation on national holidays at the same time enables and restricts religious freedom, as adherents of minority religions who want to celebrate their holidays

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beyond the nationally recognised ones would need to apply for extra permission to take leave from their occupation.96

The privilege Islam enjoys in Indonesia can furthermore be seen through the existence of a religious court which only exists for the Islamic faith, regulating matters such as marriage, divorce and inheritance for the Muslim population. While the foundations of the state itself remains religiously neutral, a certain degree of unity between law and religion is reached through this religious court.97 The lack of comparable institutions for minority religions highlights once more the advantages held by Islam in Indonesia, indicating the significant political influence of Islam in the country.98 This lack of comparable institutions for minority religions can be attributed to their teachings not requiring a similar degree of institutionalisation; however, the incorporation of Hindu laws into the legal system of India, for example, suggests the contrary.99 The comparison between the position of Islam in Indonesia and Hinduism in India suggests that the institutionalisation of religious laws by a state indicates the political sway held by the religion in question.100

4.5 Challenges of Religious Diversity in Indonesia

4.5.1 Demands for constitutional status for Islam

The presence of political Islamism in post-1998 Indonesia constitutes a challenge to multiculturalism in Indonesia. Since 1998, there have been three attempts to give Islamic law a constitutional status through the parliament, respectively in 2000, 2001 and 2002.101 While these attempts were unsuccessful, a ‘conservative turn’ among Muslims in the country has been observed, through, among other things, an increase in mutual othering between Muslims and Christians, marked by increased hostility and mutual projection of a negative image. Often, this mutual othering is ascribed to the increasing

96 Shah, “Constitutional Arrangements on Religion and Religious Freedom in Malaysia and Indonesia: Furthering or Inhibiting Rights?,” 262.
97 Salim, Challenging the Secular State, 45-46.
98 Shah, “Constitutional Arrangements on Religion and Religious Freedom in Malaysia and Indonesia: Furthering or Inhibiting Rights?,” 263-64.
100 Indrayana, “In Search for a Democratic Constitution,” 116.
101 Salim, Challenging the Secular State, 87-88.
Christian population in Indonesia, from 7.4 percent in 1971 to ten percent in 2010.\textsuperscript{102} This increase in the percentage of the Christian population, in turn, has been used by Islamists to peddle the issue of ‘Christianisation’ in the country.\textsuperscript{103} Prior to 1998, the New Order had practically banned political Islam;\textsuperscript{104} thus, the re-emergence of political Islam and a turn to religious conservatism must also be an outburst of a previously repressed identity.

Arskal Salim has identified four notable constituents in favour of Islamic law in post-1998 Indonesia: Islamic political parties, certain Muslim-majority regions such as Aceh, Muslim militant groups and sections of the Islamic print media.\textsuperscript{105} Altogether, the combined influence of various Islamic groups gives Islam a considerable leverage in Indonesian politics. Jeremy Menchik argues that Islamic organisations in Indonesia largely accept diversity and support religious tolerance; however, they reject the framework of Western liberalism in varying degrees and prefer to base their approach towards tolerance on Islamic teachings.\textsuperscript{106} Menchik further argues that Islamic organisations in Indonesia favour a state in which diverse religious groups enjoy religious freedom but do not interfere in ‘the faith matter of others’.\textsuperscript{107} The implementation of this principle, in turn, leads to debates on the definition of ‘faith matter’ and what constitutes an interference. Similarly, Julie Hwang argues that political Islamists in Indonesia are divided between those who support the Pancasila as Indonesia’s ideological foundation, and those who demand constitutional status for Islam.\textsuperscript{108} Therefore, while political Islamists in Indonesia agree that Islamic practices should be accommodated by the state, the exact demands differ between schools of thought.\textsuperscript{109}

The two largest Muslim organisations in Indonesia are Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), which were both founded prior to Indonesia’s political independence. These two organisations adopt a largely moderate position on Islam. Muhammadiyah explicitly adopts a neutral and non-partisan stance in politics, and is

\textsuperscript{104} Vatikiotis, \textit{Indonesian Politics under Suharto}, 120.
\textsuperscript{105} Salim, \textit{Challenging the Secular State}, 2.
\textsuperscript{106} Menchik, \textit{Islam and Democracy in Indonesia}, 3-6.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid., 157.
\textsuperscript{108} Hwang, “Patterns of Normalisation: Islamist Parties in Indonesia,” 60-63.
\textsuperscript{109} Salim, \textit{Challenging the Secular State}, 169.
mostly engaged in social and educational activities through its charities, hospitals and educational institutions across the country.\textsuperscript{110} Meanwhile, NU is known for advocating religious tolerance and moderation. Similar to Muhammadiyah, NU has a network of charities and educational institutions. Despite NU’s brief period as a political movement in the 1950s, presently NU’s leaders refrain from direct political involvement; however, they are still ‘important power brokers’ within society and can influence the people’s opinion on political issues.\textsuperscript{111} On the liberal end of the spectrum, \textit{Jaringan Islam Liberal} (Liberal Islamic Network/JIL) promotes a more inclusive and pluralistic view on Islam. JIL has received criticism from more conservative groups for its contextual interpretation of the Qur’an instead of a literal one.\textsuperscript{112}

Some more conservative organisations include the \textit{Majelis Ulama Indonesia} (Indonesian Council of Ulamas/MUI), one of the most influential Islamic advisory bodies in Indonesia. Originally established by the New Order government as a means to manage Islamic policies in the country, MUI has since evolved into an independent organisation with some consultative power towards the government and has developed a more conservative position on Islam.\textsuperscript{113} To demonstrate MUI’s influence in Indonesia, for example, it has been the main authority on halal-certification in the country, working in close cooperation with Indonesia’s Ministry of Religious Affairs.\textsuperscript{114} Previous research has shown that from 1975 to 2011, MUI issued 137 \textit{fatwas} (recommendations on the interpretation of Islamic law) and 50 decisions in matters pertaining to theology and worship, socio-cultural issues, as well as science and technology.\textsuperscript{115}

Among conservative Islamic organisations is the \textit{Front Pembela Islam} (Islamic Defenders Front/FPI).\textsuperscript{116} FPI’s leader, Rizieq Syihab, an Indonesian of Hadhrami
descent, claims to be a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. Founded under the principle of ‘amar ma’ruf nahi munkar’ (Arabic for ‘commanding right and forbidding wrong’), FPI’s founders argue that the Indonesian state was run under secular laws with considerable Western influence that did not suit its Muslim-majority population. Since its establishment, FPI has been engaged in various forms of violent discrimination against minority religions and groups that it perceives as deviant to its interpretation of Islamic teachings. Its members are known to spread hate speech, conduct illegal raids on ‘un-Islamic establishments’ such as cafes and nightclubs, and forcibly barricade houses of worship of minority religions. While FPI’s leaders publicly claim to denounce violence, little has been done to curb their supposed ‘rogue’ members on multiple occasions. Mark Woodward et al. argue that the conservative environment enabled by MUI’s influence has further encouraged FPI in its activities, partly by issuing conservative fatwas which are used as justifications for FPI’s actions.

Islamist organisations in Indonesia also express their aspirations by becoming political parties. For example, the moderately conservative Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (the Prosperous Justice Party/PKS) is Indonesia’s largest faith-based political party. Since its inception in 1999, PKS has shown the power of Islam for mass mobilisation in Indonesia through social activism and dakwah (missionary-like activities). In the 1999 legislative elections, PKS (then called Partai Keadilan/Justice Party) only won 1.36 percent of votes; in the 2014 legislative elections, PKS won 6.79 percent of votes, and in 2019 it managed to get 8.21 percent of votes.

Despite the re-emergence of political Islam and the contemporary conservative turn in Indonesia, the state is prepared to set limits to threats against the overall stability

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117 Ibid., 267-68.
118 Ibid., 272.
120 Bamualim, “Islamic Militancy and Resentment against Hadhramis in Post-Suharto Indonesia,” 215.
of the state. For example, in 2017, when *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* (HTI), a hard-line Islamist movement openly defied *Pancasila* as the state’s ideology, the government decidedly outlawed the movement. HTI is an organisation affiliated with *Hizbut Tahrir*, a pan-Islamic organisation with a vision to establish an Islamic state ruled by a caliphate.\textsuperscript{124} HTI was established in Indonesia in 1982 and really began to express its political views in the post-1998 reform era, making use of the easing of political control. In 2000, HTI registered as an official civil society organisation at the Ministry of Home Affairs in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{125} Ideologically, this registration posed a paradox, as the HTI rejected the notion of the nation-state and the Pancasila. HTI increasingly mobilised organised action to demand a constitutional status for Islamic law in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{126} HTI was officially banned by the government in July 2017 for threatening national unity by their mobilisation of their members. The Indonesian government received criticism for going against the principles of freedom of association and expression in its decision to disband the HTI, yet the government maintained that national unity and harmony was its priority. Furthermore, the government argued that by disbanding HTI, it protected the very foundations of the state which accommodate multiculturalism in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{127}

Officially, the government denounces political Islamism; Azis Nurwahyudi, Director for Public Diplomacy from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for example, repeatedly emphasised in his interview that Indonesia was a moderate Muslim country in which Islam and democracy are compatible. He stated that radical Islamists are not part of the true face of Islam in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{128}

Yet Islamist elements can also be found among higher echelons of the government, despite being much more subtle in their manifestation. Agustini Rahayu, Director for Marketing Development and Tourism Marketing in Europe at the Ministry of Tourism, was part of a 2016 national taskforce charged with developing Indonesia’s tourism promotion campaign. When interviewed, Rahayu said that the President wanted


\textsuperscript{126} Osman, “The Transnational Network of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia,” 753.


\textsuperscript{128} Azis Nurwahyudi, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 29 January 2018.
Indonesia to have a ‘single identity’ that would be easily recognisable. To help achieve this objective, the taskforce had to develop a logo that represented the national identity of Indonesia and could be used by different government agencies. The taskforce settled on a logo derived of the Garuda Pancasila, Indonesia’s national coat of arms. The logo is the silhouette of a bird in a spread-eagle position, painted in five different colours to emulate the diversity of Indonesia, as shown below. The number five itself was considered a good reflection of the Pancasila as the five founding principles of Indonesia.129

![Figure 4-2: the Wonderful Indonesia logo](image)

Rahayu shared an off-hand remark she heard in a meeting which indicated an Islamist presence within the government, as an unnamed individual within the higher echelons of the government objected to the logo because it looked like a Christian cross, which this person deemed unsuitable for a predominantly Muslim country.130 Since the logo was distilled out of the Garuda Pancasila, a bird in a spread-eagle position, it is reminiscent of a crucifix to some extent. The fact that someone felt it was necessary to say that a logo vaguely reminiscent of a cross would be inappropriate for Indonesia indicated a rejection on the part of some Islamic elements in the country towards the perceived growing influence of minority religions. This situation again recalled the debate on the relation between religion and the state, as well as the privileges for Islam as the majority religion in Indonesia.

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129 Agustini Rahayu, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 9 May 2018.
130 Ibid.
4.5.2 The treatment of minority religions

Another challenge to religious diversity in Indonesia is the treatment of religious minorities. While minority world religions are recognised by the state, they are not on an equal footing with Islam as Indonesia’s majority religion. The Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Amboina in Maluku, Monsignor Petrus Canisius Mandagi, expressed that it was natural for majority and minority groups to play different parts within society. His statement implied that minority religions in Indonesia have resigned themselves to their disadvantaged position in society:

[Differences between majorities and minorities] is the reality, after all. And Christians have to admit that. We have to realise that we are a minority. We have to realise that we need to be protected by Muslims. And Muslims also have to be aware of their responsibility to protect us.¹³¹

A similar resignation was observed in the statements of other leaders of minority religions in Indonesia. Johanes Subagio, the parishioner in the Catholic Church of the Holy Heart in Banda Aceh, explained that his church enjoyed largely peaceful interactions with Aceh’s Muslim-majority environment. At the same time, his statements revealed some uneasiness in those very relations.¹³² The interview reflected how religious minorities in Aceh are able to practice their faith as long as they conform to the expectations of the religious majority; for instance, they are expected not to display their religious identity flagrantly beyond the space of their church. One remark particularly revealed that his congregation did not fully enjoy freedom of religion, as Subagio stated that they were able to worship and perform other religious duties “as long as they did not bother other people”. He said that they had to respect that the majority of the people in Aceh wanted to live under the Islamic law.¹³³ Subagio further said:

Religious tolerance here is good. We are safe in the church grounds. During large services, such as the Christmas or Easter services, the police or the military would help us guard the church, make sure the services are safe. Sometimes the police and military would stand guard even for 24 hours during religious holidays. […] It is also easy to arrange such protection.

¹³¹ Petrus Canisius Mandagi, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 17 April 2018.
¹³³ Ibid.
from time to time the police chief himself would come here and discuss the
dates when he needs to dispatch people.\textsuperscript{134}

The very need for extra security on religious holidays implies an awareness of the
potential of conflict. It was, however, impossible to ascertain whether the police and
military were guarding the church from potential external disruptions or to make sure
that services were contained to the church grounds.

Similar sentiments could be detected at the Dharma Bakti Temple, a Buddhist
temple in Banda Aceh. Information gathered at the temple again showed how religious
minorities can only express their religious identity within certain restrictions. Hasan, a
caretaker and a monk of the temple, said that interreligious relations in Aceh are generally
‘good’:

\begin{quote}
I am glad that we are able to run our temple in the middle of Banda Aceh.
The relations between religious groups in Aceh is good. We have to guard
this and respect others.\textsuperscript{135}
\end{quote}

Hasan further explained that at the time of interview in February 2018, the temple was
planning to hold a special service for Chinese New Year, for which there would be
increased security from the police. However, Hasan could not elaborate on why it was
necessary to increase security, stating that it simply had always been that way.\textsuperscript{136} His
statement echoed that of Subagio on increased security around religious holidays,
implying the potential of danger or conflict around the public celebration of minority
religions.

Meanwhile, smaller Muslim groups which are considered deviant from the
mainstream in Indonesia face discrimination and persecution. The Ahmadiyahs are a
religious community, which in Indonesia consists of approximately 300,000 people.
Ahmadiyahs consider themselves to be Muslims but recognise a new prophet after
Muhammad and practice religious rituals different from the mainstream Sunni Muslims
in Indonesia.\textsuperscript{137} As such, the Ahmadiyahs are considered to defy mainstream Islamic
teachings which stipulate Muhammad as the last prophet. Historically, they have existed

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{135} Hasan, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 26 February 2018.
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137} Melissa Crouch, “Ahmadiyah in Indonesia: A History of Religious Tolerance under
in Indonesia at least since the 1920s. They had faced discrimination before but have mostly lived peacefully among the larger population. In 1980, a statement by the *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI) declared Ahmadiyah as a heretic sect.\(^{138}\) Attacks by radical Islamic groups against them noticeably increased after 2000.\(^{139}\) In turn, in July 2005, the MUI issued a statement declaring the Ahmadiyahs as a heretic sect for the second time.\(^{140}\) Violence against the Ahmadiyahs increased again following this declaration.\(^{141}\)

Since MUI’s second declaration, pressure from Islamists mounted against the government to ban Ahmadiyahs in Indonesia. In 2008, the government yielded to this pressure and issued a Joint Ministerial Decree which echoed the MUI’s declaration and prohibits the Ahmadiyahs from practicing or proselytising their faith publicly. The decree was signed by the Minister for Religious Affairs, the Attorney General and the Minister for Home Affairs.\(^{142}\) This decree indicated that the government wanted to avoid a public narrative which implies that the state was being un-Islamic or even heretic in allowing an allegedly ‘heretic sect’ to continue its practices in Indonesia. This ban demonstrates the state’s limits to toleration, particularly when discrepancies between value systems become too much, often for the sake of the interest of the wider public and the coherence of the state.\(^{143}\) This move raised concern over the supposed values of tolerance preached by the nationalist narrative and speculations of Indonesia becoming a more Islamist country.\(^{144}\) The government, in this case, chose to align itself with the radical and political Islamists in the country at the expense of an inclusive approach to multiculturalism. As a result, there was a significant crackdown on many Ahmadiyah mosques across Indonesia, including by unauthorised non-state actors.\(^{145}\)

Other minorities within Islam also face different types of persecution. For example, in the Sunni-Shi’a cleavage which stems from disagreements over the successor of the Prophet Muhammad in the seventh century, most Indonesians are taught in the Sunni tradition. There is thus a negative connotation attached to Shi’ism, which is

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\(^{139}\) Crouch, “Ahmadiyah in Indonesia,” 56.

\(^{140}\) Mariani, “Ahmadiyah, Conflicts, and Violence in Contemporary Indonesia,” 13.

\(^{141}\) Ibid., 17.

\(^{142}\) Ibid.

\(^{143}\) Newey, “Toleration, Politics, and the Role of Morality,” 376.

\(^{144}\) Crouch, “Ahmadiyah in Indonesia,” 57.

\(^{145}\) Mariani, “Ahmadiyah, Conflicts, and Violence in Contemporary Indonesia,” 18-19.
considered an erroneous interpretation of Islam by Sunni leaders. In this regard, localised small-scale violent conflicts have broken out in the past between adherents of Sunnism and Shi’ism, such as in Madura in 2012.146

In this regard, Alamsyah Djafar from the Wahid Foundation argues that the significant influence of Islam on various aspects of governance in Indonesia has created an environment that is fertile for a more hard-line take on religious identity. If the state breaches the religious freedom of its citizens, then non-state actors are more likely to engage in discriminative behaviour, particularly against religious minorities. For example, non-state Muslim vigilante groups have barricaded buildings used for worship by minority religious groups without significant resistance from the rest of the population and the government. Parts of the religious majority can also have their freedom restricted, as evident through the policing of women’s clothing in Aceh which is done towards Muslim women by both state and non-state actors. In turn, this policing has led non-Muslim women to also dress conservatively in public out of fear of persecution.147

Ambiguity in Indonesia’s laws against discrimination contains a loophole which further enables discrimination on the basis of religious identity. The Law No. 40 of 2008 on the Eradication of Racial and Ethnic Discrimination does not explicitly outlaw discrimination on the account of religion. This failure to mention discrimination on the basis of religion is striking, given Indonesia’s religious diversity and history of religious tensions. Article 1 of this law defines ‘race’ as a ‘categorisation based on physical trait marks and lines of heritage’ and ‘ethnicity’ as ‘categorisation based on faith, values, habits, traditions, norms, language, history, geography and kinship.’148 At first glance, this law thus covers many aspects of identity, including ethno-regional identity (‘race’, ‘traditions’, ‘geography’, ‘language’, ‘kinship’) and religious identity (‘faith’). However, the exact wording of this law implies that discrimination on the account of religious identity is not explicitly outlawed. The law refrains from using the word ‘agama’ (religion) and instead uses the more ambiguous word ‘kepercayaan’ (faith), which in the Indonesian language does not always carry the connotation of a religious belief. Even then, ‘faith’ is only classified as one element of ‘ethnicity’. It leaves religious minorities

147 Djafar, interview by Sidi.
at a vulnerable position when religious discrimination is not explicitly outlawed in the legal system.

Furthermore, this law against discrimination limits its own authority on ambiguous terms as stated in Articles 2(1) and 2(2), as follows:

(1) The eradication of racial and ethnic discrimination shall be conducted based on the norms of equality, freedom, justice and universal values of humanity.

(2) The norms of equality, freedom, justice and universal values of humanity as referred to in paragraph (1) shall be conducted by taking into account the values of religion, socio-cultural conditions and laws valid in the jurisdiction of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.\textsuperscript{149}

The Explanatory Addendum of this law specifies that the term ‘values of religion’ in the abovementioned article refers to ‘values adhered to by each religion which govern interpersonal relations as well as the relations between individuals and their environment’.\textsuperscript{150} The ‘religions’ addressed in this article are limited to the six recognised ones. This explanation restricts the law’s own authority and provides a loophole through which discriminatory acts could be defended if they were constructed as part of the so-called ‘values’ supposedly ‘adhered to’ by the Indonesian people. For example, discrimination against LGBTQ people could be defended as acts which upheld religious principles. Traditional cultural practices that contradict religious teachings could also be construed as offensive towards religion. In contrast, Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS/1965 categorises blasphemy and abuse against religion as a criminal offence.\textsuperscript{151} This situation provides a legal advantage for people who operate on, or claim to be operating on, a religious platform.

4.5.3 Indigenous faith groups

The recognition of localised indigenous faith groups constitutes another challenge for religious diversity in Indonesia, as this lack of recognition negatively impacts the faith

\textsuperscript{149} Ibid. My translation.

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid. My translation.

\textsuperscript{151} “Penetapan Presiden Nomor 1 Tahun 1965 Tentang Pencegahan Penyalahgunaan Dan/Atau Penodaan Agama.”
groups’ freedom to exercise their religious practices. The state does not deny their presence; however, indigenous faith groups face administrative obstacles to fully exercise their rights as citizens. For example, adherents of indigenous faith groups struggle to have their faith correctly stated on documents of identification, while it is the norm in Indonesia to have one’s religious identity on official documents. The government’s efforts to increase recognition and accommodation for these indigenous faith groups are uncoordinated and sporadic. In 2017, the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture published an encyclopaedia on various indigenous faith groups (aliran kepercayaan) in the country. In total, there were 169 separate faith groups and organisations listed in the encyclopaedia. The purpose of the publication as stated in the introduction of the encyclopaedia was to acknowledge the legacy of culture and local wisdom found in various faith groups across the country, as well as to raise the public’s awareness of them. However, while this encyclopaedia is already in its third edition, it is not widely circulated or immediately available to the public and thus has little impact on the public discourse on indigenous faith groups.

An anonymous consultation with an official within the Ministry of Education and Culture revealed that some parts of the ministry had been pushing for public schools to provide religious education in accordance with the local faith groups, particularly in remote areas where there are a higher concentration of adherents of such faith groups. There were no official numbers, but it was indicated that this effort had come to fruition in a few areas. However, the official involved in this effort felt that they were faced with prejudice both from the public and peers within the government, as indigenous faith groups are often portrayed as less civilised than world religions. This official’s reservations about being identified as a participant in itself indicates the sensitivity of the issue of the recognition of indigenous faith groups.

Alamsyah Djafar argues that the present differentiation between world religions and indigenous faith groups in Indonesia could be traced back to one speech by Suharto in 1978. The speech, which was made in front of parliament to ratify Indonesia’s white paper (Garis Besar Haluan Negara/GBHN) at the time, contained passages in which Suharto stated that faith groups were not religions and could not be recognised as such.

152 Ensiklopedia Kepercayaan Terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa, v-xi.
153 Ibid., xiii-xiv.
These passages had led to the institutionalised discrimination against the so-called faith groups which in turn trickled down into the mind-set of society.\(^{154}\)

According to Rukka Sombolinggi of AMAN, the Indonesian society is not entirely ready for a full legal recognition of these faith groups, as the general public already has the perception that these groups are not on par with world religions. As an advocate for the rights of indigenous peoples in Indonesia, Sombolinggi gave a striking statement on the predicament of the indigenous faith groups in Indonesia:

> It is really sad in our country. All the recognised religions are imported religions. Don’t you agree? The recognised ones… It’s like this. This country of ours is so… How should I put it… So convoluted in its thinking, so that our foundational value as the Indonesian nation, which is so diverse, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, has been betrayed. Ancestral religions, those are religions inherited along with our diverse culture, along with the wisdom to manage natural resources across the archipelago in a just manner, they have been eradicated. The ones that are recognised are all imported religions. Christianity, Catholicism, Islam, those are all from the Middle East. That’s where they come from, where their roots are. Right? Those three. Buddhism, Hinduism, they are also foreign. Confucianism. The same. Ancestral religions are not recognised at all. So there is actually something wrong with us. We cannot blame others as we are all complicit. You, me, the parliament, religious leaders, religious leaders of major religions, all of us. We are guilty because we keep silent about it.\(^{155}\)

Sombolinggi strongly rejected the public narrative that indigenous faith groups pose a threat to established world religions in Indonesia. She said that they were small in number, with current estimates at one million people within a total population of over 250 million. She was, however, wary of the potential of their legal recognition, if this recognition were to be paired with a differentiation between the faith groups as ‘*aliran kepercayaan*’ (‘faith groups’) and ‘*agama*’ (‘religions’). This differentiation, according to Sombolinggi, would continue to foster a discriminative environment towards them, as it implies that faith groups are ‘lesser’ than world religions.\(^{156}\)

\(^{154}\) Djafar, interview by Sidi.
\(^{155}\) Sombolinggi, interview by Sidi.
\(^{156}\) Ibid.
A widespread perception of the importance of religiosity constitutes another challenge, as a public declaration of one’s faith is considered indispensable. Sombolinggi shared a personal anecdote of trying to erase the information on her religious identity on her ID card, which is legally enabled through Article 64 in the Law No. 24 of 2013 on Citizen Administration. This article states that citizens whose faiths were not yet legally recognised by the state may leave their religious information empty on any citizenship-related paperwork. Yet Sombolinggi encountered significant resistance on the side of public servants in charge of issuing ID cards when she asked to amend hers. Despite her best efforts to convince local civil administrators about the legality of the procedure and her being of age to make that decision for herself, her mother had to give a letter of consent for her to erase the information on religious identity on her ID card.

Leaders of religious minorities interviewed for this research all expressed their support for the legal recognition of Indonesia’s indigenous faith groups, indicating that the negative public image of indigenous faith groups was a matter beyond religious teachings. Johannes Subagio from the Catholic Church in Banda Aceh stated that a legal recognition would make it easier for the adherents of such faith groups to obtain official paperwork. Elifas Maspaitella from the Protestant Church of Maluku similarly expressed his support for the legal recognition of Indonesia’s indigenous faith groups. Monsignor Mandagi from the Roman Catholic Church in Ambon stated that whether or not the legal system recognised these indigenous faith groups, they were there; as such, their rights as equal citizens before the law should be recognised by the state.

Since the fieldwork for this research was conducted, Indonesia has produced a regulation which increases legal accommodation of indigenous faith groups by enabling the legal registration of marriages for them from July 2019. The regulation overhauls several aspects of citizen administration in Indonesia and has an entire chapter dedicated to the registration of marriages conducted in the tradition of indigenous faith groups.

158 Subagio, interview by Sidi.
159 Elifas Maspaitella, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 28 March 2018.
160 Mandagi, interview by Sidi.
It thus addresses some of the past bureaucratic hurdles faced by children of families in indigenous faith groups, such as obtaining birth certificates. This regulation is another step toward a more inclusive framework for multiculturalism in Indonesia.

4.5.4 Religious segregation

The separation between religious groups is another challenge for interfaith relations in Indonesia. Indonesia’s marriage laws contribute to the perpetuation of religious cleavages in society by inhibiting interreligious marriages. The Law No. 1 of 1974 states that a marriage can only be legally recognised by the civil registry if a religious covenant has been held. This stipulation is entailed in Articles 1 and 2:

\[\text{A marriage shall be the physical and emotional bond between a man and a woman with the purpose of building a happy and everlasting family and household in accordance with the Belief in God. (Article 1)}\]
\[\text{A marriage shall be legal if conducted according to the laws of religions and faiths. (Article 2.1)}\]

This law thus implies that both parties in a marriage must be of the same religion, because in turn, the rules of religious marriage covenants usually dictate that both parties in the marriage are of the same religion. For example, Islamic marriage laws stipulate that both the groom and the bride should be Muslims, even though Muslim men are allowed to marry ‘a pious woman of the Book’, meaning a woman from an Abrahamic religion. Still, such mixed marriages are very rare. Having been in force since 1974, this law reflects that the attitude towards the salience of religion in marriage has been relatively stable in Indonesia. The process of drafting this very law itself involved negotiations between the government and Islamist groups who demanded Indonesia’s marriage law not contradict Islamic practices. In addition, the existing social pressure is high for couples to share the same religion. As a result, interreligious weddings are

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164 This thesis does not discuss gender and sexual identity; however, the implication of the requirement of a religious covenant is that marriages in Indonesia must involve a heterosexual, cisgender couple.
very rare; more commonly, one party converts to their partner’s religion even though this conversion would involve serious objections from family members.

Another challenge relating to the segregation between religious groups takes the form of religious education. Indonesia acknowledges many types of formal education, including religious schools, such as pesantren and madrasah (Islamic schools). There are also schools associated with various churches throughout the country. Schools hold a strategic importance as a place for intercultural interaction in which students can make friends with peers from different social groups. Thus, the type of school attended by young people can have significant influence on their interactions in the community. However, multiculturalism is not a natural experience in many religious and private schools. Instead, schools with a religious background tend to segregate and promote exclusivity. The homogeneity of students’ background in segregated religious schools may limit the schools’ capacity in providing an adequate citizenship education, as pupils of religious schools are less likely to have friends from other religions compared to pupils of public schools. While the provision of education in accordance with the people’s religious values is an important part of their cultural rights, there are potential social repercussions of segregating schools based on people’s religion. Therefore, the state has a continuing challenge to find an appropriate balance between protecting the people’s rights to express their religious identity and emphasising the importance of harmonious interfaith relations.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has examined multiculturalism in Indonesia through the extent of legal pluralism in the state and concludes that Indonesia’s framework for diversity has adopted an inequitable approach to multiculturalism. First, there are different degrees of accommodation provided towards majority and minority groups, with policies for minorities leaning toward toleration instead of equal recognition and accommodation. Second, while the constitution guarantees the expression of ethno-regional and religious

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168 Ibid., 495.

identities, its derivation into various laws shows inconsistencies and loopholes. For example, even though Indonesia’s legal framework supposedly provides equal recognition for world religions, the situation on the field indicates that religious minorities often have to conform to the expectations of the Muslim majority. Smaller minority groups such as indigenous faith and ethno-regional groups are often overlooked by national legislation.

The treatment of ethno-regional diversity is different from that of religious diversity; the expression of various ethno-regional identities is accommodated to a significantly larger extent than religious identities. For example, the establishment of new administrative provinces since 1998 indicates that formerly overlooked ethno-regional entities are increasingly allowed to formally express themselves. In addition, the traditional rights of traditional communities/indigenous peoples are gradually getting more legal recognition, such as their rights to their ancestral territory.

By contrast, religious groups beyond the six mainstream world religions are facing a risk of persecution. Indonesia’s law against discrimination explicitly criminalises discrimination on the basis of ethnic differences but does not explicitly categorise discrimination on the basis of religious identity as a criminal offence. In addition, Indonesia’s law against the defamation of religion enables the prosecution of people who are perceived as blasphemous by mainstream religious groups, but not by non-official religions. Furthermore, Indonesia’s legal framework facilitates the hardening of religious identity through its marriage laws, which impedes interreligious marriages within the population. The recent legal recognition extended to marriage covenants in the fashion of indigenous faith groups has yet to show its impact.

However, privileges extended towards Islam in Indonesia can be interpreted as an attempt to mollify political Islamists and prevent them from directly challenging Indonesia’s overall framework for diversity. This attitude is reflected in the state’s ban on the Ahmadiyah following increased pressure from conservative and influential Islamic groups. Similarly, the state banned the Islamist organisation Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia when it explicitly defied Pancasila as Indonesia’s foundation, showing the limits of the state’s toleration for political Islam. Paradoxically, the privileges granted to Indonesia’s Muslim majority help secure the state’s framework of Unity in Diversity, while they simultaneously foster an environment which normalises disadvantages on the side of religious minorities.
This chapter has highlighted the unique features of multiculturalism in Indonesia, both its strength and weakness. Indonesia’s take on ethno-regional diversity has been largely successful. For example, the significant delegation of political authority to the provincial level, paired with the reinstitution of traditional units of governance, has increased contentment with Indonesia’s central government. It has thus reduced potential conflicts between national and ethno-regional identities to the extent that Indonesia has not seen regional uprisings since 2005 other than in Papua. This situation is in line with theories stating that the recognition and accommodation of identities leads to the increase in the people’s contentment with the state.

At the same time, Indonesia’s management of religious diversity has not achieved a similar level of success. Despite the recognition of six world religions, Islam’s influence in various aspects of the country’s legal system highlights its predominance vis-à-vis other religions in Indonesia. Yet, Islamist groups continue to demand for Islamic law to occupy more space within Indonesia’s legal system, some even demanding to entirely replace the Pancasila with Islamic law. In this case, the preponderant accommodation accorded to Islam in Indonesia has not led to a desired degree of contentment with the state.

The contrast between policies pertaining to ethno-regional diversity and those pertaining to religious diversity as shown in this chapter has thus indicated that they constitute different dimensions within Indonesia’s diversity. Ethno-regional identity occupies a different role to religious identity, and these two types of identity possess different degrees of salience for both the people and the state. The role and salience of ethno-regional identity and religious identity are discussed in more detail respectively in Chapters 5 and 6.
5 National and Ethno-regional Identity in Indonesia

This chapter discusses the relation between national and ethno-regional identities in Indonesia, where there are more than 700 local ethno-regional groups, the largest of which include the Javanese, Sundanese, Batak and Minang. Each ethno-regional group comes with its own culture, including traditions, language and costumes, giving Indonesia a remarkable cultural diversity. This chapter argues that the Indonesian national identity is more salient than existing ethno-regional identities. This argument is based on data gathered from laypeople and university student participants in the provinces of Aceh, Jakarta, Maluku and West Java. 56 laypeople participants of various backgrounds took part in one-on-one in-depth interviews I conducted. Across eight universities, 237 university students filled out self-administered questionnaires, followed up by one focus group discussion at each university involving ten to twelve participants. Two additional, smaller focus groups were held exclusively with students from minority backgrounds. Findings from laypeople and university student participants support each other, further affirming their validity. In addition, statements from elite interviewees are shown where appropriate to better analyse the issues at hand.

The salience of the Indonesian national identity has been enabled by a prevalent narrative of ethno-regional groups being sub-nations of a larger Indonesian nation. Furthermore, this narrative portrays ethno-regional diversity as a source of cultural wealth as opposed to a threat to unity. Furthermore, participants interpreted their national and ethno-regional identities as different aspects of their selves. Participants perceived their Indonesian national identity as a primarily civic identity, associated with a sense of citizenship and duty towards the state. Meanwhile, participants understood their ethno-regional identity as a primarily ethnic attachment, associated with themes such as kinship, family and local traditions. However, the civic-ethnic distinction is not clear-cut; for instance, participants associated their Indonesian identity with traditionally ethnic themes such as birthplace and home. Furthermore, the participants’ shared understanding of Indonesia’s struggle against colonialism as an important part of the country’s national

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1 I have decided to use the term ‘ethno-regional groups’ as a differentiation from Kymlicka’s usage of the term ‘ethnic groups’. The emphasis on regional identity pertains to the fact that not all participants in a particular province identified with the local ethnic majority, but still shared significant local idiosyncrasies with them. Furthermore, the ethnic dimension in the term ‘ethno-regional’ encompasses cultural elements such as customs and traditions.

2 The use of the term ‘ethnic’ also encompasses cultural elements such as traditions and history.
identity added an element of shared culture and history. There are thus cultural elements in both the Indonesian national identity and various ethno-regional identities. In addition, the history of regional struggles against colonialism has been incorporated into the history of Indonesia, which further interlinks national and ethno-regional identities.

Participants indicated that they considered their respective ethno-regional identities to be sub-parts of a shared Indonesian national identity. For example, participants preferred to use the Indonesian national language to regional languages in public; meanwhile, they primarily used regional languages within private circles. Furthermore, participants did not perceive differences in ethno-regional identity as a barrier to friendships, courtships and marriages, particularly among younger generations. However, some issues remain. Participants indicated the regular occurrence of discrimination against ethno-regional minorities and the persistence of prejudices between different ethno-regional groups. Chinese-Indonesians in particular are prone to discrimination because, as Kymlicka’s definition of an ‘ethnic group’, they do not constitute the local majority anywhere in Indonesia. In turn, the participants’ experience of discrimination negatively affected the participants’ feelings associated to their national and ethno-regional identities.

5.1 The Indonesian National Identity

The Indonesian national identity is primarily understood by participants as a civic identity, associated with their rights and responsibilities as citizens. For instance, in the questionnaires, the most frequent theme mentioned by university student participants in relation to their Indonesian identity was their ‘sense of ownership towards Indonesia’, as mentioned by 37 out of 237 student participants (15.6%). The theme of ‘a sense of duty’ was mentioned 21 times (8.9%), and the theme of ‘love for the country’ was mentioned 17 times (7.1%). Ten participants (4.2%) mentioned the theme of benefits received from the state. Among laypeople participants, the theme of rights and responsibilities as citizens was mentioned by 15 participants (6.3%). For example:

I am very happy to be Indonesian. It is a great country, and I think it’s recently taking better care of its citizens. My younger siblings, still in junior and senior high school, they get free education. (Participant J-09)
I feel positive about being Indonesian. I get benefits from the state. (Participant M-03)

Participants also described what they perceived as typical of the Indonesian nation in civic terms, citing values such as diversity and harmonious coexistence between various cultural groups. For example, 18 laypeople participants (32.1%) stated that diversity was an inherent part of the Indonesian identity:

This is what I think is characteristic of Indonesia: first, archipelagic nation. Second, arts and culture. Third, ethnic diversity. (Participant M-10)

How do I describe the Indonesian nation? I would say, well, it is a very diverse nation, wealthy in terms of culture. Diverse peoples from Sabang\(^3\) to Merauke\(^4\) who are now one nation. (Participant WJ-15)

The theme of diversity was used by 49 university student participants (20.1%) to describe the Indonesian nation. Despite the largely homogeneous local social environment, participants from Aceh and Maluku claimed to feel similarly proud about diversity in Indonesia as the participants from the more diverse areas of Jakarta or West Java. In the focus groups, ‘diversity’ was always the first thing mentioned by university students when asked to describe Indonesia. The statements suggested their belief, at least on a perfunctory level, in the existence of tolerance between different ethno-regional and religious groups in Indonesia. Particularly in Aceh, participants did not elaborate on personal experiences with diversity but used phrases like ‘as we all know’ or ‘as we are taught’, implying that Indonesia’s diversity was much-recited jargon. The following statement from a participant in University Maluku A was very typical of university student participants:

I feel very positive about what exists in Indonesia: diversity in ethnicity, language, religion and yet we remain one as Indonesia.

The cultural element of the Indonesian national identity, meanwhile, was reflected in the participants’ understanding of a shared history of struggling against colonialism. Among laypeople participants, eleven (19.6%) mentioned Indonesia’s colonial history. For example:

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\(^3\) Sabang is the western-most city in Indonesia.

\(^4\) Merauke is the eastern-most city in Indonesia.
We are one nation because our ancestors fought off the Dutch together. Since then, we have been working together to build the nation, too. (Participant M-02)

University student participants also displayed a similar understanding of a shared history of colonialism as a source of national identity. The theme of shared history was mentioned by eleven university student participants. To take one example:

I feel that Indonesia was occupied for so long. Err, what is it, plenty of national heroes died for us to have independence. So for us, as the younger generation, it is our duty as students to study well. And then, we, err, have to give our best to fill this independence. We may not let it go in vain. We have to make sure the nation remains united and independent. (University Maluku A)

At the same time, participants associated their national identity with the theme of birthplace and home, suggesting that the Indonesian national identity also contained ethnic attachments, thus blurring the civic-ethnic distinction. Eighteen laypeople participants (32.1%) associated their Indonesian identity with the theme of ‘home’, such as Participant WJ-11:

Since I was born, until now, I do feel proud [about being Indonesian]. I was born in Indonesia, I eat in Indonesia, and everything I did was in Indonesia.

Among university student participants, the theme of birthplace was mentioned 45 times (18.9%). A participant in University West Java A wrote in the questionnaire, “No matter what, [Indonesia] is my birthplace”. This sentiment was echoed by others:

I have a very strong sense of belonging to Indonesia because it is where I was born and it is my country. (University Aceh A)

Because I was born as an Indonesian child therefore I love and care about my country very much. (University Maluku B)

The participants’ shared understanding of the Indonesian national identity has been shaped by its method of socialisation. Participants shared the idea that national identity was mainly introduced to them through formal channels, particularly the education system. For instance, 41 out of 56 laypeople participants (73.2%) stated that

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5 Özkırmlı, *Theories of Nationalism*, 49.
they became aware of their Indonesian identity during their elementary school years. Six further participants stated that their national identity was developed during their high school years. This identity was shaped by the usage of Indonesian as the primary language of instruction in the education system. Participants also recalled their attendance at their schools’ weekly flag-hoisting ceremonies during which they watched the Indonesian flag being raised accompanied by hearing the Indonesian national anthem. Participants further reported that their understanding of Indonesia was shaped by history classes that touched upon topics such as the national struggle towards independence, as well as citizenship classes that introduced the Pancasila as the fundamental principles of Indonesia. In addition, citizenship classes socialised the narrative of Indonesia being an inherently diverse nation, with various ethno-regional groups constituting its sub-nations.

Reflecting the modernist approach to nationalism which emphasises the role of the mass media in spreading national identity, three laypeople participants (5.4%) claimed that they recalled feeling Indonesian when hearing the national anthem on television or radio. These three participants were above the age of 40 and recalled how the national anthem used to be played daily during the New Order, marking the start and end of the broadcast. Meanwhile, Participant M-02, a retired navy member, said that he particularly felt Indonesian upon joining the navy when he trained with fellow recruits from all across the country. In this regard, the understanding of the Indonesian national identity of the state institution was systematically imprinted upon its recruits. These recruits also received first-hand experience of the diversity promoted by Indonesia’s national motto of Unity in Diversity.

Two laypeople participants (3.6%) claimed that they realised their Indonesian national identity upon encountering foreigners, which recalls the importance of primers and triggers for people’s awareness of their identity. In this case, the encounter with foreigners triggered the participants’ Indonesian identity to come to the fore. The Indonesian national identity in itself, however, had already been shaped and primed by the participants’ environment, including their education. One of these two participants stated that he felt Indonesian upon making friends with a foreigner as a child, which led him to realise the differences between Indonesians and foreigners. The other participant stated that she truly realised her Indonesian identity when she was mistaken as a

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6 The five principles of the Pancasila are ‘Belief in God’, ‘Just and Civilised Humanity’, ‘National Unity’, ‘Democracy’ and ‘Social Justice’.
foreigner. The misrecognition triggered the participant to decidedly declare her nationality, as she realised that it made her upset to have her national identity mistaken by others.

A significant majority of both laypeople and university student participants felt positive about their Indonesian national identity. Using a Likert scale, among 56 laypeople participants, seven claimed to feel ‘very positive’ (12.5%), 33 claimed to feel ‘positive’ (58.9%), 14 claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ (25%), 2 claimed to feel ‘negative’ (3.6%) and none claimed to feel ‘very negative’ about being Indonesian. Forty-three university student participants claimed to feel ‘very positive’ (18.1%) and 127 claimed to feel ‘positive’ about being Indonesian (53.6%). 51 participants claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ (21.5%), and only 16 claimed to feel ‘negative’ (6.8%). No participant chose the ‘very negative’ option. The most striking finding here was that the highest number of participants claimed to feel ‘positive’ about their Indonesian national identity. Furthermore, not one single participant claimed to feel ‘very negative’ about their national identity.

However, there were slight variations in the distribution of answers between the four provinces, as well as between age groups, as shown in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 below:

Table 5.1: University student participants’ feelings about their Indonesian identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Jakarta</th>
<th>West Java</th>
<th>Aceh</th>
<th>Maluku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very positive</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very negative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2: Laypeople participants’ feelings about their Indonesian identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Jakarta</th>
<th>West Java</th>
<th>Aceh</th>
<th>Maluku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very positive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very negative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both tables show a higher tendency towards ‘indifference’ in Jakarta and West Java compared to Aceh and Maluku. This finding contradicted initial assumptions that
participants from peripheral areas that were not as economically developed as the central provinces would claim less positive feelings about being Indonesian. For instance, Table 5.1 shows that 15 of 59 university student participants in Aceh claimed to feel ‘very positive’ about being Indonesian (25.4%), as did 22 out of 58 university student participants in Maluku (37.9%). Meanwhile, only four out of 60 university student participants in Jakarta claimed to feel ‘very positive’ about being Indonesian (6.6%), as did two out of 60 participants in West Java (3.3%). A similar trend is observable among laypeople participants, as shown in Table 5.2. In both Aceh and Jakarta, four participants claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ and one claimed to feel ‘negative’ about their Indonesian national identity. In West Java, six participants claimed to feel ‘indifferent’; however, not one single participant in Maluku claimed this feeling.

The explanation for this variation between the provinces was found in the participants’ descriptions of their feeling. For example, university student participants in Jakarta and West Java were more likely to compare Indonesia to other more developed countries, which negatively affected their feeling about being Indonesian. Students from these provinces were also more likely to be critical of the government. For example, participants from Jakarta wrote the following statements, the likes of which were not found from participants from Aceh or Maluku:

I love Indonesia, but I do not like how the government runs the system which is inconsistent and still abused by corruptors. Besides that, currently, Indonesians easily fall prey to hoaxes, etc. (University Jakarta A)

For a long time, I often saw developed countries like America or other European countries on TV and always wanted to live in a country like that. (University Jakarta B)

By contrast, university student participants from Aceh and Maluku typically paired their positive feelings with their satisfaction with the ongoing development that they personally witnessed in their respective region, as evident in the following statements:

Lately, Indonesia has shown that it can provide a lot of the people’s necessities, hence making my feeling towards it positive. (University Aceh A)
I feel positive. There has been significant development in Ambon, things are now much better. (University Maluku B)

Laypeople participants, meanwhile, most often associated their positive feeling about their national identity with their appreciation for the good state of the relationship between different cultural groups in Indonesia, particularly in the region they lived in. It was possible that laypeople participants were reluctant to be completely candid with a researcher who constituted a social other to them, especially because the information was gathered through one-on-one interviews. However, the participants’ explanations for their positive feelings made sense, particularly for older participants who had experienced violent conflict in their province in the past and had witnessed significant improvements in the present. For example, participants stated:

Indonesia is a beautiful country and its people are friendly towards each other. There is definitely a feeling that we are part of the same nation, whatever your own background is. (Participant M-09)

There has been a lot of improvement here in Aceh, it is much safer, it makes me feel proud to be Indonesian. (Participant A-07)

At the same time, there is a noticeable difference between university student and laypeople participants in Aceh and Maluku, shown in Tables 5.1 and 5.2. A noticeably higher portion of university student participants claimed to feel ‘very positive’ about their national identity in comparison to the laypeople participants. In this regard, the laypeople participants’ personal experience with and memories of violent conflict had affected their feelings about their national identity. While most of these participants claimed to feel positive about their national identity in relation to present peace and development, their awareness of past conflicts also made them less exuberant.

Most of the participants who claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ about their national identity attributed their feeling to having an equal amount of positive and negative thoughts about it, including nine out of 14 laypeople participants (64.3%) and 39 out of 51 university student participants (76.5%). Their ‘indifference’, thus, did not constitute an aloofness towards their Indonesian identity. Among university student participants who claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ about their national identity, the most common themes included discontentment with corruption, poverty and slow development in the country. Corruption was mentioned by four participants, poverty was mentioned three times and
slow development was mentioned seven times. Among laypeople participants, the themes were more varied, usually connected to the individual experiences of participants. For example, participants stated:

I feel just so-so… On the positive side, well, it is pleasant to live in Indonesia. There is no pressure, there is no… no… I see in other countries, some have really high stress levels. In Indonesia, I say, the stress level is not, not high. On the negative side, I see that politics in Indonesia is very messed up, in my opinion… I mean, this is subjective, but I think many people who are in the right are being scrutinised for faults in the name of particular interests. (Participant WJ-05)

Being Indonesian? Just average. As a street food vendor, life is just so-so. […] I moved here more than twenty years ago. My life is just so-so. People say you can go to Jakarta to make a fortune, but if you don’t have a good education or connections, you can’t do a lot. (Participant J-05)

However, five out of 14 laypeople participants (35.7%) claimed aloofness or detachment to their national identity, as did eight university student participants (15.6%). For example, Participant WJ-07 said:

Maybe it was my fate to be born here, so I just accept it. … Indonesian, Sundanese, I do not like to attach strong emotions to these things.

Participants from minority backgrounds were more likely to feel ‘indifferent’ or ‘negative’ about their national identity. For example, three out of five Chinese-Indonesian laypeople participants\(^7\) claimed to feel indifferent about their Indonesian identity. Among 56 laypeople participants, the two participants who claimed to feel negative about their national identity were both minorities, despite being in different situations. The first was Participant A-05, an Acehnese Muslim from Aceh.\(^8\) This participant claimed to feel negative about being Indonesian because of repeated experience of failing his scholarship applications to the Indonesian government. He stated that this experience made him feel unappreciated by the state. He also cited some

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\(^8\) The Acehnese are a local majority ethno-regional group in Aceh, but make up only 1.73 percent of the Indonesian population. “Statistik Politik 2016,” 167.
trauma from his experience living as a young child in a conflict area during Aceh’s separatist era.

The other laypeople participant who claimed to feel ‘negative’ about their Indonesian national identity was Participant J-08, a fifty-five-year-old Chinese-Indonesian from Jakarta. She stated that despite a relatively comfortable life in Jakarta, she was still traumatised by past anti-Chinese sentiments and violence in Jakarta around 1998. In 1998, Participant J-08 had to seek refuge with her family in Semarang until the situation in Jakarta calmed down. Due to this experience, she was particularly upset with recent developments in Indonesian politics, particularly around the 2017 gubernatorial elections in Jakarta which stirred up anti-Chinese sentiments.

Similar trends were observed among 16 university student participants who claimed to feel negative about their Indonesian national identity. This finding suggests that minority groups are more likely to feel negative about their national identity. These 16 participants were all from minority backgrounds who associated their feeling with negative experiences related to their minority status, including exclusion and bullying. The challenges of discrimination against minorities in Indonesia and their implications for multiculturalism in the country are further discussed in section 5.6.

5.2 Ethno-regional Identities in Indonesia

In contrast to the primarily civic national identity, participants indicated their ethno-regional identity to be a primarily ethnic attachment, associated with themes such as kinship and family. Among laypeople participants, the theme of kinship was mentioned 14 times (by 25% of laypeople participants), indicating that ethnic identity provided the impression of an extended family. For example, participant J-10 stated:

Batak people have a very high sense of kinship. Even in Jakarta, if you meet someone from the same clan as yourself, you feel like they are family. Batak

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people are also very hardworking and dependable. They help you find jobs, introduce you to people.

University student participants similarly associated their ethno-regional identity with the themes of kinship and family, which was mentioned 52 times (21.9% of university student participants). Participants likened being part of an ethnic group to being part of a larger extended family in statements such as these:

My ethnic group has a very strong sense of kinship and there is nothing beyond this keen sense of kinship in the ethnic group. (University Aceh A)

Because whether or not we realise it, we are of one kin so that we take care of each other. (University Maluku A)

Because wherever and whenever I meet with Batak people, they always care of me and we also respect each other. (University Jakarta A)

Participants added a cultural dimension to their ethno-regional identity, associating it with traditions and shared regional history. Participants reported similar narratives of history within their respective ethno-regional groups, which in turn enhanced ‘feelings of belonging, solidarity, and loyalty’. Twelve laypeople participants mentioned the theme of shared history in relation to their ethno-regional identity, as did twenty university students. Interestingly, participants from various ethno-regional backgrounds reported connections between the local history of struggle against colonialism with that of Indonesia as a whole, thus providing a link between ethno-regional and the Indonesian national identity. In Aceh, for example, participants described the province as an important part of Indonesia’s struggle against colonialism, as well as its role as the port of entry for Islam in the archipelago. In Maluku, meanwhile, participants expressed their pride in sharing the same ethno-regional background of national heroes such as Captain Pattimura and Martha Christina Tiahahu who fought against Dutch colonialists in the early 19th century. These participants then linked their local history to that of Indonesia. For instance, Participant M-10 said:

I do feel proud. Firstly, as a Moluccan and secondly as a Moluccan female. When I see Martha Christina’s statue, it inspires me. … It gives me a fighting spirit. I may not have to raise arms as she did against colonialists,

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but I can continue to improve myself and contribute to development in Indonesia.

Participants further indicated their feeling about their respective ethno-regional identity using a Likert scale, with the results presented in Tables 5.3 and 5.4 below:

**Table 5.3: University student participants’ feelings about their ethno-regional identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Jakarta</th>
<th>West Java</th>
<th>Aceh</th>
<th>Maluku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very positive</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very negative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.4: Laypeople participants’ feelings about their ethno-regional identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Jakarta</th>
<th>West Java</th>
<th>Aceh</th>
<th>Maluku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very positive</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very negative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are some similarities that can be observed in the tables above. Most noticeable is how both among university student and laypeople participants, the largest portion of participants claimed to feel ‘positive’ about their ethno-regional identity: 109 out of 237 university students (45.9%) and 31 out of 56 laypeople participants (55.4%). This trend was also consistent between the four provinces. Another noticeable similarity is that not one single participant claimed to feel ‘very negative’ about their ethno-regional identity.

The variations between the provinces were interesting. Table 5.3 above shows that university student participants in Jakarta and West Java were more likely to feel ‘indifferent’ about their ethno-regional identity compared to those in Aceh and Maluku. The latter, in turn, were more likely to feel ‘very positive’ about their ethno-regional identity. This finding suggests that participants from more heterogeneous areas in Jakarta
and West Java did not attach as much salience to their ethno-regional identity as their peers in Aceh and Maluku. In this regard, participants from Jakarta and West Java stated that the heterogeneous environment on their campus had enabled a first-hand experience with cultural diversity in Indonesia, which in turn led them to believe that ethno-regional identities were not particularly salient. However, the diversity in the participants from Jakarta and West Java also meant that there were higher numbers of participants from minority backgrounds. These participants attributed their indifference to their experience with discrimination due to their minority status. Hence, the negative social implications of the participants’ minority status affected their feelings about their ethno-regional identity.

Meanwhile, participants from Aceh and Maluku were more homogeneous, with most of the participants coming from the local majority group. Therefore, these participants were less likely to have negative experiences in relation to their ethno-regional identity. Furthermore, the higher portion of university student participants who claimed to feel ‘very positive’ or ‘positive’ about their ethno-regional identity in Aceh and Maluku reflected the participants’ strong sense of pride in their identity.

Among laypeople participants, the trend is slightly different. The distribution of answers is similar in Jakarta, West Java and Aceh; however, in Maluku, all but one laypeople participants claimed to feel ‘positive’ about their ethno-regional identity. The remaining participant claimed to feel ‘very positive’. The participants’ answers indicated that in recovering from the 1999 violent conflict, the population in Maluku have put significant effort into ensuring positive intergroup relations in society, which in turn has fostered their sense of belonging. In Aceh, meanwhile, participants claimed to be wary of overly strong attachments towards their ethno-regional identity because of their potential to cause conflict, including separatism. The findings thus suggest that depending on the narrative shared among the population, a relatively recent history of violent conflict affects people’s sense of belonging towards their ethno-regional group differently.

Aside from the abovementioned variations, laypeople and university student participants largely expressed similar reasons for their feelings about their respective ethno-regional identity. For instance, participants who claimed to feel ‘very positive’ or ‘positive’ similarly associated their respective ethno-regional identity with positive traits. In total, this theme was mentioned by 19 laypeople participants and 74 university student
participants. Participants from similar ethno-regional backgrounds further mentioned the same traits for their ethno-regional group, which suggested that their association had been socialised widely within the group, sometimes to the extent that their statements resembled stereotypes. Among laypeople participants, for example, seven out of eight Sundanese participants (87.5%) cited that their ethno-regional group was known for being polite and ‘halus’.13 Meanwhile, nine out of twelve Acehnese participants (75%) stated that Acehnese people were ‘strongly principled’, sometimes to the extent of being ‘stubborn’; nevertheless, this trait was seen as a strength and a desirable trait in Aceh.

University student participants similarly associated their ethno-regional identity with perceived positive traits, for example:

Sundanese people are known to be polite and friendly. (University West Java B)

I believe that Batak people are known for their persistence, stubbornness, justice (mostly in legal matters, because most Batak are good at seeing both sides of the stories as lawyers or politicians, etc.) They believe in educating their children, and sending them off to school is a very important goal in their eyes. (University Jakarta A)

Because the Moluccan ethnic group teaches the values of cooperation and helping each other. (University Maluku B)

The similarities between participants of particular ethno-regional backgrounds suggest that even though ethno-regional identity was largely socialised organically, they adhered to certain standards and idiosyncrasies. For example, participants claimed to have learned their regional language from parents and other family members, as well as their immediate environment. Regional traditions and idiosyncrasies were socialised similarly. However, participants further claimed that in recent years, they had seen an increase in regional mass media which helped increased people’s awareness of regional languages and cultures. In addition, the education system took part in introducing ethno-regional languages through language and art classes, which further standardised the participants’ understanding of their identities. In this regard, participants who claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ or ‘negative’ about their ethno-regional identity also associated their

13 There is no English word that can entirely capture the meaning of ‘halus’. It can be translated into ‘soft’ or ‘delicate’, but it also means ‘refined’ or ‘sophisticated’, considered to be desirable traits in West Java. Anderson, Language and Power, 50-51.
respective ethno-regional group with the same perceived negative traits, again to the extent that their statements resembled stereotypes.

There were other issues that caused participants to claim feeling ‘indifferent’ about their ethno-regional identities. For example, participants mentioned their awareness of the potential of conflict in an overly keen ethno-regional identity, which in turn led them to downplay their own sense of this aspect of their identity. This statement was particularly prevalent among participants in Aceh with its relatively recent separatist history. At the same time, participants stated that unfamiliarity with their ethno-regional group’s idiosyncrasies caused their indifference. Five laypeople participants claimed that due to having grown up away from the area of origin of their ethno-regional group, they felt unfamiliar with its idiosyncrasies. This situation shows that a person’s belonging to an ethno-regional group is not only a matter of descent, but also a matter of culture and that a person’s life experience can alter their perception on the importance of descent.\textsuperscript{14}

For example, Participant J-04, of Javanese descent, stated that she was born and raised in Jakarta, even though both of her parents were Javanese. She primarily used Indonesian and only passively understood the Javanese language. She said:

In my school years, I was a Jakartan kid through and through. Javanese traditions and customs seemed so traditional and so different from what I am used to in the capital.

Similarly, for example, some university student participants gave the following statements:

I do not know much about the ways of my ethnic group. I was born and raised in Jakarta and only visit my grandparents in Central Java annually. (University Jakarta A)

I moved around a lot while growing up. I do not feel anything significant about my ethnic group. (University Jakarta B)

Among laypeople participants, there were five who claimed to feel equally indifferent about their Indonesian and ethno-regional identity. Among university student participants, there were 27 (11.4\%) who were similarly indifferent about their national and ethno-regional identities. These participants mentioned a common theme: they did

not perceive identity labels as particularly important, and avoided over-attachment to any particular aspect of their selves. Among these participants, one displayed a particularly sophisticated understanding of identity. He stated that his indifference was due to the interchangeability of the most important aspect of his identity, depending on the context, echoing self-categorisation theories of identity:15

If I were chatting with someone from Bandung, I would say I’m from Cimahi.16 But if I met someone from Jakarta, I would say Bandung, as there is a common Sundanese heritage. But if I were talking with someone from another country, well, I would surely say Indonesian.

There was one more factor that caused university student participants in particular to claim feeling ‘indifferent’ about their ethno-regional identity: an ethnically mixed parentage. For instance, there were six laypeople participants and 12 university student participants who identified as ‘ethnically mixed’. These participants’ ethnically mixed parentage implied several situations. Six participants, for example, preferred to describe themselves just as ‘Indonesians’ compared to using compound nouns for their ethno-regional identity. Four participants stated that they did not feel a strong attachment to the ethno-regional backgrounds of their parents, feeling that they did not really belong in either group. For example, a participant from University West Java B stated:

My parents are from different ethnic groups and [my ethno-regional identity] does not matter in my day-to-day life.

Meanwhile, almost all participants who claimed to feel ‘negative’ about their ethno-regional identity came from minority groups. Their statements indicated that the negative social implications of their minority status affected their feeling about their ethno-regional identity. Chinese-Indonesian participants were even more vulnerable because of their position as a minority within minorities. There were two university student participants who claimed to feel ‘negative’ about their ethno-regional identity because they thought that strong attachments to their ethno-regional group had been the source of past conflicts. In this regard, they wanted to distance themselves from this

16 Cimahi is a regency neighbouring Bandung, usually considered a suburb of the latter.
tendency towards over-attachment and preferred to focus on their Indonesian national identity.

5.3 The Relationship between National Identity and Ethno-regional Identities

The prevalent narrative linking the Indonesian national identity with various ethno-regional identities has led participants to consider their respective ethno-regional identities to be part of a larger Indonesian nation even though there were no significant differences in their feelings about these two dimensions of identity. The survey results, as shown in Tables 5.1 to 5.4, indicate that participants’ feelings about their national and ethno-regional identities are fairly similar, with the only noticeable difference being that more university student participants felt ‘very positive’ about their ethno-regional identity compared to their national identity. However, participants consistently described their ethno-regional group as sub-nations of the Indonesian nation, for example:

The ethnic group is merely a sub-nationality, national identity should be stronger. (University Aceh A)

Whatever the ethnic group, we remain one Indonesia. (University West Java B)

This ethnic identity is merely something I was born into. Beyond this, I have stronger ties to a united Indonesia. (University West Java A)

The numbers in Tables 5.2 and 5.4 meanwhile suggest that, among laypeople participants, people had similar feelings about their national and ethno-regional identities. Hence, it is possible for people to feel equally positive about their national and ethno-regional identities concurrently. On their own, the numbers do not give more details about the relationship between the Indonesian national identity and ethno-regional identities; however, the way laypeople participants described this relationship revealed a similar narrative to that described by the participants above.

Within this narrative of Indonesia as a large nation consisting of various ethno-regional sub-nations, laypeople participants perceived their national identity as more salient than their ethno-regional identities. For example, participants stated:

I feel positive about being Ambonese. But, I am Indonesian first. I do love Maluku, yes, I love Ambon. The strength of this feeling is almost equal to my love for Indonesia. (Participant M-01)
It does not matter so much what ethnic group I am from. I am Indonesian first. (Participant J-12)

There were further indications that participants considered their Indonesian national identity to be more salient than their ethno-regional identity. Seven out of 14 laypeople participants (50%) who claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ about their ethno-regional identity stated that their Indonesian identity was more important than their ethnic group. Five out of these 14 participants (35.7%) explicitly stated that their indifference towards their ethno-regional identity was due to their mixed parentage. Statements given by these participants further indicated that the socialisation of identities through their parents significantly contributed to their stronger identification with the Indonesian identity. For instance, participants with an ethnically mixed parentage stated that their parents communicated with each other and with them mainly in Indonesian to circumvent their difference in regional languages. This prevalent use of the national language made them feel first and foremost Indonesian.

The findings further suggest that people in heterogeneous areas like Jakarta and Bandung, West Java’s capital, are more likely to communicate using the national language. Among laypeople participants, 29 (51.8%) claimed to use Indonesian more than their respective regional languages. For instance, in Jakarta, nine out of 12 participants (75%) claimed to primarily use Indonesian daily. In West Java, it was ten out of 16 participants (62.5%). In Aceh, meanwhile, it was eight out of 15 participants (53.3%), suggesting a wider preference for the Acehnese regional language within the province’s more homogeneous setting. Nevertheless, the majority of participants from Aceh claimed to use Indonesian more than the Acehnese language.

Maluku was the exception here, with only two out of 13 participants (15.4%) claiming to primarily use Indonesian. Maluku’s population is more homogeneous than Jakarta’s, which helps explain the prevalence of local languages. However, the finding in Aceh suggests that homogeneity does not necessarily cause such a predominant preference for the regional language. Thus, there is another explanation for Maluku. Even though 84.6% of participants claimed to use the regional language more than the national language, the colloquial regional language of Maluku itself was already quite similar to Indonesian. The local language uses many words that are simpler, shorter versions of Indonesian words, with the addition of local terminologies, honorifics, and accent. During the fieldwork in Ambon, for instance, I found it very straightforward to follow
the conversations of locals. Local languages like Sundanese and Acehnese, however, are linguistically more distinct from Indonesian. Six participants in Maluku called the language they used most ‘bahasa sehari-hari’ (daily/colloquial language) and called Indonesian ‘bahasa resmi’ (formal/official language). The similarities between the local colloquial language in Maluku and Indonesian suggested that the latter was more prevalent than the participants realised.

Furthermore, all laypeople participants claimed to use Indonesian in formal situations and between different ethno-regional groups. While 27 out of 56 participants (48.2%) claimed to use their regional language more than Indonesian in informal situations, they claimed to be ready to switch their language if they realised they were talking to someone from a different region. This situation was certainly reflected in the participants’ readiness and willingness to be interviewed in Indonesian. For example, participants gave the following statements:

I think I speak mostly in Indonesian. At work, I always use Indonesian unless I am speaking privately to friends who are also Batak. At home, I speak the Batak language with my wife, but less so with my children. They speak Indonesian all the time. Well, after all, they grew up in Jakarta, not like me. With school friends, they only speak in Indonesian. It’s different in Medan, even though television is using Indonesian. But yes, now that I think about it, now I speak Indonesian more than Batak. Must have been since I moved to Jakarta. (Participant J-10, Batak)

[I speak] mostly Acehnese. All my friends, my boss, are from around here. I only seldom speak Indonesian, like right now, with you. But I remember going on vacation around Java in 2016. Yes, with my family. I remember I was happy because I could communicate with everyone using Indonesian. It’s times like that when you feel like a true Indonesian. (Participant A-07, Acehnese)

Sneddon, *The Indonesian Language*, 121. The distinction of colloquial and formal language is called diglossia, defined as a situation where there is codified superposed variety of a language used for formal communication different from the language used in daily conversations. For example, ‘I want to meet you’ in the formal form is ‘saya ingin bertemu anda’ and in one variation of the colloquial form is ‘aku pingin ketemu kamu’. There are variations in forms of address, as well as in the prefixes and suffixes, but the core of the verbs remain.
University student participants indicated a similar preference for Indonesian, particularly for formal situations, as shown in Table 5.5 below. In comparison to laypeople participants, the numbers suggest that the younger generation were more likely to primarily communicate using the national language. In the questionnaire, participants were able to freely write what languages they used, in any combination. Thus, some participants indicated that they mixed languages in various situations, including foreign languages, as shown in the table below.

*Table 5.5: University student participants’ primary language use in different situations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Indonesian</th>
<th>Regional language</th>
<th>Foreign language</th>
<th>Indonesian and regional language</th>
<th>Indonesian and foreign language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At home</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On campus</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With friends</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On social media</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that whether at home, on campus, with friends, or on social media, a considerable majority of the university student participants used mostly Indonesian to communicate. Only 49 participants (20.7%) claimed to primarily use their regional language at home while 53 (22.4%) claimed to use a mixture of the national and regional languages at home. Furthermore, only three participants (1.3%) claimed to primarily use their regional language on campus. These three participants were all from Maluku, showing consistency with how 11 out of 13 (84.6%) laypeople participants from Maluku claimed to primarily use their regional language. The findings on the language use of university student participants are consistent with the findings of Tjipta Sari et al., who in 2018 studied the usage of national and regional languages by adolescents across four ethnic groups in Indonesia and found the participants to be more proficient in Indonesian compared to their respective regional languages.18

The usage of Indonesian was most prevalent on campus, which reaffirmed its preferred usage in public and formal settings. Indonesian was the compulsory language

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of instruction in most universities in this study, barring University Jakarta A which held lectures in English; however, participants’ use of the language on campus included communication among peers outside classroom settings. Among these university student participants, furthermore, the use of Indonesian was even more prevalent than regional languages even in private settings. Participants claimed to only use regional languages with friends from a similar ethno-regional background as themselves. Otherwise, Indonesian was the preferred language. Their choice of language thus reinforced the shared identity between the participants of a conversation, whether ethno-regional identity among speakers of similar ethno-regional backgrounds or the Indonesian national identity among diverse ethno-regional backgrounds.

Participants did not only use Indonesian to be understood by others, but also because they were proud to use the national language. They said that it made them feel like they were a part of something bigger, and they particularly felt Indonesian when they were able to communicate with people from different regions using Indonesian. For example, in one focus group a participant from University Aceh B said:

Yes, we like to use Indonesian on campus. We know that most students know Acehnese, but in groups, there are sometimes students from elsewhere. So we, err, we want everyone to, err, be able to take part in the conversations.

This statement was followed by another participant who said:

It makes us proud, Miss. It shows that we are all Indonesians. And we can communicate with, with, you know, people from all over the country.

Similar to the statements above, students in more homogeneous regions such as Aceh and Maluku stated in the focus groups that they were proud to use Indonesian in public and while they were on campus they were aware of students from other regions. This situation was directly observable on the campuses of Universities Aceh A and B, where students were heard conversing around campus using Indonesian. Vendors of food and beverages on campus were ready to communicate with customers using Indonesian, even though they would respond in kind if someone spoke Acehnese with them. The situation was similar on the campuses of universities Maluku A and B where campus staff were seen communicating with students using Indonesian.

The desire to be understood was consistently shown to be the primary reason participants’ preferred to use certain languages in a given situation, including when they
preferred to use foreign languages. Sixty-two participants (26.1%) claimed to use a mixture of Indonesian and foreign languages on social media. Participants explained that their usage of foreign languages (mainly English) was because they believed to have a more global audience on social media and wanted to be understood by this audience. Nineteen participants (8%) claimed to primarily use English on their social media; in addition, ten participants (4.2%) stated that they mostly used a foreign language and 27 (11.4%) claimed to primarily use Indonesian mixed with a foreign language on campus. These were almost exclusively students from University Jakarta A. This university had a significant number of international students, making up about ten percent of its student body. As such, the university uses English as its primary language of instruction, which in turn explained the prevalence use of foreign languages on campus in comparison to other universities in this research.\(^{19}\)

Clothing is another ubiquitous display of people’s identity. People can don national clothing to declare their membership to a nation.\(^{20}\) Participants in this research, for instance, displayed the higher salience of the Indonesian national identity compared to ethno-regional identities through their choice of clothing for formal events. In the questionnaires, university student participants were asked to indicate what type of clothing they would wear to an event with a dress code of ‘traditional clothing’. Across Indonesia, each region has its own traditional costume, but in 2009 batik was recognised as an Indonesian national heritage by UNESCO.\(^{21}\) It is not unusual for invitations to formal events to indicate a dress code as ‘national clothing’ or ‘traditional clothing’. In this research, batik was the participants’ overall top choice, signalling a preference to display national identity over ethno-regional identity, as claimed by 93 out of 237 participants (39.2%). While this number is not an absolute majority, it still far outweighed the next contender, the kebaya, a traditional blouse from Central Java, which was chosen by 36 participants (15.2%).

The kebaya, while historically hailing from Central Java, has been popularised throughout the country as the attire of choice for Indonesia’s first ladies throughout different presidencies, as all but one of Indonesia’s presidents to the present day have

\(^{19}\) International students were excluded from participating in this research; thus, the results shown here were obtained only from Indonesian citizens.

\(^{20}\) Marzel, *Dress and Ideology Fashioning Identity from Antiquity to the Present*, 4-6.

been of Javanese descent. Variations of the *kebaya* can be found among others in West Java (*kebaya Sunda*) and Bali (*kebaya Bali*), as well as among the Betawi (*kebaya nona*) and Chinese-Indonesians (*kebaya encim*). Therefore, despite being a more female-specific attire, the *kebaya* could have been chosen by more participants from beyond Central Java. With regard to *batik*, some of the participants’ preference for batik must be attributed to the practicality of the *batik* cloth, which is mostly not gender-specific, can be tailored into various types of clothing and is thus less elaborate and easier to wear compared to traditional regional costumes.

There were variations across regions with regard to the participants’ preference for the batik. The highest number of participants who chose batik was found in Jakarta with 30 out of 60 participants (50%), then in West Java with 28 out of 60 participants (46.6%) and in Aceh with 20 out of 59 participants (33.9%). It was only in Maluku that *batik* was outnumbered by traditional Moluccan costume, with 24 out of 58 participants (41.4%) opting for the latter and only 15 for *batik* (25.9%). Fifteen out of 58 participants is, however, still a significant number. Furthermore, a high number of participants from Maluku claimed to feel ‘very positive’ (22 out of 58/37.9%) and ‘positive’ (28 out of 58/48.3%) about being Indonesian. Therefore, the higher preference for the Moluccan regional costume does not necessarily translate into a weak Indonesian national identity.

The participants’ perception of the importance of ethno-regional identity was further indicated by their statements on their preferences for candidates running for office. In present-day Indonesia, mayors, regents and governors are directly elected by the population, and the data collection for this research in 2018 coincided with the year for regional elections. Laypeople participants were asked to describe their vision of an ideal regional leader for whom they would vote. All participants stated that for a regional leader, their leadership abilities and track record were more important than their ethnic background. For the most part, local candidates are more likely to run in regional elections anyway, but none of the participants insisted that a candidate had to be a local. From the tone of their statements, it was apparent that participants implied that ethno-regional identity should take a backseat to the candidates’ actual capabilities. For example, Participant A-05, an Acehnese, said:

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A candidate has to have the knowledge, and not just theoretical knowledge, but also real-life experience. They have to be a leader and know about leadership, and do not seek power for their own advantage. […] I do look at their background. But ethnic group or religion, those things don’t determine their capability.

Ethno-regional identity is also expected to take a backseat for people working for the Indonesian government, as evident in a statement provided by Azis Nurwahyudi, Director for Public Diplomacy at Indonesia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs:

When someone becomes a diplomat at the Foreign Ministry, they are not a diplomat of their ethnic group, they become a diplomat of Indonesia… They cannot be, for instance, a Javanese diplomat. Take myself as an example, even though I come from Java, but since I became a diplomat and was dispatched abroad, the mind-set has to be about being a representative of the Indonesian nation.23

This statement reflects how identity is multi-layered and that certain aspects of identity come to the foreground depending on specific contexts. In this regard, national identity is expected to be more dominant than ethno-regional identities within the context of a profession, as government employees are supposed to represent the entirety of the country. The expectation to subordinate ethno-regional identities to the national identity implies that the latter is the overarching identity.

While the findings indicated that the Indonesian national identity prevails over ethno-regional identities, it was particularly interesting to further investigate to what extent this was the case in Aceh and Maluku in relation to their history of separatism. The findings indicated that the participants’ awareness of these issues contributed to them declaring the importance of the Indonesian national identity, especially in preventing future conflicts. In the questionnaires, university student participants indicated the strength of their attachment towards Indonesia using a Likert scale. As shown in Table 5.6 below, 96 participants (40.5%) stated their attachment to Indonesia to be ‘very strong’ and 98 participants (41.4%) chose ‘strong’. Thirty-eight participants (16.1%) chose

23 Nurwahyudi, interview by Sidi.
‘indifferent’, 4 participants (1.7%) chose ‘weak’ and 1 participant (0.4%) chose ‘very weak’.

Table 5.6: University student participants’ strength of attachment towards Indonesia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense of Attachment</th>
<th>Jakarta</th>
<th>West Java</th>
<th>Aceh</th>
<th>Maluku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very strong</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very weak</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Noticeably more participants in Aceh and Maluku claimed to have ‘very strong’ attachments towards Indonesia than participants in Jakarta and West Java. In Maluku, 37 out of 58 participants (63.8%) claimed a ‘very strong’ sense of attachment, and in Aceh 27 out of 59 participants (45.8%) claimed the same. In comparison, only 22 out of 60 participants (36.6%) in Jakarta claimed a ‘very strong’ sense of attachment, and only 9 out of 60 participants (15%) in West Java did so. The stronger sense of attachment to the state in Aceh and Maluku corresponded with the more positive feelings that local participants claimed about their national identity compared to participants from Jakarta and West Java, as shown in Table 5.1. Thus, instead of displaying a weaker sense of national identity, participants from Aceh and Maluku did the opposite.

In this regard, there was a unique feature about university student participants from Maluku: 22 out of 58 participants (37.9%) in Maluku claimed their ethnic group to be ‘Indonesian’ instead of a specific local ethnicity, far exceeding participants from other regions in this research project. In Jakarta, only five students (8.3%) claimed their ethnic group to be Indonesian. There were seven in West Java (11.6%) and eleven (18.6%) in Aceh. It is possible that Maluku’s history of separatism combined with a prolonged violent interreligious conflict in 1999\(^{24}\) has led to a greater emphasis on unity and a common Indonesian identity within the local population of Maluku. Unfortunately, this finding did not emerge until the fieldwork had been concluded, and further follow-up with participants was not possible to examine what caused the prevalence of the Indonesian identity in Maluku. However, previous research argues that past local peace-

building efforts have shifted people’s focus from differentiating factors to unifying factors within society in Maluku, which helps explain their preference to declare their ethno-regional identity as ‘Indonesian’.  

In Aceh, meanwhile, the participants’ strong attachments to Indonesia can be attributed to narratives that purposefully align the interpretation of the Indonesian national identity with local ideals. For instance, in line with the strong Islamic influence in Aceh, Acehnese participants who claimed having a ‘very strong’ or ‘strong’ sense of attachment towards Indonesia attributed their feeling to the country’s Muslim-majority population and its accommodation of Islamic practices. This theme did not occur in other provinces. For example, a participant from University Aceh A claiming to have a very strong attachment to Indonesia wrote:

Indonesia has a good religion, namely Islam. Islam is a very strong religion and Islam is very beautiful for Indonesia.

This statement suggests that despite having a localised understanding of an ideal national identity, participants nevertheless displayed significant identification with Indonesia. Furthermore, participants stated their contentment with the ongoing development in Aceh. For example:

In the last few years, Aceh has developed a lot. The government… The central and regional ones, both, I think, have pushed this development. You see it yourself, right, Miss? The roads are nicely paved, infrastructure is getting better.

The answers provided by laypeople and university student participants in Aceh regarding their Indonesian national identity challenged the opinion of former Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement/GAM) members who claimed that there was still significant discontent with Indonesia in the province. For instance, Munawar Liza Zainal, a former high-ranking member of GAM, claimed that there were still problematic aspects of the current governance which could potentially lower Aceh’s trust in the Indonesian government. Similarly, Bakhtiar Abdullah, the former spokesperson of GAM, expressed his dismay with the way the peace settlement between Indonesia and GAM

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26 Zainal, interview by Sidi.
had been implemented and claimed that there was a continued discontent among the population.\textsuperscript{27}

The discrepancy between the opinion of the former GAM members and the opinion of laypeople and student participants indicated a shifting narrative on the relation between Aceh and the rest of Indonesia. Kemal Pasha, an anthropologist from Universitas Malikussaleh, stated that there used to be local narratives in which Indonesia was portrayed as an enemy of Aceh. However, this narrative was becoming less popular in the present. He said:

At some point in the past, Indonesia was seen as the oppressor. In the past, the juxtaposition, particularly between the Indonesian army and the Free Aceh Movement, was quite strong. But what I observe, particularly in the last five years or so, this is taking a step back. For example, the pride in the Acehnese identity channelled through various expressions or dictions of the Free Aceh Movements, whose leaders have since become governors or regents, has lessened as these figureheads fail in providing the welfare that they promised. [...] This has led the people to see that the cultivated pride in Acehnese identity was more of a political move so that they do not view Indonesia as a social other anymore. I even believe that if a referendum were to be held today, people would not vote for Aceh to separate from Indonesia.\textsuperscript{28}

The discrepancy between these former GAM members and the other participants was also caused by a generational gap, particularly when thinking about university student participants. The university student participants were young adults aged between 18 and 24 years old, while both Abdullah and Zainal were of advanced age. In addition, the student participants were likely to have experienced their Indonesian national identity in a more organic way than older generations, in addition to their education and the mass media. There were indeed aspects of the present Indonesian state that the university student participants were discontented with, such as issues of corruption. However, their discontentment did not lead as far as a disassociation from the state. This situation also applied to older laypeople participants from Aceh; eleven out of 15 laypeople participants

\textsuperscript{27} Abdullah, interview by Sidi.
\textsuperscript{28} Pasha, interview by Sidi.
(73.3%) in Aceh were Acehnese, and seven out of them (46.7%) claimed to feel ‘positive’ about their Indonesian identity. There were no indications from participants of any willingness to undergo another separatist movement, as their immediate safety and economic stability were more important than ethno-regional sentiments.

5.4 Ethno-regional Identity in Interpersonal Relationships

The participants’ attitude towards ethno-regional differences in interpersonal relationships further indicated the relatively low salience of ethno-regional identities in Indonesia. For instance, ethnically-mixed courtship and marriages were widely accepted among participants in accordance with Indonesia’s marriage laws, which have always accommodated ethnically-mixed marriages.29 The participants’ acceptance of ethnically-mixed marriages, however, was more prevalent among younger laypeople participants, which suggests that there is an intergenerational shift in the people’s attitude. This shift in attitude was reflected in the laypeople participants’ own marriages. Out of 56 laypeople participants, 28 (50%) were married. Out of these 28, nine participants were married to someone from a different ethnic group than themselves, making up almost a third of all married participants (32.1%). As a comparison, only five out of 56 participants (9%) were born out of ethnically-mixed marriages, indicating that there were less mixed marriages in the generation before them.

Older laypeople participants were more likely to be married to partners from their own ethno-regional group. As ethnically-mixed marriages were not as common for the older generation, ten younger laypeople participants reported having had older relatives display their objection to an ethnically-mixed courtship. The objection was usually tied to a negative stereotype attached to the other ethno-regional group in the relationship. Four other participants shared that their parents had explicitly stated that they would prefer them to marry within the same ethno-regional group. Two participants who were in an ethnically-mixed marriage stated that they faced initial objections from parents before finally securing their consent. Here are some statements from these younger participants:

29 “Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 1 Tahun 1974 Tentang Perkawinan.”
My mother said I could be with anyone from any ethnic group […] but then I had this ex-boyfriend from a different ethnic group, from Palembang. […] With this guy from Palembang, people told me, especially my parents, ‘Are you sure about him? Sure?’ In the end, we didn’t end up together, my parents kept saying people from Palembang were stingy and harsh, unlike the gentleness of the Sundanese or Javanese. (Participant WJ-16, Sunda-Javanese)

In this day and age, I do not feel like, what do you call it, there is a thing like ethnic hierarchy in Indonesia. My parents used to talk about it. I think we should not pay attention to such a hierarchy anymore, the most important thing is how the two families can, what now, can communicate well. (Participant WJ-09, Javanese)

My wife is Acehnese. I think my parents would have liked to have a Batak daughter-in-law, you know, because of traditions, but for me, the [difference in] ethnic group should not be a problem. And we married in the end. Yes, my parents gave their consent. (Participant A-01)

Aside from the generational factor, ethno-regional identity was still salient in relation to Kymlicka’s differentiation between ‘national minorities’ and ‘ethnic immigrant groups’.30 For instance, Chinese-Indonesians are a minority group without their own delineated territory. As such, they were more likely to experience social othering than ethno-regional groups considered indigenous to Indonesia. This othering was detected in the scarcity of marriages between Chinese-Indonesians and other ethno-regional groups. Among participants, all married Chinese-Indonesians had a spouse from their own ethnic background. Out of 56 laypeople participants, only Participant WJ-15 reported having a Chinese-Indonesian mother and a Sundanese father. This participant stated that he thought his family was rather unique due to its diversity when compared to most families that he knew.

Information gathered from university student participants indicated that differences in ethno-regional identity are becoming less salient as a marker for difference for younger generations. In the questionnaires, university student participants indicated whether there was any ethno-regional diversity in their family, including their

30 Kymlicka, Multicultural Citizenship, 11, 17.
grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, first cousins and in-laws: 116 stated that their families were homogeneous (48.9%), while 107 participants declared varying degrees of ethno-regional diversity (45.1%). Participants who reported ethno-regional diversity in their families then described their feelings about it, and not a single participant expressed any kind of discontent. Ethno-regional diversity in families was thus considered acceptable, even normal.

University student participants then indicated whether they had had a romantic relationship with someone from a different ethno-regional group than themselves, and their responses showed a similar acceptance for ethnically-mixed courtship. Out of 237 participants, 62 (26.2%) stated that they were or had previously been in a romantic relationship with someone from a different ethno-regional background than themselves. Out of these 62, only two stated that they had encountered a negative reaction to their relationship from their social environment. Five participants claimed to have encountered indifference. Seventeen participants reported positive reactions, and nine participants even claimed to have encountered very positive reactions to their relationship. These reported reactions further indicated the increasing acceptability of interethnic romantic relationships, including their potential development into marriages. These reported reactions were more telling than the sheer number of participants who reported having had interethnic romantic relationships, as 62 does not represent a majority out of 237 participants. However, it has to be taken into account that some participants might not have been in any romantic relationship at all.

Differences in ethno-regional identity is even less salient in the formation of friendships. For example, 156 university student participants (65.8%) claimed to have close friends from ethno-regional groups different than themselves. In addition, all participants welcomed ethno-regional diversity in their circle of friends and peers on campus. Participants thought they benefitted from ethno-regional diversity among their friends, encouraged by the diversity they experienced on campus, as evident in their statements:

It’s good that people from all across the country come and study at this university. This enabled me to experience Indonesia’s diversity first hand and to know that there are kind people from everywhere. (University West Java B)
My campus gives me a lot of experience with friends from a diversity of ethnic groups and cultures, it provides a good lesson for me. (University Maluku A)

At [University Jakarta B] there are so many other ethnic groups. So I am happy to get to know the cultures of other ethnic groups. And for the first time, I am personally experiencing Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity). (University Jakarta B)

Indeed, 214 out of 237 participants (90.3%) gave positive comments about the ethno-regional diversity on their campuses. They described their campuses not just as a place to study and attain a university degree, but also to get to know people from different parts of Indonesia who had come to the university. This situation reiterates the importance of education as a means to introduce multiculturalism.\footnote{Parekh, \textit{Rethinking Multiculturalism}, 236.} Furthermore, the students’ interaction with peers from diverse ethno-regional backgrounds enabled real-life experiences with diversity, which as Kymlicka argues is more important than learning about diversity and multiculturalism in theory.\footnote{Kymlicka, \textit{Politics in the Vernacular}, 293.}

In this regard, a previous study has produced results which correspond with this research, indicating that young people living in urban areas are more likely to interact with and have friends from diverse backgrounds when compared to the rural population.\footnote{Parker, Hoon, and Raihani, “Young People's Attitudes Towards Inter-Ethnic and Inter-Religious Socializing, Courtship and Marriage in Indonesia,” 477.} This tendency does not necessarily mean that the urban population are friendlier than the rural population, but indicates that the former have more opportunities to interact within a heterogeneous community.\footnote{Ibid., 474.}

### 5.5 Issues with Ethno-regional Diversity

Despite the relatively low salience of ethno-regional identity as a marker for difference, some issues remain with the existence of lingering prejudices and unaddressed grievances between various ethno-regional groups in Indonesia. Among university student participants, indications of tensions below the surface appeared in discussions about ethno-regional diversity among peers. While 214 participants (90.3%) commended
diversity on their campuses, 23 participants (9.7%) wished for more inclusivity, citing prejudice and reporting varying degrees of separation between various ethno-regional groups, as well as between them and Chinese-Indonesians. For example:

There is mutual appreciation and no real discrimination. But there are certain ethnic groups or ethnicities that tend to mingle exclusively among themselves, usually Chinese people, but not all of them. (University West Java B)

There are still groups who refuse to make friends or acknowledge relatives who come from kampons/small villages. So on campus, there is still a lack of unity and kinship. (University Maluku B)

Some observations during the fieldwork further indicated existing prejudices within society. For example, while riding on an angkot in Ambon, I observed an older female who could not get enough space to sit comfortably because another female took up a lot of space. The latter would not shift to accommodate the former. The older female did not say anything for a while and sat in silence, but as soon as the younger female alighted, the former started cursing and loudly stated in an unsavoury tone that the other woman must have been a Butonese to behave that way. The Butonese are an ethnic group from Buton, an island located off the southeast peninsula of Sulawesi. They are a local minority, make up about 10 percent of Maluku’s population. None of the remaining passengers did anything to stop her cursing. Her ability to make such problematic statements in a public space implied that her attitude was considered permissible and reflected wider prejudicial assumptions faced by the Butonese in Ambon.

The situations described above showed persisting stereotypes and negative sentiments that participants did not address or admit to. The situation corresponded with the 2016 large-scale study by the Wahid Foundation in 2016 which found that only 0.6 percent of its participants were determined to be completely accepting of people from social groups different than themselves while 49 percent was considered ‘intolerant’.

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35 A minivan repurposed for public transport, with a capacity to transport about ten people at a time.
37 “A Measure of the Extent of Socio-Religious Intolerance and Radicalism within Muslim Society in Indonesia,” 7.
The situation also corresponds with a previous study which reports that stereotyping towards other ethnicities and religions in Indonesia continues despite positive interethnic and interfaith experiences.\textsuperscript{38} In this regard, the persistence of stereotypes explains the regular occurrence of violent incidents relating to identity issues, such as the 601 separate incidents in 2014 reported by the Habibie Foundation.\textsuperscript{39}

The persistence of prejudice was also observed in statements by the laypeople participants’ statements which indicated the ubiquity of jokes based on ethno-regional stereotypes, even though participants claimed that they did not harbour negative feelings towards ethno-regional groups different than themselves. Among laypeople participants, 28 (50\%) shared experiences of having jokes made about their ethno-regional identity, including participants from majority backgrounds. Twenty out of these 28 participants claimed that the jokes were harmless or of a friendly nature, thus they did not consider the jokes as a form of discrimination. For example, Participant A-05, a male Ambonese in Maluku, said that he would regularly joke with friends from different ethno-regional groups and they would tease each other with existing stereotypes. He did not feel that the jokes would offend anyone involved, even though during the interview he reflected on whether there was an instance when he had offended someone. The remaining eight participants did think the jokes made about them as a form of discrimination, stating that the jokes hurt their feelings and they felt malicious.

Eight further laypeople participants (14.3\%) reported having experienced more obvious forms of discrimination due to their ethno-regional identity, ranging from casual jokes to bullying to institutionalised discrimination. Every instance of discrimination took place in situations where the participants were in a minority position. Here are some statements from these participants:

I first felt conscious about ethnic groups during my undergraduate years, because I went to university in Java, you know, but as I told you I am from Sulawesi, well I went to university in Java, so I mingled with all sorts of people. Well, it was then that I felt people were starting to question my identity. Back in my village nobody asked where you were from. And then, well, yeah, there was, you know … what do you call it … a prejudice, people

\textsuperscript{38} Parker, Hoon, and Raihani, “Young People's Attitudes Towards Inter-Ethnic and Inter-Religious Socializing, Courtship and Marriage in Indonesia,” 485.
\textsuperscript{39} Abdulrahim et al., “Indeks Intensitas Kekerasan 2015,” 12-17.
always thought that, because people always make these assumptions, back then, every time I said I was from Sulawesi, people always thought I liked to fight, rough, you know. The stigma was there. (Participant WJ-02, Mandar)

I was the only Chinese in the school, so I really felt it… Being called, err, ‘can’t open her eyes’, or like, ‘ooh, so cocky’, or like, ‘stingy’, you know, so differentiating. Every little thing, they would single me out. (Participant WJ-13, Chinese-Indonesian)

Among university student participants, 28 (11.8%) reported that they had personally experienced discrimination on account of their minority status. Unsurprisingly, those who reported experiencing discrimination were part of minority ethno-regional groups, or were in a particular situation where they were the minority, such as when travelling to a different region within Indonesia. The instances reported included verbal assault, stereotyping and systematic exclusion. For example:

Two years ago when I was studying in Yogyakarta people always commented that Acehnese people were rough and like to use marijuana. (University Aceh A)

I was rejected from joining a group activity because I am not from here [Maluku]. I was talked about in public. (University Maluku B)

When I was looking for a boarding room some landlords refused people from certain ethnic groups, including Batak people. (University Jakarta A)

I was being called Chinese in a derogatory manner, with animal names as suffixes. (University West Java B)

In line with the last abovementioned statement, Chinese-Indonesian participants in particular showed that their minority status negatively affected their feeling about their identity as Chinese-Indonesians. Out of 56 laypeople participants, the only two claiming feeling ‘negative’ about being part of their ethno-regional group were Chinese-Indonesians. Both participants claimed to feel unsafe due to a recent increase in anti-Chinese sentiments in Indonesia.40 One participant particularly mentioned that as a

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minority, she experienced constant micro-aggressions from her neighbours and she had experienced bullying from fellow students during her school years.

Furthermore, the negative experiences associated with their status as ethnic minorities affected the participants’ feeling about their national identity. There were five Chinese-Indonesians among laypeople participants: one from Jakarta, three from West Java, and one from Aceh. The aforementioned participant from Jakarta claimed to feel ‘negative’ about being Indonesian. The three participants from West Java claimed to feel ‘indifferent’, citing various experiences of discrimination including bullying and name-calling. The one participant from Aceh claimed to feel ‘positive’ about being Indonesian. This participant mentioned that she felt safer and more comfortable living as a minority in Banda Aceh compared to what she had heard from other Chinese-Indonesians from Jakarta. She stated that contrary to what people might think about living as a Chinese woman in Banda Aceh with its highly homogeneous culture, it was a comfortable place for her. This statement suggests that the experience of living as an ethno-regional minority varies from place to place in Indonesia. Overall, the participants’ experience with ethno-regional diversity in Indonesia varied depending on their individual majority or minority status and the immediate environment they lived in.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that presently, ethno-regional diversity is largely accepted as an inherent part of the Indonesian national identity. The dominant narrative on the Indonesian national identity positions various ethno-regional groups as sub-nations of a larger nation. Within this narrative, a strong Indonesian national identity can coexist with similarly strong ethno-regional identities. Even in Aceh, with its separatist history, participants largely expressed positive feelings about their Indonesian identity. The coexistence of the Indonesian national identity and people’s diverse ethno-regional identities is further enabled by them fulfilling different roles, complementing each other. Participants understood their Indonesian national primarily as a civic attachment, associating it with their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Furthermore, participants defined the Indonesian national identity in civic values such as ‘diversity’, ‘tolerance’ and ‘multiculturalism’, indicating that the Indonesian national identity is easier to understand in civic terms, which can be more inclusive than ethnic terms. At the same
time, there is a cultural dimension to the Indonesian national identity, such as the notion of a shared history fighting against colonialism. Meanwhile, participants viewed their ethno-regional identity as a primarily ethnic attachment, associated with themes such as kinship, family and traditions. However, the distinction between civic and ethnic dimensions of identity is not always clear cut. For instance, participants associated the themes of birthplace and home, commonly understood as ethnic attachments, with their Indonesian national identity.

The complementarity of national identity and ethno-regional identity was most apparent through the participants’ language use. Participants used Indonesian to communicate across ethnic groups, particularly in public and formal settings, and used regional languages in more private, intimate settings in which participants of the conversation were known to share a regional language. Their readiness to use the Indonesian language to converse with people from different ethno-regional backgrounds than themselves showed a shared sense of belonging to the Indonesian nation. Participants’ language use further indicated a potential decline in the salience of ethno-regional identity along with the increasing number of ethno-regional diversity within families. Participants from ethnically mixed families reported a decline in their use of regional languages, particularly among the younger generation, and even more so in heterogeneous urban settings. The participants’ increasing acceptance of interethnic courtship and marriage may further contribute to the decreasing salience of ethno-regional identities.

At the same time, even though ethno-regional diversity has been accepted as an inherent part of the Indonesian national identity, various challenges pertaining to ethno-regional diversity remain, such as persisting stereotyping and ongoing discrimination between ethno-regional groups, particularly against minorities. There is a gap between the narrative of Indonesia as an inherently diverse country and the unaddressed grievances between ethno-regional groups. Furthermore, people across Indonesia experience and understand diversity in varying manners, resulting in a similarly varied actualisation of multiculturalism. There were indications that participants’ understanding of diversity and multiculturalism was more perfunctory and superficial than they admitted. However, altogether, the narrative of Indonesia as a nation that is ethnically diverse is prevalent among all participants and has enabled the coexistence between
national identity and various ethno-regional identitis. Ethno-regional identities thus do not pose a considerable challenge to overall national unity.
6 Religious Identity in Indonesia

Religion and religious identity are issues that have permeated debates on the Indonesian national identity at least since the years around Indonesia’s declaration of independence in 1945. Since then, debates on the role of religion within the state, particularly Islam, have been central in shaping the political spectrum in Indonesia.\(^1\) Contrary to the assumption that religion would be on the decline as Indonesia became increasingly modernised and secularised, religion continues to significantly influence different aspects of life both public and private.\(^2\)

Today, Indonesia presents itself as a moderate and tolerant Muslim-majority country. Besides Islam, there are five other legally recognised world religions: Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Confucianism. However, religious minorities continue to face various kinds of discrimination. For instance, more than 150 so-called indigenous faith groups do not get equal recognition from the state, impacting the accommodation of their religious and cultural rights. In both the private and public realm, religion continues to be a significant marker of difference; for instance, marriage laws devised in 1974 continue to inhibit interreligious marriages.

This chapter contributes to the discussion on the relationship between religious and national identities in Indonesia, as well as the conditions pertaining to interfaith relations. It argues that in Indonesia, religious identity is more significant than both national and ethno-regional identity, as religion is perceived as the people’s primary source of spiritual and moral guidance. The data used in this chapter has been obtained from one-on-one interviews with 56 laypeople participants across Aceh, Jakarta, Maluku and West Java, as well as self-administered questionnaires with 237 university student participants across eight universities and focus groups that informed the previous chapter. Relevant statements from elite participants are also used to analyse their responses.

This chapter further argues that religious identity affects people’s decision-making in various aspects of life, including their political choices and views on statehood. With over 87 percent of the Indonesian population being Muslim, political Islamists have

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continued to push for more legal accommodation for Islam, at times to the extent of constitutional status. The salience of religion for people, coupled with Indonesia’s inequitable framework for religious diversity, creates an environment that supports the continued hardening of religious identities and normalises privileges for the religious majority at the expense of minorities. Thus, the state’s attempt to mollify political Islamists for the protection of Indonesia’s larger framework for multiculturalism could actually challenge the very framework it is trying to protect.

6.1 The Salience of Religious Identity

Data gathered from participants across Jakarta, West Java, Aceh and Maluku shows the salience of religion and religious identity for Indonesia’s population. Firstly, 55 out of 56 laypeople participants claimed to be religious or to belong to one of the six major world religions recognised legally in Indonesia. Out of 237 university student participants, 236 declared themselves as religious.

The distribution of religious affiliation among participants represented the religious diversity in the country. Among laypeople participants, 38 were Muslim (67.9%), 12 were Protestants of various denominations (21.4%), four were Catholic (7.1%) and one was a Buddhist (1.8%); one participant claimed to be spiritual but non-denominational (1.8%). Among university student participants, 158 were Muslims (66.7%), 58 were Protestants of various denominations (24.5%), 13 were Catholic (5.5%), five were Buddhists (2.1%) and two were Hindu (0.1%). One participant did not indicate any religious affiliation. According to Indonesia’s most recent national census in 2010, 87.18 percent of the population are Muslims, while 6.96 percent are Protestants, 2.91 percent are Catholics, 1.69 percent are Hindus, 0.72 percent are Buddhists, and 0.05 percent are Confucians. In the same census, 0.13 percent claimed to be ‘others’ while 0.38 percent were unaccounted for. The noticeably larger number of Protestants in the sample of university student participants compared to the percentage of Indonesia’s Protestant population was caused by data collection in Maluku, one of Indonesia’s Protestant-majority areas. Unfortunately, due to the snowball-sampling method for recruitment, there were no participants from a Confucian background. There were also

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4 Ibid.
no laypeople participants from a Hindu background. Otherwise, the sample is a fair representation of religious diversity in the country.

The high number of participants who claimed religious identity as the most important aspect of their identity indicates the salience of religious identity in Indonesia. Thirty laypeople participants (53.6%) and 134 university student participants (56.5%) claimed religion to be the most important aspect of their identity. This finding was consistent across the four provinces. Among laypeople participants, eight out of 12 participants in Jakarta claimed religion to be the most important aspect of their identity (66.7%), as did seven out of 16 participants in West Java (43.8%), nine out of 15 participants in Aceh (60%) and six out of 13 participants in Maluku (46.2%). In comparison, overall, only 13 out of 56 laypeople participants (23.2%) claimed national identity to be the most important aspect of their identity, and only three (5.4%) claimed the same about their ethno-regional identity. The same trend was seen among university student participants with 134 participants (56.5%) ranking religion as the most important aspect of their identity. The state and nation share the next position, with the ‘state’ representing the formal state apparatus of Indonesia and the nation representing the Indonesian people. Ethnicity came in at fourth place, while the participants’ area of origin is viewed as the least important aspect of their identity, as seen in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1: Ranking of university student participants’ aspects of identity in order of importance (1=most important, 5=least important)

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<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>69</td>
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<td>36</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of origin</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>119</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Participants considered religion and religious identity to be the most personal and intrinsic aspect of their selves, seeing religion as a moral compass fundamental in distinguishing right from wrong and good from bad. The theme of religion as a moral compass was mentioned by 20 laypeople participants (35.7%) as well as 64 university student participants (27.0%). Another common theme was the participants’ belief in the everlasting nature of religious identity; 14 laypeople participants (25%) and 29 university...
student participants (12.2%) stated that their religious identity would stay with them beyond death. Furthermore, 12 laypeople participants (21.4%) and 25 university student participants (10.5%) stated that their religious identity gave them a sense of belonging to a religious community that transcended nationalities. Here are some statements from the participants:

Our religion teaches us good and bad, right and wrong. These principles would apply whether or not I am Indonesian or whether or not I am Acehnese. And after I pass away, only my religion would matter anyway. (Participant A-05, Muslim)

Of course the most important [identity] for me is religion! How can we shed our religion? Our religion and deeds will stick with us beyond death. God forbid we go to hell. (Participant M-12, Muslim)

We are part of the Ummah, a community. I was also raised among religious people. My grandfather owned a pesantren (Islamic religious school) in the past. I was also involved in running it. So for me, Islam is very, very positive. I also went to a high school with a religious affiliation. […] Religion is the foundation for me to become a better person. (Participant WJ-06, Muslim)

In the focus groups, university student participants repeatedly stated that religion was central to their identity. In all focus groups, statements of this nature were met with concurrence from other participants through nodding and assenting non-verbal expressions. For example, in University Maluku B, a participant said, “Religion is important, of course. It teaches us to love one another and to be a good person.” This statement was followed by another participant who said, “Yes, and when we practice religion or do good things, we are supposed to only hope for divine reward. Our behaviour in this life will determine the next.” Fellow participants then nodded in agreement. Similarly, in University Aceh B, a participant said, “Religion is very important because we will be held accountable for it in the afterlife.” This statement was met with a murmur of agreement from fellow participants, indicating a general consensus on the salience of religion. In University West Java A, there was one participant who stated that he was not religious, but he did not contradict his peers on this matter. This agreement showed a widely shared perception of the importance of religion.
The salience of religion was further shown through the participants’ feelings about their religious identity. Participants indicated their feeling about their religious identity using a Likert scale. A majority of participants claimed to feel ‘very positive’ or ‘positive’ about their religious identity. Among laypeople participants, 16 claimed to feel ‘very positive’ about their religious identity (28.6%), 31 claimed to feel ‘positive’ (55.4%), eight claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ (14.3%), while only one claimed to feel ‘negative’ (1.8%), as shown in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: Laypeople participants’ feelings about their religious identity

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Jakarta</th>
<th>West Java</th>
<th>Aceh</th>
<th>Maluku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very positive</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very negative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

University student participants provided a similar distribution of answers. Out of 237 participants, 99 claimed to feel ‘very positive’ (41.8%) and 81 claimed to feel ‘positive’ (34.2%) about being part of their religious group. 39 claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ (16.5%), 14 claimed to feel ‘negative’ (5.9%) and four claimed to feel ‘very negative’ (1.7%), as seen in Table 6.3 below:

Table 6.3: University student participants’ feelings about their religious identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Jakarta</th>
<th>West Java</th>
<th>Aceh</th>
<th>Maluku</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very positive</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very negative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most noticeable difference between laypeople and university student participants was the absence of laypeople participants feeling ‘very negative’ about their religious identity. Four university student participants who claimed to feel ‘very negative’ about their religious identity expressed their discontent with the potential negative impacts of high-strung religious sentiments on interfaith relations. Their opinion
suggested that university student participants were more critical than laypeople participants about the impact of religious differences within society.

Besides this difference, however, both groups of participants expressed similar themes in relation to their feelings about their religious identity. University student participants who claimed ‘very positive’ and ‘positive’ feelings similarly associated their feelings with their belief of how their faith provided a fundamental guide for their lives. The participants’ line of reasoning confirmed the theory that religion is typically very central to an individual’s identity. Such statements were not limited to the Muslim majority, but were found from participants of various religious groups. The following statements, provided respectively by a Muslim, Protestant and Catholic participant, demonstrate this point:

Religion is an important part of my life. Without religion, I do not have a life view and faith in God Almighty, religion makes my life regulated, safe and planned. (University Jakarta A, Muslim)

I define myself as Christian, I believe in Christian teachings. I have a strong positive feeling towards my faith, my church and my fellow Christian brothers and sisters. (University West Java A, Protestant)

Because my religion leads me to salvation. And for me, God is everything. (University Maluku A, Catholic)

University student participants from the Muslim majority who claimed to feel ‘very positive’ or ‘positive’ about their religious identity reflected both on the internal values of Islam as well as the positive accommodation they received for this aspect of their identity. For example:

My religious group is Islam. Islam is a perfect religion and is tolerant of other religions, and Indonesia is a Muslim-majority country. Many regulations are accommodating towards Islam and that’s good. (University Aceh A)

Because Islam is the majority religion in Indonesia and other religions can accept it well. (University Maluku A)

Maybe it’s because Islam is the biggest majority in Indonesia. It is easy to find places to pray, Muslim clothes and halal food. (University Jakarta A)

Similarly, among laypeople participants, nine Muslim participants mentioned the extent of the accommodation provided for them to freely practise their religion, such as the availability of houses of worship and the ability to display their faith through clothing and ornaments. Three further Muslim participants also mentioned the widespread availability of halal food in Indonesia.

By contrast, participants from minority religions who claimed to feel ‘very positive’ or ‘positive’ about their religion were more likely to only reflect on the positive internal values of their religion as opposed to the negative socio-political implications of their minority status. For example:

Because our religion teaches us to have love and compassion for each other not just within the religion but also our neighbours of other faiths. (University Maluku B, Catholic)

Christianity teaches us how to love others/your neighbours as yourself, to be humble, to have a big heart towards everyone but of course it is hard to do in practice/on a daily basis. (University Jakarta A, Protestant)

Buddhism is a religion that teaches universal love and compassion. (University West Java B, Buddhist)

Laypeople participants from minority religions who claimed to feel ‘very positive’ and ‘positive’ about their religious identity also typically focused on the internal positive traits of their religion. Among laypeople participants, the most commonly mentioned theme was the participants’ view of religion being inherently ‘good’, mentioned by 13 participants, followed by the participants’ own strong faith, mentioned by 11 participants.

However, in contrast, participants who felt less than ‘positive’ about their religious identity typically reflected on the negative social implications of religious difference, as opposed to the internal values of religion. Five out of eight participants who claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ about their religious identity consciously chose not to attach much importance to any particular aspect of their identity, be it religious, national or ethno-regional identity. These participants claimed to be wary of the negative
implications of overzealous attachments towards group identities. For instance, Participant J-12, a Muslim, said:

Yes, I chose ‘indifferent’ for all three [national, ethno-regional and religious identities]. I just happen to have been born into these roles, so I don’t want to boast about any of them. There are positive and negative aspects of my religion, nationality, ethnic group… It’s not that these things don’t mean anything to me, but people should not make a big deal out of them.

Three further participants claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ about their religious identity, but not about their national and ethno-regional identity. The first one, Participant M-13, a Muslim from Maluku, stated that she felt indifferent about her religious identity because it did not affect her life in present-day Maluku. Despite a violent religious conflict in Maluku in 1999, she stated that nowadays she did not feel any significant differences between religions, as she was able to live peacefully in the same neighbourhood with people from various religious backgrounds. The second one, Participant WJ-02 stated that in being a Shia Muslim, a minority group in Sunni-majority Indonesia, it was difficult for him to openly and fully express his religious identity. Meanwhile, the third one, Participant WJ-10, a Protestant, claimed his own lack of faith as the reason for his feeling. This participant was the only layperson for whom religion did not have any particular salience. He said:

I’m only doing [the religious practices] because it is what I have known since birth. It’s just, like, automatic.

Among university student participants, there were 39 who claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ about their religious identity (16.5%). Out of these, 21 participants stated their belief that all religions taught similar values despite differences in religious practices. Here are some samples of the participants’ statements:

My religion is one of the existing religions in the world and so are others. So then I hold my identity dearly but only because it is who I am, not to be used to feel superior or putting barriers from the others, so [I chose] indifferent. (University Jakarta A, Muslim)

I do not have any problem with religious differences so for me it is indifferent. In the end, all religions want to make us good people. (University Jakarta B, Muslim)
Whatever the religion, what matters is to be good in life, universally. (University West Java B, Buddhist)

The other sixteen university student participants who claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ about their religious identity cited the sensitivity of religious differences and wariness of potential interreligious conflicts. They did not want to be overly proud or attached to their religion because of its potential socio-political implications, as seen through the following statements:

Religion is of course very important, but over-attachment towards any religious group is not a good thing. (University West Java A, Muslim)

Religion is a paramount issue because it can cause disunity among the people. Some say that because Indonesia is Muslim-majority, Islam has to come before other religions. For me, we still have to appreciate other religions and ethnic groups. (University Aceh A, Muslim)

Because as we can see in Maluku there was an interreligious conflict but since then we have learned our lesson. Now the people of Maluku are a tolerant people but there are still remnants of the conflict and religion can be a sensitive topic that needs to be handled carefully to avoid conflicts. (University Maluku B, Protestant)

There were two participants who did not put much value on their religious identity in itself, and thus had no particularly positive nor negative feelings about it:

Because I do not care that much about religious identity. (University Jakarta B, Muslim)

There are no special feelings. (University West Java B, Protestant)

These two last participants were the only ones who stated that religion held no particular salience for them; for the other 37 university student participants, it was instead their awareness of the contentiousness of religion that made them consciously mitigate their attachment to their religious identity.

The variation between different provinces in Tables 6.2 and 6.3 shows that participants from Jakarta and West Java were more likely to feel ‘indifferent’ about their religious identity compared to those from Aceh and Maluku. The participants’ explanations about their feeling indicated that a more diverse environment contributed to
a richer interaction between religious groups, causing religious identity to become less salient, as reflected in a statement from Participant WJ-02, a Muslim:

Well, in my workplace there are plenty of different ethnicities, also different religions. Plenty of Muslims, also plenty of Chinese-Indonesians. Most of us interact just fine. It’s all good and we get to know each other. In my family also, there are Catholics in my wife’s family, there are Muslims too, so the interaction between different people is quite usual to me.

Meanwhile, the only laypeople participant who claimed to feel ‘negative’ about their religious identity was Participant WJ-12, a 24-year-old Protestant from Bandung. This participant reflected on the negative social implications of his minority status. He stated that his feeling stemmed from his fear of the increased presence of identity politics in Indonesia which appealed towards a hard-line approach to Islam. He cited an increasing stigmatisation against non-Muslims and an increasing difficulty in interacting with some Muslims just on the account of religious differences.

Similarly, 18 university student participants who claimed to feel ‘negative’ or ‘very negative’ about their religious identity reflected on the negative socio-political implications of religious difference. For example:

I am not saying that my religion is negative, but there are bad individuals in my religious group who are too fanatic and not accompanied by tolerance. (University West Java B, Muslim)

Because religion is such a sensitive matter, just one disagreement can result in an interreligious conflict. (University Maluku A, Protestant)

Because until now religion is still used to divide people. (University Aceh B, Protestant)

Participants who claimed to feel negative or very negative about their religious identity were also more likely to feel indifferent about their national identity. For instance, Participant WJ-12 claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ about his Indonesian identity and ‘negative’ about his ethno-regional identity. He claimed that his indifference to his national identity was partially caused by his negative experiences as an adherent of a minority religion. Similarly, among university student participants, those who claimed to feel ‘negative’ about their religious identity claimed to feel ‘indifferent’ or ‘negative’ about their national identity,
connecting the accommodation of their religious identity to their overall feeling about being Indonesian citizens.

6.2 Religious Identity and Politics

The participants’ statements indicated that religion and religious identity had significant socio-political implications. As a Muslim-majority country, Islam has a particular influence on Indonesian politics with debates circulating around the ideal relation between the state and Islam. In particular, there are debates on the extent to which Islam should be incorporated into the state. Laypeople participants provided statements relevant to this debate. For example:

To me, the most important thing is religion. I was taught that religion should be the foundation of everything. From what I heard, even the Pancasila is based on religion, right? The first principle does say to believe in God before everything else. (Participant WJ-08, Muslim)

The most important identity of all is a religious Indonesia. Indonesia with a religious character. […] Yes, probably, for us, looking at the Indonesian culture, many Indonesian cultures have a religious aspect to it. (Participant A-01, Muslim)

These statements, both provided by Muslim participants, indicated their belief in the inseparability of the state from Islam. These participants were not actively involved in politics, and yet their statements revealed their understanding of politics. The statement of Participant WJ-08 suggested an understanding of the Pancasila with an exaggerated role of religion for the Indonesian state.6 Participant WJ-08’s statement further suggests a narrative in which ‘Belief in God’ has always been Pancasila’s first principle. This narrative, in turn, further cemented the centrality of religion in the Indonesian state in the minds of the people.

Previous research has debated to what extent Indonesian Muslims desire the implementation of Sharia instead of the Pancasila as the foundation of the state. A poll

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6 Chapter Three addressed how President Soekarno initially made nationalism as the first principle of the Pancasila; belief in God was the fifth and last principle. Belief in God was only made into Pancasila’s first principle later on as a compromise with political Islamists. Ricklefs, A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300, 209.
in 2003 suggested that sixty percent of its sample ‘would not mind having Indonesia change to Sharia law’.\textsuperscript{7} By contrast, in the same year, another poll suggested that ‘militant Islam’ was losing support to a more ‘moderate tradition’.\textsuperscript{8} The discrepancy between these two polls illuminated the debate in the country, and their results should be viewed critically, as the wording of the polls can affect their result. The use of the word ‘Sharia’ as a term for Islamic law is more likely to evoke positive images and associations with religious teachings. By contrast, the term ‘militant Islam’ is more likely to conjure violent images and be associated with things like terrorism. Therefore, it makes sense that more participants of the second poll opted for the ‘moderate tradition’.

Demands for constitutional status for Islam in Indonesia has existed at least since the 1940s.\textsuperscript{9} The same demand fuelled the separatist movement in Aceh under the banner of \textit{Gerakan Aceh Merdeka} (Free Aceh Movement/GAM). Munawar Liza Zainal and Bakhtiar Abdullah, two former high-ranking members of GAM, both stated that one of their main motivations was the desire to freely express an Islamic identity beyond the confines of Indonesia’s legal framework and its ambiguous relation with religion. For instance, Zainal and Abdullah both said, “Aceh is Islam, Islam is Aceh.”\textsuperscript{10}

Kemal Pasha, an anthropologist from Universitas Malikussaleh, stated that in Aceh, politicians have used religion as a platform to garner support from the people, particularly from the local Muslim majority. In doing so, politicians used rhetoric that glorified Islam over minority religions, which in turn pulled the public discourse away from a more inclusive and tolerant view on religious diversity. For example, there is a test of Qur’an recitation for candidates for Aceh’s governor, mayors and regent. Even though the test was said to apply only to Muslim candidates, it signalled that candidates that were non-Muslim, or Muslims that were not ‘pious’, were not desirable for office.\textsuperscript{11} In the focus groups, university student participants from Aceh were favourable towards a more widespread implementation of Islamic law across Indonesia, which reaffirmed Aceh’s support for a larger Islamic influence within Indonesia’s legal system.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{9} Ricklefs, \textit{A History of Modern Indonesia since C. 1300}, 209.
\textsuperscript{10} Zainal, interview by Sidi. Abdullah, interview by Sidi.
\textsuperscript{11} Pasha, interview by Sidi.
\textsuperscript{12} Salim, \textit{Challenging the Secular State}, 2.
The use of religion to gain political support, however, was not limited to Aceh. For instance, Participant J-01, a 35-year-old Muslim, showcased how religion was politicised by local clerics in Indonesia, which made her question how religion should shape her political choice:

Well, I didn’t use to think much about it. But in the last years, the imam in the mosque near my place has been saying that we should only have a Muslim leader, being a Muslim-majority... It makes me confused, to be honest. Some people at work say I should just look at merits. It’s confusing.

The question whether or not Muslims should demand to only be led by a pious Muslim leader is another point of contention in Indonesia’s discourse on the relation between the state and religion. Opinions on this matter vary greatly, and to some extent are influenced by the personal religious beliefs of individuals. For example, some scholars contend that a diverse country like Indonesia should be ruled by an able leader regardless of their religious background.\textsuperscript{13} One research project presented in 2018, meanwhile, argues that Indonesian voters considered religious issues to be part of their political decision making, such as when deciding which party to vote for.\textsuperscript{14}

Laypeople participants were quite reserved in expressing their opinion on how religious identity affected their decisions in terms of politics. For instance, only two laypeople participants openly stated that they would only vote for a Muslim candidate in the 2018 regional gubernatorial elections: Participant WJ-04, a 25-year-old Muslim from West Java and Participant A-04, a 36-year-old Muslim from Aceh. Participant A-04 decisively said, “It is only natural that a Muslim-majority region like Aceh has a pious Muslim governor.” Meanwhile, Participant WJ-04 was more hesitant, but nevertheless stated a preference for a Muslim governor:

I’m not really into politics, so I don’t really know what factors to watch out for in a candidate. But I think generally, err, we have to, err, look at their history. Have they been involved in cases, and so on. I would avoid someone like that. We have to elect a good person. Of course, particularly I would

\textsuperscript{13} Mary Silvita, “Presiden Non-Muslim Dalam Komunitas Masyarakat Muslim,” [Non-Muslim Presidents in a Muslim Majority Society.] Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman 7, no. 1 (2014): 58.
\textsuperscript{14} Diego Fossati et al., “Representation beneath the Surface: Political Islam, Party Competition, and Citizen-Political Linkages in Indonesia” (paper presented at the New Zealand Political Studies Association Conference, Wellington, 27 November 2018).
look at their religion. As far as I know, according to my religion, it is crucial that we have a leader from the same religion.

The low number of explicit wishes for a Muslim governor on the part of Muslim participants, however, did not mean that religious identity was not politically salient. Instead, participants expressed their preferences in less direct ways. Muslim participants, in particular, generally showed an implicit preference for a Muslim political leader. Nineteen Muslim laypeople participants expressed this preference in different ways, for example:

Well, when it comes to elections… The first thing to look at is, I think, the candidates’ track record. Things like religion or ethnicity should come second. (Participant WJ-03)

Of course I look at the candidates’ profile. Honestly, this is Aceh. All candidates would be Muslims anyway because, err, that’s how things are. I’m sure you know a non-Muslim candidate could never win here, what with the Sharia and all. (Participant A-01)

Yes. Yes, I think it is important to have someone who does not do corruption. Someone who can get the job done well. But you know it is even better if we have a Muslim leader, right? (Participant J-06)

The implicit preference among Muslim participants to have a political leader from an Islamic background partly stemmed from their belief in the perfection of their religion. For example, a Muslim participant from University Aceh A gave the following statement:

Islam is the most perfect religion. With Islam, we can change the state for the better by following religious teachings. (University Aceh A, Muslim)

Other participants were not as explicit in their reasoning about the relation between the state and Islam, yet the theme of perfection in Islam was repeatedly mentioned, for instance:

I am proud to be part of Islam because it is the last religion revealed and is the perfection of all previous religions. (University Aceh A, Muslim)

Because Islam is the most revered religion in the Qur’an. (University Aceh B, Muslim)
Because my religion is the most perfect religion. (University Jakarta B, Muslim)

By contrast, participants from minority religions did not give a similar weight on religious similarities between themselves and political leaders. They only stated their wish for a competent leader, particularly one with a good track record that is free of corruption. This situation implied their resignation that political candidates from a minority religion had a lower chance of being elected into office.

With regard to the salience of religious identity in politics, Maluku has developed a pre-emptive solution: since 2003, local gubernatorial elections feature pairs of candidates from different religious backgrounds. For instance, a Christian gubernatorial candidate runs for office together with a Muslim vice-gubernatorial candidate, and vice versa. Interestingly, this criterion of an interfaith pairing was not part of the official requirements for the 2018 gubernatorial elections. However, this self-imposed tradition has been successful in inhibiting candidates from running on a religious platform, which in turn could spark interreligious conflicts. For instance, one participant said:

The most important thing for a regional leader is that they lead well. Right? Honest, good, in accordance with the platform that they run on. […] It does not matter if they are a Christian. Right? I mean, if we see, most of the regional leaders here are Christians… Right? We think that even though they are Christian, the most important thing is that they lead Ambon well. Don’t you think? […] After all, they usually have a Muslim deputy. Or it’s the other way around. So it doesn’t matter what religion they are as long as they lead well. (Participant M-12, Muslim)

Maluku’s approach to religion in local politics thus showed one positive way to manage religious diversity, particularly given its political salience, by pre-empting the potential utilisation of religious identity as a platform for electoral politics.

6.3 Religious Identity in Interpersonal Relationships

The salience of religion and religious identity is also observable in the participants’ interpersonal relationships. Religious identity is particularly significant in the formation of families. Participants considered religion a major determinant in choosing potential marriage partners. Participants were more at ease when discussing the topic of marriage compared to discussing politics, possibly because the topic was considered more personal. Hence, the participants were not quite as vigilant to appear politically correct as they were when discussing regional elections.

Among the 56 laypeople participants, 28 (50%) were married. Among these 28, not a single participant was in an interreligious marriage. This lack of interreligious marriages shows that religion is commonly used to select a suitable marriage partner across all provinces and religious groups. There was, however, one participant who was married to a religious convert. Participant WJ-02 recounted how he married his wife:

My marriage was at first opposed by my parents, [...] it was a religious issue, at that time, my wife-to-be was a Catholic while I was a Muslim. So it was quite different. But now she is a Muslim. It is always hard when you come from families with different backgrounds. But I talked nicely with my parents, and I got my way in the end. We are all on good terms these days.

This participant recounted how his then wife-to-be converted to Islam, stating that her conversion took place prior to their wedding plans:

[Her conversion] was not directly caused by our wedding plans… I never really talked about it… Well, when we were dating we never talked about religion. But she converted anyway. Her father was Catholic, but he was the one who took her to the mosque to convert. It was rather sudden. I asked her why she converted. She said she wanted to be like her mother. Turns out her mother had converted to Islam as well. And coincidentally she lived among predominantly Muslim friends. So she became a Muslim.

Despite the bride’s conversion prior to the wedding, there were still, however, objections from the groom’s family before they finally consented to the marriage. Among the participants, the insistence on married couples sharing the religion was linked to their view of religion as a fundamental moral guide. At the same time, participants viewed religious differences as seeds of discord within a family. For example:
I don’t mind marrying someone from a different ethnic group, but, you know. It would be a hassle if my spouse and I were from different religions. One of us would have to convert to the other’s religion. (Participant WJ-05, Catholic)

My parents are from different ethnic groups, but both are Muslims. My own brother married a Batak, well, from Medan, but she is also a Muslim. … So far, there are no interreligious marriages. … For myself, not really, but religion matters. Not so much ethnic groups. Any ethnic group is alright, because the more we, err, the more we open up our traditions, the greater our knowledge will be. But only with someone from a different ethnic group. Not with a different religion. (Participant A-06, Muslim)

Of course my husband-to-be’s religion was a factor that I took into consideration. But I didn’t care about ethnic differences. At least he had to be loving. But certainly we have to share the same faith. That will be the foundation for the family. (Participant M-01, Protestant)

This conservative attitude towards religion was equally observable among unmarried participants. Out of 28 unmarried participants, 21 (75%) expressed a strong preference for a spouse from their own religious group. Participants in Aceh were the most religiously conservative, with no participants willing to consider an interreligious marriage. In Maluku, six out of seven unmarried participants wished for a marriage partner from their own religion; in Jakarta, it was four out of six and in West Java seven out of eleven participants.

Participants’ attitude towards past interreligious romantic relationships is another indicator of the salience of religious identity. Even though ten laypeople participants (17.9%) reported having had a past romantic relationship with someone from a different religion than themselves, eight of these participants described their past romance as being unsustainable for marriage. Interreligious romances were thus only viewed as a dalliance. For example, Participant WJ-03, a 32-year-old Muslim female, said the following:

I had this ex-boyfriend who was a Christian. People asked what we were doing and whether we knew where we were heading to with the relationship, err, but I was younger and we weren’t really thinking about marriage at all.
You know, in the end, we separated before the feelings between us got too strong. So yeah, obviously we broke up.

Furthermore, the reaction garnered by participants from their social environment indicated a more widespread aversion to interreligious romance. Three participants stated that they kept their interreligious relationship a secret from their families out of fear of rejection. Another three participants shared that after announcing their interreligious relationships, their families displayed various forms of rejection to the couple, such as through whispers behind the participants’ backs or straightforward demands to end the relationship. Similarly, participants reported negative reactions from family members towards relatives who had previously married outside the family’s religion, with attitudes ranging from discouraging the marriage to permanent estrangement.

There were two participants who claimed that their families were accepting of their respective interreligious relationships; however, this acceptance was caused by perceived similarities between the religions involved. One participant, Participant WJ-12, a Protestant, had previously dated a Catholic, while the other, Participant J-06 was a Catholic who had previously dated a Protestant. The participants claimed that the common denomination of Christianity was sufficient for their families to accept their relationship, in comparison to other religious groups in Indonesia.

There was one participant who received positive reactions to his interreligious romance, but this participant was the exception. Participant WJ-15, a Catholic, reported that his parents accepted his past interreligious relationships due to his exceptionally diverse family background. He had had past relationships with a Muslim, a Buddhist and a Protestant. He said:

In terms of religion, err, even Mum and Dad are from different religions. Mum is a Christian, and Dad is, well, I mean it’s not that big of a difference, Mum is a Protestant and Dad is a Catholic. Mum is Chinese-Indonesian and Dad is not. That was already a difference. And then, my relatives… Yes there are some, Mum’s eldest brother, he also… Mum’s brother is Christian and his wife is Muslim. There are plenty, actually. I think there’s one from every religion. My paternal grandmother was also a Muslim even though Dad is Catholic. […] and for myself, in terms of religious difference, it’s not a matter for me. I mean, why, err, well religion is a matter of personal
faith. The important thing is for us to build each other up without differentiating. Isn’t Indonesia supposed to be about Bhinneka Tunggal Ika?

The attitude of Participant WJ-15 and his family towards religious differences was unique. There was no other participant which described a similar religious diversity in their family. This rarity further supports the argument that religious identity continues to be a significant marker of difference in Indonesia.

University student participants also indicated an inhibition towards religious differences between romantic partners. For instance, only 21 out of 237 participants (8.9%) reported having had romantic relations with someone from a different religion than themselves. Even more telling was that 19 of these 21 reported negative reactions from their social environment to their relationship, including outright demands to end the romance. Two participants reported indifference from their surroundings. In the focus groups, university student participants confirmed that they preferred a potential future spouse from their own religious group. This finding thus confirms a previous study stating that young people in Indonesia do not mind having a romantic relationship with people from different ethnicities, but less so when it comes to a difference in religion.¹⁷

The participants’ inhibition to interreligious romantic relationships is related to the lack of marriage prospects, as religious expectations and Indonesia’s legal system reinforce each other in inhibiting interreligious marriages. Indonesia’s marriage laws combine religious and secular laws: a marriage can only be legally registered if a religious covenant has been conducted by relevant religious authorities.¹⁸ Complications thus arise for interreligious couples, because one party in the couple would have to convert to their partner’s religion, at least on paper. Considering the central role of religion for the participants’ sense of identity, a conversion would, in turn, involve a significant compromise.

However, participants did not consider differences in religious identity to be a barrier to friendship. Sixty-seven university student participants (28.3%), for example, explicitly welcomed religious diversity among their peers on campus:

¹⁷ Parker, Hoon, and Raihani, “Young People’s Attitudes Towards Inter-Ethnic and Inter-Religious Socializing, Courtship and Marriage in Indonesia,” 478-79.
[Diversity is] very good, because on the campus of University [Maluku A] there is not just one single religion, but many. (University Maluku A, Protestant)

It’s really good since probably my campus has a balanced number of different religions and everyone is basically free to do their religious conduct. (University Jakarta A, Buddhist)

This finding indicates the participants’ acceptance of religious diversity among their friends and supports the argument of a previous study which found that most young people in Indonesia visit their friends from other faiths on religious holidays.\(^{19}\) Similarly, thirty separate laypeople participants (53.6\%) expressed that they were used to religious diversity in their workplace or in their neighbourhood. For example, participants stated:

There are colleagues from all sorts of religious backgrounds in this office. We are used to it, it’s nothing extraordinary. (Participant WJ-7)

This neighbourhood is diverse. Muslims, yes, also Protestants and Catholics. There is a Mosque over there, and a Church just across the main street. (Participant M-12)

### 6.4 Issues with Religious Diversity

There are, nevertheless, significant issues with religious diversity in Indonesia. For instance, participants from minority religions were less likely to feel ‘very positive’ or ‘positive’ about their religious identity, and they were more likely to reflect on the negative social implications of their minority status. Table 6.4 on the following page shows a discrepancy between Muslim laypeople participants and participants from other religious groups in their feeling about their respective religious identity:

\(^{19}\) Parker, Hoon, and Raihani, “Young People's Attitudes Towards Inter-Ethnic and Inter-Religious Socializing, Courtship and Marriage in Indonesia,” 477.
Table 6.4: Laypeople participants’ feelings about their religious identity (by religion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Very positive</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Indifferent</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Very negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestantism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholicism</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-denominational</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers in the table show that the way participants felt about their religious identity was affected by their individual religion. Muslim participants were more likely to feel ‘very positive’ about their religious identity in comparison to other religious groups. Approximately 36 percent of all Muslim laypeople participants chose ‘very positive’, in comparison to 8 percent of Protestant laypeople participants and none of the Catholic laypeople participants. The discrepancy between Muslim and non-Muslim participants was further detected in their explanation about their feeling, as Muslim participants who claimed to feel ‘very positive’ about their religious identity described both the perceived positive values of their religion as well as the accommodation they received for their religious practices in Indonesia. By contrast, non-Muslim participants who claimed to feel ‘very positive’ about their religious identity only focused on the perceived internal values of their religion, including the singular Buddhist participant who claimed to feel very positive about her religious identity. This participant stated that her ‘very positive’ feeling stemmed from her belief she was a part of the world’s most peaceful religion and her strong faith in the religious teachings of Buddhism.

University student participants similarly showed that Muslim participants were the most likely to feel ‘very positive’ about their religious identity, as seen in Table 6.5:

Table 6.5: University student participants’ feelings about their religious identity (by religion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Very positive</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Indifferent</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Very negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestantism</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholicism</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The most noteworthy finding in Table 6.5 above is the overwhelming amount of Muslim university student participants who claimed to feel ‘very positive’ about their religious identity in comparison to participants from other religious backgrounds. Out of 158 Muslim participants, 81 participants (51.2%) claimed to feel ‘very positive’, while among Protestant participants, only 15 out of 58 (25.9%) claimed the same. Only 2 out of 13 Catholic participants (15.3%) and 1 out 5 Buddhist participants (20%) claimed to feel ‘very positive’ about their religious identity, while none of the Hindu participants claimed the same. Similar to the finding from laypeople participants, Muslim university student participants were more likely to reflect both on the internal values of their religion as well as the accommodation that they received for their religious practices. By contrast, university student participants from minority religions who claimed to feel ‘very positive’ about their religious identity tended to exclusively reflect on the internal values of their religion.

The stories of discrimination shared by minority participants, juxtaposed with the contentment expressed by Muslim participants about the accommodation that had received to express their religious identity, clearly indicated a disparity between the majority and minorities, as participants from minority religions who claimed to feel ‘very positive’ about their religious identity downplayed the social implications of their minority position. This disparity was further demonstrated by the participants’ accounts of experiences with discrimination related to their religious identity.

Five laypeople participants (8.9%) stated that they had personally experienced discrimination. For example, Participant J-06, a Catholic from Balikpapan who moved to Jakarta in 2007, recalled how he was rejected from a boarding house because of his religion. He stated that the owner of the boarding house had specifically asked about his religion and promptly stated that his boarding house was only for Muslim males. In West Java, Participant WJ-10, a Protestant, recalled how her peers in elementary school used to mock her for her religion, calling her an ‘infidel’ and saying things that were hurtful to her, such as how she would never ‘go to heaven’. This participant stated that her peers became more restrained as they grew older. Participant WJ-15, a Catholic from Bandung, stated that from time to time his friends or colleagues would joke with him using stereotypes of his religion or call him ‘dirty’ for eating pork. The most violent case of discrimination was reported by Participant WJ-13, a Protestant from Bandung:
When I was at church, there, when I was still in junior high school, there was this incidence where the [Islamic Defenders Front] blocked the church. So I saw with my own eyes how they treated us. It was really inhuman, if I may say so. Well, the church building was shaped like a regular house, and strictly speaking we did not have a license [to give the place the status of house of worship]. I want to say, they kept saying they acted in the name of religion, but their ways did not show it at all. […] This was either in 2009 or 2010. I think the news can still be found. The incidence made it on the news on TV. But what they showed on the TV was not about our fear. They only said that there was a forced closure of an unlicensed church and some demonstrations. But they did not report about the way the mob arrived, the main attention was not there at all on TV.

In the questionnaires, 19 university student participants (8.1%) reported incidents of discrimination. All of them were from minority religions. Eighteen students (7.6%) reported insults and jokes using stereotypes of minority religions. One student reported being denied boarding in a student flat by the landlord upon finding out that they were not a Muslim. In the focus groups with minority students, participants revealed more systematic forms of discrimination which they faced. The separate focus group allowed them to express things that they could have been reluctant to share in front of their peers from majority groups. One participant from University West Java A, for instance, reported that the university’s academic calendar overlooked religious holidays of minorities, among other things, by holding examinations on Christmas Eve. She said:

The University held an end-of-semester exam on Christmas Eve. I live with my parents so I still got to spend Christmas with them. But some of us come from outside of Java, so they could not be home for Christmas.

Her fellow participants further stated that lecturers had assigned essays or group work over the holiday period of minority religions, but had always made sure there were

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20 The Islamic Defenders Front, or Front Pembela Islam (FPI) is a conservative Islamic group, whose members are known to spread hate speech, conduct illegal raids on ‘un-Islamic establishments’ such as cafes and nightclubs, and forcibly barricade houses of worship of minority religions. Mark Woodward et al., “The Islamic Defenders Front: Demonization, Violence and the State in Indonesia,” Dynamics of Muslim Life 8, no. 2 (2014): 155.

no assignments over the period of Eid-l-Fitri, the largest annual Muslim holiday. One participant said:

It made me feel like our holidays are not appreciated as much. I don’t mind a shorter break compared to the Eid break but at least I want to celebrate without doing assignments. It’s even worse when it’s group work because then we have to meet up with other students and cannot spend the day with family.

A Catholic participant from University Aceh A explained that when he had first enrolled at the university all students were required to attend lectures on Islam. Religious education is compulsory by law including at tertiary level in Indonesia; however, students are entitled to an education according to their religion, and are not required to study other religions. Yet the lack of adequate teaching staff or classrooms often impedes the implementation of this law, particularly in the provision of religious education for religious minorities. The religious minority students at University Aceh A stated that they had been willing to take part in the Islamic lectures; however, they could never attain full marks for the paper, which they felt was due to them being non-Muslims. One participant said:

At first I thought they were going to teach us about Islam from an academic perspective. As it turned out, what do you call it, the lectures were more on your personal conduct as a Muslim. And I still said that I would get through it and tried my best. And then, the lecturer gave me a C. The same happened to my Christian friends. So we thought, this must be because we weren’t Muslim.

The religious minority students at University Aceh A further explained that they had collectively filed a complaint about the situation to the university. Since the complaint, the university had been providing separate religious classes for students from minority religions. However, due to a lack of lecturers from minority religions, they had to go to houses of worship outside the campus area for instruction.

One student indicated that the disadvantages faced by students from minority religions were not recognised by the majority: asked whether they thought their peers

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were aware of these situations, one participant from University West Java A said: “No one has ever bothered to ask [us].” Her statement was welcomed by nods from other participants, indicating that the non-recognition was commonplace. Thus, while privileges enjoyed by the majority were perceived as common, ongoing systemic discrimination against minority students went unnoticed.

The findings from the focus group discussions with minority students further indicated that discrimination was underreported by both laypeople and university student participants. Only five out of 56 laypeople participants reported having personally experienced discrimination (8.9%), as well as nineteen out of 237 university student participants (8.1%). In total, 21 incidents involved verbal assaults, two incidents involved exclusion from boarding houses, and one incident involved a violent forced closure of a house of worship. In addition, 11 other laypeople participants across the four provinces claimed to have heard jokes made about their religion (19.6%), but they did not consider having personally experienced discrimination. This finding further indicates that discrimination involving jokes about religious stereotypes was more widespread than reported, which in turn indicates the ubiquity of stereotyping within the population. The findings also correspond with the 2016 research by the Wahid Foundation, which concluded that only 0.6 percent out of 1,520 participants across 34 provinces in Indonesia were completely accepting of their social others.

On the subject of discrimination, there was a disparity between the more central provinces of Jakarta and West Java and the more peripheral provinces of Aceh and Maluku. All laypeople participants who admitted to having personally experienced discrimination because of their religious identity were from Jakarta and West Java; there were none from the other provinces. For Aceh, the lack of reported religiously motivated discrimination was firstly due to the homogeneity of the participants. 14 out of 15 participants from Aceh were Muslim, which is the religious majority in the province, constituting 98.19 percent of its population. Given the participants’ majority position, they were unlikely to have faced discrimination on account of their religious identity while living in Aceh.

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Participant A-11, the only participant from a minority religion in Aceh, implied in her interview that she had applied significant limitations on herself in her life in the province. Her statements further indicated that the expression of her religious identity was only tolerated, as opposed to accepted by her social environment. This participant, a Protestant born and raised in Banda Aceh, claimed that she had never personally experienced discrimination in relation to her religious identity. However, her statements revealed some implicit limitations to her freedom to express her identity. For instance, she stated that she was able to freely worship “in designated areas”, implying restrictions to her religious freedom. Her statement indicated the local condition in which the religious services of minority religions, if held inside private dwellings with no permit, typically causes scrutiny from hard-line Islamists. As indicated by Participant WJ-13 earlier, in some cases, vigilante groups have taken it upon themselves to forcibly shut down such services. Participant A-11 further stated that in knowing how adult Muslim females were required to cover up under Aceh’s sharia laws, while she did not wear a headscarf, she never wore “sexy clothes” in public because she had to “know her place”. This participant accepted these restrictions as a matter of course, further indicating the dominance of Muslim religious practices at the expense of religious minorities. Indeed, in Banda Aceh, it is unusual to see adult females without any sort of head covering in public, other than around Peunayong, the Chinatown of Banda Aceh. Even there, adult females without head coverings are usually modestly dressed; for example, they do not show bare arms or cleavage and do not wear short skirts or short trousers.

In comparison, participants in Maluku did not acknowledge the existence of discrimination on religious grounds as part of their conscious effort to build positive interfaith relations following a violent religious conflict in 1999. While participants recounted stories of personal experience in relation to the 1999 conflict, not a single participant claimed to have personally experienced discrimination due to their religious identity in the present day. Participants further gave the impression that it was presently taboo to speak about religious discrimination. Instead, participants who were old enough to remember the 1999 conflict emphasised how interfaith relations had improved significantly since then. For example, Participant M-11, a 38-year-old Muslim born and raised in Ambon said:

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No, I have never experienced discrimination since Ambon returned to peace. I can worship freely and attend a neighbourhood Qur’an recitation group. I wear my headscarf when going about town and it’s quite ubiquitous. It’s safe, you know.

Participant M-08, a 25-year-old Protestant born and raised in Ambon echoed her sentiments:

I have lived in Ambon since I was born. It is good to live here. I do not really remember the events around the conflict… My family doesn’t like to bring it up either. The harmony among the people has become good, even very good for the time being. People respect each other’s religions.

The participants’ statements were in line with those of religious figures in Maluku, who emphasised the role of local wisdom in maintaining harmonious interfaith relations. Reflecting the intersections of aspects of identity, this local wisdom appeals to the people’s commonalities in ethnicity and nationality to overcome religious cleavages. For example, both Elifas Maspaitella, Secretary of the Protestant Church of Maluku, as well as Monsignor Petrus Canisius Mandagi, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Amboina in Maluku, similarly emphasised the importance of the ‘pela gandong’ principle. The principle of pela gandong is based on the idea of a broader kinship between different religious groups. It is a long-standing, ancestral pact agreed upon by two or more groups in the community to be bound by an extended kinship, appealing to a common ancestry that cannot be disintegrated by differences in religion. Maspaitella explained that the pela gandong principle had existed in Maluku long before the proliferation of world religions:

The culture of kinship in various places in Maluku shows that religious difference is not an obstacle for kinship, because we are related, perhaps of different faiths but coming from a common ancestor, and religion is a more recent entity, in the history of proliferation. The kinship had existed long before. The Moluccan people is not a new people, right? It is a very ancient

26 Maspaitella, interview by Sidi; Mandagi, interview by Sidi.
28 Ibid.
community, [...] whoever it is, from whatever ethnic group they are in Maluku, whatever their religion is, we are all of the same kin.\textsuperscript{29}

The \textit{pela gandong} principle was also mentioned by all laypeople participants in Maluku, for example:

There is a good relationship between Christian and Muslim communities here. We have the \textit{pela gandong}, you know? If a Christian village wants to build a church than people from its Muslim brother village will come and help. And the other way around, too. (Participant M-03, Protestant)

Furthermore, observations on the field showed that people in Ambon were able to freely display their religious identity in public. Markers of religious identity were seen in people’s clothing, such as headscarves or crucifix-shaped accessories, as well as in graffiti with religious images on buildings. Houses displayed decorations with religious symbols, such as depictions of religious images or calligraphy. In some locations, both church bells and the call to prayer from mosques could be heard.

It was, however, noticeable through the predominant display of either Christian imagery or Islamic symbols in different neighbourhoods that the local society was still somewhat segregated. Therefore, the local society is not as well integrated as participants claimed. Furthermore, people could usually tell whether someone was a Christian or a Muslim simply by asking which part of the city they lived in. Participants from Maluku, both in the individual interviews and the focus groups, could not explain this segregation, stating that things had always been that way in Ambon. Participants were reluctant to further discuss the segregation between religious communities in Maluku, hinting at the possibility of unaddressed grievances from the past as well as their fear of igniting another conflict.

The participants’ reluctance to discuss issues with religious diversity reaffirms the arguments presented by Aan Permana, a researcher from the Habibie Centre,\textsuperscript{30} about unresolved issues between various religious groups which have inhibited meaningful interfaith interaction and contributed to the perpetuation of discriminative behaviour:

For example, maybe we claim to be tolerant; we have a neighbour, for example, me being a Muslim with a Catholic or Protestant or Hindu or

\textsuperscript{29} Maspaitella, interview by Sidi.
\textsuperscript{30} “About the Habibie Center”.
Buddhist neighbour. And we are tolerant, fine. What do you call it, we can live as neighbours, act nice, never have a conflict with them. We are not enemies, if you want. But we don’t mingle either; maybe we seldom hold conversations, have no interest to meet up with each other.\textsuperscript{31}

Thus, overall, while interfaith relations in Indonesia are peaceful on the surface, the quality of the interactions between people vary significantly. Tolerance between religious groups does not always translate into acceptance; adherents of minority religions continue to face various types of discrimination.

Another significant challenge for religious diversity in Indonesia concerns the provision of equal recognition for the country’s indigenous faith groups. Beside the six world religions officially recognised by Indonesia’s legal system,\textsuperscript{32} there are over 150 local indigenous faith groups across the country.\textsuperscript{33} These faith groups do not enjoy the same legal recognition as the six world religions.\textsuperscript{34} Focus group discussions with university student participants indicated the divided opinions on the place of these indigenous faith groups within Indonesia. Participants often neglected to mention the existence of these indigenous faith groups in the narrative of Indonesia’s religious diversity. For example, when asked to describe religious diversity in Indonesia, participants across four provinces consistently exclusively referred to six world religions:

\begin{quote}
In Indonesia, we are proud and respectful of religious diversity. As you know yourself, we have six different religions: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Confucianism. These religions have their holidays celebrated nationally and we can find houses of worship for each religion anywhere around the country. (University West Java B)

Religious diversity in Indonesia... I think it’s quite unique, where the country recognises six religions officially. (University Jakarta B)

Speaking of diversity, I think, in terms of religion... There are six religions in Indonesia, and the public facilities provided by the government... I think, in every region, they have provided, like, mosques... For example,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{31} Aan Permana, interview by Budi Annisa Sidi, 7 May 2018.  
\textsuperscript{32} Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Confucianism.  
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ensiklopedia Kepercayaan Terhadap Tuhan Yang Maha Esa}, v-xi.  
\textsuperscript{34} Shah, “Constitutional Arrangements on Religion and Religious Freedom in Malaysia and Indonesia: Furthering or Inhibiting Rights?,” 262.
churches, temples… I think the government has provided such public facilities quite well. (University Aceh A)

Religious diversity in Indonesia is very good. We have Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and also Confucianism. The relations are good as well. For example, this campus has a Protestant background but we welcome everyone… There are students from various religious backgrounds. (University Maluku B)

Upon being reminded of the existence of indigenous faith groups in Indonesia, participants started to provide a range of opinions on the issue of their legal recognition. Some answers indicated that religious tolerance is more perfunctory and superficial than acknowledged by the participants. For instance, participants carefully approached the issue by providing generic statements about religious rights, but without explicit support for the equal recognition of indigenous faith groups with world religions:

Minority rights should be recognised by the government, so that they don’t feel excluded. This is also important to prevent our nation from breaking apart. (University Aceh A)

Every citizen of Indonesia should have the same rights and responsibilities whether they are a majority or a minority. The government should respect everyone equally. (University Maluku B)

I had to ask the participants to be more specific with their opinions on the legal recognition of indigenous faith groups vis-à-vis the six world religions. Specifically, participants were asked to share their opinion on the right of the adherents of indigenous faith groups to declare their faith in official documents. The hesitation on the part of the participants to answer this question was palpable. Some participants spoke in favour of their equal recognition. For example:

If Indonesia is truly about Unity in Diversity, there should not be a reason why these faith groups cannot be recognised. (University Jakarta B)

I think it would be good if adherents of such faith groups can be recognised on paper. Then they won’t have to pretend they belonged to another religion just for the sake of paperwork. (University West Java B)
The first abovementioned participant associated the right of indigenous faith groups for proper recognition with Indonesia’s national motto. Indonesia’s adoption of the motto ‘Unity in Diversity’ was thus interpreted as a commitment towards inclusivity by some participants; however, participants who were opposed to the equal recognition of these faith groups similarly claimed to base their opinion on the foundations of the Indonesian state. For example, these participants said that the recognition of indigenous faith groups would contradict the first principle of the Pancasila, Belief in God, which they interpreted as a commitment to monotheism:

I don’t think [their legal recognition] is necessary. It would go against the principle of Belief in God. These people worship idols and the like. They are not proper religions. (University Aceh B)

It is dangerous to recognise faith groups on the same level as religion. If we do that, how can we measure what is religion and what is not? People could make up anything and call it religion. It will make Indonesia prone to negative foreign influences. (University Aceh A)

Focus group participants in Aceh particularly voiced the opinion that Indonesia should only grant proper legal recognition to monotheistic world religions. A couple of participants in University Maluku A similarly stated that polytheistic faith groups did not fit into the monotheistic framework of Indonesia; however, this opinion was not unanimously supported by other participants the way it was in Aceh.

The participants’ opposition to the legal recognition of indigenous faith groups partly stemmed from a lack of understanding of what they were. In University Aceh B, one participant confused the indigenous faith groups with different schools of thought within world religions, such as the Sunni and Shia division within Islam. Other participants confused the term ‘faith groups’ with ideologies such as communism, and even sexuality; they clearly understood the term ‘faith groups’ in a pejorative manner. In University Aceh A, one participant said the following:

I disagree with the inclusion of faith groups on ID cards, because, well, for one, it has a high risk of allowing other things to enter Indonesia, and that could destroy Indonesia with things that don’t suit our morality. Things that don’t suit our constitution and don’t suit the Indonesian culture. For
example, LGBT, which I think, for those people is a matter of faith. But in terms of matters relating to the state, to Indonesia, it is a transgression.

As the discussion digressed into the issue of gender and sexuality, it was necessary for me to interject into the discussion and explain to the participants that the term ‘faith groups’ referred to faiths and religions that had existed in Indonesia prior to the dissemination of world religions and persisted in small, localised areas. Despite this explanation, the participants’ objection to the recognition of the faith groups persisted, as my explanation was countered with the following opinion:

I still disagree with their recognition. Because, Indonesia itself, we all know, already has six religions. We know, there are different religions in many regions that want to be acknowledged by the state. Like that faith group in Java. They want the state or people in the government to acknowledge that they also exist. There are also, as we know, other faith systems such as animism or dynamism, of which we know that they also push to be recognised on a similar level with other religions. And I do remember there is a law that outlaws discrimination against Indonesian citizens. But we also need to have standards on what religions are. We already have, as the foundation of the state, the principle of ‘Belief in God’. And there are already six recognised religions. Beyond those, it should be unnecessary.

While this research project does not address the issue of sexual or gender identity, the participants’ mention of the LGBTQ community as a ‘transgression’ recalled the conservative Islamist narrative prevalent in Aceh. In this regard, Kemal Pasha, an anthropologist from Universitas Malikussaleh explained that the Acehnese local population’s pejorative view of the LGBTQ community was part of the increasingly monolithic understanding of Islam in the province. Pasha further argued that Aceh used to be far more accepting towards the local LGBTQ community, such as towards transwomen who traditionally worked as beauticians and makeup artists.35 In the past, the Acehnese court had employed androgynous sida-sida or capados, akin to eunuchs, who acted as the monarch’s right hand and gatekeeper, particularly during the regime of Acehnese queens in the 17th century.36 Furthermore, Acehnese folk tales featured

35 Pasha, interview by Sidi.
characters of ambiguous sex and gender characteristics, such as the story of a ‘Bamboo Princess’ who grew a white beard and died when the king had her beard cut off.\(^{37}\) Previous research by Eleni Polymenopoulou similarly argues that the public’s attitude towards the LGBTQ community has turned more hostile over the years as Aceh increasingly presents itself as a conservative Muslim province.\(^{38}\)

It was difficult to alter the narrative on so-called faith groups which has permeated society for a long time. Despite my attempt to explain the definition of the indigenous faith groups, a participant followed up the previous discussant by equating them with ideologies which they perceived could “endanger the state’s morality”, such as Atheism and Satanism. This confusion showed that they were unwilling to reconsider their position on the recognition of indigenous faith groups. Following this opinion, no other participants wanted to speak up in favour of the indigenous faith groups.

Some participants objected to the idea of legally recognising indigenous faith groups on official documents, not out of a lack of understanding of what the faith groups were, but out of fear of putting them in a more vulnerable position. In University West Java A, as well as in both universities in Jakarta, focus group participants rejected the legal recognition of local faith groups on ID cards out of concern that it would only put their adherents in an open and vulnerable position, making them targets for discrimination. These students did not believe that the people in Indonesia were ready for such a change in attitude towards faith, as stated by one student from University West Java A:

> I think this is unnecessary right now. I think it will be confusing to most people, and they might not know how to include their faith group on their ID. And what for? They would just become targets of discrimination because now everyone can see on their ID that they don’t belong to a big religion.

Students from University West Java B, meanwhile, were of the opinion that religious identity should be a more private matter and was not necessary to be included on official documents:

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Instead of fretting about including minority faith groups on ID cards, we should just abolish the inclusion of any faiths on official documents. Plenty of people are only declaring a religion out of obligation anyway.

During the discussion on indigenous faith groups, instead of the previous murmurs of concurrence and nodding, there were far more puzzled looks from participants. Hesitation was palpable from participants who seemed too shy or scared to make a statement on the issue and opted to whisper among themselves. By contrast, participants who did express an opinion on the issue of indigenous faith groups were usually quite decided in their tone. Typically, participants waited until one of them was confident enough to voice a strong opinion, after which two to three participants repeated what was said by the former participant.

The issue of declaring a person’s religious identity on official documents also concerned individuals who did not identify with any religion in particular. Participant J-04 was the only layperson not belonging to any religious group. Not belonging to a religious group is a rarity in Indonesia, where the first principle of the Pancasila, ‘Belief in God’, implies that good citizens must be religious. Participant J-04, a 32-year-old from Jakarta, stated that she was born and raised as a Muslim. However, upon reaching adulthood she decided to identify as non-denominational as she was becoming more critical of religious authorities and the politicising of religion. On her official documents, however, she still retained Islam as her religion, as doing so was easier in terms of bureaucracy. Recalling her estrangement from some family members and former friends after her decision to renounce religion, she thought that neither the society nor the government in Indonesia was ready for people publicly declaring their belief other than for one of the six officially recognised religions in Indonesia.

### 6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the salience of religion and religious identity for laypeople and university students in Indonesia and has raised some issues arising from religious diversity in the country. Firstly, religion and religious identity are considered the most important aspect of a person’s identity by a significant majority of laypeople and

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university student participants. Adherents of minority religions in Indonesia tend to feel less positive about their religious identity compared to the Muslim majority, particularly when considering the socio-political implications of their religious identity; nevertheless, religion remains at the centre of their selves with perceived internal virtues which function as a source of moral guidance and is seen as more salient than both their ethno-regional and national identities. Participants of this research, for instance, expressed that their religious identity allowed them to be part of a group which transcends nations and nationalities. With this paramount salience, religious identity is thus likely to influence people’s decision making in various aspects of their lives. For instance, religious difference is considered a particularly significant barrier to courtship and marriage.

Religious identity also influences people’s political decisions. The continued salience of religious identity in Indonesia, including for the younger generations, helps explain the persistence of debates on the relation between the state and religion to the present day. The majority of Muslim participants did not insist on having a Muslim as their political leader; nevertheless, they exhibited a preference to vote for candidates for political offices who shared their faith.

Meanwhile, other religious groups in Indonesia are likely to resign themselves to their minority position. In discussing the qualities of their ideal political leader, adherents of minority religions displayed awareness that Muslim candidates were more likely to be elected into office. Furthermore, adherents of minority religions tend to resign themselves to systematic discrimination, as is evident through minority students in Aceh who agreed to attend lectures on Islam and those in West Java who had to sit examinations on Christmas Eve. In this regard, the prevalence of discriminatory behaviour which is not recognised as such by the religious majority constitutes a challenge to religious diversity in Indonesia. The treatment of religious minorities is often merely toleration, which can enable sustained negative stereotyping between religious groups and may, in turn, prolong existing grievances.

Muslim participants recited significant privileges for Islam which they enjoyed in the country. These privileges seem to have been taken for granted; privileges for the majority religious group thus appear normal to the population. In turn, discrimination against religious minorities does not appear as jarring, and members of the majority religion often do not realise that they are exhibiting discriminatory behaviour. For example, there is a prevalent narrative that indigenous faith groups are not equal to world
religions and, as such, do not require equal legal treatment from the state. The situation of indigenous faith groups in Indonesia is a particularly noticeable deficiency in Indonesia’s framework for multiculturalism, particularly in addressing religious diversity.

Within this framework for religious diversity, while religious identity is equally important to all religious groups in Indonesia, they experience different degrees of recognition and accommodation from the state and within society. As participants considered their religious identity to be more salient than both their national and ethno-regional identities, the state should focus more on the provision of adequate accommodation for all religious groups. Otherwise, as displayed by participants in this research, adherents of minority religions are less likely to feel positive about their national, ethno-regional and religious identities.
Conclusion

This thesis was an endeavour to better understand the current conditions pertaining to national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia, particularly the state’s framework for cultural diversity, as an important of maintaining national unity. It examined the importance of ethno-regional and religious identities for the Indonesian people and how these two aspects of identity affect their understanding of their national identity. Furthermore, it sought the relationship between cultural diversity and national unity; specifically, to what extent a state can celebrate its internal cultural pluralism while still maintaining its unity and national identity.

To this end, I analysed the relevant literature, laws and regulations, as well as information gathered from laypeople, university students and elite participants across four provinces in Indonesia: Aceh, Jakarta, Maluku and West Java. I have observed that the Indonesian national identity is more predominant than people’s various ethno-regional identities. This predominance is enabled by a prevalent narrative of Indonesia as an inherently culturally diverse nation with various ethno-regional groups constituting its sub-nations, united by a common history of fighting against Dutch colonialism. Within this narrative, national identity and ethno-regional identity constitute different aspects of people’s selves that complement each other. Religious identity, meanwhile, is the most central aspect of people’s identity and is more salient than both national and ethno-regional identities. Religious identity thus affects most aspects of people’s lives, including their political and romantic choices. Furthermore, religious identity acts as a more significant marker of difference than ethno-regional identity.

In consideration of the relationship between national, ethno-regional and religious identities in Indonesia, this thesis argued that the Indonesian state has adopted an inequitable framework for multiculturalism. On the one hand, post-1998, this framework has increasingly provided due recognition and accommodation to various ethno-regional groups, including smaller traditional, indigenous communities and immigrant ethnic minorities such as Chinese-Indonesians which upheld the people’s contentment and positive identification with the Indonesian state. On the other hand, this framework still limits the expression of religious identities by only acknowledging and accommodating six world religions and inhibiting interreligious marriages. Furthermore, this framework confers considerable privileges to Islam which are not enjoyed by any other religion in the country in an attempt to mollify political Islamists who have been
demanding a constitutional status for Islam since before Indonesia’s political independence. Hence, this approach to multiculturalism is intended to protect Indonesia’s overall framework for cultural diversity; however, this framework has fostered an environment which normalises privileges for Indonesia’s Muslim majority at the expense of religious minorities. As such, this framework also threatens the very multiculturalism which it aims to protect.

The first section of this conclusion addresses the research questions of this thesis and highlights the main findings and arguments in relation to these questions. It begins with discussing the relationship between national, ethno-regional and religious identities in Indonesia before continuing with an examination of Indonesia’s framework for diversity. This discussion is presented alongside the implications of the findings on relevant theories. Finally, this conclusion presents some policy implications of the findings for the Indonesian government as well as some recommendations for future research.

**Observations, Findings and Implications on Theory**

The central research question in this thesis addresses the way the Indonesian state maintains national identity and unity in consideration of the country’s internal cultural diversity as well as post-1998 democratisation processes. In order to answer this question, this thesis has analysed the relationship between national, ethno-regional and religious identities in Indonesia.

Relevant literature on identity indicates that it is complex and multi-layered. A person’s identity is constituted of multiple aspects with varying degrees of salience. Narratives can determine the relationship between different aspects of people’s identity, which can enable their coexistence, or, alternatively, cause them to contradict each other. In turn, because of the multi-faceted nature of identity, no social group is completely uniform. Nations, as a form of social group, experience varying degrees of internal diversity. In this regard, national, ethno-regional and religious identities occupy different but interconnected roles within people’s selves in present-day Indonesia.

The Indonesian national identity is understood as a primarily civic identity and is associated with people’s rights and responsibilities as citizens. In addition, the Indonesian national identity has a cultural dimension, as people also associate it with a shared history.
of fighting against Dutch colonialism. Meanwhile, ethno-regional identity is primarily associated with ethnic attachments such as kinship and family. It is also associated with cultural attachments pertaining to local traditions and history. The way participants understand these aspects of their identity has shown that the traditional civic-ethnic distinction in theories of nationalism is not clear-cut. Therefore, while the civic-ethnic distinction is useful for understanding underlying types of nationalism, this distinction is not always applicable in practice. For instance, participants primarily described their Indonesian national identity in civic terms and their ethno-regional identity in ethnic terms. At the same time, participants associated the theme of birth and home with their national identity, even though ‘birth’ is commonly understood as an ethnic attachment. Furthermore, both national identity and ethno-regional identity contain a cultural dimension. The cultural dimension of the Indonesian national identity manifests in the participants’ sense of shared history. Similarly, participants associated their ethno-regional identity with a cultural dimension such as regional history that is in turn intertwined with Indonesia’s history.

The intertwining of regional and national history, particularly in relation to a common history of fighting against colonialism, is part of the narrative which has enabled the establishment of the Indonesian state. Within this prevalent narrative, Indonesia is portrayed as a culturally diverse but united nation that consists of various ethno-regional ‘sub-nations’ (suku bangsa). This narrative has further enabled national identity and ethno-regional identities to co-exist in a largely complementary relationship, in which strong ethno-regional sentiments do not necessarily translate into a weak sense of national identity. The prevalence of this narrative can be detected in the participants’ daily language use. A large majority of participants primarily used the Indonesian national language for their daily communication, particularly within public and formal settings. Regional languages, meanwhile, are reserved for private and intimate settings. Furthermore, participants who used their respective regional language more than the Indonesian language were prepared to switch to Indonesian when conversing with someone who did not speak the same regional language as them, indicating a shared sense of belonging to the Indonesian nation. The relationship between these aspects of identity has demonstrated that national and ethno-regional identities are not by default mutually exclusive. Instead, the nature of their relationship depends on the narrative that binds them.
Participants perceived their national and ethno-regional identities in an equally positive manner, showing that a positive national identity can coexist with a positive ethno-regional identity, including in provinces with a history of separatism. Furthermore, participants did not perceive these two aspects of their identity to be in competition with each other. However, participants from minority ethno-regional backgrounds tended be less positive about both their national and ethno-regional identities due to the negative experiences they had for being part of a minority group.

Meanwhile, religious identity is considered to be the most salient aspect of the participants’ identity. Participants of all religious backgrounds, for instance, considered religion to be their fundamental source of moral guidance which helps them determine good from bad and right from wrong. As such, religious identity affects most aspects of people’s lives, including their preferences for marriage partners as well as their political choices. This central and overarching role of religion within people’s identity, in combination with the Muslim-majority environment in Indonesia, helps explain the continued demands of political Islamists for constitutional status for Islam in the country.

Participants’ assessment of their religious identity, however, depended on their status as part of the Muslim majority or as part of religious minorities. A large majority of Muslim participants viewed their religious identity positively, both as a result of their reflection on the positive accommodation they received from the state for their religious practices as well as on the internal values of the religion in itself. By contrast, participants from minority religions tended to view their religious identity as less than positive as they reflected on the negative socio-political implications of their minority status. Participants from minority religions who perceived their religious identity positively, meanwhile, tended to reflect on the internal values of their religions, such as the positive values of their religious practices.

Looking at the relationship between national, ethno-regional and religious identities, national identity is more likely to be in competition with religious identity, as the ideals of an inclusive, largely secular state compete against ideals of a state based on religious (Islamic) laws. To the present, however, the use of these narratives has also enabled Indonesia to keep the aspirations of political Islamists in check by portraying Indonesia as a pious pan-religious nation. This situation again demonstrates the paramount role of narratives in aligning different identities within a functioning social group by emphasising similarities among their members while minimising the
significance of intragroup differences. Depending on their particular context, internally diverse nations can focus on ethnic, civic or cultural similarities among their members in their narrative to ensure their cohesion and integrity.

In addition to a unifying narrative, internally diverse states also have to manage their cultural pluralism. States have to decide the most appropriate approach towards their cultural pluralism in line with their chosen narrative. The right balance of recognition and accommodation for various cultural groups is particularly important to ensure people’s allegiance and contentment with the state. In contrast, the repression of identities which people consider to be very salient is likely to provoke resistance. With regard to this salience of identity, this thesis challenges the traditional liberal approach to multiculturalism which suggests that citizens of a state can completely relegate their particular attachments to the private sphere and focus exclusively on a shared civic identity in public. This liberal approach underestimates the salience of various aspects of people’s identity as shown by participants of this research. For example, as participants in this research consider religious identity to be more salient than their national identity, it is unlikely that their religious identity does not affect their understanding and performance of their civic national identity.

After addressing the relationship between national, ethno-regional and religious identities in Indonesia, this thesis analysed Indonesia’s framework for cultural pluralism in consideration of post-1998 democratisation processes in the country. To this end, for comparative purposes and to give a historical context, I also examined conditions pertaining to nation-building in Indonesia prior to 1998, specifically since the era of Indonesia’s ‘National Awakening’ in the 1920s to the end of the New Order in 1998.

In pre-1998 Indonesia, nation-building had been a primarily elite-driven top-down process which is dependent on the elites’ comprehension of identity and diversity. During Indonesia’s ‘National Awakening’ in the 1920s, elites consisting of educated youth organisations led nationalist movements across the archipelago, emphasising the shared plight of Dutch colonialism and the shared desire for political self-determination. In this era, ethno-regional and religious diversity were put on the backseat as elites focused on attaining political independence as a common goal for the whole ‘nation’. This era in particular recalls theories on post-colonialism which state that post-colonial states are seen to be shaped by their colonial experience, including their territory. In this instance, Indonesia’s borders have been determined by past borders of the Dutch colonial
territory. Furthermore, as the educated youth in this era received an education fashioned after the Dutch model, their understanding of nationhood was shaped by Western political theories of the time, including the concept of the nation-state, in which homogeneity is expected from the population of a state. The pre-existing internal diversity of the post-colonial state has hence been subjected to a nation-building process which standardised the people’s understanding of their national identity.

The elite-led nation-building process continued throughout much of Indonesia’s pre-1998 history, including the eras of Soekarno’s and Suharto’s respective presidencies. Both Soekarno and Suharto focused on the civic aspects of identity but neglected the importance of ethno-regional and religious identities. Instead, they adopted an assimilationist approach to diversity in what can be called a shallow multiculturalism: cultural diversity was recognised and valued as a national asset, such as for tourism purposes, but otherwise there was a lack of adequate accommodation for the expression of ethno-regional identities under a centralistic governance.

Soekarno, Indonesia’s first president, conceived the Pancasila as the Indonesia’s ideological foundation, consisting of belief in God, humanitarianism, national unity, democracy and social justice. The Pancasila emphasises the civic dimension of the Indonesian national identity. Soekarno also adopted a syncretic approach to reconcile different political and religious ideologies, emphasising their common objectives of political independence and welfare for the people. Soekarno’s syncretic approach towards nationalism, Islamism and communism showed his attempt to employ a particular narrative to align ideologies that were rarely considered to be compatible with each other. During the New Order (1966-1998), Suharto continued to promote Pancasila as the basis of the Indonesian state. Suharto furthermore continued to promote the narrative of a diverse but united Indonesian nation, made up by various ethno-regional ‘sub-nations’.

Both Soekarno’s and Suharto’s approach to nation-building reflected the modernist approach to nationalism, in which modern means of communication, including mass media, enabled the dissemination of the idea of the Indonesian nation to large numbers of people across the archipelago. The mass media was accompanied by the dissemination of a standardised Indonesian language, Bahasa Indonesia, which facilitated communication across various ethno-cultural groups. Furthermore, the idea of
the Indonesian nation, including its history of fighting against colonialism, was systematically spread through a centralised education system.

The systematic dissemination of the Indonesian nationhood was even more apparent during Suharto’s distinctly authoritarian and militaristic presidency in the New Order. In this era, ethno-regional aspirations and various forms of political competition were repressed. The narrative of ethno-regional diversity was determined by the central government in a top-down manner. At the same time, the central government only sanctioned three political parties to give the state some semblance of democracy. In effect, political competition, including the aspirations of political Islamists, were strongly controlled by the state.

Prior to 1998, the repression experienced by ethno-cultural groups resulted in some separatist conflicts, for example in Aceh and West Papua. These separatist movements reflect how the repression of salient identities can generate discontent which may erupt in disruptive or violent manners. In the case of separatism in Aceh, the ethno-regional movement was also imbued with a religious dimension, as the separatist movement aspired to establish a state based on Islamic law.

The demand of Acehnese separatists for an Islamic state, in turn, recalls the long-standing debate on the ideal relationship between the Indonesian state and religion, particularly Islam. This debate first took place before Indonesia’s independence, with political Islamists arguing that, as a Muslim-majority state, Indonesia should adopt Islamic law as the basis of the state, while secular nationalists wanted a religiously neutral state. This debate reflects how varying interpretations of national identity are possible among members of the same nation. This situation can pose a challenge if these interpretations differ fundamentally from each other, making it difficult to accommodate them within a functioning state with a viable national identity. In the Indonesian case, the compromise between political Islamists and secular nationalists resulted in a constitution which portrays Indonesia as a pious, pan-religious nation.

As the constitution is the basis for all laws and regulations in Indonesia, it is the best place to start analysing Indonesia’s present framework for diversity and multicultural policies. The most noticeable aspect about the constitution is Indonesia’s national motto, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, which is usually translated into Unity in Diversity in English. Furthermore, the constitution highlights two kinds of diversity. Firstly, ethno-
regional diversity, which is acknowledged in articles that address regional autonomy. Secondly, religious diversity, which is acknowledged in articles warranting the freedom of religion and cementing the existence of a religious court.

The present Indonesian constitution has undergone significant amendments post-1998, including the articles on regional autonomy, which delegate the authority to make decisions to regional governments with the exception of decisions pertaining to foreign affairs, national security and fiscal matters. In this regard, this thesis has shown some effects of democratisation on internally diverse states which enables the bottom-up expression of particular identities. In post-1998 Indonesia, democratisation has allowed the creation of regional autonomy laws which allow provinces to make political decisions in accordance with local values and hold local direct elections. In turn, regional autonomy has allowed people to be more content with the state. Renewed freedom of association has further allowed political Islamists to channel their aspirations through Islamic political parties. At the same time, a renewed freedom of expression has enabled the expression of views that challenge the very foundations of the state, for example, the now-disbanded Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia that campaigned to replace the Pancasila with Islamic law. The situation in Indonesia thus reflects scholarly debates on the effect of democratisation on internally diverse states, as democratisation can lead to more inclusive political practices, but also lead to the fragmentation of the state. Indonesia’s example indicates that the effect of democratisation on a culturally diverse state depends on the exact type of diversity: in this case, religious diversity is more polarising than ethno-regional diversity.

I have examined Indonesia’s present framework for diversity for multiculturalism through three dimensions. First, Indonesia’s framework for diversity has been examined through the context in which elites laid out the foundations for multiculturalism. A multiculturalist foundation of the state should explicitly accommodate the collective rights of various ethno-regional and religious groups, with the celebration of diverse identities as an end in itself. However, in Indonesia, the framework for diversity is the result of a political compromise between secular nationalists and Islamists. Hence, policies pertaining to diversity have primarily been a means for the self-preservation of the state, safeguarding the country’s overall national unity and diversity.

Indonesia’s present framework for diversity has become more multiculturalist post-1998; it grants more accommodation for diverse ethno-regional and religious
identities. Yet, above all, this framework for diversity is still intended to preserve the integrity of the state, which is apparent in the differentiation of the state’s treatment of ethno-regional diversity and religious diversity. There is more accommodation for the expression of ethno-regional identities than religious identities, as ethno-regional identities are not considered to constitute a similar challenge to Indonesia’s overall national identity and unity. The prevalent narrative of ethno-regional groups as Indonesia’s sub-nations and the complementary relationship between national and ethno-regional identities has enabled more space for the expression of ethno-regional identities. For instance, regional autonomy laws have allowed the establishment of new administrative provinces based on ethnic and cultural boundaries, and discrimination based on people’s ethno-regional identity is classified as a criminal offense. In turn, participants expressed contentment with the state due to the space provided for the expression of ethno-regional identities. In contrast, the freedom to express religious identities is limited, as the state only acknowledges six world religions (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Confucianism) in their mainstream interpretation. Furthermore, the state continues to mollify the demands of political Islamists by providing various privileges for Islam not enjoyed by any other religious groups in the country. These privileges further indicate that multicultural policies in Indonesia have not been established solely for the celebration of diverse identities.

Second, I have examined the extent of legal pluralism in Indonesia, including the range of particular groups who are recognised and accommodated by the state. A multiculturalist state should provide equal treatment to its various ethno-regional and religious groups, regardless of their size or political leverage. However, Indonesia’s legal pluralism does not extend equal treatment to all of its religious and ethno-regional groups. The expression of religious identity in Indonesia, as stated previously, is limited to six legally recognised world religions. Out of these six religions, Islam enjoys the most privileges from the state, reflecting the political sway of Islamist groups in the country. Meanwhile, laws against blasphemy further prohibit the public display and proselytising of faiths beyond the mainstream traditions of the six recognised religions, which inhibits minority groups such as the Ahmadiyahs to freely practice their faith. Furthermore, despite increasing recognition from the state, Indonesia’s indigenous faith groups do not enjoy the same accommodation as world religions; these faith groups even struggle to be
recognised as ‘religions’, particularly because they do not fit the mould of monotheistic religions. In addition, participants largely displayed pejorative views to indigenous faith groups, suggesting an established negative public narrative about them.

The way the size and political sway of cultural groups affect their standing in the state is also apparent in how larger ethno-regional groups are more likely to have their rights accommodated by the state. In particular, Indonesia’s framework for ethno-regional diversity still has to improve its accommodation of its traditional societies/indigenous peoples, such as through the reconciliation of national legislations with customary laws pertaining to the utilisation of customary lands. These customary rights used to be entirely overlooked in the pre-1998 era; therefore, present efforts to increase the recognition and accommodation of these rights are a step in the right direction for a more multiculturalist approach to diversity, but it is still a work in progress.

Third, I have examined multiculturalism in Indonesia through the way cultural groups perceive themselves and each other. Within an ideal multiculturalist setting, intergroup differences are not perceived in a pejorative manner, but accepted and even celebrated. Instead of a superficially peaceful coexistence with unaddressed grievances and prejudices between cultural groups, there should be sustainable meaningful positive interaction among and between cultural groups. In Indonesia, however, prejudices continue to exist between various ethno-regional and religious groups despite the largely peaceful situation across the country, with perhaps the current exception in West Papua. Participants revealed their prejudice towards other groups, for example, during discussions on the viability of mixed marriages. There are unspoken grievances and mistrust between ethno-regional and religious groups that are hard to capture through statistics, and there are no policies in place to explicitly address these grievances.

Participants’ attitude towards interethnic and interreligious marriages was a further indication of an existing projection of negative images between social groups. Religious identity constitutes a particularly salient marker for difference which inhibits interfaith courtship and marriage, perpetuated by marriage laws which necessitate a religious covenant for marriages to be legal. Thus, Indonesia’s marriage laws contribute to the continued segregation between religious groups. By contrast, there is no legal hurdle for interethnic marriages in Indonesia, and younger, unmarried participants stated that they would consider marrying someone from an ethno-regional background different
from themselves. However, participants from both older and younger generations indicated continued prejudice between different ethno-regional groups, attaching negative stereotypes to groups different from their own background.

In addition, minority groups continue to experience various types of discrimination and members of minority groups tend to resign themselves to their disadvantaged position, as shown by minority participants in this research. Experiences shared by participants of minority religions confirmed that world religions other than Islam are merely tolerated instead of accepted, let alone celebrated. Among participants, for example, university students from the Muslim majority were unaware of the lack of disadvantages faced by their peers from minority religions, such as examinations or groups assignments being conducted during minority religious holidays. The participants’ experience with cultural diversity thus depends on their status as part of the majority or minority.

The present state of the relationship between cultural groups in Indonesia is partly affected by the management of cultural groups during the colonial era. For example, past classification of citizens according to their ethno-regional or religious identities can result in persisting stereotypes and prejudice. This is the case with Chinese-Indonesians who used to be classified as ‘foreign Orientals’ during the colonial era vis-à-vis ethno-regional groups who were classified as ‘natives’. To the present day, Chinese-Indonesians are still often construed as an immigrant ethnic group even though many have lived in Indonesia for generations. This situation shows the way colonialism continues to affect post-colonial countries for decades after their political independence.

Considering the three aforementioned dimensions of multiculturalism in Indonesia, this thesis has argued that the Indonesian state has adopted an inequitable framework for diversity. This framework has thus far been successful in maintaining Indonesia’s overall national identity and unity and providing considerable accommodation for the expression of various ethno-regional and religious identities. However, this framework has its limitations. For instance, despite considerable privileges extended to Islam, there has been no end to the debate on the relation between the state and religion, as evident from continued demands for a constitutional status for Islam. Indonesia’s framework for diversity also has yet to provide equitable treatment to its diverse ethno-regional and religious groups, particularly for currently vulnerable groups such as traditional societies and indigenous faith groups. In addition, intergroup relations
continue to be weighed down by unaddressed grievances and prejudices, even though they are largely peaceful at the surface.

Furthermore, Indonesia’s framework for diversity has created an environment which normalises privileges for the Muslim majority and limitations for religious minorities. Thus, the state has not provided equal recognition and accommodation to all cultural groups within it; larger groups with more political sway are more likely to have their cultural needs recognised and accommodated by the state. Meanwhile, smaller groups with lesser leverage may have to resign themselves to their disadvantaged position in society. Indonesia is thus challenged with fostering a more equitable and inclusive framework for diversity which can withstand the sway of political Islamists without sacrificing minority rights, especially religious minorities. Altogether, this thesis has highlighted some positive achievements as well as considerable deficiencies within Indonesia’s framework for diversity. Hence, finding and maintaining a better balance between the celebration of diversity and the maintenance of unity remains the central challenge for the Indonesian state.

**Policy Recommendations**

The findings of this research have shown that the current post-1998 framework for diversity in Indonesia has largely been able to maintain the nation’s overall identity and unity, but there are some improvements to be done. With respect to ethno-regional diversity, the state can continue with its existing framework for regional autonomy, as the space provided for the expression of ethno-regional identities, including the establishment of new administrative provinces, have not caused a waning in the people’s sense of belonging to Indonesia. By contrast, this space has increased the people’s contentment with the state. However, the state has to further increase its recognition and accommodation of the traditional rights of Indonesia’s indigenous communities by incorporating their rights into national legislation. At the same time, the Indonesian government should continue to spread the narrative of Indonesia being a nation that consists of diverse sub-nations, as this narrative has been the main factor that allows the positive coexistence between the Indonesian national identity and various ethno-regional identities.
The state further has to be more active in promoting religious moderation and tolerance. The teaching of religion and religious practices should be accompanied by values of positive interfaith relations; citizenship studies should also put more emphasis on positive interfaith relations. The current conditions pertaining to religious diversity in Indonesia are particularly inequitable, as the Muslim majority enjoys privileges while religious minorities have to resign themselves to disadvantages. The state has to live up to its claims of warranting religious freedom as stated in the constitution and avoid superfluous adoption of Islamic practices into national legislations. Furthermore, the government must be more cognizant of the experiences of religious minorities and, in some cases, provide them with affirmative action. Specifically, the state needs to be more specific in making discrimination on the basis of religious identity a criminal offense, as it previously did for ethno-regional identity.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are some recommendations for future research pertaining to national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia. As presented in the introduction, the fieldwork for this thesis was only conducted in four out of 34 provinces: Aceh, Jakarta, Maluku and West Java. While these provinces have provided a good variation of locations in terms of local context and demographics, similar research can be done in other locations across the country. Provinces such as Hindu-majority Bali or other Christian-majority areas could provide particularly interesting insights. West Papua, with its ongoing case of separatism, is important location for assessing the ability of the Indonesian state to remain united. Given sufficient time and resources, similar research could be conducted across all provinces in Indonesia.

Furthermore, because the fieldwork for this thesis was largely contained to urban and suburban areas around the capital city of each province, future research could include more rural areas, where the population may feel stronger ethno-regional attachments than the population of urban areas. Thus, there may be interesting variations within the same provinces. The comparison between diverse urban areas and more homogeneous rural areas can contribute to the understanding of the way exposure to cultural pluralism affects people’s understanding of diversity and multiculturalism.
In this research, I chose to focus on ethno-regional and religious identities and their connection to people’s understanding of national identity, because these are the two aspects of diversity highlighted in Indonesia’s constitution. However, there are more aspects to people’s identities than ethno-regional and religious ones. As shown by some participants’ aversion to LGBTQ issues and the salience of religion, for instance, it would be interesting to examine feelings of national identity and belonging among Indonesians who identify as queer.

In addition, the demand of political Islamists for more accommodation of Islamic law in the country has been a recurring theme throughout this thesis. As such, a further study examining the attitude of the members of Muslim political parties pertaining to the Indonesian national identity can shed more light on the current conditions pertaining to Islamist aspirations in the country. Furthermore, another study could compare the attitude of people from different political alignments to examine their understanding of the ideal Indonesian national identity.

Furthermore, for this research, I examined variations between provinces, between majority and minority groups, as well as between older and younger participants. For future research, it would be interesting to examine to what extent other factors such as participants’ level of education and economic class contribute to their perception and understanding of their national identity. While this research has focused on laypeople participants from various backgrounds as well as university students, future research could control for the occupation of participants by focusing on particular vocational groups. For example, a study on members of the armed forces or civil servants could yield salient results.

There were some intriguing points that could not be followed up directly with participants, as analysis was done following the completion of the fieldwork. For example, some findings indicated that participants in Aceh and Maluku displayed more positive feelings about their national identity and claimed a stronger sense of attachment to Indonesia than their peers in Jakarta and West Java. This finding could be further examined. I have reasoned that the local history of separatism has compelled participants to claim a strong sense of attachment towards Indonesia, either due to a stronger local socialisation of national identity or to the participants’ reluctance to be affiliated with separatism. For future research, it would be fruitful to study to what extent a local history of separatism and/or violent conflict affects people’s sense of attachment towards their
country. Altogether, these recommendations should contribute to a better understanding of national identity, diversity and multiculturalism.
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Appendices

Appendix 1: List of laypeople participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital status</th>
<th>Spouse’s ethnic group</th>
<th>Spouse’s religion</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Small spare-parts store owner</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Batak</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Vocational school</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Acehnese</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>A-01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Clerk at a bank</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Acehnese</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Acehnese</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>A-02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Admin support</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Acehnese</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>A-03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Waiter at coffee shop</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Acehnese</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Vocational school</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>A-04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Employee at a small enterprise</td>
<td>32</td>
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**Jakarta**

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**Maluku**

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**West Java**

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Appendix 2: Sample interview questions for laypeople participants

1. How do you describe your own identity?
2. Which ethnic group(s) and religion do you identify with?
3. What is your age, occupation and educational background?
4. How do you feel about being Indonesian?
5. How do you feel about being part of your ethnic group?
6. How do you feel about being part of your religious group?
7. What part of your identity do you feel as the most important one?
8. How do you use Indonesian and your regional language? Which one do you use predominantly?
9. What are your thoughts and experience regarding diversity in the area where you live?
10. Are you married, or in a romantic relationship with someone? Does your partner share the same ethnicity and/or religion with you?
11. Is there any ethnic or religious diversity within your family, including aunts/uncles/first cousins?
12. Does someone’s ethnic or religious background matter to you when looking for a potential marriage partner?
13. Do you get much information around cultural diversity in Indonesia? What do you see in the media and how do you feel about it?
14. Do you have any personal experience with discrimination?
15. Regarding the upcoming 2018 regional gubernatorial elections, what criteria do you feel are most important to look for in a candidate? Do the ethnicity and religion of a candidate matter to you?
16. What could be improved or done differently to further increase your sense of attachment to the Indonesian nation?
## Appendix 3: Demographic of university student participants

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<td>18 – 24 years old</td>
<td>15 males, 17 females</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>18 – 24 years old</td>
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<td>26 Muslims, 1 Protestant</td>
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<td>Jakarta A</td>
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<td>18 – 22 years old</td>
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<td>21 Muslims, 3 Protestants, 3 Catholics, 3 Buddhists</td>
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Appendix 4: Questionnaire template for university students

Reference Number: 17/131

**Questionnaire/Kuesioner**

University/Universitas : 
Age/Usia : 
Gender/Gender : 
Religion/Agama : 
Ethnicity/Suku Bangsa : 
Area of origin/Daerah asal : 

1. How do you feel about being Indonesian? Select one option and explain why.
   *Bagaimana perasaan Saudara/i menjadi bagian dari Bangsa Indonesia? Pilih salah satu dan jelaskan mengapa.*
   - [ ] Very positive/Sangat positif | Why/Mengapa?
   - [ ] Positive/Positif
   - [ ] Indifferent/Biasa saja
   - [ ] Negative/Negatif
   - [ ] Very negative/Sangat negatif

2. How strong is your sense of attachment to the Indonesian state? Select one option and explain why.
   *Sekuat apa rasa memiliki Saudara/i terhadap Negara Indonesia? Pilih salah satu dan jelaskan mengapa.*
   - [ ] Very strong/sangat kuat | Why/Mengapa?
   - [ ] Strong/kuat
   - [ ] Indifferent/Biasa saja
   - [ ] Weak/Lemah
   - [ ] Very weak/Sangat lemah
3. What could be improved or done differently to further increase your sense of attachment to the Indonesian state?

_Hal apa yang dapat diperbaiki atau diubah untuk meningkatkan rasa memiliki Saudara/i terhadap Negara Indonesia?_

4. How do you feel about being part of your ethnic group? Select one option and explain why.

_Bagaimana perasaan Saudara/i menjadi bagian dari suku bangsa Saudara/i? Pilih salah satu dan jelaskan mengapa._

- Very positive/Sangat positif
- Positive/Positif
- Indifferent/Biased saja
- Negative/Negatif
- Very negative/Sangat negatif

5. How do you feel about being part of your religious group? Select one option and explain why.

_Bagaimana perasaan Saudara/i menjadi penganut agama Saudara/i? Pilih salah satu dan jelaskan mengapa._

- Very positive/Sangat positif
- Positive/Positif
- Indifferent/Biased saja
- Negative/Negatif
- Very negative/Sangat negatif

6. Please rank these affiliations from most to least important to you (1: most important, 5: least important)

_Mohon urutkan afiliasi di bawah ini dari yang paling penting bagi Saudara/i (1: paling penting, 5: kurang penting)"

- the Indonesian State/Negara Indonesia
- the Indonesian Nation/Bangsa Indonesia
- Religion/Agama
- Sub-nationality or Ethnicity/Suku bangsa
- Area of origin/Daerah asal

7. What language(s) do you speak on a daily basis? Please specify the language you use the most in these circumstances:

_Bahasa apa saja yang Saudara/i gunakan sehari-hari? Mohon sebutkan bahasa yang paling sering digunakan dalam situasi-situasi berikut:

- At home or with family/Di rumah, dengan keluarga:
- On campus/Di kampus:
- With friends/Dengan teman-teman:
- On social media/Di media sosial:
- Others/lain-lain:
8. If you went to an event with a dress code that says ‘national clothes’, what type of clothing would you wear?
   *Jika Saudara/i menghadiri acara yang mewajibkan mengenakan ‘pakaian nasional’, pakaian jenis apa yang akan Saudara/i kenakan?*

9. Do you have people in your family who are from a different ethnic group or different religion from you?
   *Apakah Saudara/i memiliki anggota keluarga dari kelompok etnis atau agama yang berbeda dengan Saudara/i?*
   □ No/tidak
   □ Yes/ya → Please specify the ethnicity or religion/mohon sebutkan suku bangsa atau agamanya:
   
   How do you feel about this diversity in your family?
   *Bagaimana perasaan Saudara/i terkait kebhinekaan di keluarga Saudara/i?*
   □ Very positive/sangat positif
   □ Positive/positif
   □ Indifferent/biased saja
   □ Negative/negatif
   □ Very negative/sangat negatif

10. Do you have close friends who are from a different ethnic group or different religion from you? *Apakah Saudara/i memiliki sahabat dari kelompok etnis atau agama yang berbeda dengan Saudara/i?*
    □ No/tidak
    □ Yes/ya → Please specify the ethnicity or religion/mohon sebutkan suku bangsa atau agamanya:
    
    How do you feel about this diversity in your circle of close friends?
    *Bagaimana perasaan Saudara terkait kebhinekaan di lingkaran persahabatan Saudara/i?*
    □ Very positive/sangat positif
    □ Positive/positif
    □ Indifferent/biased saja
    □ Negative/negatif
    □ Very negative/sangat negatif

11. Have you had romantic relations with people from different ethnicities and/or religion from you?
    *Apakah Saudara/i pernah memiliki hubungan asmara dengan orang dari suku bangsa dan/atau agama yang berbeda?*
    □ No/tidak
    □ Yes/ya → Please specify the ethnicity or religion/mohon sebutkan suku bangsa atau agamanya:
How have people reacted to this relationship?

Bagaimana reaksi orang-orang terhadap hubungan asmara tersebut?

- Very positive/sangat positif
- Positive/positif
- Indifferent/bisa saja
- Negative/negatif
- Very negative/sangat negatif

12. Have you ever faced discrimination because of your ethnicity?

Apakah Saudara/i pernah mengalami diskriminasi karena suku bangsa Saudara/i?

- No/tidak
- Yes/ya → Please specify/mohon sebutkan:

13. Have you ever faced discrimination because of your religion?

Apakah Saudara/i pernah mengalami diskriminasi karena agama Saudara/i?

- No/tidak
- Yes/ya → Please specify/mohon sebutkan:

14. What type of school did you attend before university?

Sebelum universitas, Saudara/i bersekolah di jenis sekolah apa?

- Public school/sekolah negeri
- Private school/sekolah swasta
- Religious school/sekolah keagamaan

Please specify/mohon sebutkan nama sekolahnya:

15. What are your thoughts about and experience with diversity on your campus?

Bagaimanakah pemikiran dan pengalaman Saudara/i dengan kebhinnekaan di kampus Saudara/i?

16. Are there any other issues pertaining to national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia that you wish to raise?

Adakah hal-hal lain terkait identitas nasional dan kebhinnekaan di Indonesia yang ingin Saudara/i kemukakan?
Appendix 5: List of focus group discussion participants

University Aceh A

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University Aceh A – Minority Students

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**University West Java A – Minority Students**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
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<td>19</td>
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</table>

**University West Java B**

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<th>Age</th>
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<td>19</td>
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<td>Islam</td>
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<td>F</td>
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<td>Religion</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Gender</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Sundanese</td>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Minang</td>
<td>Islam</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>Islam</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Bugis</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 6: Sample questions for focus group discussions

1. Please elaborate on what you think is the Indonesian national identity – are there any characteristics you associate particularly with being ‘Indonesian’?
2. How do you personally feel about being Indonesian?
3. How do you feel about diversity among the population of Indonesia?
4. How do you feel about diversity on campus?
5. What are your personal experiences with discrimination on campus?
6. Do you think your cultural/ethnic/religious group is well represented at the national level, for example through government policies or by the media?
7. What could be improved or done differently to further increase your sense of attachment to Indonesia?
Appendix 7: List of elite participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Interview date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bakhtiar Abdullah</td>
<td>Former spokesperson/negotiator</td>
<td>Free Aceh Movement/Gerakan Aceh Merdeka</td>
<td>Banda Aceh</td>
<td>13 February 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Wirya Adiwena</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Habibie Foundation</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>7 May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Saifuddin Bantasyam</td>
<td>Law professor</td>
<td>Universitas Syiah Kuala</td>
<td>Banda Aceh</td>
<td>2 February 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Alamsyah Djafar</td>
<td>Senior researcher</td>
<td>Wahid Foundation</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>31 January 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hasan</td>
<td>Caretaker</td>
<td>Darma Bhakti Buddhist Temple</td>
<td>Banda Aceh</td>
<td>26 February 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Nurina Vidya Hutagalung</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Habibie Foundation</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>7 May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Petrus Canisius Mandagi</td>
<td>Bishop</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Diocease of Amboina</td>
<td>Ambon</td>
<td>17 April 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Elifas Maspaitella</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Protestant Church of Maluku</td>
<td>Ambon</td>
<td>28 March 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Azis Nurwahyudi</td>
<td>Director for Public Diplomacy</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>29 January 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Martini Paham</td>
<td>Director for Marketing Strategy and Communication</td>
<td>Ministry of Tourism of Indonesia</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>9 May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Kemal Pasha</td>
<td>Anthropologist</td>
<td>Universitas Malukissaleh</td>
<td>Banda Aceh</td>
<td>9 February 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Aan Permana</td>
<td>Project leader/researcher</td>
<td>Habibie Foundation</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>7 May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Prof. Arief Rachman</td>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>3 May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Agustini Rahayu</td>
<td>Director for Marketing Development</td>
<td>Ministry of Tourism of Indonesia</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>9 May 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position/Role</td>
<td>Organization/Group</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Date</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Rukka Sombolinggi</td>
<td>Secretary General</td>
<td>Indigenous Peoples’ Alliance of the Archipelago (AMAN/Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara)</td>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>14 May 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Johannes Subagio</td>
<td>Parishioner</td>
<td>Catholic Church of the Holy Heart</td>
<td>Banda Aceh</td>
<td>21 February 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Munawar Liza Zainal</td>
<td>Former high-ranking member/supporting team for negotiations</td>
<td>Free Aceh Movement/Gerakan Aceh Merdeka</td>
<td>Banda Aceh</td>
<td>13 February 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8: Sample interview questions for elites

1. How would you describe the Indonesian national identity?
2. How do you view the diversity among the population of Indonesia?
3. What is the role of your position/institution in relation to national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia?
4. What are your personal experiences in dealing with Indonesia’s cultural diversity during your current/past position?
5. What issues do you see arising out of diversity in Indonesia, and what do you think should be done to address them?

Note: These are only guiding questions and were tailored according to each participant’s actual position and affiliation, complemented by follow-up questions on their answers.
Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate I thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and I thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for a PhD at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

This research explores how national identity is constituted in Indonesia. It aims to examine the factors which challenge the Indonesian national identity and those that contribute to its maintenance. It also looks into how government policies shape national identity and vice-a-versa.

What Type of Participants are being sought?

This project seeks participants from the following criteria:

1. Public figures and officials of the Indonesian government, selected according their position;
2. Tertiary students;
3. The grass-roots of society.

Participants should hold an Indonesian citizenship and be at least 18 years old.

Participants will be presented with a small souvenir as a token of appreciation.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview for the duration of approximately 30 minutes to an hour.

Please be aware that if you decide not to take part in the project or at any moment wish to end your participation, you may do so without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.
What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

Interviews will involve an open-questioning technique and will be recorded on a digital voice recorder, unless the participant objects to being recorded. The general line of questioning involves asking about interviewees’ thoughts and perceptions on national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently, although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used.

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable, you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and also that you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

All laypeople participating in interviews will remain anonymous. Please be aware that we will make every attempt to preserve your anonymity. You will also be given the option on your willingness to be recorded. It is absolutely up to you which option you prefer.

The results of the project will be submitted as a PhD dissertation, and may be published as academic articles. You are most welcome to request a copy of the results of the project.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only my supervisor and I will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least five years in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants will be destroyed at the completion of research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Budi Annisa Sidi and Assoc. Prof Vicki Spencer
Department of Politics
University of Otago
annisa.sidi@postgrad.otago.ac.nz vicki.spencer@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (Ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
IDENTITAS NASIONAL DAN MULTIKULTURALISME:
TANTANGAN TERHADAP PEMBANGUNAN BANGSA DI INDONESIA

LEMBAR INFORMASI BAGI PESERTA
(Wawancara Pribadi bagi Masyarakat Umum)


Apakah tujuan dari proyek ini?
Proyek ini merupakan bagian dari program PhD (S3) pada University of Otago di Dunedin, Selandia Baru. Penelitian ini bertujuan menelaah pembentukan identitas nasional di Indonesia dengan mempelajari faktor-faktor yang membantu maupun menghambat pembentukan identitas nasional tersebut. Penelitian ini juga menelaah bagaimana kebijakan pemerintah membentuk identitas nasional, dan sebaliknya.

Partisipan seperti apakah yang dibutuhkan?
Proyek ini mencari partisipan dari kriteria berikut ini:
1. Figur publik dan pejabat pemerintah Indonesia yang dipilih berdasarkan kewenangan atau jabatannya;
2. Mahasiswa;

Partisipan adalah Warga Negara Indonesia (WNI) yang berusia setidaknya 18 tahun.
Partisipan akan mendapatkan cenderamata sebagai tanda terima kasih atas keikutsertaannya.

Apakah yang diharapkan dari para partisipan?
Data atau Informasi apakah yang dikumpulkan, dan bagaimana data/informasi tersebut akan digunakan?


Hasil penelitian ini akan dipublikasikan sebagai disertasi PhD/S3 dan kemungkinan juga akan diterbitkan dalam jurnal akademik. Bapak/Ibu dapat meminta hasil-hasil penelitian ini.

Data yang dikumpulkan akan disimpan secara aman dan hanya dapat diakses oleh peneliti serta pembimbingnya. Data tersebut akan disimpan untuk setidaknya lima tahun, namun informasi pribadi partisipan akan dimusnahkan pada akhir penelitian. Hanya data yang relevan bagi hasil penelitian akan disimpan untuk jangka waktu panjang yang tidak ditentukan.

Dapatkah partisipan berubah pikiran dan mengundurkan diri?

Bapak/Ibu dapat sewaktu-waktu mengundurkan diri dari proyek ini tanpa menimbulkan kerugian apapun bagi Bapak/Ibu.

Bagaimana apabila partisipan memerlukan informasi lebih lanjut?

Apabila Bapak/Ibu memiliki pertanyaan terkait proyek ini, baik saat ini maupun di masa mendatang, maka Bapak/Ibu dapat menghubungi:

Budi Annisa Sidi
Jurusan Politik
University of Otago
annisa.sidi@postgrad.otago.ac.nz

dan

Assoc. Prof Vicki Spencer
Jurusan Politik
University of Otago
vicki.spencer@otago.ac.nz

Appendix 10: Consent form for individual laypeople participants (bilingual)

Reference code: 17/131

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND MULTICULTURALISM: CHALLENGES TOWARDS NATION-BUILDING IN INDONESIA

CONSENT FORM FOR GRASS-ROOTS INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Personal identifying information such as audio recordings will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;

4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning involves asking about interviewees’ thoughts and perceptions on national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. This research project is funded by the Indonesian Endowment Fund for Education (Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan/LPDP). Participants will be given a token of gratitude for their participation.

6. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but my participation is anonymous and every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.
7. I, as the participant:  
a) agree to being recorded in the interview,                    OR
b) disagree to being recorded.

I agree to take part in this project.

......................................................... ........................................
(Signature of participant)   (Date)

.........................................................
(Printed Name)

Name of person taking consent

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (Ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
IDENTITAS NASIONAL DAN MULTIKULTURALISME:
TANTANGAN TERHADAP PEMBANGUNAN BANGSA DI INDONESIA

FORMULIR PERSETUJUAN BAGI
PARTISIPAN WAWANCARA MASYARAKAT UMUM

Saya telah membaca Lembar Informasi proyek ini dan memahami tujuannya. Segala pertanyaan yang saya ajukan telah dijawab secara memuaskan. Saya mengetahui bahwa saya berhak meminta informasi lebih lanjut sewaktu-waktu.

Saya mengetahui bahwa:-

1. Keikutsertaan saya dalam proyek ini sepenuhnya sukarela;

2. Saya dapat mengundurkan diri dari proyek ini sewaktu-waktu tanpa kerugian apapun;

3. Informasi pribadi yang dapat mengidentifikasi saya, seperti rekaman audio, akan dimusnahkan pada akhir proyek ini, namun data mentah yang menentukan hasil penelitian akan disimpan secara aman untuk setidaknya lima tahun;


5. Penelitian ini didanai oleh Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan/LPDP. Partisipan akan mendapatkan tanda terima kasih untuk keikutsertaannya.


7. Saya, selaku partisipan: a) setuju direkam audio saat wawancara, ___

   ATAU

   b) tidak ingin direkam. ___
Saya setuju berpartisipasi dalam proyek ini.

................................................................. ........................................
(Tanda tangan) (Tanggal)

.................................................................
(Nama jelas)

.................................................................
Nama peneliti lapangan

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate I thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and I thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?
This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for a PhD at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

This research aims to explore how national identity is constituted in Indonesia. It aims to examine the factors which challenge the Indonesian national identity and which contribute to its maintenance. It also looks into how government policies shape national identity and vice versa.

What Type of Participants are being sought?
This project seeks participants from the following criteria:

1. Public figures and officials of the Indonesian government, selected according to their position;
2. Tertiary students;
3. The grass-roots of society.

Participants should hold an Indonesian citizenship and be at least 18 years old.

Participants will be presented with a small souvenir as a token of appreciation.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?
Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to fill out a self-administered questionnaire containing eight (8) open-ended questions.

Please be aware that if you decide not to take part in the project or at any moment wish to end your participation, you may do so without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.
What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

Questionnaires are to be filled out by participants in their own time and at their own convenience and will be collected after a maximum of three (3) days since their distribution. Questionnaires may be filled in Indonesian or English. A souvenir will be presented upon the return of a complete questionnaire.

In the event of questions that make you feel hesitant or uncomfortable, you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and also that you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

All questionnaire participants will remain anonymous. Please be aware that we will make every attempt to preserve your anonymity.

The results of the project will be submitted as a PhD dissertation, and may be published as academic articles. You are most welcome to request a copy of the results of the project.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only my supervisor and I will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least five years in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants will be destroyed at the completion of research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Budi Annisa Sidi and Assoc. Prof Vicki Spencer
Department of Politics
University of Otago
annisa.sidi@postgrad.otago.ac.nz

Assoc. Prof Vicki Spencer
Department of Politics
University of Otago
vicki.spencer@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (Ph +64 3 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
IDENTITAS NASIONAL DAN MULTIKULTURALISME:
TANTANGAN TERHADAP PEMBANGUNAN BANGSA DI INDONESIA

LEMBAR INFORMASI BAGI PESERTA
(Kuesioner Mandiri)


Apakah tujuan dari proyek ini?
Proyek ini merupakan bagian dari program PhD (S3) pada University of Otago di Dunedin, Selandia Baru.

Penelitian ini bertujuan menelaah pembentukan identitas nasional di Indonesia dengan mempelajari faktor-faktor yang membantu maupun menghambat pembentukan identitas nasional tersebut. Penelitian ini juga menelaah bagaimana kebijakan pemerintah membentuk identitas nasional, dan sebaliknya.

Partisipan seperti apakah yang dibutuhkan?
Proyek ini mencari partisipan dari kriteria berikut ini:

1. Figur publik dan pejabat pemerintah Indonesia yang dipilih berdasarkan kewenangan atau jabatannya;
2. Mahasiswa;

Partisipan adalah Warga Negara Indonesia (WNI) yang berusia setidaknya 18 tahun.

Partisipan akan mendapatkan cenderamata sebagai tanda terima kasih atas keikutsertaannya.

Apakah yang diharapkan dari para partisipan?
Apabila Bapak/Ibu berkenan berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini, maka Bapak/Ibu akan diminta untuk Mengisi sebuah kuesioner tertulis yang terdiri atas delapan (8) pertanyaan.

Dalam hal Bapak/Ibu tidak berkenan berpartisipasi dalam proyek ini, atau pada saat apapun ingin mengakhiri partisipasinya, maka tidak terdapat kerugian sedikitpun bagi Bapak/Ibu.
Data atau Informasi apakah yang dikumpulkan, dan bagaimana data/informasi tersebut akan digunakan?


Apabila terdapat pertanyaan yang menimbulkan ketidaknyamanan bagi partisipan, maka partisipan dapat menolak menjawab pertanyaan maupun mengakhiri keikutsertaannya dalam proyek ini tanpa kerugian apapun.

Partisipan yang mengisi kuesioner dijamin anonimitasnya. Kami akan sepenuhnya menjaga anonimitas Bapak/Ibu.

Hasil penelitian ini akan dipublikasikan sebagai disertasi PhD/S3 dan kemungkinan juga akan diterbitkan dalam jurnal akademik. Bapak/Ibu dapat meminta hasil-hasil penelitian ini.

Data yang dikumpulkan akan disimpan secara aman dan hanya dapat diakses oleh peneliti serta pembimbingnya. Data tersebut akan disimpan untuk setidaknya lima tahun, namun informasi pribadi partisipan akan dimusnahkan pada akhir penelitian. Hanya data yang relevan bagi hasil penelitian akan disimpan untuk jangka waktu panjang yang tidak ditentukan.

**Dapatkah partisipan berubah pikiran dan mengundurkan diri?**

Bapak/Ibu dapat sewaktu-waktu mengundurkan diri dari proyek ini tanpa menimbulkan kerugian apapun bagi Bapak/Ibu.

**Bagaimana apabila partisipan memerlukan informasi lebih lanjut?**

Apabila Bapak/Ibu memiliki pertanyaan terkait proyek ini, baik saat ini maupun di masa mendatang, maka Bapak/Ibu dapat menghubungi:

*Budi Annisa Sidi*  
Jurusan Politik  
University of Otago  
annisa.sidi@postgrad.otago.ac.nz

*Assoc. Prof Vicki Spencer*  
Jurusan Politik  
University of Otago  
vicki.spencer@otago.ac.nz

Penelitian ini telah mendapatkan persetujuan Komite Etik University of Otago. Apabila Bapak/Ibu meragukan kode etik penelitian ini, maka Bapak/Ibu dapat menghubungi Komite Etik tersebut melalui Administrator Komite Etik (Telp. +643 479 8256 atau email *gary.witte@otago.ac.nz*). Segala hal yang disampaikan oleh Bapak/Ibu terjaga kerahasiaannya dan Bapak/Ibu akan mendapatkan hasil investigasi kasus terkait.
Appendix 12: Consent form for university student participants (bilingual)

Reference code: 17/131

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND MULTICULTURALISM:
CHALLENGES TOWARDS NATION-BUILDING IN INDONESIA

CONSENT FORM FOR
QUESTIONNAIRE PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Personal identifying information such as written questionnaires may be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;

4. This project involves the filling out of a questionnaire on my thoughts and perceptions on national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia. In the event of questions which make me feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. This research project is funded by the Indonesian Endowment Fund for Education (Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan/LPDP). Participants will be given a token of gratitude for their participation.

6. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but my participation is anonymous and every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.
I agree to take part in this project.

................................................................................. ............................... 
(Signature of participant) (Date)

.................................................................................
(Printed Name)

.................................................................................
Name of person taking consent

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
IDENTITAS NASIONAL DAN MULTIKULTURALISME:
TANTANGAN TERHADAP PEMBANGUNAN BANGSA DI INDONESIA

FORMULIR PERSETUJUAN BAGI
PARTISIPAN KUESIONER

Saya telah membaca Lembar Informasi proyek ini dan memahami tujuannya. Segala pertanyaan yang saya ajukan telah dijawab secara memuaskan. Saya mengetahui bahwa saya berhak meminta informasi lebih lanjut sewaktu-waktu.

Saya mengetahui bahwa:-

1. Keikutsertaan saya dalam proyek ini sepenuhnya sukarela;

2. Saya dapat mengundurkan diri dari proyek ini sewaktu-waktu tanpa kerugian apapun;

3. Informasi pribadi saya, seperti kuesioner tertulis, akan dimusnahkan pada akhir proyek ini, namun data mentah yang menentukan hasil penelitian akan disimpan secara aman untuk setidaknya lima tahun;


5. Penelitian ini didanai oleh Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan/LPDP. Partisipan akan mendapatkan tanda terima kasih untuk keikutsertaannya.

Saya setuju berpartisipasi dalam proyek ini.

................................................................. ........................................
(Tanda tangan) (Tanggal)

.................................................................
(Nama jelas)

.................................................................
Nama peneliti lapangan

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND MULTICULTURALISM: CHALLENGES TOWARDS NATION-BUILDING IN INDONESIA

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS
(Focus Group Discussion)

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate I thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and I thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?
This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for a PhD at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

This research explores how national identity is constituted in Indonesia. It aims to examine the factors which challenge the Indonesian national identity and which contribute to its maintenance. It also looks into how government policies shape national identity and vice versa.

What Type of Participants are being sought?
This project seeks participants from the following criteria:

1. Public figures and officials of the Indonesian government, selected according to their position;
2. Tertiary students;
3. The grass-roots of society.

Participants should hold an Indonesian citizenship and be at least 18 years old.

Participants will be presented with a small souvenir as a token of appreciation.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?
Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to participate in a Focus Group Discussion for the duration of approximately an hour.

Please be aware that if you decide not to take part in the project or at any moment wish to end your participation, you may do so without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.
What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

Focus Groups will involve a discussion following a set of pre-determined questions and will be recorded on a digital voice recorder. The general line of questioning involves asking about interviewees’ thoughts, perceptions and experience on national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia. Depending on the way the discussion develops, new themes may be added to the pre-determined questions. Consequently, although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the pre-determined questions for discussion, the Committee has not been able to review all the questions to be used.

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable, you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and also that you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

All Focus Group participants will remain anonymous. Please be aware that we will make every attempt to preserve your anonymity.

The results of the project will be submitted as a PhD dissertation, and may be published as academic articles. You are most welcome to request a copy of the results of the project.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only my supervisor and I will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least five years in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants will be destroyed at the completion of research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Budi Annisa Sidi and Assoc. Prof Vicki Spencer
Department of Politics and Department of Politics
University of Otago and University of Otago
annisa.sidi@postgrad.otago.ac.nz and vicki.spencer@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (Ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
IDENTITAS NASIONAL DAN MULTIKULTURALISME:
TANTANGAN TERHADAP PEMBANGUNAN BANGSA DI INDONESIA

LEMBAR INFORMASI BAGI PESERTA
(Focus Group Discussion/FGD)


Apakah tujuan dari proyek ini?
Proyek ini merupakan bagian dari program PhD (S3) pada University of Otago di Dunedin, Selandia Baru.
Penelitian ini bertujuan menelaah pembentukan identitas nasional di Indonesia dengan mempelajari faktor-faktor yang membantu maupun menghambat pembentukan identitas nasional tersebut. Penelitian ini juga menelaah bagaimana kebijakan pemerintah membentuk identitas nasional, dan sebaliknya.

Partisipan seperti apakah yang dibutuhkan?
Proyek ini mencari partisipan dari kriteria berikut ini:
1. Figur publik dan pejabat pemerintah Indonesia yang dipilih berdasarkan kewenangan atau jabatannya;
2. Mahasiswa;
Partisipan adalah Warga Negara Indonesia (WNI) yang berusia setidaknya 18 tahun.
Partisipan akan mendapatkan cenderamata sebagai tanda terima kasih atas keikutsertaannya.

Apakah yang diharapkan dari para partisipan?
Apabila Bapak/Ibu berkenan berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini, maka Bapak/Ibu akan diminta untuk ikut serta dalam Focus Group Discussion dengan durasi sekitar satu jam.
Dalam hal Bapak/Ibu tidak berkenan berpartisipasi dalam proyek ini, atau pada saat apapun ingin mengakhiri partisipasinya, maka tidak terdapat kerugian sedikitpun bagi Bapak/Ibu.
**Data atau Informasi apakah yang dikumpulkan, dan bagaimana data/informasi tersebut akan digunakan?**

*Focus Group Discussion* (FGD) berupa diskusi kelompok, dan akan mengikuti sejumlah pertanyaan yang telah ditentukan sebelumnya dan direkam secara audio. Secara umum, pertanyaan wawancara terkait dengan pemikiran, persepsi dan pengalaman partisipan mengenai identitas nasional dan multikulturalisme di Indonesia. Diskusi kelompok dapat mengangkat tema-tema yang menarik dan menimbulkan pertanyaan lanjutan baru. Oleh karena itu, Komite Etik University of Otago memahami cakupan diskusi ini, namun tidak dapat menelaah seluruh pertanyaan yang akan diajukan.

Apabila perkembangan wawancara maupun diskusi menimbulkan ketidaknyamanan bagi partisipan, maka partisipan dapat sewaktu-waktu menolak menjawab pertanyaan maupun mengakhiri keikutsertaannya dalam proyek ini tanpa kerugian apapun. 


Hasil penelitian ini akan dipublikasikan sebagai disertasi PhD/S3 dan kemungkinan juga akan diterbitkan dalam jurnal akademik. Bapak/Ibu dapat meminta hasil-hasil penelitian ini.

Data yang dikumpulkan akan disimpan secara aman dan hanya dapat diakses oleh peneliti serta pembimbingnya. Data tersebut akan disimpan untuk setidaknya lima tahun, namun informasi pribadi partisipan akan dimusnahkan pada akhir penelitian. Hanya data yang relevan bagi hasil penelitian akan disimpan untuk jangka waktu panjang yang tidak ditentukan.

**Dapatkah partisipan berubah pikiran dan mengundurkan diri?**

Bapak/Ibu dapat sewaktu-waktu mengundurkan diri dari proyek ini tanpa menimbulkan kerugian apapun bagi Bapak/Ibu.

**Bagaimana apabila partisipan memerlukan informasi lebih lanjut?**

Apabila Bapak/Ibu memiliki pertanyaan terkait proyek ini, baik saat ini maupun di masa mendatang, maka Bapak/Ibu dapat menghubungi:

- **Budi Annisa Sidi**
  Jurusan Politik
  University of Otago
  annisa.sidi@postgrad.otago.ac.nz

- **Assoc. Prof Vicki Spencer**
  Jurusan Politik
  University of Otago
  vicki.spencer@otago.ac.nz

Appendix 14: Consent form for focus group discussion participants (bilingual)

Reference code: 17/131

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND MULTICULTURALISM:
CHALLENGES TOWARDS NATION-BUILDING IN INDONESIA

CONSENT FORM FOR
FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. An audio recording is made for the duration of the Focus Group Discussion;

4. Personal identifying information such as audio recordings may be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;

5. This project involves an open-ended discussion. The general line of questioning involves asking about interviewees’ thoughts and perceptions on national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the discussion develops. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

6. This research project is funded by the Indonesian Endowment Fund for Education (Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan/LPDP). Participants will be given a token of gratitude for their participation.

7. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but my participation is anonymous and every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity.
I agree to take part in this project.

...............................................................................
(Signature of participant)  ..............................................
(Date)

.............................................................................
(Printed Name)

.............................................................................
Name of person taking consent

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +64 3 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
IDENTITAS NASIONAL DAN MULTIKULTURALISME:
TANTANGAN TERHADAP PEMBANGUNAN BANGSA DI INDONESIA

FORMULIR PERSETUJUAN BAGI
PARTISIPAN FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD)

Saya telah membaca Lembar Informasi proyek ini dan memahami tujuannya. Segala pertanyaan yang saya ajukan telah dijawab secara memuaskan. Saya mengetahui bahwa saya berhak meminta informasi lebih lanjut sewaktu-waktu.

Saya mengetahui bahwa:

1. Keikutsertaan saya dalam proyek ini sepenuhnya sukarela;

2. Saya dapat mengundurkan diri dari proyek ini sewaktu-waktu tanpa kerugian apapun;

3. Diskusi dalam FGD akan direkam secara audio;

4. Informasi pribadi saya, seperti rekaman audio, akan dimusnahkan pada akhir proyek ini, namun data mentah yang menentukan hasil penelitian akan disimpan secara aman untuk setidaknya lima tahun;


6. Penelitian ini didanai oleh Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan/LPDP. Partisipan akan mendapatkan tanda terima kasih untuk keikutsertaannya.

Saya setuju berpartisipasi dalam proyek ini.

................................................................................................
(Tanda tangan) ................................................................................................
(Tanggal)

................................................................................................
(Nama jelas)

................................................................................................
Nama peneliti lapangan

Appendix 15: Information sheet for elite participants (bilingual)

Reference code: 17/131

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND MULTICULTURALISM:
CHALLENGES TOWARDS NATION-BUILDING IN INDONESIA

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS
(One-on-One Interview for Public Officials)

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate I thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and I thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?
This project is being undertaken as part of the requirements for a PhD at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

This research explores how national identity is constituted in Indonesia. It aims to examine the factors which challenge the Indonesian national identity and those that contribute to its maintenance. It also looks into how government policies shape national identity and vice-a-versa.

What Type of Participants are being sought?
This project seeks participants from the following criteria:

1. Public figures and officials of the Indonesian government, selected according to their position;
2. Tertiary students;
3. The grass-roots of society.

Participants should hold an Indonesian citizenship and be at least 18 years old.
Participants will be presented with a small souvenir as a token of appreciation.

What will Participants be Asked to Do?
Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to participate in a one-on-one interview for the duration of approximately 30 minutes to an hour.

Please be aware that if you decide not to take part in the project or at any moment wish to end your participation, you may do so without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.
What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be Made of it?

Interviews will involve an open-questioning technique and will be recorded on a digital voice recorder, unless the participant objects to being recorded. The general line of questioning involves asking about interviewees’ thoughts and perceptions on national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. Consequently, although the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas to be explored in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used.

In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable, you are reminded of your right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and also that you may withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

On the Consent Form, you will be given options regarding your anonymity. No participant should be identified without their consent and all grass-root participants will be anonymous. However with your consent, for public officials it would be preferable to attribute contributions made to individual participants, in which case you will be identified by your name and your position. If you prefer to be anonymous, you will be given the option to be cited by affiliation (as an anonymous representative of your organisation) or not to be cited at all. You will also be given the option on your willingness to be recorded. It is absolutely up to you which of these options you prefer.

The results of the project will be submitted as a PhD dissertation, and may be published as academic articles. You are most welcome to request a copy of the results of the project.

The data collected will be securely stored in such a way that only my supervisor and I will be able to gain access to it. Data obtained as a result of the research will be retained for at least five years in secure storage. Any personal information held on the participants will be destroyed at the completion of research even though the data derived from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:-

Budi Annisa Sidi and Assoc. Prof Vicki Spencer
Department of Politics Department of Politics
University of Otago University of Otago
annisa.sidi@postgrad.otago.ac.nz vicki.spencer@otago.ac.nz

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (Ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
IDENTITAS NASIONAL DAN MULTIKULTURALISME: TANTANGAN TERHADAP PEMBANGUNAN BANGSA DI INDONESIA

LEMBAR INFORMASI BAGI PESERTA
(Wawancara Pribadi bagi Pejabat Publik)


Apakah tujuan dari proyek ini?
Proyek ini merupakan bagian dari program PhD (S3) pada University of Otago di Dunedin, Selandia Baru.
Penelitian ini bertujuan menelaah pembentukan identitas nasional di Indonesia dengan mempelajari faktor-faktor yang membantu maupun menghambat pembentukan identitas nasional tersebut. Penelitian ini juga menelaah bagaimana kebijakan pemerintah membentuk identitas nasional, dan sebaliknya.

Partisipan seperti apakah yang dibutuhkan?
Proyek ini mencari partisipan dari kriteria berikut ini:
1. Figur publik dan pejabat pemerintah Indonesia yang dipilih berdasarkan kewenangan atau jabatannya;
2. Mahasiswa;
Partisipan adalah Warga Negara Indonesia (WNI) yang berusia setidaknya 18 tahun.
Partisipan akan mendapatkan cenderamata sebagai tanda terima kasih atas keikutsertaannya.

Apakah yang diharapkan dari para partisipan?
Data atau Informasi apakah yang dikumpulkan, dan bagaimana data/informasi tersebut akan digunakan?

Wawancara pribadi akan dilakukan dengan teknik tanya jawab terbuka dan direkam secara audio, kecuali apabila partisipan menolak menawarkan data/informasi tersebut. Secara umum, pertanyaan wawancara terkait dengan pemikiran dan persepsi partisipan mengenai identitas nasional dan multikulturalisme di Indonesia. Pertanyaan yang akan diajukan tidak ditentukan secara rinci sejak awal, melainkan akan mengikuti alur percakapan dalam wawancara. Oleh karena itu, Komite Etik University of Otago memahami cakupan wawancara ini, namun tidak dapat menelaah seluruh pertanyaan yang akan diajukan.

Apabila perkembangan wawancara menimbulkan ketidaknyamanan bagi Bapak/Ibu, maka Bapak/Ibu dapat sewaktu-waktu menolak menjawab pertanyaan maupun mengakhiri keikutsertaannya dalam proyek ini tanpa kerugian apapun.


Hasil penelitian ini akan dipublikasikan sebagai disertasi PhD/S3 dan kemungkinan juga akan diterbitkan dalam jurnal akademik. Bapak/Ibu dapat meminta hasil-hasil penelitian ini.

Data yang dikumpulkan akan disimpan secara aman dan hanya dapat diakses oleh peneliti serta pembimbingnya. Data tersebut akan disimpan untuk setidaknya lima tahun, namun informasi pribadi partisipan akan dimusnahkan pada akhir penelitian. Hanya data yang relevan bagi hasil penelitian akan disimpan untuk jangka waktu panjang yang tidak ditentukan.

Dapatkah partisipan berubah pikiran dan mengundurkan diri?

Bapak/Ibu dapat sewaktu-waktu mengundurkan diri dari proyek ini tanpa menimbulkan kerugian apapun bagi Bapak/Ibu.

Bagaimana apabila partisipan memerlukan informasi lebih lanjut?

Apabila Bapak/Ibu memiliki pertanyaan terkait proyek ini, baik saat ini maupun di masa mendatang, maka Bapak/Ibu dapat menghubungi:

Budi Annisa Sidi dan Assoc. Prof Vicki Spencer  
Jurusan Politik  
University of Otago  
annisa.sidi@postgrad.otago.ac.nz  
vicki.spencer@otago.ac.nz

Appendix 16: Consent form for elite participants (bilingual)

Reference code: 17/131

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND MULTICULTURALISM:
CHALLENGES TOWARDS NATION-BUILDING IN INDONESIA

CONSENT FORM FOR
PUBLIC OFFICIAL INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;

2. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;

3. Personal identifying information such as audio recordings will be destroyed at the conclusion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;

4. This project involves an open-questioning technique. The general line of questioning involves asking about interviewees’ thoughts and perceptions on national identity and multiculturalism in Indonesia. The precise nature of the questions which will be asked have not been determined in advance, but will depend on the way in which the interview develops. In the event that the line of questioning develops in such a way that I feel hesitant or uncomfortable I may decline to answer any particular question(s) and/or may withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind.

5. This research project is funded by the Indonesian Endowment Fund for Education (Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan/LPDP). Participants will be given a token of gratitude for their participation.

6. The results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand) but every attempt will be made to preserve my anonymity, should I choose to remain anonymous.
7. I, as the participant:  
   a) agree to being named in the research, [ ] OR  
   b) prefer to be named by affiliation, [ ] OR  
   c) would rather remain anonymous. [ ]

8. I, as the participant:  
   a) agree to being recorded in the interview, [ ] OR  
   b) disagree to being recorded. [ ]

I agree to take part in this project.

.............................................................................  .........................  
(Signature of participant) (Date)

.............................................................................  
(Printed Name)

Name of person taking consent

This study has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph +643 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.
IDENTITAS NASIONAL DAN MULTIKULTURALISME:
TANTANGAN TERHADAP PEMBANGUNAN BANGSA DI INDONESIA

FORMULIR PERSETUJUAN BAGI
PARTISIPAN WAWANCARA PEJABAT PUBLIK

Saya telah membaca Lembar Informasi proyek ini dan memahami tujuannya. Segala pertanyaan yang saya ajukan telah dijawab secara memuaskan. Saya mengetahui bahwa saya berhak meminta informasi lebih lanjut sewaktu-waktu.

Saya mengetahui bahwa:

1. Keikutsertaan saya dalam proyek ini sepenuhnya sukarela;

2. Saya dapat mengundurkan diri dari proyek ini sewaktu-waktu tanpa kerugian apapun;

3. Informasi pribadi yang dapat mengidentifikasi saya, seperti rekaman audio, akan dimusnahkan pada akhir proyek ini, namun data mentah yang menentukan hasil penelitian akan disimpan secara aman untuk setidaknya lima tahun;


5. Penelitian ini didanai oleh Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan/LPDP. Partisipan akan mendapatkan tanda terima kasih untuk keikutsertaannya.

7. Saya, selaku partisipan: a) bersedia disebutkan namanya, 
   ATAU
   b) lebih suka disebutkan afiliasinya, 
   ATAU
   c) ingin tetap anonim.

8. Saya, selaku partisipan: a) setuju direkam audio saat wawancara, 
   ATAU
   b) tidak ingin direkam.

Saya setuju berpartisipasi dalam proyek ini.

........................................................................................................................................
(Tanda tangan)  (Tanggal)
........................................................................................................................................
(Nama jelas)
........................................................................................................................................
Nama peneliti lapangan

Appendix 17: Letter of ethics approval

21 September 2017

Assoc. Prof. V Spencer
Department of Politics
Division of Humanities

Dear Assoc. Prof. Spencer,

I am writing to let you know that, at its recent meeting, the Ethics Committee considered your proposal entitled “National Identity and Multiculturalism: The Challenges of Nation Building in Indonesia”.

As a result of that consideration, the current status of your proposal is: Approved.

For your future reference, the Ethics Committee’s reference code for this project is: 17/131.

The comments and views expressed by the Ethics Committee concerning your proposal are as follows:

While approving the application, the Committee would be grateful if you would respond to the following:

Travel Safety Plan

The Committee noted the consideration and comment given in relation to the student’s overseas travel and asks for a copy of the student’s overseas travel plan for our records.

Consent Form for Public Official Interview participants

The Committee noted that the Public Official participants can opt to be identified in the research. Should a participant waive their anonymity, this would also allow for their organisations to become potentially identifiable. Has this been considered? Could the possible identification of a participant’s organisation be problematic in any way?

Please provide the Committee with copies of the updated documents, if changes have been necessary.

Approval is for up to three years from the date of this letter. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, re-approval must be requested. If the nature, consent, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise me in writing.
Upon approval, it is expected that all members of the research team are made aware of what the standard conditions of ethical approval covers. This includes the date ethical approval expires, as well as the process regarding applying for amendments to the research.

The Human Ethics Committee asks for a Final Report to be provided upon completion of the study. The Final Report template can be found on the Human Ethics Web Page

http://www.otago.ac.nz/council/committees/committees/HumanEthicsCommittees.html

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Mr Gary Witte
Manager, Academic Committees
Tel: 470 8256
Email: gary.witte@otago.ac.nz

c.c. Professor J Hayward Department of Politics