

JOURNAL OF DEMOCRACY

October 2014, Volume 25, Number 4 \$13.00



India's Watershed Vote

Eswaran Sridharan ■ *Ashutosh Varshney* ■ *Rajiv Kumar* ■ *Sumit Ganguly*

External Influence and Democratization

Jakob Tolstrup ■ *Ghia Nodia* ■ *Steven Levitsky & Lucan Way*

Indonesia's 2014 Elections

Edward Aspinall ■ *Marcus Mietzner*

Euroskepticism Arrives

Liubomir Topaloff ■ *João Carlos Espada*

Richard Joseph on the Nigerian Paradox

Javier Corrales & Michael Penfold on Term Limits in Latin America

Marc F. Plattner on *The Confidence Trap*

From Politics to Protest

Ivan Krastev

Indonesia's 2014 Elections

HOW JOKOWI WON AND DEMOCRACY SURVIVED

Marcus Mietzner

Marcus Mietzner is associate professor in the College of Asia and the Pacific at the Australian National University. His most recent book is Money, Power, and Ideology: Political Parties in Post-Authoritarian Indonesia (2013).

In the discussion about democracy's global recession, analysts tend to focus on the most dramatic cases of democratic reversal, such as the military coups in Egypt and Thailand. In their shadow, however, Indonesia (the world's third-largest democracy) has faced a less discussed, but equally serious, threat to its democratic polity. Ironically, this threat came in the form of the country's third direct presidential election since the fall of longtime autocrat Suharto in 1998. Held on 9 July 2014, this contest featured a formidable populist challenge from Prabowo Subianto, Suharto's former son-in-law. Promising tougher leadership and a return to the indirect electoral mechanisms with which Suharto ruled Indonesia for 32 years, Prabowo came within a hair's breadth of winning the presidency. Had he been successful, the consequences would have been momentous: Not only would Indonesia have been put on the path of authoritarian revival, but the potential "loss" of a much-praised majority-Muslim democracy would have further deepened the global democratic recession.

Ultimately, Prabowo lost to Joko Widodo (popularly called "Jokowi"), the governor of the capital Jakarta, by a margin of 53.1 to 46.9 percent. Even after his defeat was evident, Prabowo continued his challenge by publishing obviously manipulated quick counts that showed him winning, and by trying to intervene in the official vote tabulation on the ground. Despite these maneuvers, the General Election Commission declared Jokowi the winner on July 22, paving the way for his inauguration in October. Nevertheless, the election revealed the continued vulnerability of Indonesia's young democracy and highlighted the strength of the country's antidemocratic forces—within both the elite and the general electorate. Prabowo's ability to attract almost half the population with a

populist and ultranationalist agenda suggests that Indonesian democracy needs further strengthening—a task that will now fall to Jokowi.

What do the stark alternatives that faced Indonesian voters in the July 2014 election and the election outcome tell us about the state of Indonesian democracy? Building on interviews with key actors, this essay emphasizes that the election was not only a contest between two candidates, but also between diametrically opposed concepts of power and visions for Indonesia's future. As the following discussion shows, these differences were reflected in three major antagonisms that played out during the elections: first, grassroots volunteerism versus oligarchic machine politics; second, technocratic moderation versus populist demagoguery; and third, support for democratic elections versus the denunciation of them as “un-Indonesian” and too costly. What made it possible for Indonesian democracy to survive Prabowo's challenge, and what is the likelihood that the post-Suharto polity will stabilize in the coming years?

Yudhoyono's Democracy: 2004 to 2014

Neither Prabowo's populist challenge nor the emergence of his rival Jokowi can be understood outside the context of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's presidency (2004–14). Populist campaigns against the democratic status quo typically occur in polities in the throes of political and economic crises.¹ This would suggest that the effectiveness of Prabowo's challenge was linked to the perceived or real failure of Indonesian democracy to satisfy its citizenry. Yet Indonesian democracy did not appear to be in crisis under Yudhoyono. Politically, Yudhoyono managed to stabilize the previously unsettled system, end longstanding communal conflicts (among them, the thirty-year war in Aceh), and oversee the consolidation of new institutions, such as the Constitutional Court. Satisfaction with democracy was high in the late 2000s and early 2010s (83 percent in July 2014),² and voter turnout has been above 70 percent in national elections throughout the post-Suharto period. This contrasts sharply with the situation in other countries that have experienced populist takeovers: In Venezuela, for example, electoral turnout had dropped to 52 percent in 1998, when Hugo Chávez was first elected, and government institutions were widely viewed as ineffective and in decay.

Economically, Indonesia had prospered under Yudhoyono. Indonesia's per capita income tripled between 2004 and 2012 (rising from US\$1,161 to \$3,557), and the middle class expanded rapidly. Indonesia now boasts 74 million middle-class and affluent consumers, a group that has been growing by 8 to 9 million each year.³ Economic growth has been mostly above 5 percent during Yudhoyono's tenure, with Indonesia reaching the status of a trillion-dollar economy in 2014. Again, the situation was very different in Venezuela prior to Chávez's takeover—there, per capita income had halved in the seven years before his 1998 victory.

Despite the overall stability of the polity and the economy, significant dissatisfaction with Yudhoyono (and elite politics in general) was brewing. Yudhoyono's minimalist interpretation of democratic consolidation (that is, his preference for stabilizing the status quo over pushing for further reforms) created a sense of sociopolitical stasis, especially during his second term (2009–14). Indeed, the term-limited Yudhoyono did not launch a single significant policy initiative in his second (and last) term, disappointing voters who had reelected him in a landslide in 2009. As a result, the president's popularity collapsed—dropping from 75 percent in November 2009 to 47 percent in June 2011 and 30 percent by May 2013.⁴ It only recovered somewhat in 2014 as voters turned their attention to the candidates vying to succeed him.

Yudhoyono was particularly criticized for his failure to rein in corruption. In fact, his Democratic Party (PD) became the symbol of the rampant collusion and nepotism that plagues Indonesia. Party chairman Anas Urbaningrum was indicted in 2013 and later arrested, as was Yudhoyono's onetime favorite for succession, sports and youth minister Andi Mallarangeng. Two other PD ministers also were linked to corruption scandals, with the son of one of them being arrested in June 2014. The president's son and secretary-general of the party, Edhie Baskoro Yudhoyono, was mentioned in several corruption trials, although no charges were brought against him. Indonesians also raised their eyebrows at the PD's 2014 list of legislative candidates, which included no fewer than fifteen Yudhoyono family members.

But much of the disillusionment with Yudhoyono's government was related to economic and social policy. Although the general state of the economy was healthy under Yudhoyono, and poverty and unemployment statistics seemed impressive (between 2004 and 2013, the poverty rate fell from 16.7 to 11.4 percent, and unemployment declined from 9.9 percent to 5.9 percent), 43 percent of Indonesians still live on less than \$2 a day.⁵ Many among the poor feel that they have not benefited from the country's economic growth. Most economists agree, noting that much of Indonesia's "boom" has been driven by the capital-intensive commodity sector, not by labor-intensive manufacturing. In other words, most of the growth has made the wealthy wealthier, while creating few benefits for the lower classes. Tellingly, the Gini coefficient, which indicates the level of inequality in a society (0 indicates total equality of income distribution; 1 indicates total inequality), reached a record high of 0.413 in 2013. Thus, while Yudhoyono's Indonesia did not exhibit the usual features of a polity in decline, there were enough sources of discontent for populist challengers to tap into.

Both candidates to succeed Yudhoyono used Indonesians' simmering disgruntlement to their advantage, but in very different ways. Prabowo, for his part, presented himself as a classic populist strongman, lambasting the weakness and corruption of Indonesia's political class.

Contending that the country's resources were being sold off cheaply to foreigners, he promised to protect the nation's wealth and restore its pride. Borrowing from the playbooks of Chávez and Thai strong-

Wearing cheap clothes and speaking in a casual, unrefined manner, Jokowi looked and sounded like an average lower-middle-class Indonesian, which made him seem like the antithesis of typical Indonesian elite politicians.

man Thaksin Shinawatra, Prabowo appealed to the poor, offering them a detailed catalog of assistance. He even took over a peasant organization in 2004—a move designed to mask his status as a multimillionaire whose campaign was bankrolled by his tycoon brother, Hashim Djojohadikusumo. In fact, both Prabowo and Hashim were archetypal rent-seekers who gained their wealth through connections and natural-resource portfolios.⁶ Not only was Prabowo a stranger to the poverty

he promised to overcome; he also engaged in the very natural-resource extraction that he so fiercely criticized.

Projecting an image of strength that stemmed largely from his history as a Special Forces commander under Suharto's New Order regime, Prabowo appealed to conservative segments of the electorate. But his military career was as much a political liability as an asset. In 1997 and 1998, Prabowo's unit kidnapped at least 22 antiregime activists, 13 of whom never reappeared. Prabowo was held responsible for these events and discharged from the military in August 1998. He then went into exile in Jordan before returning to Indonesia in 2001 to launch his political career. In 2004, he unsuccessfully sought the presidential nomination of Golkar, Suharto's former electoral machine, after which he founded his own party, Gerindra. In 2009, Prabowo was Megawati Sukarnoputri's running mate, but Yudhoyono defeated the pair in a landslide. The kidnappings have burdened all of Prabowo's post-Suharto campaigns, but played a particular role in mobilizing civil society groups against his 2014 nomination. Yet some polls suggested not only that a significant number of Indonesians did not know or care about Prabowo's past, but that some even supported him *because* of it.⁷ Presumably, they viewed his human-rights violations as a sign of toughness and uncompromising dedication to the state.

Politically, Prabowo offered a return to a polity in which presidential leadership would cut through the cacophony of interests to which democracy had given rise. In several speeches and statements, he proposed reinstating the original version of the 1945 Constitution that had served as the foundation of the regimes of both Suharto and his predecessor Sukarno (Indonesia's founding president).⁸ Since 1998, the constitution has been amended four times, to introduce direct presidential elections, a stronger parliament, a human-rights charter, and a new sys-

tem of checks and balances. Returning to the 1945 Constitution would undo all these post-Suharto reforms and restore the previous autocratic framework. Prabowo was unapologetic about this agenda: He declared that direct elections were a Western idea unsuitable for Indonesia and, moreover, that they were too expensive and bred corruption.⁹

In contrast to Chávez's and Thaksin's successful populist campaigns, however, Prabowo had trouble attracting his target constituency, the rural poor. Paradoxically, Prabowo got more support from affluent, urban, and highly educated voters. One exit poll revealed that Prabowo trailed Jokowi 39 to 47 percent among voters with only an elementary-school education, but led Jokowi 46 to 34 percent among university graduates, a much smaller social group.¹⁰ Similarly, Prabowo trailed Jokowi 37 to 47 percent among low-income voters (under \$100 a month), but led Jokowi 45 to 39 percent among higher earners (over \$200 monthly). Prabowo also trailed in the countryside, by 38 to 47 percent, while leading in cities by 42 to 40 percent. Polls showed that upper-middle-class voters backed Prabowo because they viewed him as more experienced, self-confident, and sophisticated than the down-to-earth and rather crude Jokowi, whose strong appeal among the rural masses irritated many urbanites. In the end, however, Prabowo's support among Indonesia's affluent citizens was not enough to make up for his deficit among the lower classes.

Indonesia's rural poor felt naturally drawn to Jokowi, foiling Prabowo's attempts to court that constituency. Like Prabowo, Jokowi presented himself as a populist—but of a very different sort. In contrast to most conventional populists, he did not decry the general decay of the state and society; he did not try to play the poor against the rich; and he did not agitate against foreign influences. Instead, Jokowi's populism was pragmatic, moderate, and inclusive. He was able to mobilize the lower classes without using the typical repertoire of “hard” populist rhetoric mainly because of his humble origins and lifestyle. Born in 1961 in Solo, Jokowi had built a small furniture business before running for mayor of his hometown in 2005. Quickly gaining a reputation for problem solving and dedication to providing reliable healthcare and education, Jokowi easily won reelection in 2010. As important as his achievements, however, was his carefully cultivated personal image: Wearing cheap clothes and speaking in a casual, unrefined manner, Jokowi looked and sounded like an average lower-middle-class Indonesian, which made him seem like the antithesis of typical Indonesian elite politicians.¹¹

With his national profile rising after 2010, Jokowi gained the attention of Indonesia's party leaders. Although Jokowi was nominally a member of Megawati's pluralist-nationalist Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), he showed little interest in the party's activities. But in 2012, Megawati drafted Jokowi to run in Jakarta's gubernatorial elections against a seemingly invincible incumbent. Interestingly, Prabowo and Hashim supported Jokowi's nomination—a move they

came to regret. Developing an effective grassroots and social-media campaign, Jokowi unexpectedly went on to win the election. This victory was his big breakthrough as a national media star—from then on, he was a regular fixture on TV and news sites on the Internet. The media also helped him to promote his achievements as the new governor of the capital: Within weeks of taking office, he launched a healthcare scheme that opened Jakarta's hospital to the poor; he introduced a new scholarship program for students from low-income families; and he prioritized the long-delayed mass-rapid-transport system. By early 2013, Jokowi was suddenly leading opinion polls on possible presidential candidates, and although Megawati initially seemed reluctant, she handed him her party's nomination in March 2014.

But while Jokowi enjoyed unprecedented levels of personal popularity, he failed to formulate a clear political strategy or vision for the next phase of Indonesia's democratization. When asked by journalists, Jokowi stated strong support for Indonesia's existing democratic framework, promising to make it more effective. But he often expressed surprise at being posed this question, pointing to his terms in Solo and Jakarta as evidence of his belief in openness, transparency, and democratic fairness.

Confident that this would be enough to sway voters, he refrained from building a coherent democratic agenda to counter Prabowo's populist and neoauthoritarian vision. Instead, he focused on cultivating his image as a humble man of the people, organizing his campaign as a series of visits to markets and street restaurants. While stumping for PDI-P legislative candidates in April 2014, he refused to address programmatic issues at all, and only slowly developed a platform for the presidential campaign in June and July. His popularity consequently plummeted: In December 2013, he was ahead of Prabowo by 39 percentage points (62 to 23 percent); by the following April, Jokowi's lead had narrowed to only 16 points (52 to 36 percent); and by June, he and Prabowo were neck and neck at 46 to 45 percent, respectively.¹² Jokowi, it seemed, was headed for defeat, along with the democracy that Indonesians had built since 1998.

That Jokowi eventually prevailed—and Indonesian democracy survived—was largely due to developments in three key areas of democratic contestation: 1) the paradigmatic tension between citizen-driven grassroots mobilization and oligarchic machine politics; 2) the competition between moderation and populist militancy; and 3) the discourse about the importance of elections for Indonesia's nation-state.

Machine Politics vs. Grassroots Volunteerism

One of the most important discussions among political scientists focusing on Indonesia in the last decade has concerned the role of oligarchs in democratic politics.¹³ While some scholars have asserted that oligarchs are in control of Indonesia's democratic institutions and proce-

dures (by being able to sponsor or directly control political machines that protect their interests), others—including this author—have described postauthoritarian politics as an ongoing and mostly evenly balanced contestation between oligarchic and nonoligarchic forces.¹⁴ Arguably, this balance was again on display in the 2014 elections, with Prabowo's campaign relying on oligarchic machine politics, while Jokowi's depended largely upon grassroots volunteers. In the end, Prabowo's well-funded electoral machine failed, but only by a small margin.

Indonesia's system of direct presidential elections, introduced in 2004, has created an environment in which money-driven machine politics are an important part of electoral competition. In order to qualify for the ballot, presidential candidates must win the support of parties or coalitions of parties that received more than 20 percent of the seats or 25 percent of the vote in the preceding parliamentary elections. Designed to limit the number of candidates and to give the incoming president a power base in parliament, this regulation has handed party machines a key role in presidential campaigns. Prabowo, for his part, put together a coalition of seven political parties, including four with tested machines: Golkar; the Islamist PKS (Prosperous Justice Party), which had a strong network of loyal activists; Prabowo's own Gerindra party; and Yudhoyono's PD. The president himself initially stayed neutral, but received Prabowo at his private residence a few days before the election—a move widely interpreted as Yudhoyono's endorsement of Prabowo.

Just as important as the existing party infrastructures were the oligarchic leaders who funded them. These included Golkar chairman Abdurizal Bakrie, a tycoon with a wealth of \$2.45 billion but also considerable debt;¹⁵ Prabowo's brother and Gerindra patron Hashim Djojohadikusumo, worth an estimated \$700 million; Prabowo himself, who declared a wealth of around \$160 million to the Election Commission; and his running mate, Hatta Radjasa, chairman of the National Mandate Party (PAN), who declared a fortune of only \$3 million, but was widely believed to have the backing of wealthy oil trader Muhammad Riza Chalid. In addition to these party oligarchs, Prabowo recruited the support of Hary Tanoesoedibjo, a tycoon of ethnic Chinese descent who had a net worth of \$1.4 billion and—crucially—owned three TV stations with a market share of around 40 percent. Overall, then, Prabowo's machine was well-oiled, as evidenced by the professionalism of its media advertisements and the speed with which money reached the local components of the machine.

The work of Prabowo's political machines (both those run by parties and those working outside the parties) proved instrumental to his voter-mobilization efforts. For instance, party branches and other pro-Prabowo operators organized meetings of influential local leaders; handed out money to village heads or religious, ethnic, and social groups; and promised to deliver welfare benefits and projects if Prabowo won. The effectiveness of this campaign was particularly visible among support-

ers of the various parties assembled in the Prabowo coalition. Whereas at the beginning of the campaign, many sympathizers of the parties that belonged to Prabowo's coalition had stated their intention to vote for Jokowi, over time most bowed to the wishes of their leadership: Just before election day, 81 percent of PKS voters pledged to back Prabowo (up from 53 percent two weeks prior), as did 56 percent of Golkar voters (up from 43 percent), 50 percent of PD voters (up from 37 percent), and 90 percent of Gerindra voters.¹⁶

But as effective as Prabowo's machine was, there were limits to its reach. Local Prabowo operators confessed that the community leaders and voters they were able to mobilize lacked enthusiasm. A woman tasked by the Prabowo campaign with dispensing money to Muslim clerics in Madiun, East Java, admitted that "if they weren't given incentives, they'd all vote for Jokowi."¹⁷ Similarly, Prabowo's chief pollster in East Java correctly predicted, "Prabowo may get the lead in the polls, but Jokowi's voters are more committed—and they will turn out strongly on voting day."¹⁸ Indeed, the relatively low turnout of 69.6 percent indicates that many citizens who had promised to vote for Prabowo ultimately stayed home. One key factor in voters' decision to abstain was the Prabowo machine's inability to engage in systematic vote-buying. Although the candidate could afford to hand out small sums to society leaders—and there were isolated reports of vote buying—even Prabowo's combined oligarchic coffers were not well-lined enough to offer payments to each of Indonesia's 194 million voters. This, of course, differed starkly from the parliamentary elections, when more than 230,000 candidates had competed for votes, many of them by handing out cash (see Edward Aspinall's essay on pp. 96–110).

In contrast, Jokowi entrusted his campaign more to grassroots volunteers than to machine politicians. To be sure, this was not entirely by choice. Four political parties supported Jokowi's nomination: the PDI-P; the National Awakening Party (PKB), a traditionalist Muslim party; NasDem (headed by media tycoon Surya Paloh, worth an estimated \$100 million); and Hanura, chaired by Wiranto, a former armed-forces chief and Prabowo rival. On top of this, Jokowi's running mate was the wealthy former vice-president and Golkar figure Jusuf Kalla. But the PDI-P's party machine—supposedly the main engine of the campaign—did not function smoothly. For one thing, a strong faction within the central party leadership, including Megawati's daughter Puan Maharani, viewed Jokowi as a newcomer undeserving of PDI-P support and therefore delayed the disbursement of campaign funds from several big party donors. As a result, local branches had trouble carrying out systematic activities. Moreover, many local PDI-P leaders were disappointed by Jokowi's inability to boost the party's performance in the parliamentary elections (it won only 19 percent of the vote), and thus felt no obligation to work for him.

In lieu of a functional party machine, Jokowi relied heavily on a loosely coordinated network of volunteers. These consisted of young professionals promoting him on social media; students organizing support networks; activists reaching out to their communities; and Muslim and non-Muslim religious figures. While most of these volunteers worked independently, there were two organizations that tried to enforce a minimum level of coordination: the National Secretariat for Jokowi (Seknas Jokowi) and Pro-Jo. Jokowi saw them as the main pillars of his campaign and often visited their local offices before the PDI-P branches.

Furthermore, Jokowi was the first presidential candidate in Indonesian history to launch a significant community-based fundraising drive. In a subtle hint to the PDI-P that he knew funds were being withheld from him, Jokowi called on his supporters to donate to his campaign. Normal in more consolidated democracies, this was a novelty in Indonesia, where campaigns are typically funded by oligarchs, interest groups, and candidates themselves. During the campaign, Jokowi collected at least \$3.8 million from more than 40,000 officially reported individual donors, compared to the roughly \$200,000 that Prabowo received from 47 personal donors.¹⁹

The 2014 triumph of Jokowi's volunteer-driven grassroots campaign is not, however, a sign that the end of oligarchic machine politics in Indonesia is nigh. It was Prabowo's money-fueled machine that turned him from an outsider whom most observers deemed unelectable into a highly competitive presidential contender. Similarly, even the Jokowi campaign could not run without the support of wealthy benefactors and politicians who provided emergency funds when the PDI-P failed to disburse the money allocated for the election. Jokowi's campaign trips through the vast archipelago, the printing of campaign t-shirts and banners, the renting of campaign facilities—all this required the support of sponsors. This does not make Jokowi a "tool of the oligarchs," as oligarch Prabowo rather absurdly suggested after losing the election, but it points to the continued importance of money and organized machine politics in post-Suharto Indonesia.

Divisive Populism vs. Moderation

Another area of contestation in democracies—especially in postauthoritarian societies—pits populist militancy against political moderation. Functioning democracies need to accommodate and synthesize a variety of diverse views in order to maintain their legitimacy, whereas radical populists lament this approach as a sign of weakness, compromise, and ineffective leadership. Many democratic reversals, then, begin with populist sentiments gaining the upper hand over pragmatic, pluralist views.²⁰ In post-Suharto Indonesia, every president has shied away from radical or divisive rhetoric. Instead, they have all tried to present an image of a moderate, inclusive, and open-minded Indonesia, both

to their domestic audiences and to the outside world. While this image has always been somewhat misleading—especially under Yudhoyono, as militant Islamic groups have openly agitated against religious minorities—it was the official rhetoric of mainstream politics.

Prabowo challenged this moderate consensus in many ways. To begin with, he asserted that Indonesia's mainstream politicians had allowed the country to be exploited by outside forces, denying it the national greatness that it once had and still deserved. Prabowo advanced this populist view with not only his words but also his appearance. He dressed like founding president Sukarno—the only head of state in the country's history to adopt a militant and confrontational rhetoric in pursuit of his goals. Prabowo imitated Sukarno's gestures and populist punch lines, using an antique microphone to emphasize the similarities. But he went even further than Sukarno, linking his campaign to images of anticolonial wars in the early nineteenth century. In March, Prabowo appeared in Jakarta's main sports stadium dressed in a faux Javanese war costume, complete with a traditional dagger. Riding on one of his expensive horses, he reviewed a parade of his private militia, marching bands, and security squads. The event culminated in a feisty speech lambasting unnamed liars, corruptors, and weaklings, as well as the foreign powers that allegedly were trying to prevent him from becoming president.

Not only did Prabowo mobilize anti-imperialist instincts rooted in Indonesia's nostalgia for the revolutionary struggle of the 1940s, but he also secured the backing of conservative and militant Islamic groups. Indonesia's three most conservative Islamic parties (the PKS, the United Development Party, and the Crescent Star Party) supported Prabowo's campaign, as did the militant Islamic Defenders' Front. Also backing him was Jafar Umar Thalib, head of the now-defunct Holy War Fighters, a group that had engaged in anti-Christian jihad in the Maluku Islands in the late 1990s. Through this network of Islamist parties and groups, rumors were spread that Jokowi was a Singaporean Chinese and a Christian—a potentially deadly attack in the nation with the world's largest Muslim population. On the surface, Islamists' dedication to Prabowo's cause was surprising: Prabowo himself was not a devout Muslim, and Hashim and other family members were Christian. But Prabowo had already used the Islamist segment of Indonesian politics as an instrument in the intramilitary conflicts of 1998, and simply reactivated those contacts in the run-up to the 2014 elections.

In contrast, Jokowi represented the ideological mainstream that had shaped democratic Indonesia since 1998. He generally endorsed the democratic status quo, only proposing a "mental revolution" to raise the quality of democracy to the next level; he rejected Islamic exclusivism, although he always presented himself as a devout Muslim; and he refrained from engaging in antagonistic arguments with his political opponents, despite the attacks that Prabowo's campaign launched at him.

Jokowi also refused to completely adopt Prabowo's very popular position on economic nationalism—that is, the need to protect local markets from the threat of globalization. Asked by Prabowo in one of the televised debates what Indonesia should do about contracts with mining companies that disadvantaged the nation, Jokowi gave an answer that highlighted his moderate and pragmatic views: These contracts were legally binding, he said, and Indonesia had to respect them until they expired. In the process of negotiating contract extensions, he continued, Indonesia could then insist on better conditions. Breaking existing contracts, Jokowi maintained, could lead to international arbitration and cost the government billions of dollars. The contrast with Prabowo's belligerent rhetoric could not have been greater.

Apparently, a slim majority of voters viewed Jokowi's nonconfrontational pragmatism as the safer option for Indonesia. While Prabowo's nationalist grandstanding, angry speeches, and attacks on his opponent impressed many Indonesians, it put off even more. Women voters, especially, indicated early on that they would not vote for him. Preelection polls consistently showed Prabowo narrowly leading Jokowi among men but trailing him among women by around 8 percentage points.

Moreover, Prabowo overestimated the extent of voters' discontent with the existing polity. Although voters were dissatisfied with Yudhoyono's performance, they did not see the need for radical regime change. Asked in April 2014 what they thought about the state of the economy, for instance, 39 percent of poll respondents said that it had improved in the last year; 36 percent said that it had remained the same; and only 23 percent thought that it had worsened.²¹ Clearly Prabowo's fierce assertions that the Indonesian economy was in tatters and the political status quo intolerable were not sufficiently persuasive to sway a majority of the electorate. They did, however, push a popular candidate of the moderate mainstream to the brink of defeat.

Electoral Democracy vs. Authoritarianism

The third key battle in this election was between support for competitive elections as the main vehicle for democratic representation and their denigration by proponents of a vaguely defined collectivism. In transitional societies, democratic elections come under attack in two ways: First, they are vulnerable to electoral autocrats who want to manipulate elections while using them as a source of legitimacy;²² and second, they are threatened by antidemocratic thinking that rejects competitive elections on principle—as in Thailand, for example, where the military, royalist politicians, and parts of the bourgeoisie have agitated against elections after constantly losing them.

In 2014, Prabowo advanced an agenda that was openly hostile to Indonesia's existing electoral framework. He also tried to intervene in the

electoral process, even when he had already lost the race. Prabowo had stated in general terms that he wanted Indonesia to return to the 1945 Constitution, which implied the abolition of direct presidential elections. This was a position that he had held for many years but had not discussed widely in public. Toward the end of the campaign, however, Prabowo talked more specifically about his views on both local and national direct elections. In a June 28 speech, Prabowo stated that direct elections were an unwanted Western import, likening them to a bad habit such as smoking. He said that state leaders should be chosen by semi-elected legislative institutions, as called for in the founding constitution. (Indeed, Suharto was reelected six times by a legislature that was partly appointed and partly elected through a manipulated process.) These comments drew headlines, and Prabowo felt the need to clarify. On June 30, in front of an audience composed largely of foreign diplomats and journalists, Prabowo rejected the notion that he was an autocrat. But on the issue of direct elections, he restated his opposition, this time using a different argument: They were too expensive and should be replaced with a “cheaper” process.

Prabowo also tried to apply the classic methods of electoral authoritarianism to win the contest with Jokowi. He not only used ministries and local governments under his coalition partners’ control to mobilize voters, but he also falsely declared victory based on manipulated quick counts broadcast on pro-Prabowo television stations. Quick counts are scientifically designed, election-day counts of selected voting stations that, if done properly, can forecast the overall result with high levels of precision. The quick counts for every national election in Indonesia since 2004 have been accurate, and in 2014 all quick counts conducted by established survey institutes found that Jokowi had won. But Prabowo used four organizations that were either owned or funded by his allies to “produce” quick counts showing him as the winner. Subsequently, his team attempted to intervene in the official count. In some cases, Prabowo supporters managed to manually change the forms on which election results were recorded at multiple administrative levels. Given the prevalence of such manipulations in previous elections (including April’s parliamentary polls), the Prabowo campaign had every reason to believe that its handiwork would go undetected.

Jokowi, on the other hand, was a strong believer in competitive electoral processes. In fact, he owed his rise to them. Unlike most other elite politicians in Indonesia, Jokowi’s prominence did not stem from a military background, personal wealth, or bureaucratic connections. Rather, it was his electoral victories in Solo and Jakarta that propelled him to national prominence. Although defending electoral democracy was not an explicit cornerstone of Jokowi’s campaign, he did stand up for it publicly. When Prabowo asked Jokowi in one televised debate whether he shared the view that direct local elections were too expensive and bred corruption, Jokowi replied that these elections were an important part

of Indonesian democracy and should be maintained. In terms of cost, he proposed holding local elections simultaneously rather than individually, adopting a suggestion that electoral experts had been making for some time. In later interviews with foreign media, Jokowi also rejected Prabowo's proposal to abolish direct presidential elections via a return to the 1945 Constitution.

Ironically, it was Prabowo's direct threat to electoral democracy that made the 2014 presidential elections the most transparent in the country's history. The official count for the 2004 and 2009 elections had been carried out mostly in closed sessions by electoral officials, and because Yudhoyono won by wide margins, interest in a precise count was low. The 2014 count, by contrast, was intensely scrutinized by the media and concerned citizens. In an unprecedented move, the Election Commission uploaded all forms, from all administrative levels, onto its website, allowing everyone to check whether numbers were correctly recorded and reported to the next level. Most important, a network of seven-hundred independent volunteers (the main group was known as "Guard the Election") formed to create a parallel online count, adding the numbers and updating them regularly on its website. These volunteers exposed thousands of mistakes by electoral officials and put pressure on the Election Commission to correct them. Thus, if the Prabowo team had plans for altering the official tabulation, they were thwarted by extraordinary efforts of citizen monitoring.

Democracy Survives

Although Prabowo's populist challenge to Indonesian democracy was eventually defeated, it raised a number of questions that deserve deeper scholarly investigation. Most essential, to what extent did Prabowo voters understand their choice as a vote against the democratic status quo? Prabowo had repeatedly called himself a "democrat," claiming that attempts to portray him as a "dictator" were politically motivated. Thus many of his supporters may have believed that Prabowo—despite having explicitly called for a "new consensus" to replace the system of direct elections—would not harm the foundations of democracy. Others may have believed Indonesia's democracy strong enough to withstand any attempts to revamp it. Indeed, this view was voiced frequently, both in Indonesia and abroad. Prabowo's loss means that we can only speculate about what actions he would have taken as president, and whether any attack on Indonesia's democracy would have succeeded.

In this context, it is useful to look at the composition of the Prabowo electorate. For much of the second Yudhoyono term, Prabowo had a core support of around 17 to 20 percent in the polls. Arguably, these "hard" Prabowo voters backed his entire populist agenda: the depiction of the current system as irreparable; the attacks on foreign nations that

exploit Indonesia's natural resources; Prabowo's militaristic strong-man image; and nostalgia for the Suharto era. But, between March and July 2014, Prabowo added around 27 to 30 percent of the electorate as new recruits to his base. These supporters are best described as "soft" Prabowo voters: citizens who were disappointed by Jokowi's failure to offer a clear platform or who thought that Indonesia needed a tougher leader than the soft-spoken Jokowi. It is unlikely that all these voters—a group that surely included some of the 83 percent of citizens who were satisfied with Indonesian democracy—thought that they were opting out of democracy when voting for Prabowo. Presumably, some of these "soft" Prabowo supporters switched to Jokowi as the prospect of a Prabowo presidency became increasingly realistic—Jokowi's poll numbers slightly rebounded by 2 to 3 percent in the last week of the campaign.

Indonesian democracy, then, survived for three main reasons. First, the general political and economic conditions were not suitable for a successful populist takeover: Despite significant discontent, the polity and economy were stable, and most people were satisfied with the way that the government and the democratic system were working. Prabowo's radical rhetoric thus overshot the mark, repelling moderate voters, especially women. Second, Jokowi offered a lighter version of populism to an electorate longing for some, but not fundamental, change. As the first presidential frontrunner in Indonesian history not to originate from the country's conventional elite, Jokowi embodied the desire of ordinary voters to be ruled by one of their own. Consequently, the majority of Indonesian voters were prepared to forgive Jokowi for a lackluster campaign. Finally, there was sufficiently strong support for elections as the foundation of Indonesian democracy to spoil Prabowo's attempts to both abolish and rig them. By producing citizen networks to protect Jokowi's election victory from blatant attempts at manipulation, Indonesian democracy completed the electoral process on a high note.

All this good news, however, must not distract us from the fact that the post-Suharto electorate came very close to choosing a president who promised to undertake the radical and dangerous experiment of restoring Indonesia's pre-democratic order. Indonesian democracy is still vulnerable, and will remain so for years to come.

NOTES

1. Kenneth M. Roberts, "Social Correlates of Party System Demise and Populist Resurgence in Venezuela," *Latin American Politics and Society* 45 (September 2003): 35–57.

2. Indikator Politik Indonesia (IPI), "Hasil Exit Poll Pemilu Presiden RI 2014 Rabu, 9 Juli 2014," 5.

3. Vaishali Rastogi et al., “Indonesia’s Rising Middle-Class and Affluent Consumers: Asia’s Next Big Opportunity,” *bcg.perspectives*, 5 March 2013.
4. Marcus Mietzner, “Indonesia: Democratic Consolidation and Stagnation Under Yudhoyono, 2004–2014,” in William Case, ed., *Handbook of Southeast Asian Politics* (London: Routledge, forthcoming).
5. World Bank, “Poverty Headcount Ratio at \$2 a Day (PPP) (% of Population),” n.d., <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.2DAY>.
6. Simon Montlake, “Hashim Djojohadikusumo Returns to Indonesia After a Post-Suharto Exile,” *Forbes Asia*, 18 January 2010.
7. This information was provided by IPI director Burhanuddin Muhtadi.
8. “Ini Pernyataan Prabowo Soal Nasionalisasi Aset dan Kembali ke UUD 1945,” *Detik News*, 7 May 2014.
9. “Prabowo Sebut Indonesia Produk Barat yang Susah Diperbaiki,” *Kompas*, 29 June 2014.
10. IPI, “Hasil Exit Poll Pemilu Presiden,” 21–22.
11. Marcus Mietzner, “Jokowi: Rise of a Polite Populist,” *Inside Indonesia* 116 (April–June 2014).
12. Saiful Mujani Research and Consulting (SMRC), “Survei Nasional Pemilihan Presiden, 30 Juni–3 Juli 2014,” 13; and SMRC, “Koalisi untuk Calon Presiden, Elite vs. Massa Pemilih Partai, Temuan Survei: 20–24 April 2014,” 4 May 2014, 31.
13. Michele Ford and Tom Pepinsky, eds., *Beyond Oligarchy: Wealth, Power, and Contemporary Indonesian Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program Publications, 2014).
14. Edward Aspinall, “The Triumph of Capital? Class Politics and Indonesian Democratization,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 43 (May 2013): 226–42.
15. The wealth figures of Indonesian tycoons come from a variety of sources, mostly widely used wealth rankings (such as Forbes) and candidates’ reports to the Electoral Commission.
16. Indo Barometer, “Aspirasi Publik Tentang Capres, Cawapres, dan Tiga Skenario 9 Juli 2014,” 34; and Indo Barometer, “The Final Round: Siapakah Pemenang Pilpres 9 Juli 2014?” 24.
17. Author interview, Madiun, 28 June 2014.
18. Author interview, Surabaya, 27 June 2014.
19. See the National Election Commission’s website: www.kpu.go.id.
20. Steven Levitsky and James Loxton, “Populism and Competitive Authoritarianism in the Andes,” *Democratization* 20 (January 2013): 107–36.
21. IPI, “Hasil Exit Poll Pemilu Legislatif 2014,” 33.
22. Andreas Schedler, *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2006).