A Graceful Exit: An Analysis of Civil-Military Relations in Yudhoyono's Indonesia

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"A Graceful Exit: An Analysis of Civil-Military Relations in Yudhoyono’s Indonesia"

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Honor Thesis Abstract

Why have certain states been able to successfully transition from authoritarian regimes to democratic ones? Indonesia, after nearly four decades of authoritarian military rule, has been able to develop a democratically elected civilian regime and keep the military in the barracks. This paper examines the methods Indonesian President Yudhoyono has used to enact military reforms and strengthen civilian oversight of the military. This paper will utilize a qualitative research design using primary and secondary sources. I will argue that President Yudhoyono has used the institutional power of the presidency, as well as his professional legacy as a former military elite, to strengthen civilian dominance over the military by: controlling personnel appointments within the military in order to put reformist officers in top positions, raising the institutional prestige of the military, and increasing the amount of resources devoted to military procurement and maintenance. I conclude by examining the theoretical implications of Indonesia’s civil-military relationship, and due to its unique characteristics, I advance a new theoretical model, the ‘Executive Dominant Model’, in order to fully explain Indonesia’s contemporary civil-military relationship.
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ABSTRACT (100 – 200 WORDS):
"A Graceful Exit: An Analysis of Civil-Military Relations in Yudhoyono's Indonesia"

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INTRODUCTION

The end of the Cold War marked a new beginning within the international political order. The bi-polar ideological balance between the Soviet Union and the United States was torn down. The authoritarian regimes that were the client states of these two respective superpowers lost their ideological as well as economic lifelines. As a result, many of these authoritarian regimes began a democratic transition towards representative democracy and began implementing various institutional reforms that this democratic transition entails. However, not all of these former states that were once clients of the two superpowers have successfully made the democratic transition.

Why have certain states been able to successfully transition from authoritarian regimes to democratic ones? Certain states such as Thailand and Pakistan have been unable to successfully implement democratic reforms and return the military to the barracks. By contrast, Indonesia was successfully able to engineer the military’s relinquishment of its formidable political power and transition over to a democratically elected civilian administration. Conventional wisdom would argue that after nearly four decades in power, the Indonesian military would at best be very resistant to reform, and at worst would openly contest its relinquishment of power. However, not only has the military failed to act out on the latter, but has appeared to acquiesce to a democratic civilian regime. This is all the more significant due to the incomplete nature of Indonesia’s progress at instituting military reform according to most research. Relying on existing theory relating to civil-military relation, it would appear that the conditions are not sufficient for effective civilian control and de-politicization of the military. Why have the Indonesian military acquiesced in such a conditional environment?
I will argue that Indonesian President Yudhoyono, contrary to conventional wisdom, has indeed set the proper conditions for preventing the military from returning to politics. Three key conditions support my argument. First, President Yudhoyono has been able to control the process of appointing military officers to senior posts. This allows Yudhoyono to fill the senior ranks with loyal officers. Second, Yudhoyono has reoriented the military towards peacekeeping and international military exchanges that raise the prestige of the armed forces and removes the military from unpopular internal security functions. Third, President Yudhoyono has begun to procure high tech weapon systems and new equipment. This provides leverage to President Yudhoyono over the military: obey the President or lose funding for new weapon systems.

The study of military reform and the democratic transition in Indonesia is important because it provides a useful framework for examining other large, ethnically diverse, Muslim majority states, like Pakistan and Nigeria, who have struggled with military keeping the military in the barracks. First, Indonesia is a vast archipelago where over 240 million people call home. Indonesia is ethnically very diverse as well as hosting the world’s largest Muslim-majority population. Against these two very significant obstacles, one geographical the other cultural, Indonesia has seemingly been able to combine pluralistic democracy without estranging its Muslim population. Additionally, Indonesia has also been able to hold together its 17,000 islands and 33 divergent provinces without reverting back to Suharto era authoritarian methods. This remarkable achievement could provide theoretical insight for other ethnically diverse societies that are seeking to implement reforms aimed at furthering their democratic transition.

Second, Indonesia has not been immune to many of the negative global circumstances afflicting new democracies. Indonesia has suffered terrorist attacks on its soil that originated from groups espousing Islamic extremism. Indonesia has begun to develop a robust political
space where Islamist parties are free to contest elections and offer an alternative to secular government. Indonesia has also suffered in the past from instances of regional secession, including the movement in Aceh province or the restive population in Papua, which has threatened the territorial integrity of the state. Against all these demanding circumstances, the military has never used any of them as a pretext to snatch power away from the civilian political elites in the name of national security. This provides an alternative policy framework with which transitioning democracies can employ to undermine the theoretical foundations certain military regimes could use to qualify expanding military powers in order to attain stability. States such as Pakistan, Thailand and the numerous African states that have failed to return the military to the barracks now have a policy guideline to utilize in order to attain the two primary objectives espoused by both the military and the reformers: democracy and stability.

Third, President Yudhoyono is in his final term as stipulated by the constitution and therefore cannot run again for the office of Indonesia’s President. The next Indonesian president may or may not have a military background that is similar to Yudhoyono’s. Anyone attempting reform in the future under such conditions may be constrained either due to a lack of understanding the military culture and its bureaucratic environment or due to a lack of legitimacy in the eyes of the military which may lead to bureaucratic resistance and failure to implement further reforms. An understanding of the Yudhoyono approach could be valuable to a truly ‘civilian’ president who will face the daunting challenge of trying to persuade the military to accept further reforms from a standpoint of having never worn the uniform and being unfamiliar with its culture and operating environment.

I have organized this paper along a linear path that articulates the development of Indonesia’s civil-military relations over a given time period. I begin by examining the
authoritarian military regime of Suharto and the dominant role the Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI) played in the political process. Next, I will examine the military's reaction to the fall of the Suharto regime and their behavioral responses to a newly empowered civilian executive. I will examine the evolutionary development of the successive civilian heads of state and their relationship to the military elite. Finally, I will examine President Yudhoyono's relationship with the military elite and his efforts at implementing military reforms given his unique military background.

THE SUHARTO ERA

In order to understand the changes brought about by President Yudhoyono, it is instructive to first examine the nature of the previous regime under Suharto and the Indonesia's military transition from the fall of Suharto to the election of President Yudhoyono.

The Indonesian armed forces (ABRI) under the Suharto dictatorship was characterized by dwifungsi, or dual function. This concept was created by Suharto in order to legitimize the military's role in non-military affairs (Honna 2003, 9). The military's 'historic mission' was to protect national unity and maintain national stability in order to facilitate economic development (Honna 2003, 9). According to Leonard Sebastian (2006), the military's approach to strategic, operational, and tactical doctrines stresses the preeminence of interrelationships. This explains the penchant for all-encompassing acronyms such as Ipoleksosbudmilag, which stands for ideology, politics, economics, society, culture, and the military and religion (13). The rationale for such an approach relates to the idea "that if all these elements are considered and analyzed for any given problem, a balanced solution can be arrived at and harmony restored or created". This
allowed the military enormous scope to shape societal norms, identity, and culture (Sebastian 2006, 13). Under Suharto, the military became the dominant institution within Indonesia.

To facilitate the military's dominant political position, GOLKAR was created. GOLKAR was the political party that represented the regime's and the military's interests; usually their interests coincided. GOLKAR's membership in the Indonesian legislature during this period consisted of civilian regime supporters, retired military officers, and a very large number of active service military officers. GOLKAR always held a large parliamentary majority and the officers sent to sit in the regional and national legislatures on behalf of GOLKAR were appointed (Honna 2003, 10).

Military officers were also sent to non-military sectors in order to facilitate implementation of government development projects. This practice, known as *kekaryaan*, was justified due to the perceived incompetence of civilian officials (Honna, 2003, 10). *Kekaryaan* facilitated the placing of military officers in government positions from ministerial level all the way down to the district and village level. The implementation of *dwifungsi*, the dominance of GOLKAR, and the military representation in parliament led to a tightly controlled political environment that greatly restricted political participation (Honna 2003, 10).

However, during the Suharto era the annual military budget was small. The military budget was only around 1.8 percent of GDP, but was supplemented by revenue from a fairly extensive military commercial empire, which, it is estimated nearly quadruples the ABRI's overall income (Kingsbury 2003, 9). The ABRI's commercial interests were seen as in line with its *dwifungsi* principle as well as providing a practical way to meet the military's expenditure requirements. However, this also led to corruption and the enrichment of the senior officer caste.
In fact, military commanders, often from the lower-middle-class, suddenly enjoyed the prospect of financial gain and the prospect of rapid social advancement (Mietzner 2009, 54). In fact, a successful military career in the ABRI virtually ensured entry into the most exclusive elite (Mietzner 2009, 54).

Suharto also established complete personal control over personnel appointments in the military. Suharto frequently granted senior officers access to additional resources in an effort to secure loyalty to him (Mietzner 2009, 55). In order to prevent any challenges emerging from within the ranks, Suharto personally controlled the appointments to senior posts within the military as well as establishing a military territorial system that reduced the powers of the regional commanders. Furthermore, Suharto centralized the military command structure under a powerful ABRI headquarters all the while downgrading his service commanders and depriving them of direct command over troops (Mietzner 2009, 55).

The ability of lower-middle-class officers to rapidly attain social mobility coupled with the fact that the military was seen as the institution most capable of delivering economic and social development, resulted in the military possessing a great amount of prestige within the 'New Order' regime. Suharto was able to develop a patronage system that allowed him to distribute resources to loyal officers which facilitated his personal control over the military ranks. Suharto controlled senior military appointments, allowed the military to develop a large commercial empire, and enabled the military to possess a great degree of autonomy within Indonesia. Suharto's 'New Order' regime was characterized by complete military dominance over political, social, and economic life within Indonesia from 1965-1998.
Suharto's regime collapsed in 1998 arising from great economic turmoil stemming from the global financial crisis that began the year before in Latin America and has spread to most of the developing world. Indonesia's economy was very vulnerable to such externalities due to its reliance on import-substitution models of growth and a large and mostly uncompetitive manufacturing sector that served more as a patronage facilitator than a facilitator of economic development. Suharto was able to retain the loyalty of much of the officer corps by distributing the profits from these state owned corporations to the officer corps. After the economy began to collapse, the cohesion of the military began to erode as a result of the fracturing of the officer corps between senior officers who had benefited from the resources of the patronage schemes, and the younger junior officers who felt alienated operating in a highly politicized officer corps. Moreover, younger officers who had been schooled in the military academies had developed a doctrinal sense of 'professionalism' and began questioning the military's dwifungsi role (Honna 2003, 46). Furthermore, years of political dominance had led society to view the military with deep suspicion which resulted in the eroding of the military's high level of societal prestige (Honna 2003, 48-49). Subsequently, a combination of rising societal pressures, arising from students and other civil society groups, economic degradation, and the erosion of the military's cohesion behind Suharto, led to the flight of Suharto from power and the emergence of a new civilian post-authoritarian regime.

May 1998 marked the departure of Suharto and the introduction of a new democratic regime led by Suharto's vice-president, B.J. Habibie, a man intensely disliked by the military (Mietzner 2009, 195). B.J. Habibie had been a member of GOLKAR and been a leading executive at an aviation engineering company. He was a Suharto era technocrat that had never
served in the military nor had developed close personal networks with senior military figures (Sebastian 2006). The military had been the dominant institution for over three decades and now was operating in a very different and fluid political environment. For the first time since 1966, the military had to take orders from a president who did not possess a military background (Mietzner 2009, 199).

Habibie's first task was to establish authority over the officer corps. Habibie immediately began to assert his prerogative to appoint senior officers by removing the GOLKAR chairman and placing his personally selected man into the top GOLKAR spot (Mietzner 2009, 200). Habibie also removed the military service commanders with officers who, like Habibie, shared a common anxiety over political changes that would lead to greater transparency, critical press reporting, and possible legal proceedings (Mietzner 2009, 200). This shared sense of anxiety and caution lead to the belief among the senior military that their fate, and the political fate of B.J. Habibie, was intertwined. This greatly explains the military's actions during the early transition period.

Abdurrahman Wahid (also known as Gus Dur) replaced Habibie as president in October 2000. The Indonesian military was embroiled in fighting an insurgency in East Timor during this time. The military became widely accused of human-rights abuses in East Timor which further sapped its sinking prestige and continued to place the military on the defensive in the public's eyes. This also came at a time when senior level military officers were jostling among themselves for position within a network of power politics (Kingsbury 2003, 168-169). Threats of a coup attempt against Wahid were thinly veiled, and eventually Wahid was forced to sack the powerful command-in-chief Wiranto and begin reigning in the military (Kingsbury 2003, 169). Wahid focused his efforts on reforming his cabinet and, like Habibie, utilized his appointment
powers to surround himself with personnel that would be amenable to the military (Kingsbury 2003, 169).

However, during this time the military has taken it upon itself to introspectively begin articulating a new reform program. The motives behind this are clear. It would be better for the military to take control of the military reform process where it could be properly managed, than to have reform imposed from outside without any military input. This reform process was called 'New Paradigm' and consisted of: 1) separating the police from the armed forces; 2) ending military involvement in local political affairs; 3) turn the office of Political and Social Affairs into the office of Territorial Affairs; 4) ending the social and political role of the armed forces down to the local level; 5) ending the appointment of senior officers to civilian positions; 6) remove the military's involvement in day-to-day politics; 7) require officers to chose between military or civilian careers; 8) reduce the number of seats allotted to the armed forces in the legislature (DRP); 9) cut links with GOLKAR; 10) remain neutral in politics, especially elections (Kingsbury 2003, 173).

These 'first generation' military reforms allowed for the review, disbandment, and eventual replacement of old regime bodies (Mietzner 2009, 202). The dual-function doctrine was effectively scrapped with the gradual reduction of its representation in the DPR and its formal exclusion of active duty military officers from serving in government (Mietzner 2009, 203). 'Socio-Political' branches were closed, ministerial positions were filled by civilians, the military formally cut their ties to GOLKAR, and, importantly, the police were separated and hived off from the armed forces which allowed for the renaming of the armed forces from ABRI, to its English acronym, TNI (Mietzner 2009, 202).
However, the military reform process did not accomplish all it set out to do nor completely alter the institutional arrangements that existed under the old regime. The retaining of the territorial structure allowed the military to sustain its regional power bases and continue operating a substantial commercial empire outside of central bureaucratic control. The Decentralization Law of 1999 proved to exacerbate this dynamic (Mietzner 2009, 204). The law allowed for a substantial transfer of political authority and financial resources into the regions, precisely where the military was strongest and operating at its most opaque form (Mietzner 2009, 204).

Also eroding was the presidential authority over personnel management within TNI, which was viewed by President Wahid as undermining the principle of civilian dominance over the military. President Wahid, in attempting to place loyalist military officers in key positions, went too far in purging Wiranto allies and an intense and very competitive environment emerged within the TNI hierarchy (Honna 2003, 180-181). This military 'factionalism' triggered the most extensive fragmentation of the military elite since May 1998 (Mietzner 2009, 214). The TNI elite saw this as just another attempt on the part of the political elite to manipulate the military in order to suit their political objectives; the result further demoralized the military (Honna 2003, 184). The military's displeasure with Wahid soon spilled over into the political realm as well with numerous political parties and elites moving towards impeaching the hapless Wahid. In order to maintain political survival, Wahid surrendered the ability to manage the military and conceded to military demands in order to maintain the military's loyalty (Honna 2003, 184).

After the dismissal of Wahid for a series of corruption scandals, the transferring of political authority to Vice-President Megawatti did not improve the relationship between the executive and the senior military, nor prevent the continued erosion of presidential supremacy
relating to military affairs. To the contrary, the military actually began to reassert its authority into areas it had retreated from in the early reform periods of 1998-2000 and rebuild lost military-presidential patronage relationships. Megawatti viewed the military as an effective life insurance against a possible betrayal by parliament and the parties that dominate it; she began extending more privileges to the military by allowing the military to have a greater influence in security policy, promoting senior officers who were opponents of military reform, and the diminishment of the post of defense minister in relation to the uniformed military (Mietzner 2009, 226-227).

Furthermore, the insurgency in the Indonesian province of Aceh, as well as the new security concerns relating to terrorism after 9/11, allowed the military to stake out 'exclusive' ground for itself in the realm of security policy with the effect of marginalizing any civilian input into this policy category (Mietzner 2009, 230). The marginalization of the civilian elite led to the institutional autonomy of the military that not only defeated the prospect of further military reform but greatly weakened the civilian presidency in relation to the military. The civilian executive was now totally reliant upon the military to prevent Indonesia's territorial integrity from disintegrating, as well relying on the military to mediate intra-civilian conflicts due to the political weakness of President Megawatti (Mietzner 2009, 232).

YUDHOYONO CHANGES THE GUARD

The first condition that has facilitated President Yudhoyono’s control over the military has been the re-imposition of civilian dominance in the military’s personnel appointments process. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, a former ABRI general and former chief of the military’s socio-political affairs department, was the first head of state to firmly establish the military’s
acquiescence to military reform and to civilian dominance relating to military policy and personnel matters. President Yudhoyono has ushered in a new cadre of reform-minded officers, reversed the deteriorating prestige of the military, and has broken the 'tribal' mentality that existed within the military elite.

Yudhoyono was elected 2004 to become the first popularly and directly elected Indonesian Head of State. His election was set against the backdrop of a territorial insurgency in Aceh which was damaging the military's image due to the public's perception that the military was mishandling its operations there; a growing sense among the military elite that the unitary nature of the Indonesian state was disintegrating; the arrival of terrorist attacks on Indonesian soil culminating in the Bali bombing of 2002; and the loss of executive civilian control over military management and military policy. A persistent and continuing deterioration of any of these factors would provide fertile conditions for the military to leave the barracks and regain political control in the name of 'national salvation'. President Yudhoyono was able to overcome these formidable conditions due to his professional profile as a former senior military general and his deep personal network of former military colleagues within the military bureaucracy that allowed him to circumvent any bureaucratic opposition or 'foot dragging'.

The first move Yudhoyono made was to reestablish presidential control over senior level military appointments. In February 2005, Yudhoyono sacked all three service commanders and replaced them (NYTimes.com 2005, [accessed October 27, 2010]). Particularly, the appointment Djoko Santoso as army commander was seen as a move not only to appoint senior level leaders who shared Yudhoyono's outlook, but also to regain presidential control over military policy (NYTimes.com 2005, [accessed October 27, 2010]). The move was also seen as an attempt to remove the personnel obstacles that were obstructing military reform and place new 'fresh'
officers who would be more amenable to pursuing military reform (Voice of America 2005). These moves were different from Habibie's, Wahid's, or Megawatti's attempts to surround themselves with loyalists. Yudhoyono surrounded himself with loyalists not only to secure his political base in order to cement his reassertion of presidential authority, but to put in place a bureaucratic network that could facilitate his designs on military reform.

The most significant changes occurred later in his presidency, when the most troubling aspects of the Indonesian political environment (Aceh, Bali, the Tsunami...etc) had subsided and Yudhoyono could focus on more lasting institutional changes. General Djoko Santoso was promoted to TNI Commander in January 2008. His immediate declarations signaled a new intent among the TNI leadership. General Santoso stated in his first speech as TNI Commander: 

"Let us not act individually. Let us not follow the example of some countries ... where the political situation is unstable, where there were revolts and coups, resulting in a failure to build a democratic culture and good political system" (Pathoni 2008). This was the first committed declaration by a serving Indonesian military commander since Yudhoyono took office that firmly derided any thought of a military coup and firmly committed the military to continued development along a strictly apolitical dynamic.

Two years later, Yudhoyono further shook up the top brass of the military by replacing once again all the service chiefs as well as the overall military commander as is his prerogative under the constitution as Commander-in-Chief. Additionally, he has instituted a policy of rotating the top military job between the three services, in order to bring the navy and the air force into the top echelons of decision-making that had been traditionally dominated by the army. Yudhoyono appears to be regularly rotating his top military leaders approximately every two years, using the guise of 'mandatory retirement age' regulations to give him political cover
for his actions. This is intended to prevent any one individual from remaining in one position for too long, thus reducing the likelihood that that person could establish a rival power base or patronage network in which to build a political 'faction' within the military elite. Furthermore, Yudhoyono has to submit his choices for the top military posts to the lower house of parliament thus giving his personnel rotations an added sense of democratic legitimacy.

Yudhoyono's fairly regular rotation of top military personnel has allowed him to prevent any rival military 'factions' developing from within the military that could rival his presidential prerogatives in managing military affairs. Not only does this policy reduce the likelihood of 'tribalism' within the military elite, it also provides an incentive for younger officers since they realize that senior commanders will not stay in top positions for too long, crowding out the younger cadres from the elite ranks. This policy also appears to be in line with current democratic norms; most western democracies rotate their top brass every two to three years as well as require some form of parliamentary approval of top appointments.

REDIFINING MISSIONS AND IDENTITIES

The second condition that has facilitated President Yudhoyono's control over the military has been the reorientation of the military forces towards more prestige international peacekeeping duties and more frequent exchanges with foreign militaries. This has raised the prestige of the military and reoriented military thinking and action away from domestic political concerns and towards 'professional' endeavors.

According to Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia is currently participating in six UN Peacekeeping operations involving over 1,600 personnel (Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2009). After years of scorn heaped on it by the international media and public
stemming from human rights abuses, Indonesia has now been praised as one of the most professional forces within the UN Peacekeeping organization and is a much sought after participant due to their very effective implementation of women peacekeepers (Antara News 2011). A new prestigious UN Peacekeeping Training Center has opened as well in Indonesia allowing Indonesia to 'contribute to world peace' as well as serving as a global hub for peacekeeping operations (Antara News 2011).

Indonesia's deepening integration into the global UN Peacekeeping framework assists President Yudhoyono in keeping the military out of politics in two ways. First, extensive UN Peacekeeping operations has turned significant elements of the TNI into a well trained force that is very capable of performing peace support operations, civic assistance project development, and humanitarian relief and support operations (US Army Times 2010). These types of operations are well suited to being used within Indonesia; disaster relief and support, civil development projects, community assistance programs. By training the TNI in these types of operations, the TNI becomes less and less an effective internal security force. Soldiers and their units will become more proficient in modern techniques and extremely reluctant to become tools of repression bent on using violence against their own people.

Second, by hosting such a prestigious UN Peacekeeping center, the Indonesian military has overcome a significant 'barrier to entry' and now has access to UN and international resources. This center allows military officers to enhance their military proficiency and to gain expertise and access to resources that were previously unobtainable (Eurasia Review 2011). Military officers now have ample opportunities for career development credential building which greatly assists in the quest for promotion (Eurasia Review 2011). Military officers now have an incentive not to 'deviate' from professional development where success is based on merit and
competency. Political activism and overt political involvement not only threaten a potentially rewarding career path, both professionally and financially, but would invariably lead to the loss of hard-won international recognition and prestige.

President Yudhoyono, by integrating the Indonesian military into the UN Peacekeeping framework, has given junior and midlevel military personnel an opportunity at a rewarding career path, while simultaneously bringing enormous prestige and international recognition onto the Indonesian military as an institution. After a tumultuous past with human rights abuses in Aceh, Papua and East Timor, President Yudhoyono has co-opted the senior military elite and has gotten them behind a program that steers them away from political involvement and towards international military cooperation.

**PROCURING MODERN WEAPONS TO FIT WITH MODERN THINKING**

The third condition that has facilitated President Yudhoyono’s control over the military has been the procurement of modern and technologically advanced weapon systems. This has given Yudhoyono leverage over the military. In effect, Yudhoyono has won them over by giving them access to cutting edge military hardware. In return, the military has not only remained apolitical, but has acquiesced to further reform as a price to pay for receiving access to more resources and technology.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, between 2005 and 2009, Indonesian arms imports rose by over eighty-four percent (Pressrun.net 2010). Everything from Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAMs), engines for naval frigates, attack helicopters, fighter aircraft, radars, and armored personnel carriers (APCs) were on Indonesia’s shopping list (Pressrun.net 2010). In 2006, President Yudhoyono expressed a desire to purchase about $3
billion dollars worth of Russian military hardware and the following year announced another $1 billion dollar deal with the Russians (Guerin 2006). In the summer of 2010, Defense Minister Purnomo Yusgiantoro announced that Indonesia would spend approximately $16.8 billion dollars over the next five years to modernize Indonesia's aging weapons platforms and bring Indonesia's defense capabilities in line with its regional standing (Govindasamy 2010).

However, these major procurement drives came after a series of military disasters that cost the lives of dozens of servicemen while publicly embarrassing the Indonesian military. On May 20, 2009, an Indonesian Air Force C-130 transport plane crashed and killed over one hundred people (Francis 2009). Less than a month later, on June 12th an Indonesian Army helicopter crashed in West Java killing 2 people; in April a Fokker F-27 transport plane crashed killing twenty-four people; following two days later after the Army helicopter crash another helicopter crashed in another part of West Java killing three more servicemen (Asia Pacific News 2009). From 2005 to 2010, the Indonesian military has experienced dozens of military accidents, primarily involving aircraft that has led to the deaths of dozens of military personnel as well as civilians.

The military was not only the group under fire for these accidents. President Yudhoyono was also severely criticized by the national media as well as by the legislature. After the latest accident during June, 2009, the chairperson of the defense commission in the House of Representatives, Yusron Ihza Mahendra, blasted the government: "The repeated accidents are very strange. Someone from the government must be held responsible" (Aswadi 2009).

After suffering significant embarrassment from spending billions of dollars every year purchasing new military kit, coupled with the ever increasing frequency of military accidents,
President Yudhoyono struck a deal with the military elite. In return for keeping their mouths shut and accepting nominal blame for these accidents, Yudhoyono kept the military procurement funds flowing. Yudhoyono, due to legislative pressure, set up an 'audit' of the military budget in order to locate any budgetary shortfalls that hindered military safety (Aswadi 2009). This 'audit' provided the political legitimacy to expand military spending and procurement. The military kept up their end of the deal too. When questioned as to the root causes of the frequency of the military accidents, TNI chief General Dyoko Santoso stated they were not the result of insufficient funds and that the military's budget was sufficient and that their aircraft were well maintained (Aswadi 2009). This answer implies ineptitude and poor operational standards on the part of the military. This is all the more puzzling since in September 2009 General Santoso stated that 'only 35% of TNI equipment was operational; implying that insufficient funds have led to spare part shortages and a need for new weapons purchases would be costly (Jane's 2011). This is directly counter to what Santoso stated in regards to the 'audit' directive (Aswadi 2009).

This puzzling reply by the TNI chief makes sense only if placed within the context of Yudhoyono's overall strategy towards civil-military relations; stay quiet, leave the political maneuvering to the president, and in return for political obedience the military will receive ample access to resources and equipment. Had the military spoken up and began to question the administration's policies towards military funding, they would have been defeating their own cause. Yudhoyono could have really embarrassed the military by attributing most of the blame on military ineptitude and symbolically fired specific military leaders in order to satisfy political opponents. Yudhoyono could also have withheld more funds for weapons purchases until the military made significant improvements in safety and standards. Yudhoyono could have subjected the military to even more legislative scrutiny instead of the 'audit' whose main goal
anyway was to provide political cover to increase military spending. In the end, had the military not kept quiet and ready to accept President Yudhoyono's directives, they would have suffered significant embarrassment and would also have lost a significant portion of their funding for new weapons purchases.

President Yudhoyono was able to use access to resources and equipment as leverage against the military. Faced with an embarrassing situation, instead of succumbing to institutional pride and seeking to avoid blame, the military acquiesced to presidential demands. Using the media and the legislature as a release valve, Yudhoyono was able to deflect significant political pressure away from the presidency and force upon the military unwanted legislative scrutiny in return for significant financial and material gain.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The civil-military relationship that I have argued Yudhoyono employed in order to keep the military in the barracks and out of politics does not fit neatly into any of the 'established models' of civil-military relations. Yudhoyono's Indonesia would seem to fit into J. Gus Liebenow's 'Civilian Supremacy Model' which is predicated upon civilian supremacy in policy-making, the size and scope of the military, the basic methods of recruiting and promoting personnel, and the allocation of government revenues for funding the military (1986, 250-254). However, the inability of Yudhoyono's administration to fully remove all the commercial enterprises from the military's control would seem to undermine the civilian-supremacy labeling.

Liebenow's 'Watchdog Model' would not seem apt either. This model is predicated on the military's strong support for civilian supremacy, but with the caveat that the military regards itself as the ultimate guarantor of democracy. As a result, the military will launch short-term
political interventions (coup) in order to restore democratic principles (Liebenow 1986, 251). Within the current conditions, the Indonesian military would be hard pressed to launch a successful coup. Not only would a coup be extremely unpopular in Indonesia, but the military would put in danger their access to resources that have grown in value under Yudhoyono. Additionally, junior and middle ranking officers, who have not been educated under the dwifungsi doctrine, have interacted closely with professional militaries from around the world, and have attained immense prestige performing UN Peacekeeping duties, would be at great pains to support their superiors who were putting this career path into jeopardy. The growing professionalism and prestige of the junior and middle officer corps has created an institutional 'barrier' that greatly raises the costs of inserting the military into political or other 'distasteful' activities like public policing or political repression. The 'Watchdog Model' does not seem adequate to explain the current transition process in Indonesia.

In order to place Indonesia's current civil-military relationship into a theoretical framework, a new theoretical parameter will need to be advanced. I argue that Indonesia falls into what I term is an 'Executive Dominant Model'. The 'Executive Dominant Model' requires the military to recognize the political supremacy of a civilian head of state over the military. The institutional power of the civilian president then acts as the link between the military and other political actors. For instance, the president shields the military from intrusive legislative directives and oversight; a good example is the foot dragging within the Yudhoyono administration at removing businesses from military control as mandated by legislation passed in the House of Representatives. This model also implies that given the weak institutional oversight of the legislature, the main 'balancing' force against the military is the executive. The executive uses its ability to appoint and fire senior military personnel as its main weapon to
guarantee political acquiescence. This model also allows for some institutional autonomy on behalf of the military. The executive allows for the military to try its own personnel in military courts (executive branch) and prevent any jurisdiction over military justice by civilian courts (judicial branch).

However, this model, particularly in Indonesia’s case, is premised on the fact that the military perceives the civilian authority as legitimate and that the regime has a genuine interest in the military’s welfare. President Yudhoyono’s professional background, his deep network of former military colleagues in the bureaucracy, and his genuine desire to raise the military’s prestige is vital for the success of this unique civil-military relationship model. This dynamic of the executive ‘adopting’ the military has proven successful in Indonesia, but not in Pakistan. The civilian elites in Pakistan have never tried to ‘adopt’ the military and ensure the military’s interests are met within the political process. Instead of treating the military’s interests as ‘our’ interests, like Yudhoyono has done, the civilian elites in Pakistan have treated the military’s interests as a separate entity. Additionally, the current Pakistani civilian elites have little military experience between them, as well as a legacy of political corruption, which subsequently has led them to be viewed as less than legitimate by the Pakistani military elites.

The ‘Executive Dominant Model’, within the Indonesian context, centers on the military elites surrendering their ‘personal’ power over military affairs and giving obedience to the civilian executive, the presidency. In return, the president utilizes the ‘institutional’ power and resources of the presidency in order to maintain the military’s prestige and secure the military’s right to state resources. This model leads to the strengthening of institutions, like the presidency, and erodes the power and prerogatives of individual actors. Nevertheless, as Indonesia progresses in its democratic transition and develops truly democratic institutions, the 'Executive
Dominant Model' will deteriorate. The emergence of strong civil society groups or the emergence of a robust and effective legislature exercising its prerogatives may undermine this model and push Indonesia towards a genuine 'Civilian Supremacy Model'.

CONCLUSION

I have argued that Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has successfully kept the military out of politics and in the barracks since his election in 2004. Given the deteriorating conditions within Indonesia's civil-military relationship at the time of his election, the military's return to politics was not an unforeseen possibility. The institutional weakness of the early post-Suharto presidency was evident in the Habibie, Wahid, and Megawatti administrations. Yudhoyono, although a former senior military officer, could not be certain that the military would stand behind him. Over three decades of military rule had turned the military into a privileged caste that controlled a large commercial empire.

Three conditions explain how and why Yudhoyono was able to keep the military out of politics. First, Yudhoyono was able to reassert presidential supremacy regarding appointments to senior military positions. Yudhoyono fired all three service commanders immediately after he assumed office and began filling the positions with loyalists. Yudhoyono, later in his second term, began to rotate the top military position from among the three branches; previously the army has always been the senior officer. Yudhoyono also placed limits on how long senior officers served in any one position. This prevented alternative 'power bases' from developing and reduced the likelihood of 'tribalism' developing within the senior military leadership.

Second, Yudhoyono reoriented the military away from internal security roles and redefined the Indonesian military identity. Yudhoyono developed the Indonesian military into a
professional peacekeeping force that was well respected for its peacekeeping accomplishments. Indonesian military personnel, with the establishment of an international peacekeeping center in Indonesia, now had a prestigious new career path to follow which allowed for foreign travel and close interaction with other military forces. This greatly enhanced Indonesian military prestige, and reduced the likelihood that these newly trained forces could be used in any political or repressive fashion.

Third, Yudhoyono secured large weapons and equipment purchases in an effort to modernize the Indonesian military. This raised the prestige of the military and allowed it to begin reversing the effects of years of underinvestment. However, Yudhoyono used this as a mechanism to ensure that the military stayed out of politics. The military's continued access to modern weapon systems and funds would be predicated upon the military's docile attitude toward presidential prerogatives.

The key factor that binds these three conditions is the institutional strength of the presidency that is derived from: 1) legitimacy that accompanies a popular election; 2) a close association between the presidency and the military through the former's service in the latter; 3) binding the interests of the military with those of society in general. The year 2014 will see a presidential election in Indonesia; one in which Yudhoyono is constitutionally barred from running. The new president will have to grapple with Indonesia's ever evolving democratic transition and complicated civil-military relationship. In order for Indonesia to complete its democratic transition and align its civil-military relationship along current democratic norms, the Indonesian military will have to reform. This includes its institutional relationship with the presidency. The military must forever surrender any political tendencies it may possess. In
return, the presidency must allow the legislature and other civil society groups access to the previously 'closed space' that is military policy.
REFERENCE


