Indonesia Seven Years after Soeharto: Party System Institutionalization in a New Democracy

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This article examines what the performance of Indonesia's political parties seven years on from Soeharto's resignation can tell us about politics in the country. Using the party system institutionalization framework first developed by Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully in Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (1995), the article finds that Indonesia's parties and party system show a mixed score card, strengths and weaknesses mixing to deprive the parties of legitimacy. On balance, the 2004 elections and 2005 regional elections represent a step towards further deinstitutionalization due to the primacy of personalities in the direct elections of the president and the regional heads. Democracy may indeed now be the only game in town, but its operation is likely to be rocky. There is a silver lining, however; accountability has been somewhat improved due to the electorate's realization of its power to reward and punish parties and political leaders.

Keywords: Soeharto, institutionalization, deinstitutionalization, New Democracy, political legitimacy, Indonesia, political parties, Yudhoyono.

It is often said, following Samuel Huntington, that it is not the first elections after the fall of an authoritarian regime that matter; instead, the path to democracy is seen to be assured only after second elections have been completed. Indonesia's second post-Soeharto elections, both parliamentary and presidential, were held from April to September 2004. Furthermore, 2005–2006 is witnessing the country's first-ever direct elections for regional heads, governors, mayors, and regents. Can the country be seen finally to be firmly
on the path to democracy? Is democracy now “the only game in town”?

This article examines what the performance of Indonesia’s political parties seven years on from former authoritarian president Soeharto’s resignation can tell us about politics in the country. The parties are an important part of the political society envisioned by Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan as forming one of the integral “arenas” of democratic consolidation (1996). By using the party system institutionalization framework first developed by Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully in Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America (1995), the article analyses the degree to which the Indonesian party system can be seen to be institutionalized, thus contributing to, as Mainwaring and Scully found in Latin America (or not, in the case of less institutionalized systems), democratization, and stable governance.2

The article finds that, across Mainwaring and Scully’s criteria of party system institutionalization, Indonesia’s parties and party system show a mixed score card, strengths and weaknesses mixing to deprive the parties of legitimacy. On balance, the 2004 elections and 2005 regional elections represent a step towards further deinstitutionalization due to the primacy of personalities in the direct elections of the president and the regional heads. Democracy may indeed now be the only game in town, but its operation is likely to be rocky. There is a silver lining, however; accountability has been somewhat improved due to the electorate’s realization of its power to reward and punish parties and political leaders.

Party System Institutionalization and Democracy

In much of the literature on transitions from authoritarian rule, the role of political parties is seen to be key. To Linz and Stepan, the development of political parties is part of the development of “political society”, by which they mean “that arena in which the polity specifically arranges itself to contest the legitimate right to exercise control over public power and the state apparatus”.3 As scholars recognize, often it is not the political parties which bring down the old regime (this is typically brought about on the backs of union members, human rights campaigners, and students, among others), but it is to the political parties that one must look to observe the kernel of democratic consolidation apparent in the transition from authoritarian rule. Consolidation requires political parties to build a new system of competition for political office (O’Donnell and Schmitter
O’Donnell and Schmitter see the founding election as “provoking parties” into action for the “party is the modern institution for structuring and aggregating individual preferences” (ibid., p. 58). Observers of areas as diverse as Russia, Portugal, and Chile have seen the role of parties as key to understanding the progress (or lack thereof) of the transition.

This discussion builds primarily from Mainwaring and Scully’s 1995 volume on Latin America, *Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America*. Mainwaring, working alone, has gone on to develop further the ideas first presented in the 1995 study with his 1998 article, “Party Systems in the Third Wave”, and his 1999 book, *Rethinking Party Systems in the Third Wave of Democratization: The Case of Brazil*. According to Mainwaring and Scully, past work on parties and party systems has focused almost exclusively on Sartori’s measures of the party system: the number of parties and the degree of polarization (Sartori 1976). These are, to the authors, more relevant to a discussion of Western European politics. Developing and developed countries might well share features if evaluated based on the number of parties. Why, then, do the political systems operate so differently, the authors ask. To Mainwaring and Scully, the answer lies in different degrees of party system institutionalization.

For the authors, an institutionalized party system is one in which there is stability in inter-party competition, parties have stable roots in society, parties and elections are accepted as the legitimate means to determine who governs, and party organizations have relatively stable rules and structures (Mainwaring and Scully 1995, p. 1). Institutionalization is not an either/or proposition. Rather, institutionalization is measured in degrees.

To Mainwaring and Scully, institutionalization of the party system is key, not so much as an end in itself, but for what a relative lack of institutionalization can tell us about a country. Historically, holding politicians accountable has been difficult, legislatures weak, and government legitimacy low in countries with weak parties and party systems, such as Bolivia, Brazil, and Ecuador. In these systems, “politics has a patrimonial flavour, as individual interest, political party, and public good are fused” (ibid., p. 20).

Mainwaring and Scully use their framework to examine institutionalization across large swaths of time, in many countries across several different discrete party systems. However, in his volume on Brazil, Mainwaring mentions that “[f]rom the perspective of party building, the first seven or eight years of democracy [the administrations of Sarney and Collor] could hardly have been worse”
It is clear that dynamics are at work early in a process of political change that set the norms and ground rules for the new system. How this process has evolved in the first seven years of Indonesia’s transition is the focus of this article.

Indonesia’s Parties and Elections: The 2004 “Year of Elections”

Indonesia experienced three sets of elections in 2004. The first, in April, was for the country’s legislative bodies from the national to the local level (pemilu). The second, in July, was for the national presidency (pilpres), the first time the holder of this office would be elected directly by the people. As no candidate scored over 50 per cent of the vote in this July first round, a run-off election was held in September 2004 between July’s top two finishers. The issues in the campaigns, such as they were, focused primarily on eliminating corruption, restoring higher levels of growth to the economy, and job creation.

To discuss a few of the most salient features of the party system as 2004 began, the number of parties competing in the elections declined from 48 in the 1999 elections to just 24. Six parties, the Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan (Indonesian Democracy Party-Struggle, or PDI-P), Partai Golkar (Functional Group Party, or Golkar), Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (National Awakening Party, or PKB), Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (United Development Party, or PPP), Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party, or PAN), and Partai Bulan Bintang (Crescent Star Party, or PBB) qualified for the 2004 elections based on their performance in the elections of 1999, earning more than 2 per cent of seats in the country’s parliament. Other parties in 2004 represented splinters from the larger parties: for example, Partai Nasional Banteng Kemerdekaan (Freedom Bull National Party, or PNBK) from PDI-P, Partai Karya Peduli Bangsa (Concern for the Nation Functional Group Party, or PKPB) from Golkar, and Partai Bintang Reformasi (Reform Star Party, or PBR) from PPP. Still other parties represented reworkings of parties that had tried in 1999, like the Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (Prosperous Justice Party) which was the renamed Partai Keadilan (Justice Party). The last category of party competing in 2004 was the entirely new party, such as Sjahrir’s Partai Perhimpunan Indonesia Baru (New Indonesia Alliance Party, or PIB).

Table 1 shows the results of the April 2004 parliamentary elections paired with those from Indonesia’s first post-authoritarian elections held in June 1999.
Table 1
Parties’ Results in the 1999 and 2004 Parliamentary Elections:
Share of Vote, Number of Seats, and Share of Seats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>% of Vote</th>
<th>No. of Seats</th>
<th>% of Seats</th>
<th>% of Vote</th>
<th>No. of Seats</th>
<th>% of Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Golkar</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDI-P</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKB</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demokrat</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKS</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAN</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBR</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBB</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDS</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKPI</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPNUI</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDKB</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** In the event a party’s name changed between 1999 and 2004, the most recent name has been used.

Golkar = Partai Golkar.
PDI-P = Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan.
PKB = Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa.
PPP = Partai Persatuan Pembangunan.
Demokrat = Partai Demokrat.
PKS = Partai Keadilan Sejahtera.
PAN = Partai Amanat Nasional.
PBR = Partai Bintang Reformasi.
PBB = Partai Bulan Bintang.
PDS = Partai Damai Sejahtera.
PKPI = Partai Kesatuan dan Persatuan Indonesia.
PPNUI = Partai Persatuan Nahdlatul Ummah Indonesia.
PDKB = Partai Demokrasi Kasih Bangsa.

Commentary on the 2004 parliamentary elections frequently called Partai Demokrat (Demokrat) and Partai Keadilan Sejahtera (PKS), two parties that were seen to come out of nowhere to capture more than 7 per cent of the vote each, the “winners” of the vote. According to one observer, the parliamentary elections “ended the mandate of the status quo political parties” (Tomagola 2004, p. 44). The Lower House of parliament, the Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat (DPR), would be occupied by legislators, almost 70 per cent of whom were new to the body, leading many to view the elections as a turning out of the old and an entering of the new.

Not so fast, though. Most of those house members still come from the old established political parties. In fact, the top four finishers in the elections came from “the status quo political parties”. Golkar, the party of the Soeharto era, led the polls with 21.6 per cent of the vote and 128 seats. Golkar outperformed its rivals in 26 of the country’s 32 provinces and, while the party’s vote share dropped slightly from 1999, its seat total actually went up, from 120 to 128. PDI-P placed second, but the depth of the party’s drop in support from 1999 is glaring: from 33.7 per cent of the vote, it fell to just 18.5 per cent in 2004. The party no longer was dominant in terms of parliamentary seats either (with 109, or about one-fifth). Other large parties, PKB, PPP, and PAN, also saw their national shares of the vote decline, PPP and PKB by 2 to 2.5 per cent and PAN by about half a point. PKS and Demokrat, the perceived “winners” of the elections, nipped the big parties’ heels. PKS rose from just 1.4 per cent in 1999 to 7 per cent in 2004 and grabbed 45 seats, up from just seven in the previous parliament. Demokrat did not exist in 1999. It captured 7.5 per cent of the vote nationwide and 57 seats. This turnaround caused political observer Riswandha Imawan to label Golkar and PDI-P “lonely winners” (Imawan 2004, p. 182). They had won the election mathematically but probably had little to feel happy about.

Overall, 17 parties won seats in parliament, ten in the double digits or more; this represented a slight shrinkage from 1999, when 21 parties scored representation at the national level. Still, more parties today are players in the system. Party system scholars use a measure called the effective number of parties to take the parties’ relative strengths as a way of weeding out the consequential from the inconsequential parties and coming to a conclusion on the size of the party system. This is done by squaring each party’s share of the vote, summing the squares, and dividing one by the result. The effective number of parties after the 2004 elections was 8.55, up strongly from 5.1 after 1999, confirming the dilution of the party system from 1999 to 2004.
Table 2 presents a different look at the dilution of the party system. From an examination of the table, it is clear that the overall strength of the big parties has been watered down somewhat (1955 is included just for comparison as Indonesia’s only free elections before 1999). In 1999 almost 80 per cent of the vote went to the top four parties; in 2004 that figure was just 59 per cent. In 1999 almost 90 per cent of the vote went to the top seven parties; in 2004 just 80 per cent of the vote was so concentrated.

But these parliamentary elections were not the only game to be played in 2004. After the April parliamentary elections, parties scoring at least 3 per cent of the seats in the DPR or 5 per cent of the vote in the parliamentary elections were permitted to put up a candidate pairing for the presidential–vice presidential contest to begin in July 2004. After one candidate was ruled ineligible to stand on health grounds (PKB’s Abdurrahman Wahid), five candidate pairs were cleared to compete. Results from the two rounds of the presidential election are presented in Table 3.

Into 2003, many believed that the presidential election was Megawati’s to lose, though she was aware of the very real possibility that incumbency could hurt her due to the need to make tough policy choices when in office. Though her regime had not performed in stellar fashion, it had at least restored stability to both politics and the economy after the tumult of the 1998–2001 period. Megawati, though, was unable or unwilling to move boldly forward
in finding solutions to the country’s many problems: corruption, rising prices, sluggish growth, little foreign investment, and unemployment. Further, the president was singularly incapable of communicating to the public what efforts the government was in fact taking in these areas.

This left an opening which would be filled by Megawati’s former coordinating minister for political and security affairs, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, commonly referred to by just his initials, SBY. SBY’s candidacy developed a momentum, greatly helped by the Demokrats’ results in the parliamentary elections, and peaked at just the right time to carry him through the two rounds of presidential elections. The campaign’s strategy was brilliant as well. SBY ran against the existing political parties. In the words of an official with the SBY campaign: “We want to portray SBY as the people’s president, not as a party president” (Far Eastern Economic Review, 8 July 2004). The former general attracted votes because of his personality as much as anything else. National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) Focus Groups found people liked the fact that SBY was “polite”, “calm … [with] an authoritative bearing”, firm, and because he appeared to have integrity (NDI 2004, p. 6). SBY was the first choice of many voters and the second choice of both Golkar and PDI-P voters, too. Interestingly, in Indonesia’s historically communalized politics SBY was popular with both supporters of secular-nationalist parties like Golkar and PDI-P as well as supporters of Islamic-leaning or affiliated parties (NDI 2004, p. 8), throwing out of the window notions that Indonesia’s politics were hopelessly polarized along these lines.

Table 3
Indonesian Presidential Elections, 2004 (Percentage score)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presidential–Vice-Presidential Candidate Pair*</th>
<th>July 2004, First Round</th>
<th>September 2004, Second Round</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wiranto and Salahuddin Wahid</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megawati Soekarnoputri and Hasyim Muzadi</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amien Rais and Siswono Yudo Husodo</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Jusuf Kalla</td>
<td><strong>33.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>60.9</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamzah Haz and Agum Gumelar</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Winner of each round noted in bold.

It seems that a vote for SBY was cast as a vote for change. The candidate campaigned with a simple message that he would work hard to create a more “secure, just, and prosperous Indonesia”. In fact, SBY’s landslide 60 per cent of the vote in the presidential election’s second round could be seen as an overwhelming mandate for change. But, again, not so fast. Many of those backing SBY’s candidacy were former Golkar stalwarts, the pillars of the authoritarian Soeharto regime. The new president himself is a former general. SBY campaigned brilliantly selling honeyed words, serenity, and few concrete details. Discussions the author conducted with SBY voters during the presidential election’s first round suggested that those choosing SBY expected him to save the nation’s politics and economy from the country’s bickering and self-seeking politicians. Typically, the election of a charismatic strongman would be seen to be antithetical to party system institutionalization as strongmen like De Gaulle, Yeltsin, and Chavez typically seek to weaken existing political parties. However, in Indonesia’s case, SBY has not proven to be a party destroyer. Rather, the cautious, doctorate-holding former general has built alliances with existing parties and his vice-president has captured the leadership of the election-topping Golkar.


Since the parliamentary and presidential contests of 2004, Indonesia has embarked on another election project. For the first time, Indonesia’s regional heads, governors, regents, and mayors, are being directly elected by the people (pilkada). The elections began in June 2005 and continue into 2006. As the terms of serving, appointed regional heads expire in the future, direct elections will be held to fill those slots as well. This is a game of consequence. With Indonesia’s launching of its massive decentralization project in 2001, these regional leaders have both more resources and wider authority.

As the regional election law was crafted in the party-dominated national parliament, the parties assured a monopoly role for themselves in contesting these local races. However, thus far, the dynamic appears to be somewhat different from the national picture in the regional races, a complex dance between the parties and incumbents/local notables. The party centres were allowed a say in candidate selection for the regional contests by the election law. In some cases, the parties put forth their own candidates for office from within the party structure. In other cases, though, the parties have attempted to attract serving officials or those believed to have pulled in the localities, due to ethnic, family, or financial considerations, to run under a party banner. This
changes the power balance between party and candidate slightly and will be interesting to observe over the coming years.

The elections were organized by local election commissions (KPUD); this means a central repository of information on the whole panoply of elections is lacking. Press reports covering the early rounds suggest that turn-out was not as high as 2004’s contests in many areas, perhaps 70 per cent and as low as 50 per cent in some places. Protests (including the burning of a local election office) and allegations of vote buying and other malfeasance have accompanied the polls in a variety of areas, but, as at this writing, the polls seem to have gone off relatively peacefully. There were further concerns that fraud would be widespread due to the lack of monitors and press attention to the contests. Instead, a wide variety of independent citizen groups across the archipelago seem to have arisen to observe the vote process.

Party System Institutionalization in Indonesia

During the preceding discussion, I have outlined a number of ways in which Indonesia’s party system has changed from 1999 to 2005. New parties have risen; some older ones have declined. The number of parties competing in the system has grown smaller, as has the number of parties achieving representation in parliament. Despite this, the effective number of parties in the system has actually risen, as the bulk of the vote has been dispersed among more parties. The presidential and regional election contests have turned more on personalities than parties. Now it is time to turn from this basic discussion of the party system to a consideration of the degree of institutionalization apparent in the party system.

Stability in Inter-party Competition

Scholars examining party system institutionalization look to inter-party competition as providing a clue to the relative stability or instability of the overall complex of party relationships and voter preferences. Systems such as the United States’, in which the actual number of swing voters is relatively small from election to election, would be seen to provide a high degree of stability. How does Indonesia fare?

Traditionally, stability in inter-party competition is measured through volatility from one election to the next. Volatility is simply a measure of the degree of change in overall support for the political parties in the system from one election to the next. Parliamentary election volatility (calculated by the vote) from 1999 to 2004 was
28.55; calculated by seats earned, the figure was 25.78. This is high compared with established democracies such as the United States and Switzerland, where figures in the range of four are common. Indonesia’s volatility is just on par with other transitional countries, however. Mainwaring lists volatility figures for Poland (31.4) and the Czech Republic (29.2) during the 1990s (during the early years of their transitions) that are quite close to Indonesia’s current level of volatility (Mainwaring 1999, p. 29).

Clearly, the parties have not yet found their natural levels of support (if they are ever to find these), and we will continue to experience instability in inter-party competition for the foreseeable future. Contributing particularly this time to Indonesia’s moderately high level of volatility was the PDI-P’s dramatic 15-point downward swing. Golkar support too has fallen from the absurd levels it achieved under Soeharto’s authoritarian regime (sometimes more than 90 per cent in areas of Eastern Indonesia) to the more moderate 20–30 per cent range, scoring generally in the teens on the island of Java.

Beyond volatility, are there any other notes we might take of the nature of inter-party competition since Soeharto fell? Deborah Norden critiques classical party system theory’s emphasis on the number of parties and ideological polarization and says that what is important to examine in newer democracies is the nature of inter-party competition, whether that competition is collusive, combative, or moderate (Norden 1998). Moderate competition, according to Norden, is the most promising for democracy, as it prevents the rise of extra-system movements attendant to collusive competition (because significant interests may be unrepresented) and the chaos of combative competition (in which defeating one’s rival is more important than the survival of democracy itself). From the perspective of party system institutionalization, moderate competition would seem to offer advantages as it would presage orderly change.

Overall, Indonesia’s system shows a mixture of collusive, combative, and moderate features. In the legislature, party leaders seem to collude to shepherd the business of parliament without transparency (votes are rarely taken, and decisions are arrived at by faction leader-driven consensus). Dan Slater finds “parties share power far more than they fight over it”, with the parties acting like a cartel (Slater 2004, p. 3). Party relations are also combative, as the painful impeachment of Abdurrahman Wahid in 2001 showed, accompanied by months of escalating demonstrations both for and against the president with fears that the nation was headed towards civil war. But party competition is also moderate.
From the rulelessness of the campaign in 1999 in which rules were violated with impunity and sanctions rarely taken in most cases by election supervisory bodies, the long list of election violations in 2004 (7,000 according to the election oversight body Panwaslu) could actually represent a positive development. These violations ranged from the small (flyers where they were not supposed to be, involving children in campaign activities) to the not-so-small (attempts to vote twice, giving gifts or money to buy votes, intimidation of voters, ballot officials pre-punching ballots). Perhaps, though, the increasing attention to these violations and the penalties that were handed down this time around were a case, as O’Donnell and Schmitter observed likening transitions to a multi-layer chess game: “with people challenging the rules on every move” but “becoming progressively mesmerized by the drama they are participating in” and “gradually ... committed to playing more decorously and loyally to the rules they themselves have elaborated” (O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986, p. 66). Elections in 2004 were slightly more decorous play (evidencing moderate competition); at least violations were more public, and there was more pressure to act upon them.

To further understand the ways in which the parties compete, scholars look to ideological distance, the parties’ differences of stance on fundamental political or economic questions. According to this logic, greater ideological distance presents opportunities for paralysing or de-stabilizing inter-party competition. In Indonesia, ideology has become less salient in 2004 and 2005 even from the low starting point of 1999. At least in 1999, parties seemed to battle over whether they were reformist or status quo. Others contended between Islam and secularism or between different understandings of Islam (Indonesia’s party streams, to which I return below). Today, the picture is muddier as most parties have made alliances across these former ideological chasms. On the parties’ platforms for the April 2004 parliamentary elections, Habibie Center scholar Irman Lanti observed that the “platforms were made only to complete the registration procedure in KPU (the election commission)”, not as a genuine reflection of programmatic intent (“Report on Discussion”, 2004, p. 22). Converts to notionally secular-nationalist SBY’s presidential campaign included the Islamic modernist PKS and PBB. In the campaigns for regional elections in 2005, local expediency threw together parties that would also seem to be ideological polar opposites. In West Sumatra, secular PDI-P teamed with Islamic PBB to field a candidate. Elsewhere, it was Islamic PKS with secular PKPI (Partai Kesatuan dan Persatuan Indonesia). Ideological distance is not an important factor in polarizing competition among Indonesia’s parties.
Stable Roots

Mainwaring and Scully look to parties having stable roots in the population as providing stability to the party system. This is in a sense related to stability in inter-party competition above. If parties have consistent bases of voters on which to call from one election to the next, inter-party competition will be more stable.

A method Mainwaring and Scully use to examine whether the parties have stable roots in society is to look at the average age of parties winning 10 per cent or more of the vote. This makes intuitive sense as a measure since older parties would suggest more staying power and thus more stable roots in society. For Indonesia, this is a rather loaded measure, though, since only three parties topped 10 per cent of the vote in 2004: Golkar (founded in 1964), PDI-P (a splinter of Partai Demokrasi Indonesia, formed in 1973), and PKB (formed in 1998). So, Indonesia’s relatively long-lived average age of 25.6 might speak poorly to the party system as a whole. If we looked at the top seven parties, those with 6 per cent or more of the vote, though, we still find an average age of 17.2 years (PPP [1973], PD [2003], PKS [1998], PAN [1998]). This suggests that despite the new-ness of Indonesia’s democracy the top-scoring parties are more rooted than they might at first glance appear.

Rootedness might also be found by locating specific geographic areas or socio-economic groups associated with the various political parties. Parties that have roots in groups such as these can expect a certain level of support from election to election, thus contributing to the stability of the party system.

Table 4 presents a simple view of geographic rooting, drawing a distinction between parties that do well on Java,11 where a majority of the country’s voters live and where ethnic Javanese dominate, to those that do well off-Java. Java accounts for almost 62 per cent of Indonesia’s population but just 55 per cent of seats in the country’s national legislature, the DPR. Those parties with a high degree of Java dependence in 2004 include PKB with 87 per cent of its support from Java, PDI-P with 71 per cent, and Partai Demokrat with 68 per cent. On the lower end of the scale, we find PAN with 60 per cent of its support coming from Java and Golkar with just 52 per cent. From these simple calculations, we can see that PKB and PDI-P are Java-based political parties, while Golkar is an off-Java party.

Breakdowns of results from opinion polls in 2004 add further insight to what we can observe from the Java/non-Java cleavage above. Voters in rural areas, those with less education and lower incomes
tended to vote for Golkar, PDI-P, PPP, and PKB. In contrast, those in urban areas, with more education and higher incomes tended to vote Demokrat, PKS, or PAN in 2004 (LP3ES April 2004). So in terms of both geography, Java/off-Java, as well as socio-economic characteristics, the parties do indeed have different complexions.

Dwight King and colleagues also find important continuities in voting from 1999 to 2004, with districts choosing similar parties or similar types of parties from one election to the next (King et al. 2005). Conventionally understood in terms of aliran, or stream, Indonesia’s parties can be broadly understood as secular-nationalist (PDI-P, Demokrat), Islamic modernist (PKS, PAN), Islamic traditionalist (PKB), and Christian/minority (such as the Partai Damai Sejahtera, Prosperous Peace Party, PDS). King and colleagues find impressive and clear correlations between parties/party stream chosen in 1999 and 2004.

The different complexions of the parties and the convincing evidence brought to bear by King and colleagues do suggest that the parties seem to have a core of voters upon which to call from election to election, the crux of rootedness. Still, something niggles. Rooted parties are chosen by voters consistently from year to year and election to election. Polling in 2003 suggested that large numbers of “swing voters” were up for grabs in 2004. In mid-2003, 58 per cent of respondents to a national Asia Foundation poll were unsure what party they would support in the upcoming parliamentary elections (Asia Foundation, 2003, p. 98). This did not suggest that

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Share of Vote from Java 2004 Parliamentary Elections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Golkar</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDI-P</td>
<td>71.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKB</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>66.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demokrat</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKS</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAN</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5
Support for Presidential Candidates (Round I/July 2004<sup>a</sup>)
by Party Chosen in Parliamentary Contest, April 2004<sup>b</sup>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party Chosen in April Parliamentary Elections</th>
<th>Percentage of Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golkar</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDI-P</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKB</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demokrat</td>
<td>87.3&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKS</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAN</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBB</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBR</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDS</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>59.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secret</td>
<td>36.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>23.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Read across presidential candidate columns as support for candidates from each party’s voters.

<sup>a</sup> Interviews conducted June 2004. N (number of respondents) = 2,000.

<sup>b</sup> Solidity of support from candidate’s own party.

voters would behave with a great deal of loyalty from 1999, and the wide swings in the vote in the 2004 parliamentary elections suggest that many did not. The subsequent presidential election vote in particular demonstrated that the parties, aside from a hard core of rooted supporters, could not command voters’ selection of a particular presidential candidate.

Table 5 reports polling results after the April 2004 parliamentary elections and links party voters in the parliamentary elections with candidates for the presidential election which would be held in July. As with voters supporting the same party from year to year, in systems in which the parties have stable roots in society, we would expect to see voters choose a party and a presidential candidate from the same party in simultaneous (or near-simultaneous) elections.

The results shown in Table 5 belied this idea in the case of Indonesia. The superscripts b in the table show party voters who planned to stick with the party’s presidential candidate in the first round of the presidential elections. The “loyalty rate” was highest for Demokrat voters (87 per cent); this is intuitively understandable. Since Demokrat was set up as a vehicle for Yudhoyono, it would make sense that voters that chose the party intended to choose SBY as their presidential candidate. Amien Rais appeared likely to hold 71 per cent of PAN voters, but interestingly, 14 per cent of PAN votes, too, were headed to SBY. Megawati might have kept almost 60 per cent of PDI-P voters, but a significant 22 per cent planned to vote SBY in the presidential race after choosing PDI-P for parliament. More Golkar voters chose SBY than planned to choose the party’s own candidate, Wiranto (39 to 38 per cent). With PPP voters too SBY was more popular than party leader and then vice-president Hamzah Haz (39 per cent for SBY, with just 26 per cent sticking with Hamzah). The table makes two interesting points. First, a glance at the table would predict an election victory for SBY. Second, voters were not solidly behind parties and their respective presidential candidates, reflecting a weak rooting in the population. It is interesting to wonder whether the SBY/saviour phenomenon contributed to this weakness or whether the weakness contributed to the rise of the SBY phenomenon.

**Legitimacy of Parties and Elections**

Acceptance of the system of parties and elections is key to the institutionalization of the party system. If the parties or the electoral system, for example, are not widely considered legitimate by the
population, instability can be expected. Legitimacy, though, is probably also a result of the institutionalization of the party system. Long-lived, stable systems that are regularly able to deliver governing solutions are much more likely to be accepted by citizens and thus considered legitimate.

In Indonesia the issue of the legitimacy of parties and elections presents, as elsewhere in the article, contradictory trends. In general, parties are ill trusted, but the elections themselves are well respected. Polls since 1998 have repeatedly found parties as among the least trusted social/political institutions. In this vein, an LP3ES (Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi Sosial) poll conducted in early 2004 found that respondents felt the parties to be out of touch and self-seeking. The horse trading that parties engage in, the corruption, the lack of attention to or ability to solve the nation’s most pressing problems all seem to weigh down popular sentiments towards the country’s political parties. The parliamentary election results, with large drops for the major parties, particularly the PDI-P of then president Megawati Soekarnoputri, and the rise of new powers, such as Demokrat and PKS, also seem to demonstrate popular dissatisfaction with politics as usual, and the parties are a big part of that.

Widespread antipathy towards the parties is echoed in and reinforced by comments by public intellectuals on the subject of the parties. Arbi Sanit, a political scientist at the University of Indonesia, observes that the “[p]arties have failed to carry out their duty and function in a quality manner”. The leaders are oriented towards their own ends “as a result of [their] egoism”. The party leaders have not “developed abilities as statesmen, politicians, and technocrats”. According to Arbi, the party politicians use the cheap and easy way to motivate their followers, playing on values and primordial ties (Sanit 2003, pp. 1, 10, 12, 13).

Abd. Rohim Ghazali seconds many of Arbi’s sentiments. As shown by the 2004 parliamentary elections, the parties, rather than channelling the people’s aspirations, have become “the stage for the betrayal of the people’s aspirations”. According to him, the parties are just a “Trojan horse” to get the party elites into power (Ghazali 2004). Another cynical view comes from Frans Magnus Suseno, from the Driyarkara School of Philosophy. “Though there is the perception that all of the 24 parties [running in the parliamentary elections] are bad, pick the one that is the best of the worst!” (Koirudin 2004, p. 80). That seems to be a backhanded means of encouraging people to use their right to vote despite the pathetic offerings.
Frans’ comment leads us from attitudes towards the parties to attitudes toward the elections. Turn-out has historically been high in Indonesian elections. During the Soeharto years, voting was compulsory and averaged almost 92 per cent across the six New Order elections. Turn-out in 1999 at 93 per cent was typical of New Order elections and high even by the standards of many “euphoric” first-democratic elections. Turn-out across the three elections in 2004 declined continuously. Turn-out for the parliamentary elections in April was 84 per cent. For the first round of the presidential elections in July, turn-out was 78 per cent. For the final round of the presidential polls in September, turn-out was just 75 per cent (IFES, undated). Many explanations may be offered for the declining turn-out: the confusing ballot and new voting system for the April parliamentary elections (people were allowed to choose both a party and a candidate); people feeling free not to vote; fatigue with the seemingly incessant elections of 2004; the relative certainty that SBY would win the second round presidential contest, as demonstrated by opinion polling before voting day; and the last, lack of feeling of efficacy on the part of voters. It is this last sentiment that would be most important to know. Did voters not turn out to vote because they felt unable to influence the system? Did they believe the machinating party politicians could not be brought to heel by ordinary voters? These are, at this time, still unknowns. Examining the early rounds of elections for regional heads held in mid-2005 shows a turn-out rate of about 70 per cent (Jakarta Post, 8 July 2005). Rises in voter alienation would be ill harbingers for institutionalization of the party system and, potentially, democracy.

Despite a declining turn-out, public perception of the elections has generally been quite positive, as demonstrated through opinion polling by the International Foundation for Election Systems, or IFES (2004). That the elections were very or somewhat well organized was agreed to by 90 per cent of respondents after the first round of the presidential contest and 96 per cent after the second round. Were the elections fair? After the second round of the presidential contest, when, assuming all three elections were in respondents’ minds, 97 per cent considered the elections mostly or completely fair. Eighty-nine per cent of respondents felt that the election monitoring organization, Panwaslu, was effective at supervision of the polls; just 7 per cent disagreed. Election rules were not well enforced in 1999. In 2004, election oversight seems to have improved.

In addition to viewing attitudes toward parties and elections, we may look to the embeddedness of the political parties in the current political system to attempt to see public recognition of the legitimacy
of their role. Embeddedness alone cannot be seen as an unmitigated positive for institutionalization. We must look at embeddedness in conjunction with other attitudes towards legitimacy, and here is why. Parties that are strongly embedded in the political system without being viewed as legitimate, as was the case up to 2004, may actually be a recipe for dissatisfaction. It is this dissatisfaction that could lead to alienation from the democratic system and potential instability.

The parties have been strongly embedded in Indonesia’s post-Soeharto system of government; some would say the parties have a stranglehold on the political process. Only parties (and parties of a certain size) can nominate candidates for parliament at all levels, the presidency, and province/district heads. Attempts to mitigate the parties’ power, such as by moving from a closed to open-list proportional representation system and creating a new party-less Regional Representatives Council (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah, DPD), have changed the situation little. Fewer than 50 per cent of voters took advantage of the open-list feature (which would break the party centres’ control over who enters parliament through their control of list rankings) (“Report on Discussion” 2004, p. 26). In the 2004 parliamentary elections, few contests turned on this feature. The DPD is also a weak cousin to the party-dominated parliament and even this notionally party-less body is not devoid of strong connections between members and the existing political parties.

**Stable Rules and Structures**

The last criterion of party system institutionalization, stable rules and structures, is the most “organizational”. In order to be considered institutionalized, parties need to have developed their capacities as “organizations”. First, party organizations should be relatively independent: having sufficient and regular funding, free of the dictates of any sponsoring organization, and not personalistic. Secondly, parties should be internally disciplined. They should have the capacity to vote as a bloc in legislative bodies. They should also be relatively free of faction. Parties should also control processes of candidate selection. Lastly, parties should be routinized as organizations, with systemness, or inter-connectedness, among the various parts as well as regularization of internal processes.

Due to the many criteria at issue in considering the degree to which the parties have established stable rules and structures as well as the poor information available on the topic due to lack of transparency on the part of the parties, in this section, I will be forced to speak
in broad brush strokes on the issue of party organization and offer a more extended discussion on a few key issues such as personalism and factionalization in the parties. The presidential elections brought the issue of personalism in particular to the fore.

Indonesia’s party organizations generally wither in the absence of elections; this, of course, suggests a lack of stable structures and systemness and thus a lack of institutionalization. Perhaps, of all the parties, only the upstart PKS has worked to develop a solid organization based on rigorous cadre development, discipline, and democratic participation. In general, due to strong concentration of decision-making authority at the party centre and the magnetic role of party leaders, other arms of the organization do not develop; this is rational in that other parts of the organization are neither wanted nor needed. It would be superfluous or even counter-productive from party leaders’ perspectives to develop highly involved party cadres if party strategy relies on the motivation of followers based on charisma alone. Those involved cadres might want input into the party’s direction, depriving the centre of its power to set party policy unobstructed.

The personalism of Indonesia’s parties is the most remarked upon organizational concern. Educated, urban political observers decry that parties’ reliance on what are seen to be irrational, primordial sentiments and personality to obtain votes. William Liddle and Saiful Mujani in their study of voting behaviour found that the most important factor in determining Indonesians’ vote in both the presidential and parliamentary contests was attachment to an individual party leader (Liddle and Mujani 2005). Because the parties have the ability to manipulate voter sentiments through charismatic leaders, it actually does not make sense to invest heavily in organization building. For this reason, aside from the PKS exception, most parties are “rational” and rely on “irrationality”, thus resulting in weaker organizations.

One Indonesian observer noted that Indonesia’s “media-democracy was leaving political parties at the margin of political activity” (Prasojo 2004, p. 223). The nature of the entire campaign from parliamentary to presidential elections was highly personalistic. Both the parliamentary and presidential campaigns were largely focused on the parties’ respective presidentiables (to borrow a term from the Philippines), in addition to an array of stars from the worlds of television, movies, and music. According to Andi Mallarangeng, the personalistic nature of the campaign suggested that “[p]olitical leaders don’t think people are smart enough or rational enough to look at the issues” (Slate.com, 28 June 2004). Issues were treated only vaguely in the
campaign. Candidates were big on identifying the nation’s problems: unemployment and corruption, for example, but were much weaker on how these problems would be overcome. Presidential campaigns were run by success teams focused on the candidates themselves and not the political party.\textsuperscript{15}

One important indicator of the degree to which 2004 was a series of contests about personality rather than party was the failure of the parties to deliver their voters to their respective presidential candidates, as discussed above. As Indra J. Piliang of the Center for Strategic and International Studies observed, a “political rebellion took place at the grassroots level” (\textit{Jakarta Post}, 6 October 2004). Voters chose for themselves who would be the most appealing presidential candidate, taking few cues from party organizations or other bodies.

As far as internal discipline is concerned, the parties are obviously strongly divided. While parties can control parliamentarians due to their power of recall, party splits are ubiquitous. The lack of internal democracy in the parties and all-powerful natures of the party centres almost make these splits inevitable, as there is small room for challenge, reform, and leadership renewal. Between 1999 and 2004, most of the major parties, including Golkar, PDI-P, PKB, PPP, PAN, and PBB, experienced significant splinters and internal factionalization, some of the parties experiencing multiple, significant divisions. In the wake of the 2004 elections, Megawati’s leadership of the PDI-P was challenged by a reform movement in the party seeking to foster internal democracy and hold Megawati responsible for her failures in office and as a campaigner; the attempts failed. Unlike PDI-P, Golkar was able to react to the outcome of the 2004 elections, most notably SBY’s victory. The anti-SBY wing of the party was soundly defeated in leadership elections, as new Vice-President Jusuf Kalla took control of the party and placed his own people in the party’s leading positions, presenting a more unified organizational front.

\textbf{Conclusion: Implications for Indonesian Democracy}

Scholars Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully pointed to the level of party system institutionalization as the key difference between developed and developing country politics. In the Latin American systems the authors studied, low levels of institutionalization of the party system were accompanied by low levels of accountability and unstable governance. I have used the authors’ framework in a different, Asian, context, and in a situation of recent transition from authoritarian rule. I view the party system institutionalization
framework as a lens which highlights important areas in considering Indonesia’s democratization.

On balance, I find that Indonesia’s party system has deinstitutionalized slightly since 1999, particularly with the focus on individuals rather than parties because of the presidential contest, continuing into the races for regional heads around the nation. SBY’s victory in particular can be seen as a triumph over the parties. Still, the parties exhibit conflicting signs of institutionalization, strong in some areas and weak in others. In many ways the parties’ strengths make their weaknesses worse. There is a silver lining, however.

In the realm of inter-party competition, we see a declining share of the vote to the established political parties and a rise in the effective number of parties in the system. Volatility at more than 28 is high, but on par with some other countries in transition. The PDI-P’s large swing downward explains a great deal of the volatility in the system. In 2004, rules of campaigning were broken wildly, suggesting a lack of decorum in the parties’ inter-relationships, but that these rules brought down sanctions in contrast to 1999’s utter rulelessness could be seen as a strong positive. Ideological polarization has declined since 1998–99 as all parties have attempted to reach across the old socio-cultural divides in the population. In fact, collusive competition now seems a larger danger than combative competition. We can expect to see further flux in parties’ vote shares in future.

Parties do seem to have established either on-Java or off-Java support bases. In addition, there seems to be a split between parties of the urban, educated, and relatively wealthy (Demokrat and PKS), in contrast to parties of the rural, less educated, and relatively poor (Golkar, PDI-P, PKB). Also, the parties winning the lion’s share of the vote are longer lived than Indonesia’s young democracy might suggest. Evidently, the parties have established a core of support that can be counted on from one election to the next. There are weaknesses, though. Parties were unable to deliver their parties’ parliamentary voters to particular presidential candidates, nor were they able to hold them unambiguously from 1999; these would be two markers of greater rootedness of the parties in the population.

The parties are widely seen as corrupt and self-seeking; this is affected and reinforced by public intellectuals’ commentary on the party system. The decline in turn-out through 2004 might also speak to voters’ declining sense of efficacy. Or, the declining turn-out might be seen simply as acceptance of a foregone conclusion. The parties are strongly embedded in the system as shown in laws on parties and elections (qualifying as a party is more difficult and only parties
of a certain size can participate). Attempts to minimize the parties’ centres’ power by implementing an open-list form of proportional representation had minimal impact. The new party-less Regional Representatives Council is also by design no match for the party-dominated DPR. The vote in 2004, though, should be seen as a vote against politics as usual. The upturn in vote for PKS and Demokrat as well as SBY’s victory in the presidential race were indications of a desire for change and thus a lack of legitimacy for existing ways of doing business.

Lastly, the parties’ rules and structures are weak. Party organizations, outside the centre, collapse into nothingness outside of election periods. Personalistic parties still dominate the political system, nowhere better demonstrated than in the failure of PDI-P reformers to bring Megawati to heel in their challenge to her at the 2005 PDI-P Congress. Parties have indeed behaved rationally in betting on the electorate’s irrationality. Why build structures when charisma can work just as effectively and much more cheaply? The parties experienced an earthquake of schisms in the 1999–2004 interval and are strongly factionalized.

As the above synopsis suggests, Indonesia’s political parties are in certain ways very strong. The position they are given in the political system by virtue of the country’s laws on parties and elections is strong. The proportional representation electoral system strengthens the parties, and the party central leaderships particularly. Opposing the “Western practice” of voting, the party leaderships, in consultation with one another, are able to shepherd most of parliament’s business with barely a whimper from the country’s parliamentarians.

Indonesia’s parties are also weak. The parties are divorced from the population, almost uniformly elite-led creations which, while having a somewhat stable constituency, have no stable popular involvement in decision-making. In addition, many of the parties are personalistic, trading on the charisma of prominent persons for votes. Finally, the parties are underdeveloped as organizations. They have struggled with a lack of internal rules, party splits, and unprofessional management.

The parties’ strengths, then, make the parties’ weaknesses worse. Because the party central leaderships are in a strong position in the legislature and the parties are personalistic, party leaders have little incentive to develop their organizations. Because the parties are strong, they have behaved with relative impunity to this point. The parties’ startling weaknesses have contributed to a climate in which their legitimacy is dissipating. In many ways, this explains the ex nihilo success of Demokrat and PKS in 2004 as well as SBY’s dramatic rise.
to the presidency, drawing votes from across Indonesia's political spectrum.

A key criticism of Indonesia’s democratization to this point has been the weakness of accountability — and, importantly, this is often associated with weak party system institutionalization. With a president coming to power on the back of a grand coalition, as was the case with Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Soekarnoputri, who is to be held responsible, in the end, for policy successes and failures? With a legislature that disdains voting, shepherding its business through the consensus of faction leaders, where, too, is accountability? The key lesson of 2004 is that the anvil of accountability can come crashing down, and this is the silver lining for those hoping for democratic consolidation in Indonesia. According to Thamrin Amal Tomagola of the University of Indonesia, “[f]rom now on, leaders will have to reckon with the people” (Associated Press, 21 September 2004). Indeed, Golkar and PDI-P have little to relish in their parliamentary “triumphs” in 2004. Movements have stirred in both parties to react to the popular verdict. SBY was elected as a non-partisan figure who, it was hoped, could save the nation, but he has not acted as a party destroyer. While we can continue to expect to see shifts in levels of support for the parties in future, the people cannot be written out of the equation, and that is the healthiest news of all for Indonesia’s democratization.

NOTES

* An earlier version of this article was presented at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting, Chicago, Illinois, in April 2005. Thanks to fellow panelists Dwight King, Bill Liddle, and Allen Hicken. Brantly Womack also offered comments on an earlier draft. The author monitored the 2004 first round of presidential elections with Jakarta’s Habibie Center. She is grateful to the Center and its kind staff.

1 In the Third Wave, Huntington actually highlights a “two turnover test”, which required not just two sets of elections but two peaceful changes of government following elections as indication that democracy was becoming established. This is often telescoped to a two-election test. See Huntington (1991, pp. 266–67).

2 Criticisms of Mainwaring and Scully that accuse the scholars of melding the ideas of party institutionalization and party system institutionalization have informed the author’s analysis of the Indonesian case. See Randall and Svasand (2002).

3 Linz and Stepan describe five “arenas” in which the consolidation of democracy takes place. Consolidation requires a vibrant civil society, an autonomous political society, the rule of law, a usable state, and an economic society. For more on the arenas, see the introductory chapter of Linz and Stepan (1996).
According to the revised election law (2003), parties needed 2 per cent of seats in the existing DPR, 3 per cent of regional parliament seats (DPRD) in half of all provinces, or 3 per cent of seats in regency or municipal-level councils (DPRD II) in half of all the country’s regencies and cities to qualify to take part automatically in the elections. Parties not fulfilling the criteria could merge with an existing party or attempt to create a new party meeting the criteria. New parties needed executive committees and permanent offices in two-thirds of the provinces and two-thirds of the regencies/cities in those provinces and 1,000 party members (or 1/1000th of the population, whichever is smaller) in each regency/city where the party is organized.

As Partai Keadilan, PKS had competed in 1999, achieving just under 1.4 per cent of the vote. Partai Demokrat was a wholly new party.

It is in this type of stability that some suggest that high degrees of institutionalization can actually be stultifying to a political system. New parties have many hurdles trying to break in to the US system.

Volatility is the sum of the changes from one period to the next divided by two.

PDI-P’s swing has been interpreted as PDI-P members not showing loyalty to the party. We do not have the data to support this conclusion. A more likely interpretation is that votes broadly intending towards “reform” went to PDI-P in 1999. These were frustrated by PDI-P alliances with status quo politicians and Megawati’s relative inactivity in office from 2001. PDI-P had no long-term claim to these votes, and they have moved elsewhere in an attempt to seek satisfaction.

On the rulelessness of the 1999 campaign, personal interview with Hikmahanto Juwono, a member of the Jakarta Panwas, Jakarta, 11 February 2000. On the 2004 elections, see the Panwaslu website at http://www.panwaslu.or.id/.

The author acknowledges that reasonable scholars may differ on how to establish the parties’ ages. Where continuity in personalities, symbols, ideology, or facilities was clear, such as with Golkar, PDI-P, and PPP from the Soeharto era, I have counted these contemporary parties as continuations of the earlier incarnations. Where significant breaks occurred, such as from the Partai NU of the parliamentary democracy era to the PKB of today, the party has been dated to its post-Soeharto founding. However exactly the parties are dated, the point would remain the same. Despite the 48 notionally “new” parties which contested the polls in 1999 and the 24 in 2004, the bulk of the vote went to parties with longer histories. These parties thus provide more stability to the system than its new-ness might suggest.

The Java provinces include Jakarta, Banten, West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta, and East Java.

Parties such as Golkar and PPP defy easy categorization within the traditional streams. Golkar is primarily a secular-nationalist party but with important Islamic currents. PPP is an Islamic party that takes in both modernist and traditionalist elements.

N = 5,592. LP3ES survey preceding the parliamentary elections (LP3ES March 2004).

The national-level election organizing body, the KPU, has since been rocked by scandal as several of its members, including its head, have been arrested and
charged with corruption. It is not clear how or whether this has impacted popular attitudes towards the conduct of the elections.

15 This is similar to the US party system. Despite US parties’ long-livedness, US parties are notoriously weak along many other criteria of institutionalization.

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