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Between fear and power : Kompas, Indonesia's most influential daily newspaper, 1965-2010

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BETWEEN FEAR AND POWER:

Kompas, Indonesia's Most Influential Daily Newspaper,

1965-2015

Wijayanto

Note:

The cover photograph is taken from the book *Syukur Tiada Akhir, Jejak Langkah Jakob Oetama* [Endless gratitude, Footsteps of Jakob Oetama], written by *Kompas* senior journalist St. Sularto (2011). The photo appeared on page 622 of the book, with the following caption: *"[Jakob Oetama] receiving the* Bintang Mahaputera Utama (Star of the Great Son) *from the Indonesian government. The Star was awarded by President Suharto at the presidential palace on May 21, 1973."*

Between Fear and Power: Kompas, Indonesia's Most Influential Daily Newspaper, 1965-2015

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Chapter 1

Introduction

"Kompas is a newspaper from three different eras.
Established in 1965 when President Sukarno still ruled Indonesia,
it became a leading newspaper during the New Order, to survive as
the most prestigious newspaper during the Reform era."

~David T Hill, Professor in Southeast Asian Studies, Murdoch University, Kompas, June 28, 2015

It was Sunday afternoon, June 28, 2015. The yard of Bentara Budaya building, which was located right across from the *Kompas* newspaper office in South Palmerah street, Jakarta, was filled with hundreds of journalists. They wore traditional Indonesian costumes from all over the islands: Batak, Betawi, Sunda, Java, Sulawesi and Papua; as if they wanted to confirm that *Kompas* represented a 'miniature of Indonesia' – a popular government slogan that the newspaper echoes. These journalists did not come alone. They brought their families as well: wives, husbands and kids. Not all these journalists were working in Jakarta; some senior journalists were based on the outer islands, and had been given special return flight tickets in order to be present here on this day. Those who came were not only active journalists, but also retired ones. Their faces were flushed with smiles and pride.

On the far side of the yard, in a small pavilion (*pendopo*), a limited number of guests were being welcomed and seated. Though small in terms of number, these guests were very important: amongst them were the Vice President of

Indonesia, Jusuf Kalla; the Minister of Trading and Industry, Rahmat Gobel; some former ministers of the Indonesian cabinet such as Muhammad Luthfi, who used to serve as the Minister for Trading and Industry; some media elites such as Chairul Tanjung, the owner of Trans corporation; Agus Sudibyo, the former member of the Indonesian Press Council; Islamic religious elites such as Ayumradi Azra; as well as academics such as Rhenald Kasali. Joining these distinguished guests were the elites from *Kompas* newspaper, such as Randu Raharjo[1], the new Chief Editor of *Kompas*; Sularto, the Senior Editor of the newspaper; and Agung Adi Prasetyo, the Chief Executive Officer of *Kompas Gramedia Group*.

As dusk fell, the central focus of the celebration was underway. The large screen started showing a recorded speech of Jakob Oetama, the founder, owner and General Director of *Kompas* daily newspaper. Although the 83-year old Jakob was seated there amongst the guests in the audience, he did not deliver his speech live due to poor health. For about 10 minutes, all the people in the room, including Jakob himself, watched the video and listened to the melodious voice of the most important person at *Kompas.* The overall theme of his speech was an expression of gratitude that the newspaper had run for more than 50 years, making it the longest running newspaper in this post-authoritarian country. He expressed his gratitude to all of the people who had contributed to its success, with special emphasis on the government, who in his view had kindly given them an opportunity to be a part of the state and society. In his words:

> *Thank you as well for the collaboration of all stakeholders, such as the readers, the advertisers, opinion writers, sources, the ombudsman board, newsagents, retailers,* ***as well as the government, who has given Kompas a chance to contribute to the life of the state and the***

[1] In this dissertation, some names of informants have been changed due to ethical considerations.

> ***society**. (Oetama, Kompas, June 28, 2015[2], emphasis added by the author).*

This expression of gratitude by Jakob echoed an event that had taken place almost four decades earlier, in 1978, when Jakob thanked President Suharto for allowing his newspaper to run again after being banned by the regime. At a press conference at the Indonesian Press Day on February 8, 1978, Jakob shook the hand of the ruler of the New Order, and spoke refined Javanese: *"Matur nuwun sampun diparengaken terbit malih",* which literally means: *"thank you for allowing us to open again."* The authoritarian ruler replied with a cold smile and a curt reply, also in Javanese, but a coarse version: *"ojo meneh-meneh",* which literally means: *"never again" (*Sularto, 2011: 23). Prior to that day, from January 21 to February 5, 1978, *Kompas* had been closed after covering a student protest demanding Suharto not to run for President again in the upcoming elections.

In fact, this ban had been so traumatic for Jakob Oetama that he still remembered it long afterwards. On the front page of the newspaper published earlier on the day of the ceremony, Jakob admitted how this trauma still lingered in his mind:

> *After being banned from January 20 to February 5, 1978, choosing, sorting and giving meaning to our journalistic works was no longer an easy thing to do... for a variety of issues as well as events which were seen as very sensitive, journalistic work needed to be done in the state of, quoting the words of philosopher Soren Kiekergaard, "**fear and trembling**". (Oetema, Kompas, June 28, 2015, emphasis added by Jakob himself.)*

[2] All references for *Kompas* newspaper articles are available on request. When citing, the date and author will be noted for opinion columns, and only the date for other types of articles as these are usually written by a group of journalists, and usually using code names.

Witnessing the ceremony, as well as reading the newspaper of that day, even a casual observer would immediately recognize an apparent ambivalence. While tens of powerful figures had congratulated the paper on its anniversary, ranging from intellectuals, religious elites, businessmen, political elites, and even the president himself, the trauma of the dark past was one of the main themes commemorated by the journalists. That journalism under Suharto's authoritarian regime had to be conducted 'in fear and trembling' is hardly a surprise. But that the Chief Editor of *Kompas* should choose to recall that fact so prominently almost two decades after Suharto's fall, and that he should then also feel the need to thank the (democratically elected) government for giving the newspaper 'a chance to contribute to the life of the state and the society', raises important questions about the nature of *Kompas* journalism in the ongoing democratization process in Indonesia. Do old habits of deference to authority really die that hard? Or is there an ongoing price that *Kompas* must pay, in terms of gratitude to and cooperation with today's political establishment, for its continuing status as Indonesia's ultimate establishment newspaper?

With this background in mind, this book will investigate the biography of *Kompas* newspaper, the largest and most influential daily newspaper in Indonesia, which has managed to survive under more than three decades of authoritarian rule (1965-1998), and discuss its responses to the radical shift in the Indonesian political system from an authoritarian regime to a democracy, focusing particularly on the first 17 years of democratization (1998 – 2015). This change included the amendment of the constitution regulating that the President shall be elected directly by the people, and that his time in office will be limited to two terms only. At the local level, this change included the direct election of governors at the provincial level, as well as regents and majors at the regency and city level. In regard to media freedom, the amendment regulated the freedom of expression through the use of all possible communication channels (article 28 E, 1945 constitution). This change also included the enactment of the Press Act 1999, which regulated that unlike the previous era, the state was no longer able to shut down media outlets. Furthermore, government permission was no longer needed to establish a new

publishing company. As a result, the Indonesia's media experienced euphoria, and there are now 351 TV stations, 1.248 radio stations, and 1.076 print media (Nugroho, Putri & Lakshmi, 2012).

The three central questions in this book are: How were the journalistic values and practices of Kompas developed during the authoritarian era? To what extent did those journalistic values and practices change or continue after the fall of the authoritarian regime? And, what were the forces, inside and outside the newspaper, that influenced the changes and continuities?

To address these questions, this book will use historical material, interviews, newsroom ethnography, and content analyses to trace the evolution of *Kompas* over its fifty years of operation. On the basis of this material, I argue that during the New Order, *Kompas* developed a distinctive style of journalism that was polite, indirect, and cautious, and that this style has changed remarkably little after Indonesia's transition to democracy. In the authoritarian period it was shaped by a combination of personal and cultural factors - most importantly the pervasive influence of the newspaper's founder, Jakob Oetama, a Javanese Catholic – and it broadly supported many of the regime's aims out of political necessity to avoid conflict with those in power. In doing so, the paper could secure its economic interest as a media company, managing to accelerate its business operations and accumulate wealth by receiving tremendous financial support from the state. The persistence of the same cautious journalistic practices in the democratic era has to do partly with Jakob's continuing leadership, and with the momentum of an established and respected newsroom culture. In addition, the close relationship which the newspaper had built up with Indonesia's political elite – which remained very much intact and stable despite the regime change - proved a continuing and valuable asset which it was reluctant to jeopardize by adopting a more critical, investigative style of watchdog journalism. This was partly because the newspaper depended on its elite connections for access to newsworthy information, and partly because under democracy, the danger of state repression was replaced by a new threat in the form of hostile social forces,

notably on the Islamic right, which it had to be wary of offending, and from which it knew it might ultimately need the state's protection. With this close relationship with the regime established, *Kompas* could secure its symbolic capital as the most influential newspaper in Indonesia, targeted to the upper class and elite, who are their main audience. More importantly, it could also secure economic gain from advertising revenue from the regime itself, or from private businesses which have close political ties to the power holders.

In investigating this, my book aims to contribute to academic debates about the character and evolution of journalism in post-authoritarian settings. A common observation in this literature is that restricted journalistic practices under authoritarian regimes tend to linger. It is these authoritarian journalistic practices, characterized by commercialism, partisanship and non-criticality, as well as non-investigative reporting of the power holders, which have prevented the media from becoming a fully effective force for speeding up the ongoing democratization process. Yet, there is considerable disagreement about why newspapers and journalistic find it difficult to change when their country democratizes. While some scholars believe that the entrenched journalistic culture developed under the old authoritarian regimes have been the main factors constraining the newsroom from adapting to the democratization process, others blame the political economy pragmatism of the media workers themselves, which has resulted in the media losing its autonomy and remaining committed to partisanship. Furthermore, how these two factors might interact with each other has barely been examined in existing literature. Indeed, so far the study of post-authoritarian journalism falls into a theoretical dichotomy categorized by two main approaches: a political economy approach and a cultural approach. I will discuss these briefly, before further developing my integrated approach that transcends this theoretical dichotomy and finally outlining the main arguments in this book.

1.1 Journalism in Post-Authoritarian Countries: Political Economy Approaches

The first significant approach explaining journalism in post-authoritarian countries are the political economy theories. To put it briefly and without wishing to generalize, this perspective assumes that media owners, media producers, or media journalists are groups of actors whose actions are guided by the desire to maximize their private political economy interests. This private political economy interest then becomes the main driving force of news production, which ultimately manifests in the media content. The simplest version of this theory is often caricatured as a "conspiracy theory" in which there is "a ruling directorate of the capitalist class that dictates to the editors and the reporters what to run in newspapers" (Schudson, 1989: 266-267). The more critical version of this theory argues that power holders are usually also economic conglomerates, or at least allied with them, and therefore might not implement such "vulgar" control of the media, but rather, exert influence through an ideological hegemony resulting in a situation where the media produce consent among "the public" to legitimize the existing political establishment (Laughey, 2007).

Regarding journalism in the post-authoritarian setting, the political economy factors that prevent the media from fully functioning as a critical watchdog of the power holders are: media ownership by politicians or by media conglomerates who have close political ties with power holders; media dependency on financial support from the state or state advertising; media dependency on the state as a news source or for access of information; and market pressure or business competition between media groups. These political economy analyses also include threats of physical violence from intolerant, radical members of society. This was closely related to either the state's failure to establish law enforcement measures to secure journalists' safety, or the failure to implement such laws where they exist.

A study in line with this political economy approach can be found in the work of Waisbord in the case of four Latin American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Peru (2000). In research that has been much cited by scholars studying journalism in the region, Waisbord proposed the convincing argument that after the fall of authoritarian regimes, there was a rise in watchdog journalism. However, the investigative model of watchdogging, which is believed by many scholars to be the true manifestation of watchdog journalism, did not occur in those aforementioned countries. Waisbord argues that financial dependency on state advertising as a key of source of revenue made the media hesitant to expose the wrongdoings of power holders. This situation was made worse by journalists' reliance on sources from within the state to access information about the existence of corruption. This encouraged journalists not to be critical of elites in order to ensure continued access to information. Therefore, it was of no surprise that any exposure of wrongdoing was mainly initiated by the political elites themselves, in order to beat down their political rivals who were usually mid-level politicians. Waisbord also suggests that the continued repressive political environment made journalists vulnerable to the threat of physical violence, and further prevented them from taking up adversarial positions to those in power.

In contrast to Waisbord, who still believed that to some extent there was a rise of watchdog journalism, Ferreira (2006) provides a more critical view, claiming that the media was used as an instrument by power holders in Latin American countries such as Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Venezuela and Cuba, to deepen the political oppression of citizens. However, in line with Waisbord, he explains this as being due to political economy factors such as media ownership by conglomerates that had close political ties with regimes. He also cites the use of judicial threats such as libel lawsuits, treason charges, as well as impending threats of physical violence from members of civil society, as being influential factors that forced journalists in these countries to self-censor their work. Echoing Waisbord, he argues that dependency on government and corporate sources is an indirect form of control.

To a large extent, the arguments of these two scholars about the prominent influence of political economy factors on the conduct of the media has resonated with other scholars working in the region. Surveying various countries in South and Central America such as Cuba, Guatemala, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Chile and Venezuela, Hughes and Lawson (2005), for instance, emphasize the oligarchic ownership of media outlets as the main factor that prevents the media from becoming an effective force in supporting democratization. Focusing on the case of Mexico, Fromson (1996) and Benavidez (2000) identify the widespread practice of *gacetilla* among the print news media, whereby the state paid newspapers for writing news stories that promoted the government. This dependency on state finances, they argue, was one of the main reasons the newspapers in that country could easily be tamed by the government. Another recurring theme reported on by many scholars is the threat faced by journalists in regard to the implementation of libel laws, as well as threats of physical violence from certain hostile groups in society. It can be found, for instance, in the works of Whitten-Woodring (2009) and (Bustamente & Relly, 2014) in their studies on Mexico, Lavieri (1996) in his study on Argentina, as well as Alves (2005) and Hughes and Lawson (2005) in their extensive comparative investigation of several Latin American countries.

In Southeast Asia, the same line of argument was proposed by McCargo (2003), who compared three post-authoritarian countries: Thailand, The Philippines and Indonesia. He suggests that even though the media enjoyed more freedom in these countries after the regime change, they were less protected. The threat of physical violence, posed by private agencies or political forces from outside the state, was significant. In addition, the political business alliance between the media and parts of the political establishment is a source of partisanship and reporting bias, preventing the media from functioning as a rigorous watchdog. This situation is made worse by the increasing concentration of media ownership amongst a handful of media moguls. Echoing McCargo, Heryanto and Hadiz (2005) found a similar situation in their observations on political journalism in these three post-authoritarian Southeast Asian countries. They argue that despite the increasing freedom enjoyed by the

press, the media faced some serious challenges from oligarchic power holders consisting of the political and business elites, who have persistently pressured the newsroom to serve their political business interest. Furthermore, the threat of physical violence from radical groups is another factor that has prevented journalists from fulfilling their watchdog function.

In line with the various scholars above, the vast number of studies focusing on post-authoritarian Indonesia have emphasized the influence of political economy factors as the main explanation for the failure of the media from playing a watchdog function in the process of democratic consolidation (Lim, 2011 & 2012; Haryanto, 2011; Ida, 2011; Nugroho, Putri & Laksmi, 2012; Tapsell, 2012 & 2017; Sudibyo 2004 & 2009; Sudibyo & Patria, 2013; Andres, 2016). One of the main factors preventing the media from being critical of power holders is the concentration of media ownership amongst a handful of media conglomerates which have political business interests. This argument was proposed by Lim (2012), in what she names "the league of thirteen" media moguls, who she believes threaten the democratization of the Indonesian media. Similar concerns were shared by Nugroho, Putri and Laksmi (2012), who further argue that this situation led journalists to favor and support government and corporate policies. Furthermore, this situation has also led to a lack of quality media content, as media companies prioritize ratings and circulation. Tapsell (2012) and Haryanto (2011) confirmed the findings above by providing a detailed analysis of how political economy factors influence the daily practice of journalistic works at the micro-level. Conducting interviews with newspaper journalists of different media and at different periods of time, both scholars came to the same interesting conclusion that media owners, motivated by political economy interests, have intervened substantially in the newsroom, resulting in a climate that favors self-censorship. Researching five newspapers owned by political business figures (President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's *Jurnal National*, Surya Paloh's *Media Indonesia*, Bakrie's *Surabaya Post*, Dahlan Iskan's *Jawa Post* and Riyadi's *Jakarta Globe*), Tapsell identifies the way control was executed directly from the media owner to the Chief Editor. The Chief Editor would then give instructions to the managing editors, who in

turn gave instructions to the editors, and finally these were relayed to the journalists. This has led to the practice of self-censorship. Meanwhile, examining two print media outlets (*Lippo's* Magazine and *Suara Pembaharuan*) and two television stations, Haryanto reached the same conclusion: that media owners influence the practice of self-censorship in line with their own political business interests.

Whereas the research above provides evidence of how political economy factors have strongly influenced the national media, the research by Hill (2007) and Ida (2011) provide evidence at the local level. Examining the mass media at the local level, which has rarely been done in Indonesia, they showed how the it is used by their owners as an instrument to favor certain candidates running for mayor or regent in local elections. Hill, for instance, presents empirical evidence by mapping media involvement in the 2004 local election for city mayor in Manado. He illustrated how *Global News,* a local newspaper in Manado, was used by its owner, Wempie Frederik, as an instrument for promoting his candidacy when he successfully ran for election. Meanwhile, using Robison and Hadiz's (2004) argument on the emergence of local oligarchies in Indonesia as a point of departure, Ida also argued that there was a concentration of oligarchic power at the local level, consisting of local politicians and local media owners. She supported her argument using the evidence of the owner of *Jawa Pos* newspaper, Dahlan Iskan, and his involvement in supporting a candidate who ran for the 2005 local election in Surabaya. She also identified a similar situation in the case of Satria Naradha, the CEO of the *Bali Post* group, and his close relationship with the local Balinese state administration.

In summary, it can be seen that political economy theories advocate the essential role of political economy forces in shaping journalistic practice in post-authoritarian countries, which has prevented the media from playing a role as a critical watchdog over the power holders. These forces ranged from: (a). media dependency on state advertising, (b). media dependency on political elites as news sources or for access to information, (c). media ownership by politicians

or by media conglomerates who have close political ties with power holders, (d). the increasing concentration of media ownership by a handful of media conglomerates, to (e). the threats of libel and physical violence from conservative members of society. However, factors such as market pressure or business competition between media outlets has not been examined much in the literature, and this will be a key feature of this study in regard to the case of *Kompas.* Furthermore, these theories neglect the role of cultural factors in shaping journalistic values and practices in these countries, and fail to examine how journalists in the newsroom legitimize or justify political economy pragmatism in the daily production of news. The influence of cultural factors in shaping the process of news production in the media newsroom is significant and cannot be ignored, and I will examine these cultural theories in the next section.

1.2 Journalism in Post-Authoritarian Countries: Cultural Approach

While political economy factors are arguably obvious as they materialize in the form of political interests of media owners, advertisers, market pressures, as well as pressure from the state, there has been debate amongst scholars as to how to define culture, and what role this plays in shaping media norms. Accordingly, this research will follow the theorization of Hanitzsch (2006) who defined culture in six different ways. First of all, there is the territorial-based definition which maps culture to certain geographically or spatially defined systems, such as ethnicities, language, or even the state within a particular nation. Second, there is the essentialist definition in which culture is believed to be the 'true' essence, which mostly relates to individual characteristics such as race, ethnicity, religion and gender. Third, there is the milieu-specific definition which refers culture to specific, socially distinctive lifestyles signaling the identity of its followers, and which distinguish them from other members of society. Fourthly, there is the value-centered definition which defines culture as sets of values, attitudes and beliefs embraced by certain individuals or communities, such as those found in the ideology of "Asian Values". Fifth, the organizational definition refers to collective values and practices that

distinguish the members of one organization from another. Finally, there is professional culture, which is the conscious ideological views shared by either all members of a particular profession, or a subpopulation of the profession.

In this regard, it is important to note that some categories or definitions of culture may overlap. For example, the value-centered definition in terms of 'Asian Values' can also be understood as an essentialist definition, as it is attached to a certain race (Asian) or nation (Asia), as well as a territorial-based definition referring to a certain geographically defined system (Asia as a continent). Furthermore, value-centered definitions in terms of religious values could as well refer to the essentialism definition, such as when we talk about Islamic values. However, despite the potential overlap, it will become clear in the following explanation that the differentiations above will be useful to understand how culture is understood and theorized differently by scholars in South America and Southeast Asia.

In regard to the theorization of Hanitzsch above, in post-authoritarian South America, scholars talk about culture in light of organizational culture which refers to sets of collective values and practices of individual journalists in the newsroom organization. In South America, this organizational culture of the newsroom was very much shaped by its authoritarian past, which they refer to as "authoritarian journalism culture". A study conducted by Marquez-Ramirez (2012) in Mexico advocates this theory. In her study, she argues that an "authoritarian journalism culture" was developed during the authoritarian period, and continuously maintained after the regime change. In her argument, she proposes that a defining feature of this authoritarian journalism culture was the culture of distanced, cautious, passive and detached reporting, employed to soften the tone of political coverage. In doing so, the media hoped to avoid being banned by the state, and to maintain economic benefits derived from government advertising, or more controversially, from bribes in the form of direct payments to news executives, publishers or radio anchors (2012: 243). This situation was made possible by the hierarchical organizational structure within the newsroom in which the editorial policy was very much directed by

media elites, who were under the strong influence or control of the media owner. These sets of values and practices developed in the authoritarian era transformed into an entrenched organizational culture in the media newsroom, creating a template to be re-adopted when the political regime transitioned to a democratic government. As a result, she concluded that instead of a progressive cultural transformation, what happened within the media was development of a "hybrid journalism culture", where the liberal discourse of professionalism has blended with authoritarian practices, thereby preventing the media from fully fulfilling a watchdog function.

Hughes (2006) takes a more optimistic view compared to that of Marques-Ramirez, in the apparent rise of civic journalism, which included the implementation of watchdog journalism in post-authoritarian Mexico. She emphasizes the role of cultural factors such as organizational culture as well the social psychological world of individual journalists in supporting change. However, in line with Marquez-Ramirez, Hughes also acknowledges the existence of a hybrid journalism culture in Mexico, in which the old authoritarian journalism culture still influences current journalistic practices. Similarly, Pinto (2009) also argues that it is the impact of authoritarian journalism culture in the past that explains the "diffusion" of the recent practice of watchdog journalism in Argentina. Mostly owned and founded by wealthy political elites during early independence, Argentina's media was financially dependent on these elites and adopted a partisan voice in support of its politicians. This early period, which he calls "agrarian oligarchy", lasted for 70 years (1860-1930), and was followed by an authoritarian period under military regime which suppressed press freedom for 53 years (1930-1983). These two periods shaped the journalistic culture of the media newsroom and compelled journalists to embrace partisan loyalties which aligned with significant economic interests. As a result, when the period of political and economic liberalization finally arrived between 1984-2000, the media did not automatically transform into a fully effective force in supporting democracy. In the short liberal period in which the media embraced the idea of watchdog journalism, the implementation of this ideal was diffused and translated

according to the journalists' pre-existing values and beliefs. When the country was hit by economic recession and the threat of being banned was re-implemented again by the state, watchdog journalism was abandoned by the major print media in the country.

The same phenomenon has been observed in post-authoritarian countries in Southeast Asia, in which the media could not fully play a watchdog role due to cultural factors. However, while the scholars in Latin America talked about the "authoritarian journalistic culture" or "hybrid journalistic culture" which refers to organizational culture, scholars in Southeast Asia discussed culture in light of value-centered or essentialist-centered definitions, embodied by the theory of "Asian Values" and religious values (such as Islamic values). One example of this argument can be found in the work of Massey and Chang (2002) in their content analysis of 10 online newspapers containing what they defined as "Asian Values" from ten Asian countries with varying degrees of press freedom. Specifically, there were six newspapers from Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Thailand, The Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei); two newspapers from East Asian (Japan and Hong Kong); and two newspapers from South Asian countries (India and Pakistan). They found that in terms of the degree of press freedom, three regions were considered free (Japan, Thailand and The Philippines), four were partly free (Indonesia, Hong Kong, Pakistan and India), and three were not classified as free (Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore). From their analysis, it was found that newspaper content which was seen as emphasizing the importance of respect, supporting social harmony and avoiding conflict (and thus illustrating 'Asian Values'), were found predominantly in the newspapers of Southeast Asia. Confirming the findings above, Romano (2005) argued that Asian Values such as "respect for elders and leaders, concern for upholding harmony, respect for the importance of saving face, and a preference for communicating criticism in a mild, courteous rather than brusque fashion" shaped the ideas and practices of journalists in Asia, including Southeast Asia (Romano, 2005: 6-7). It was these values that provided the justification for the journalists to embrace the idea of journalists as nation builders or government partners in development. The later point was also often

conceptualized in the idea of 'development journalism'. Romano points out that this journalistic culture is in sharp contrast to the idea of detached and adversarial watchdogs seen in Western democracies, as in Southeast Asia any questioning of the power holders was expected to be done without "offending the feeling or disturbing the authority of the honored leadership figure" (2005: 10).

Regarding essentialist or value-centered definitions of culture, Tekwani (2008) suggests that when reporting conflict, religion and ethnicity has an important impact on the work of journalists in various countries in Asia, including post-authoritarian Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia. Biases were often adopted by journalists, for example in reporting conflict between minority and majority groups within a country, with the coverage tending to align with the journalist's religious views or ethnic affiliation. Indeed, the fact that in most Asian countries, the society is culturally diverse in term of language, ethnicity and religion, has provided much context for the conflicts studied in the book. Cultural forces in essentialist or value-centered terms have also been suggested as factors influencing journalism in post-authoritarian Indonesia (Hanitzsch, 2005 & 2006; Pintak & Setiyono, 2011; Lang, 2016).

One prominent theme proposed in the essentialist argument regards the influences of Javanese values to Indonesian journalism, as well as religious values such as Catholic values and Islamic values. Comparable to the notion of "Asian Values", Javanese values emphasize the importance of respect for the elderly and authority, as well as the hierarchical order in society. Furthermore, there is also an emphasis on conflict avoidance, called *rukun,* in order to maintain social harmony (Geertz, 1960; Koentjaraningrat, 1989; Suseno, 1997). In the study of journalism, this argument was proposed by, amongst others, Thomas Hanitzsch (2005), who suggested that instead of playing an assertive watchdog role, Indonesian journalists acted instead as a "timid watchdog". He argues that this situation was shaped by the Javanese values embraced by Indonesian journalists, especially those who had roots in central parts of Java such as Jogjakarta. In these values, the principle of harmony and respect for authority are an integral feature of the Javanese way of life (Hanitzsch,

2005 :502). He goes on to suggest that the Java-based media and Javanese journalists tend to be politer in conveying messages, and thus tend to be politically uncritical (Hanitzsch, 2006). He argued that within these Javanese values, the practice of bribery, evoked by the concept of *"sungkan"*, also evolved among media practitioners and owners. In the case of bribery from the government (as a news sources) to the journalists, *sungkan* referred to the mutual expectation in which the journalists felt hesitant to refuse the bribe to avoid offending the giver or losing their trust. On the other side, the sources felt compelled to offer bribes as they believed that the journalists expected this, and a failure to do so would result in negative coverage.

In line with Hanitzsch, Romano (2003) observed earlier the importance of cultural factors to the everyday lives of Indonesian journalists. Combining in-depth interviews and a quantitative survey, she shows that the pattern of journalistic routines (or what she called a journalistic culture/micro culture) had been shaped by the broader Indonesian political culture, which was characterized mainly by paternalism (macro culture). This patriarchal culture provided a space for the state possession of power to define what would be the appropriate ideas and practices in Indonesian journalism. In term of ideas, the state controlled Indonesian journalism through the enigmatic notion of *Pancasila*, resulting in a journalistic practice which did not allow for the implementation of the media as a watchdog. In terms of practice, the state enforced regulation that gave them the right to censor the media or even ban them if considered appropriate. Based on her study, Romano believed that the roots of such journalistic culture was the strong influence of the organic political philosophy claimed by the Javanese authoritarian ruler as being the essential, authentic Indonesian character. This philosophy, which emphasizes the harmonious relation between the ruled and the ruler to maintain social order, was seen as best suited to Javanese values.

Other scholars have also promoted the influence of culture in the essentialist or values manner, but with more emphasis on the role of religion. This can be found in the work of Pintak & Setiyono (2011) and Lang (2016). Surveying 600

journalists across the Indonesian archipelago, Pintak & Setiyono (2011) observed the increasing influence of Islamic values in the newsroom. Many journalists saw themselves, first and foremost, as Islamic believers rather than as journalists. This shaped their attitudes towards politics, where they chose to avoid being a critical watchdog and instead preferred to be in partnership with the government. This supports earlier arguments by Romano (in Pintak & Setiyono 2011: 187) who quotes a journalist: *"I do not wish to be a fierce watchdog, I wish to be like [the Prophet] Muhammad and to spread a good agenda. Muhammad was not fierce."* In this light, these scholars have concluded that Indonesian journalists were no longer as timid as during the authoritarian era; however, they were also never in an oppositional position with the elites, as they were still keen to maintain their partnership with the political establishment. Therefore, even though international journalistic practices might influence Indonesian journalists, it would be misleading to see them as adopting them wholesale.

A similar argument about the influence of religion was revealed in the work of Lang (2016). Analyzing the position of four Indonesian print media (*Kompas, Republika, Jakarta Post* and *Suara Hidayatullah)* towards the foreign policy of the United States, he suggested that religion did play a role in shaping the editorial policy of those newspapers. Referring to the United States' war on terror, two Islamic newspapers (*Republika and Suara Hidayatullah)* reacted negatively as they believed the policy had unfairly attacked the Islamic international community. In contrast, the secular media *(Jakarta Post)* and Catholic media (*Kompas*) supported the policy. Furthermore, with regard to conflicts in Muslim nations such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine, *Republika* and *Suara Hidayatullah* suggested that Indonesia could play a bigger role in helping them. Meanwhile, *Kompas* and *Jakarta Post* took a softer stance; the former suggested that Indonesia was not strong enough to play an active role in supporting those countries, whilst the later suggested that Indonesia should play a role at the regional level of Southeast Asia instead. Therefore, it is obvious for Lang that religion was the underlying explanation behind the different positions of these four newspapers in these cases.

In summary, from the discussion above, it is clear that cultural factors have an important influence on journalism in post-authoritarian countries. However, culture has been understood differently between scholars in South American countries and Southeast Asian countries. While in South America, culture was defined in terms of organizational culture which is theorized as an "authoritarian" or "hybrid" culture, scholars in Southeast Asia defined culture in light of values or essentialist focused definitions, by suggesting that culture refers to certain values, religion, race or ethnicity. In this regard, cultural theorists in South America are aligned with the political economy theorists by suggesting that in the beginning, it was political economy forces that shaped the authoritarian journalism culture. However, they overlooked the role of culture in the essentialist or value-centered understanding, such as that of Asian values, Islamic values, or Javanese values in the case of Southeast Asia and Indonesia. In contrast, cultural theorists in Southeast Asia are proficient in explaining the role of values, race, ethnicity, and religion in shaping journalistic practices, but they undermined the important role of political economy factors.

1.3 Previous Studies on Kompas Newspaper

From the explanation above, it is clear that there is a theoretical dichotomy in explaining journalism in post-authoritarian countries between political economy theories and cultural theories. Interestingly, this dichotomy has also colored academic research on *Kompas* daily newspaper. This section will discuss some of these works. One of the earliest works on *Kompas* can be found in the study of De Jong (1990), who examined the values directing the work of *Kompas* journalists. Conducting interviews with Jakob, *Kompas'* founder, as well as 13 journalists working for the paper, he concluded that the journalists had been inspired to practice the ideology of transcendental-humanism, which could be traced to the teachings of the Catholic religion. Under this ideology, *Kompas* journalists believed in the virtue of promoting humanistic values without undermining the existence of God as being supreme. Humans were seen as the creation of God, and they have dignity and rights and should therefore be treated with compassion. Even in cases of humans

committing any wrongdoing, they still have the potential for virtue and kindness in their hearts, and therefore should be given a chance to save face. It is in this light that *Kompas* journalists play their role as polite watchdog of the power holders, as manifested in their gentle and refined political coverage.

This work emphasizing the role of values was then re-emphasized by Keller (2009), who examined the influence of Javanese values held by Jakob Oetama, *Kompas'* owner and founder, in guiding the work of *Kompas* journalists. She argues that the influence of these Javanese values has shaped the cautious and uncritical reporting style of the newspaper. She also argues that these Javanese values influenced the newspaper's tendency to avoid conflict with the elites, so that when there was a dispute or protest from them over a particular news item, *Kompas* journalists were expected to apologize, even if they actually believed that they had been journalistically correct. The ultimate purpose of this was to establish and maintain social harmony, which is touted as another virtue according to Javanese values. She claims that this culture created a strongly paternalistic relation between Jakob and *Kompas* journalists, with the former being seen as a father figure whose words must be obeyed and respected. The fact that Jakob remains such a central figure despite the regime change has made it difficult for the newspaper to transform its journalistic culture.

In contrast to De Jong, Dhakidae (1991) proposed the importance of political economy factors as the underlying explanation for the journalistic practices of *Kompas* journalists. In his work, he believes that the cautiousness of *Kompas* in its political reporting can only be understood when considering the authoritarian state's relation to the emerging capitalist groups in Indonesia. He argues that given the nature of Indonesian capital as *"state-induced capital"*, the capitalists in the media industry were actually state-nurtured capitalists. Consequently, Indonesian journalism during this period was politically uncritical and avoided being a direct adversary to the state. Furthermore, given that only a limited number of mass media are allowed to operate, they enjoy a huge market share. As a result, the newspapers in the New Order era were

economically prosperous but politically uncritical. Indeed, Dhakidae claims that *Kompas*' enormous wealth could not have been achieved without the financial support of the state.

More recently, Andres (2016) argues that in this situation of media oligarchy, political business elites have manipulated media freedom for their own private interests by employing it as a political weapon in the struggle for power in key political institutions and for political resources. It is noteworthy that this situation flourished due to the fact that most media owners have positioned themselves as actors in the intra-elite struggle. This entails a permanent or temporary coalition between the media and political elite, where certain political scandals are splashed across the media in order to destroy political opponents and even change the composition of elected officials in government. Andres argued that *Kompas* was involved in such a conflict amongst the political elites, in the case of the political scandal of Century Bank, which forced the then Finance Minister, Sri Mulayni, to resign from office. She suggested that in doing so, the newspaper adopted a partisan bias by siding with the establishment, in order to avoid escalating the scandal and causing further economic and political instability.

This research on *Kompas* has echoed the mainstream political economy and cultural approaches in general, which remain trapped in a theoretical dichotomy. In this regard, just like the cultural theorists, De Jong (1990) and Keller (2009) do not pay sufficient attention to the influences of political economy factors. Moreover, they also do not support their arguments with a content analysis of the newspaper to demonstrate how the Catholic or Javanese values are manifested. On the contrary, Dhakidae (1991) and Andres (2016) convincingly demonstrate how *Kompas'* close relationship with the political elites made the newspaper uncritical of power holders, and shaped its bias towards elite interests. However, they ignore the agency of *Kompas* journalists, and their personal values for providing justification or legitimation for their actions. Therefore, in the following section I will explain how this study will contribute to filling the gap between existing research.

1.4 Habitus and the Journalistic Field: Bridging the Theoretical Dichotomy

The existing literature on journalism in various post-authoritarian countries, as well as on *Kompas* daily newspaper, has produced a theoretical dichotomy as discussed above. This study believes that the theory of habitus in the journalistic field could offer a solution to bridge these two contrasting approaches. In fact, over the last decade there has been a growing interest among media scholars to take advantage of the work of the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu (2005), in approaching the study of the field of journalism (Benson, 1998 & 2006; Benson and Neveu, 2005; Hanitzsch, 2011; Hensmondhalgh, 2006; Marlière, 1998 & 2000; Schultz, 2007;). One of the cornerstones of Bourdieu's influence can be seen in the manuscript edited by Rodney Benson and Erik Neveu entitled "Bourdieu and the Journalistic Field" (2005). As well as presenting a translation of Bourdieu's article entitled "The Political Field, the Social Science Field, and the Journalistic Field", this book also provides some articles by Bourdieu's colleagues, and more importantly, articles written by media scholars from English speaking countries explaining their responses to and theoretical reflections on Bourdieu's theory (Champagne, 2005; Darras, 2005; Duval, 2005; Hallin, 2005, Klinenberg, 2005; Marchetti, 2005; Schudson, 2005).

The starting point for understanding this theory of journalism is Bourdieu's general theory of 'field'. Departing from Weber's sociology of religion, Bourdieu suggested that society consists of various fields, each with its own rules, and each of which is a space of unequal social relationships between agents who are struggling either to transform or preserve that social space. Within each field, there are two opposing poles: the heteronomy pole representing the political and economic forces (which is a reflection of the penetration of external forces into the field), and the autonomy pole that represents capital unique to that field. Thus, the field can be distinguished by both the specific type of capital it utilizes, and the degree of autonomy it has in relation to the dominant economic and political field.

The first step to understanding the journalistic field is to position it amongst other fields. In this case, the journalistic field lies within the field of cultural production, which itself lies within the field of power. The field of cultural production consists of two aspects: the field of restricted cultural production and the field of large-scale cultural production. According to Bourdieu, journalism belongs mostly to the field of large-scale cultural production which contains the conflict between cultural forces and political economy forces. This cultural power is a type of capital that is unique to the field, whilst the political and economic forces are factors that come from outside, namely from the field of power. The greater the cultural capital of the field, the more autonomous a field will be. On the contrary, the bigger the political and economic forces in the field, the more heteronomous a field will be. So in this journalistic field, there is a constant struggle between poles of autonomy and heteronomy.

In addition, the journalistic field is exposed to two binary oppositions between the old and the new, which compete dynamically for the preservation or transformation of the existing field. Each agent operating in the journalistic field arrives with a series of life trajectories, experienced through other fields in an earlier period of life. This long process of socialization shapes the agent's predisposition in terms of feeling, perception, thought and action. Therefore, the study of the journalism field is the study of the process of convergence between disposition (*habitus*) and position (*location in a field that has its own rules.*) Indeed, habitus is one of the central concepts in Bourdieu's field theory, which he defines as:

> *systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating of a conductor. (Bourdieu, 1977: 72)*

This is where the theory of field focuses on change. The presence of new agents entering the field will be a force for both preservation and transformation. To be able to make changes, new agents have to show their differences to those already in the field. It is important to see who these new arrivals are, what their social and economic backgrounds are, where they schooled and got their training, and where they developed their work practices. Furthermore, the already established field has its own rules that must be accepted by the newcomers. In other words, for the presence of new agents to be able to bring about change, the balance of power between heteronomy-autonomy within the field, and ultimately larger societal structure of class relations, can only occur under certain conditions.

It is this explanation of change that is one of the main reasons why Bourdieu is highly influential. His field theory offers an explanation which unites both cultural and political economy factors, which operate together to influence the media, and he was able to observe this precisely because he used an historical approach to examine changes in journalism in France. We can find this argument in his work entitled "On Television" (1998), in which he theorized about the change in journalistic practice of TV in France before and after the 1970s. He argued that before 1970, journalism was serious and more autonomous, while after 1970 it became "cheap and sensationalistic", and more heteronomous. He argued that there are at least two factors explaining this change. Firstly, since 1968 journalism was subject to increasing privatization, resulting in the increased influence of the economic field in the journalistic field. Secondly, there was a generation of new journalists carrying a particular news habitus that was based more on practical considerations rather than on philosophy or critical studies. Therefore, the entry of these new journalists also influences the composition of the field. In the words of Benson:

> *According to field theory, the changes are born by two sources namely internal dynamic within the field and the transformation that occurs in the surrounding environment either in the form of political break, economical break, technology and demography. To do so*

> *methodologically, field theory suggests that the best way to analyze this change is to take a case study to see media field relationships with other fields for years or even decades. Thus it would appear that "the current state of the field of the result of a complex historical change". Media field studies combine extensive theoretical reflections, detailed ethnographic descriptions, tell anecdotes and integrate them with macro data such as media ownership, percentage of advertising revenue, journalists' numbers and trends in journalist training. Although Bourdieu is well known as a grand theorist, his concept of field, habitus and capital (these methods and approaches) is indeed intended to be a flexible tool for empirical research that is open to exploration. (Benson, 1998: 448)*

In summary, as suggested by Benson (1998), field theory can contribute to media research in different ways, and those that are germane to my research are: firstly, that, it offers a theoretical and empirical bridge between macro-societal media theories such as cultural, political economy and technological theories; and micro-organizational approaches. This theory also provides a bridge between cultural and political economy approaches in media theory, by suggesting that political economy and culture are not two competing explanations of the social world, but rather are two intertwined aspects of social reality. Secondly, it explains processes of change, both how the media field itself is transformed and how a reconfigured media field affects other major societal sectors. In this regard, this study believes that Bourdieu's field theory is useful as a theoretical tool of analysis in this study of *Kompas* newspaper. This theoretical avenue of investigation becomes more significant when considering that although Bourdieu made an important contribution to media studies, surprisingly Indonesian media scholars have yet to profit fully from his work.

1.5 Argument of this Book

This book argues that *Kompas* developed a polite, indirect and cautious style of journalism over more than three decades under authoritarian structures, which has prevented the newspaper from performing a critical watchdog role, and has prevented it from being a fully effective force in supporting the deepening of Indonesian democracy. This particular style of journalism was developed as a result of two different forces interacting with each other in shaping the habitus of *Kompas*, namely cultural forces and political economy forces. On one hand, there was the strong influence of Jakob Oetama, one of the founders and owners of the paper, who possessed the habitus of a Javanese man and acted as Chief Editor of the newspaper in the first 40 years. At the same time there was the persistent threat of a ban from the authoritarian regime, and due to the newspaper's Catholic and Chinese roots, there was also verbal and physical threats from intolerant conservative Islamic groups. These factors contributed in creating a culture of fear among *Kompas* journalists. During this development, and despite this fear, *Kompas* also succeeded in transforming itself into an economic giant with the support of the authoritarian regime, rendering the newspaper financially dependent on the power holders. This paradoxical fear of and financial dependency on the regime forced *Kompas* to establish a good relationship with the power holders, in order to maintain its economic advantage, as well as secure political protection. The fact that *Kompas* was a profit-oriented news company that focused on political news, required that the newspaper be close to the power holders, not only to gain access to political information, but also to boost their sales by branding themselves as the newspaper with exclusive access to the palace. This last factor has exacerbated the newspaper's dependency on the state, creating a complex and uneven power relationship with the state as the patron.

After the collapse of the authoritarian regimes, the old habitus developed during the authoritarian past did not immediately vanish from *Kompas*, as the entrenched political economy and cultural forces were still intact. Culturally, this situation reflected the lack of meaningful structural changes within the

Kompas newsroom. The pyramidal distribution of power and hierarchy inside the news organizations remained intact, whereby ordinary reporters, who despite holding university degrees, were positioned at the bottom and had limited influence in decision-making processes. In contrast, the editorial elites possessed the privilege of determining the editorial policy, and were therefore in a much stronger position in the daily production of news, with Jakob Oetama at the top of the structure. As the General Director of the newspaper, Jakob also had the privilege of determining the composition of the editorial board and could, at any time, intervene in editorial decisions whenever the interest of the newspaper's owner was under threat. Furthermore, with his extensive experience as a journalist, Jakob also accumulated the symbolic, cultural and economic capital needed to establish his authority, resulting in his nearly unchallenged influence at *Kompas.*

In terms of political economy, the fact that *Kompas* media outlet developed into a giant business group forced the newspaper to remain cautious in its journalistic style to avoid offending any powerful political or business actors, or any social groups, not only for the sheer survival of *Kompas* itself, but also for other business entities under *Kompas* in general. There were also some aspects of the existing legal system which threatened press freedom and discriminated against the rights of the Chinese-Catholic minority group, which further added to the complexity of the problem. The fear of being a minority was persistent, primarily because the problem of intolerance persisted in Indonesia and was even greater in the post-authoritarian era. Most importantly, the nature of patronage relations between *Kompas* and the regime was still preserved, wherein *Kompas* needed the regime for access to information, political protection, as well as to safeguard its economic interest. It is to serve this purpose that *Kompas* has always maintained its close relationship with the power holders and has always kept its polite tone, despite the change in political regimes.

It is in their explanatory power to reveal that both political economy factors as well as cultural factors have intertwined and shaped the habitus of *Kompas*

newspaper, and herein lies the original aspect to this study. In examining this, this study has gone beyond the theoretical dichotomy between political economy as well as cultural approaches, which has become mainstream in journalism literature of post-authoritarian countries in the 21st century.

In order to address the theoretical challenge above, this research employs a historical comparative methodological approach, and frames its research perspectives by combining ethnographic fieldwork involving on-site observations in the newsroom, content analyses of the newspaper archive across different political regimes, as well as oral history through in-depth interviews with journalists. These three methods for data gathering are explained below:

1.6 Research Method

Research Method 1: On-Site Observation within the Newsroom

The on-site observations in this research are conducted to capture the dynamic within the newsroom, in order to examine the ideals and practices of current *Kompas* journalists, and to investigate the underlying forces which influence news production at the newspaper. In my fieldwork, the on-site observations lasted for approximately six months, started from the end of January 2014 until early July 2014. During this observation period, I was treated like a *Kompas* journalist, with an identity card which gave me free access to enter the newsroom at any time, and also my own workstation and desk. In regard to my research, which focuses on the relation between the newspaper and the power holders, I was seated with the group of journalists at the political desk, who were in charge of political news. This gave me a chance to interact with them very closely from morning until midnight. Furthermore, I was also allowed to attend all *Kompas* editorial meetings related to the editorial policy. This consisted of daily, weekly and monthly editorial meetings, and the meeting of the ombudsman board, which is also held every month.

The daily editorial meetings took place twice a day: in the morning at 9 am and in the afternoon at 4 pm. The morning editorial meeting aimed to discuss the main prominent issues and stories of the day, which could be considered for the next day's coverage. Meanwhile, the afternoon editorial meeting planned this coverage in more detail, and here editors provided detailed lists of coverage to every desk. This afternoon meeting was referred to as "budgeting". Both meetings were usually attended by members of the editorial board, representatives of the research division, as well as the editor of every desk at the newspaper. However, the number of journalists attending the morning meeting was usually smaller than in the afternoon.

Meanwhile, the weekly meetings took place every Wednesday at around 11 am. During these meetings, an evaluation of the newspaper's performance during the previous week was usually discussed, and sometimes, the agenda was set for the next week. In this meeting, the Human Resource Manager was also present, and she would report on the current progress of newly recruited journalists. In addition, the journalists from the online version of the newspaper, *Kompas.com,* also joined this meeting. It goes without saying that those journalists who were usually present at the daily meetings also joined this weekly meeting, as they were the key people in charge of the daily editorial policy. On very rare occasions, Jakob Oetama, the General Director and owner of the newspaper, also attended this meeting.

The monthly meetings were held by each division in the newsroom, and aimed to establish the agenda for the upcoming month. Since my observation was at the political desk, I attended their meetings, for instance, when they discussed their position during the upcoming Indonesian legislative election, as well as presidential election in 2014. Unlike in the daily or weekly meetings, which were attended by the elites, this meeting was attended by all journalists from the political desk, including new journalists who were still in their probation period. On top of that, the Chief Editor of the newspaper, as well as some members of the editorial boards, were also present.

Furthermore, there was a monthly meeting of the ombudsman board which I could also attend. This board consisted of a handful of experts whose job was to give monthly evaluations of the newspaper's coverage. Therefore, unlike the weekly evaluation performed by journalists, this monthly meeting provided the view of external experts. Among the members of the boards were Daniel Dhakidae –a media scholar who had also previously worked as the Chair of the research division of the newspaper; Ashadi Siregar –a media expert who was also an academic at Gadjah Mada University, a well-known state university in Jogjakarta; Ignatius Haryanto –a senior media researcher who also worked as an academic at the Media Nusantara University, a prominent private university in Jakarta; Faisal Basri –an economist as well as an academic at Indonesian University, Jakarta; and, finally, Nurul Augusta, an environmentalist who was also an activist in the non-government sector. While the first three people focused on the evaluation of media issues, Faisal Basri focused on the evaluation of the economic news of the newspaper. As an environmentalist, Nurul focused on the coverage of environmental issues in the newspaper. During this meeting, the members of the editorial board, as well as representatives of the journalists from the various desks, were also present. Therefore, the evaluation of the ombudsman board could be conveyed directly to the journalists.

Apart from those formal meetings, on some occasions, I also went into the field with *Kompas* journalists. I used this opportunity to watch very closely how the journalists interacted with their news sources, not only in conducting interviews but also in the way they built rapport with their sources. Alongside these formal journalistic activities, I also participated in informal gatherings such as birthday celebrations –which happened quite often, eating dinner together during the fasting month of Ramadan, as well celebrating the anniversary of the newspaper itself. I noticed that within the newsroom, there were many occasions to eat together, thereby providing a moment for socializing. Particularly with the journalists of the political desk, there was a moment to dine together every day. In terms of building trust and friendship with these young journalists, what surprised me the most was that we

sometimes engaged in karaoke singing together - there was a special room for singing karaoke inside the *Kompas* newsroom.

In addition to the activities above, I also spent my first three months living in the house of a mid-level *Kompas* journalist. During my stay, he often shared the gossip inside the newsroom with me, and gave his personal views about it, as well as expressing his satisfactions and disappointments working at *Kompas*. It is important to note here that even though my on-site observation formally ended in July 2014, I was still allowed to come back to the newsroom for additional on-site observations and interviews. The journalists said that I was now a member of the large *Kompas* family and that their door was always open to me, so I used this opportunity. I attended the monthly meetings of the ombudsman board in August and September 2014, and on June 28, 2015, I was present at the celebration of the golden anniversary of the newspaper: a historical, significant moment in the history of the Indonesian media, as *Kompas* celebrated being the longest running newspaper in Indonesia, operating for for over half a century.

Research Method 2: Content Analysis of the Newspaper Archives

The ultimate result of the process of news production within a daily newspaper is news in its printed format. In this regard, the newspaper archive is seen as a cultural artifact; an integral part of cultural production. As a cultural artifact, newspaper archives represent the way a group of people communicates to the world, including to the power holders, through language, symbols, or pictures. Furthermore, while the on-site observations mostly served as a tool to look at the present, a content analysis provides a tool to examine both the present and, more importantly, the past. The underlying assumption is that the newspaper content reflects the way journalists interact with power holders over time and across various regimes.

Hsieh and Shanon (2005) propose three kinds of approaches used in the current application of content analysis method: conventional, directed, and summative. The conventional approach suggests that the categories for coding are directly

derived from data. Therefore, this approach is highly inductive and is usually used to explain phenomena in which the number of existing theories or literature is very limited. The ultimate result is a description of a certain phenomenon. The directed approach uses theories or findings of previous research as a starting point for categorization and coding. This approach is deductive, but the key building blocks are derived from the naturalistic paradigm. This approach therefore uses theory for guidance and aims to validate or extend it. The summative approach conducts an analysis using counting and comparisons, usually of keywords or content, alongside interpretation of the underlying context. In this approach, a researcher chooses certain keywords based on her interest or on the literature, and then counts the frequency of the keywords within certain texts. The purpose of this approach is to explore an idea or concept.

In my research, these three aforementioned approaches are combined according to the specific aims of the particular chapter. For instance, in chapter 5 which examines the role of watchdog journalism, this study uses the directed approach by approaching the content of the newspaper using the perspective of watchdog journalism theory, and developing categories based on previous studies or research. The categorization will then be used to analyze *Kompas'* content on corruption across different regimes from 1965-2015, and thereby determine whether it performed a watchdog function. Meanwhile, in chapter 6 which explores the newspaper's position during the 2014 presidential election, this research uses a combination of the directed approach and summative approach. On one hand, this chapter uses the theory of media neutrality to examine *Kompas'* position in the election, but on the other, it also counts the amount of *Kompas* coverage given to both candidates in order to quantitatively see the degree of balance in their coverage. In the rest of the chapters, this study uses the conventional approach of content analysis by taking a direct inference from the text. Above all, a content analysis of the newspaper is the interpretation of text in its socio-political context, and it is therefore an integral part of this study and will appear in every chapter. A more detailed elaboration of the content analysis will also be given in each chapter.

Research Method 3: In-depth Interviews as Oral History

Finally, in addition to the on-site observation as well as content analyses, this research also conducts in-depth interviews involving oral history as a method of data gathering. For this study, interviewing is vital to gaining an understanding of the ideals and values of *Kompas* journalists over time. First, it is used to determine the ideals and values of the journalists, and how they apply them in their daily journalistic practice. Secondly, in-depth interviews indicate how journalists conduct their work both in the current era and in the past, which captures the changes and continuities in their ideals and practices. Finally, but no less importantly, in-depth interviews are instrumental to understanding the underlying reasons behind journalistic practices, including why some ideals and practices are preserved and others transformed within the newsroom. In particular, this research will employ a specific method of in-depth interviewing, namely an oral-historical method.

As explained by Leavy (2011: 1), oral history is a method of qualitative interviewing that stresses participants' perspectives, and generally includes multiple open-ended interview sessions with each participant. He explains that the main purposes of oral history are: (1) to fill a historical record; (2) to understand people's subjective experience of historical events; (3) to understand people's subjective experience of historical periods or periods of social change; (4) to understand people's subjective experience of current or recent events; (5) to contribute to the understanding of topical areas; and (6) to gain community experiential knowledge (Leavy, 2011: 19-20).

Oral history has its root in anthropological research, which is often used in field research to access the experience of people living in the field sites. This method is based on oral traditions of knowledge transmission, usually family or community knowledge that is transferred from generation to generation. Furthermore, regarding the ontological assumption of research methods, oral history assumes that meaning is not externally "out there" waiting to be discovered. Instead, narratives are constructed and interpreted through the process of interviewing. Therefore, oral history believes that social knowledge

does not exist independently of the research process, but instead, it is created through the process. Accordingly, as a logical consequence of this ontological assumption, this method believes in the epistemological assumption about the collaborative relationships between researcher and participant in the process of data collection. This means the researcher is not seen as the sole authority in the process of knowledge production. Furthermore, it relies on the highly inductive interview format and claims that no two interview sessions are the same.

In order to gain an understanding of the ideals and values of *Kompas* journalists over time via interviews, three groups of journalists became the informants for this study:

1. Senior journalists who had experience of working in both eras.
   The first group of participants in this study are senior journalists who experienced both the New Order era and the current Reformation era. They are particularly important to help me understand the beliefs, values, attitudes, ideas, and language they use as journalists, and also to hear their stories and experiences in dealing with the power holders during the two eras. In addition, by having them as informants, I wish to understand the meaning behind their experiences. This group of participants are living witnesses of two different parts of history, and therefore these interviews can shed light on whether they perceive change is occurring, and if so, to what extent.

2. Retired or inactive journalists who had experience of working in the New Order era.
   As explained by Leavy (2011:2), one of the advantages of using oral history as a method is that it allows us to hear the views of marginalized groups in a certain culture. While history is usually written by the rulers, oral history gives serious attention to marginalized voices. Therefore, I also interview retired journalists who worked during the New Order, and those who were fired from their jobs, as both are seen as representatives of marginalized voices in the *Kompas* institution. The aim of interviewing this particular group is to understand their beliefs, values, attitudes, ideas and the

language that they use as journalists, and also to hear their stories and experiences in dealing with the power holders in the New Order era, and their interpretations of these experiences.

3. The new generation of journalists with experience of working during the Reformation era.
   The last group of participants in this study are the current journalists who only started working at the newspaper after the fall of Suharto on May 21, 1998. Their presence is important to capture the beliefs, values, attitudes and ideas from the latest generation of journalists working in the current Reformation era, and to understand their experiences in dealing with the power holders, and their interpretations of these experiences.

The interviews were conducted from the time I started my fieldwork in July 2013, when I arrived at the newsroom for the first time to obtain permission to conduct on-site observation within the newsroom. They were conducted most intensively when I was in the newsroom from January 2014 until July 2014, though they were some ongoing ones after I had left the newsroom. These were with retired journalists whom I visited in Jakarta in 2015 and 2016, as well as in Jogjakarta in 2015. In addition, as I am writing this book in the Netherlands, I also conducted some interviews through telephone calls to *Kompas* journalists in Jakarta. On top of all this, as I was already considered a member of the *Kompas* family*,* I continued to visit the newsroom every time I went home to Indonesia, where informal interviews inevitably took place. Therefore, the in-depth interviews were conducted from 2013 to 2017.

1.7 Structure of the Book

Because my intention is to investigate the biography of *Kompas* newspaper with a special emphasis on the changes and continuities of its relationship with power holders across different political regimes, this book is structured into historical sequences, starting from the time of the birth of the newspaper to the current period. Meanwhile, in order to reveal the dynamics within the

newsroom in the daily production of news and to capture the tension between ideals and practices, this book is divided into three main parts.

After a preliminary chapter explaining the justification for this study, as well as research objectives, theoretical frameworks and research methods, the first part: ***the Kompas Way,*** will describe the ideals and values of *Kompas* journalists and explain why they embrace and adhere to them. This part consists of two chapters: Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. Chapter 2 will explain the socio-historical background that contextualize the origins of the newspaper. It will explain the fear that has been a running theme throughout the newspaper's history. On one hand, *Kompas* was established under an authoritarian political regime and operated during its first three decades under the threat of being banned. Thus, there is a tangible and persistent fear of being banned by power holders. On the other hand, there is a fear of being attacked by hardline Muslim groups due to the fact that the newspaper was founded by a minority Catholic-Chinese group. In the course of the newspaper's history, *Kompas* has experienced both being banned by the regimes, as well as attacks from Islamic groups, leaving historical trauma in the minds of the journalists.

Chapter 3 will describe the profile of *Kompas* journalists and explain that the journalistic values of the newspaper are very much inspired by Jakob Oetama: the founder, owner, as well the General Director of the newspaper. Jakob's overwhelming influence on *Kompas* is not only down to him occupying these three important positions, but also because he successfully ensured *Kompas'* survival during the regime changes. In addition, he made the newspaper one of the biggest and most influential in the country. Jakob's journalistic style is characterized by a strong sense of indirectness, cautiousness and politeness, and this has successfully saved the newspaper from the rage of the authorities. It is noteworthy that this style of journalism is strongly influenced by the background of Jakob, who was born and raised as a member of the Javanese gentry. In turn, this style of journalism has been socialized by, and internalized amongst, *Kompas* journalists across generations, both through the everyday news making process, and through the daily social interaction within the newsroom.

The second part, ***Ideals and Pragmatism in Practice,*** concerns how these ideals and values are being carried out in practice by the journalists. This part consists of three chapters: chapter 4, chapter 5 and chapter 6. Chapter 4 discusses the practices of self-censorship within the newspaper and explains how *rasa,* a key value in Javanese culture, has provided a basis for these practices. I will further demonstrate in this chapter that even though *rasa* is a cultural concept, its implementation in the self-censoring of *Kompas* journalists is compelled by the need for survival against the threat of being banned by the regime. In turn, *rasa* based self- censorship has also provided a useful strategy for journalists to preserve themselves from the rage of Islamic groups in Indonesia, which could flare up at any time, not only because of their coverage, but more importantly, also due to the newspaper's Catholic-ness. Therefore, to some extent, the practice of self-censorship actually reflects the hidden political and economic interest of *Kompas* journalists as a minority group in Indonesia.

In line with this, in chapter 5, I demonstrate how Javanese values have been significant in the practice of watchdogging. Presenting the results of a content analysis of the newspaper's coverage on corruption over 50 years, I clearly show that the stories on corruption rely heavily on official sources and are mainly framed in a legal theme. This means that they do not take the initiative to unearth any misconduct of the power holders, but merely report on cases of corruption already processed by the legal apparatus. Thus, the newspaper mainly functions as a megaphone of the legal officials. By doing so, it still strives to hold those in power to account, while at the same time, minimizing any direct confrontation with them. In this chapter, I characterize this practice of watchdog journalism at *Kompas* as a "polite watchdog"*,* to show that they do not actually function as an agent of moral guardianship or monitor the actions of power holders as is understood in Western conceptions.

The need to build a close relationship with the power holders is also reflected in the newspaper's position during the Indonesian presidential election in 2014, as explored in Chapter 6. Amid close and fierce political competition between the two candidates running for the presidency, there was a strong wave of political

polarization within Indonesian society. During the highly charged, emotive campaigns waged by followers of both candidates, there was intense tension between opposition supporters involving not only political parties, but also civil society in general. This was reflected in the Indonesian media, which were divided into two camps: those who supported Prabowo and those who supported Jokowi. *Kompas,* however, decided to remain neutral in their editorial policy by not siding with either candidate. As demonstrated in my second content analysis, this effort to be neutral was successfully achieved through giving equal space, in quantitative terms, to the two campaigning candidates. Nevertheless, in terms of tone, *Kompas* was in practice more inclined towards Jokowi than to Prabowo. This paradoxical mix between neutrality and partiality was a reflection of the collision between the idealism to support democracy, and pragmatism to stay close to whichever candidate won the election.

In the last part of this book I will show that even though the newspaper belongs to a minority group in Indonesia, they have been very influential over the power holders across different political regimes. In chapter 7, I will present three case studies from three different political regimes where *Kompas* managed to influence the power holders in some crucial matter. Therefore, while there is a compromise between idealism and pragmatism in their journalistic practice as described previously, the newspaper has managed to show their commitment to defending public interest and in supporting democracy.

Finally, Chapter 8 brings together the major findings of this research by providing an answer to the research questions proposed in this introduction. I will also make a number of suggestions based on these findings about what the story of *Kompas* tells us, not only about the relationship between the media and power holders in Indonesia, but also the relationship between the media and power holders in post-authoritarian countries in general. Therefore, I will situate my findings in the context of the current research on media and politics, by comparing the case of *Kompas* to similar cases in other countries. To close this chapter, I will discuss the limitation of this research and suggest a possible topic for further research.

Part 1

The Kompas' Way

Chapter 2

Kompas' History of Dealing With Fear

The year was 1965. The day was Monday, June 28. It was on this day that *Kompas* was founded and published its first edition. The founders were P.K. Ojong and Jakob Oetama. Ojong acted as the General Director, while Jakob was the Chief Editor. But something was missing from the front page of the new newspaper. In the top left corner of the front page, there was a small box listing the name of Jakob Oetama, explicitly mentioning him as the Chief Editor, along with all the other members of the editorial board. However, there was nothing written about the position of the General Director, nor the name of the person occupying that post. It was simply not there.

Fifteen years later, exactly two days after PK Ojong passed away, Jakob Oetama gave an explanation for this strange omission. In a testimony dedicated to Ojong at his funeral ceremony on May 31, 1980, Jakob explained how because Ojong's name was still something of a political taboo during that period, his name and position was omitted. Helen Ishwara, a former *Kompas* journalist who wrote a biography of P.K. Ojong, gave a further explanation. She believed that Ojong had started to become a political outcast right after *Star Weekly*, the weekly magazine in which Ojong had acted as Chief Editor, was banned by Sukarno's regime in 1961 (Ishwara, 2014). Therefore, there was a fear that making Ojong's name visible would antagonize Sukarno, which might lead to

the banning of the newspaper. Thus, since its very first day, *Kompas* chose to compromise.

This chapter discusses the history of *Kompas* and proposes an argument that this newspaper was born into a culture of fear, and that it has internalized this fear over three decades of authoritarian regime, under President Suharto. This fear was due to, on the one hand, the constant threat of press bans whenever the newspaper was considered to be critical of the power holders, and on the other, the practices of discrimination associated with the Chinese and Catholic identities of their founders. At the same time, *Kompas* has managed to transform itself into an economic giant, successfully diversifying its business operations beyond being merely a media company. Interestingly, this success was achieved partly due to political assistance and financial support from the state. However, this further added to the culture of fear at the newspaper, as the journalists were no longer just responsible for ensuring the survival of the newspaper, but also for all the business units sheltered under the umbrella of *Kompas*.

To showcase this argument, this chapter will be divided into two main parts. The first part will discuss the history of *Kompas* as a newspaper and how it struggled to survive amid various threats from the political and social environment. The repressive journalistic policies and practices of the political regimes, from the twilight of the Old Order era under President Sukarno to the rise and fall of the New Order under Suharto, will be charted, with emphasis on how these impacted on the life of the newspaper. The second part will discuss *Kompas'* history as a media business and how it has been assisted, directly or indirectly, by the authoritarian state. It will also elaborate on the business diversification of *Kompas,* which transformed the daily into a business group consisting of many other companies. This section will also present the case of the ban on *Monitor* weekly, one of *Kompas'* subsidiaries *(anak perusahaan* Kompas), due to its coverage on sensitive Islamic issues. This is to demonstrate that being a giant business media conglomerate fueled the fear of the

newspaper, especially in relation to sensitive issues such as ethnicity, religion, race and intergroup conflict (*Suku, Agama, Ras dan Antar Golongan/*SARA).

2.1 Kompas As a Newspaper

PK Ojong and The Pre-history of Kompas

Understanding the reason why Ojong was labeled a political outcast sheds light on the political setting of Indonesia's Old Order under President Sukarno, especially the period in which the regime was approaching its demise in 1966. *Kompas* daily newspaper came to life on June 28, 1965, in the period under the Old Order known as 'Guided Democracy'. This period began on July 5, 1959, when President Sukarno issued a presidential decree which abolished the parliament, promulgated the 1945 Constitution, and promised that the institutions of the Constitution would be formed immediately. This speech came to be known as the Manipol USDESK political manifesto, whose main principles involved: harking back to the 1945 Constitution, Indonesian Socialism, Guided Democracy, Guided Economy, and 'Indonesian Personality' (USDEK)[3]. This became the main doctrine of the state of the Old Order.

The political constellation of the period was dominated by three main political actors: Sukarno, the Army, and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), creating a 'triangle' balance of power. The nature of the power structure of this period was the delicate interplay of relationships between these three actors. Sukarno needed the PKI as a counterweight against the increasing power of the army, not only in the military but also in the political and economic field. By this strategy, he freed himself from total dependency on the army. On the other hand, the President also needed the army to enhance his power at the domestic level against the PKI, whose power was increasing sharply over and above other Indonesian political parties. The army supported Sukarno as the lifelong President in order to prevent the necessity for a general election, which

[3] This is a teaching of Sukarno, the first Indonesian President, saying that Indonesia should have, among other things, an Indonesian personality.

would most likely be won by the PKI. Furthermore, and no less importantly, the army needed Sukarno as a legitimizing figure behind which it could build, consolidate and extend the power it gained during martial law. Finally, the PKI needed Sukarno as a shield against the threat of the army, as well as providing access to the heart of Indonesian politics. The absence of an election would give the PKI time to consolidate their power before finally launching a communist revolution.

In accordance with Guided Democracy, President Sukarno argued that the press also needed to be 'guided' to support the political ideals as stipulated in the Manipol USDEK. For the regime, the press could function as a tool to raise public awareness of the ideals of Guided Democracy. In 1963, the government issued another presidential decree (presidential decree no. 6/1963) which revealed that any criticism of government policy must be carried out constructively and must not offend the state ideology of *Pancasila* and the teachings of Manipol USDEK. This rather vague regulation was explained by the Minister of Information, Ruslan Abdulgani as follows:

> *We must realize that the recognition of press freedom as an elementary right …does not signify that we may return to the press practice of liberal democracy that is individualistic and Social-Darwinistic. But we must be able, in the implementation of this elementary right, to impose restraints on ourselves defined by morality, national interests, state security and the prosperity of the people in accelerating the conclusion of our revolution. (cited in Lee, 1971: 140).*

It was in this specific political setting that Ojong experienced a media ban through three publications in which he was involved: *Star Weekly* – a weekly magazine in which he was Chief Editor, *Keng Po* –a daily newspaper belonging to the same group as *Star Weekly,* in which Ojong was a journalist, and *Pos Indonesia* - a newspaper founded by the same group to replace *Keng Po,* but which also ended up being banned (in this newspaper, Ojong acted as one of its

commissioners). Besides belonging to the same group, all these media shared one similar characteristic: they were all Chinese media aimed at Chinese Indonesian readers. These three print media were important not merely because Ojong had connections to all of them, but also because they belonged to the same company which then went on to establish *Kompas* daily newspaper[4]. In fact, in the early period of its birth, *Kompas* occupied the same editorial office as *Keng Po* and *Star Weekly.*

Star Weekly was a weekly magazine intended for non-Chinese-speaking Chinese Indonesians, and was founded by former journalists of *Keng Po,* a newspaper for non-Chinese-speaking Chinese Indonesians which was banned during the Japanese occupation on January 6, 1946. The first edition of the magazine was only eight pages long. Among its journalists was Khoe Won Sioe, who acted as the first Chief Editor of *Star Weekly*. Together with some of his colleagues, Khoe was once sent to prison by the Japanese because of his critical articles in the newspaper. Early in the year of 1946, Ojong met Khoe and soon joined *Star Weekly* as one of its journalist. A year later, on January 2, 1947, *Keng Po* was again allowed to be published, and it occupied the same building as *Star Weekly*. After that, Ojong also worked as a contributor to *Keng Po*. The interaction between Khoe and Ojong was so close that Khoe was often considered to be the ideological father of PK Ojong. In his biography, Ojong said that he wanted to write a biography about Khoe, but had never realized it until his death in 1980.

Unfortunately, at the end of 1961, despite its impressive growth in terms of circulation (60.000 copies by then), as well as its development in terms of journalistic quality, the magazine was banned after its October 7, 1961 edition. Ojong was summoned by the government and asked to come to the regime's office, from where he returned with the bad news: the magazine was to be

[4] *PT Keng Po,* which then published *Keng Po* and *Star Weekly* then changed its name into *PT Kinta* (acronym of Kertas dan Tinta) which was the company who printed the earliest edition of *Intisari* magazine and *Kompas* daily newspapers.

banned. According to Tan Hian Lay, the Vice Chief Editor of the magazine, the reason for this was because of a critical piece written by one its journalists, Ide Anak Agung Gde Agung, in the regular column *"Foreign Affairs"*, about the failure of the government's policy in India. It was perceived that the magazine never spoke positively about the work of the government in general, however; there were never any clear explanations issued by the regime itself for the ban.

This critical position was not only directed at government policy alone, but more fundamentally, also to the ideological position of the regime. At the time, Sukarno was very close to the Communist Party (PKI), whose ideology diametrically opposed the Catholic group of which Ojong was an elite member. Furthermore, Ojong feared that if the PKI were in power, they would abolish the existence of other politival parties. In one of his pieces in *Star Weekly*, five days before the September 29, 1955 election, Ojong boldly wrote:

> *Communists are the biggest enemies of religion everywhere. Religions with the fewest adherents will be communist victims, if the PKI wins.... So even though Star Weekly cannot name just one party to support, we can give a dividing line. The dividing line is the ideological line. Across the line we reject parties like the PKI. Because if the PKI wins, then the general election of 29 September will be the last general election. Other parties will be eliminated. (Ishwara, 2014: 129)*

Furthermore, Ojong was also close to political prisoners such as Mochtar Lubis, the Chief Editor of the banned newspaper *Indonesia Raya,* and he often visited him in prison. It should be noted, however, that Ojong's anti-PKI stance gradually softened after learning that the PKI was getting closer to Sukarno, and as he became aware of the increasing authoritarian nature of Sukarno's power before and during Guided Democracy.

Therefore, the ban that took place in 1961 was a shock for Ojong, as he had anticipated it and taken pre-emptive action by being more cautious and less critical in his *Star Weekly* coverage. This was following the ban of *Keng Po* on

August 1, 1957, where Injo Beng Goat, the then Chief Editor of the newspaper, was imprisoned for several months. This ban, as well as the banning of *Pos Indonesia*[5]*,* a new newspaper published by the same company to replace *Keng Po,* in January 1961, sent a warning to Ojong that the same thing could happen to his *Star Weekly* magazine.[6] Therefore, he took several actions to prevent this. The first was eliminating a column that was critical of the government: the column *"Domestic Affairs*" which was written by Injo Beng Goat[7], the former Chief Editor of the obsolete *Keng Po,* was dropped from the magazine in 1958 (Ishwara, 2014: 159). Ojong also took further preventative actions, such as terminating the column *"Gambang Kromong"* whose content was a critical satire of the government.

The question is: were these media banned simply because they were seen as being critical of the political regime, or also because of their Chinese-ness? I argue that based on the political circumstances, it was due to both factors. At the time when *Keng Po* was banned, there was no explicit reason provided by the government for the ban. However, there was a rumor that besides being seen as critical of the government, the regime also suspected the newspaper was not sufficiently nationalist because it was a Chinese newspaper. After the ban, as if to refute the anti-nationalistic stigma, Tan Eng Kie, a former *Keng Po* journalist, wrote:

> *Even though the name of Keng Po was considered foreign (to the Indonesian language) and was created by Chinese Indonesians, the voice is not anti-nationalist. Bung Hatta believed that Keng Po was a*

[5] Ishwara does not give much information about *Pos Indonesia,* except the fact that the newspaper had successfully replaced *Keng Po* in the sense that it enjoyed similar circulation numbers .

[6] After the banning of *Keng Po,* some of its journalists went on to work at *Star Weekly.*

[7] Ishwara described Beng Goat as a socialist with very progressive views and a sharp tongue, which ensured that he was jailed under every political regime: the Dutch government, the Japanese regime, and again in the Sukarno era.

> *nationalist daily. This I found out when I read the letter of Bung Hatta addressed to the SOB holder (the government institution which had the authority to issue publishing permits). Bung Hatta protested against the ban of Keng Po… But his effort did not succeed, even though by then he was already Vice President again. (Ishwara, 2014: 158-159)*

As the Martial Law of 1957 implied, there was a policy to "Indonesianize" the press by banning Dutch press, followed by the restriction of Chinese newspapers (even if published in the Indonesian language), in order to protect the "national press". This policy was then continued during the Guided Democracy period (Lee, 1971: 61). On April 18, 1958, the highest commander of the military under martial law, Peperti (panglima perang tertinggi), issued a decree banning all newspapers printed in Chinese characters. After it became clear that the newspaper still had a social function considering the large Chinese population in Indonesia, unlike the Dutch, permission to publish was granted again. However, the newspaper owners had to obtain a license to publish. The tendency to discriminate against Chinese newspapers was again practiced when the newspaper *Sin Po* was banned after being accused of publishing sensationalist news. It was allowed to publish again only after changing its name to *Pantjawarta*. However, *Keng Po* was banned for different reasons, after being accused of supporting the local rebellion PRRI/Permesta.

In the early days of independence from the Dutch, citizenship was an important issue in the context of power consolidation. The newly independent state wanted to make citizens of those who were considered as migrants, and for them to declare themselves as citizens of Indonesia. This matter was regulated in the 1954 Citizen's Act. In this setting, some of the people of Chinese descent in Indonesia formed the Indonesian Citizenship consultative body (Badan Permusyawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia, or BAPERKI) as a commitment to assimilation and support to the government. But most Chinese remained non-citizen oriented, and leaned instead towards the People's Republic of China. In these circumstances, Ojong, as a person of Chinese descent, could not

escape the existing political upheaval. He initially chose to become a member of *BAPERKI* and campaigned for assimilation through the medium of *Star Weekly* (Ishwara, 2013). However, Ojong then withdrew his membership from BAPERKI as the institution became increasingly leftist and pro-Sukarno. Despite his pro-assimilation stance, he refused to make his magazine declare itself as a supporter of the leftist ideology, and chose instead to be free and critical of the regime.

This resulted in Ojong becoming a target for two sides. He was attacked by the government as he did not declare support to the political orientation of the regime who was close to the political left. In domestic politics, President Sukarno was close to the PKI, while in foreign affairs, he was close to the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union, both of whom were communist countries. Ojong's withdrawal from BAPERKI made him appear to have abandoned the idea of assimilation, thereby bringing into question his commitment to being a loyal citizen of Indonesia. So it was to no surprise that according to Ishwara, the official biographer of Ojong, that Ojong was also attacked in relation to his ethnic background.

How the banning of *Star Weekly* impacted on Ojong personally can be gleaned through his diary entry, dated in the new year of 1962, in which he wrote:

> *There were two dark sides: in January Pos Indonesia was banned and on 11 October Star Weekly died. The impact of this last ban was already clear. The death of Pos Indonesia means that there were no more dividends and no payments for me as a commissioner in the year of 1960… Once more, 1961 was very gloomy. Since February 1961, we had heard rumors of the death of Star Weekly. The general situation was worrying. The community was sick, psychologically. The tone of the press was serving the regime. Phrases like "screaming with the wolves in the forest" were too often heard... What would 1962 then*

> *bring for us? Would it be like Bismarck's Germany of 1866? (Ishwara, 2014: 169-170)*

From the quote from his diary above, it can be seen how the impact of the ban affected Ojong psychologically. For him, the ban of *Star Weekly* was such a miserable event that he lamented it in his diary. Writing his diary in the New Year, he also worried about the future of media freedom by asking whether the press would face similarly harsh treatment to that which occurred in Germany in 1866.

It was against this political backdrop of Guided Democracy that the infant newspaper *Kompas* was born on June 28, 1965. A major motivation behind the founding of this newspaper was to curb the influence of the PKI's newspaper, and this was initiated by the army and agreed to by the Catholic Party. Being perceived as an atheist party, the PKI was seen as a common enemy of both the army as well as the religious parties, including *Partai Katolik*. The next section will elaborate further on the founding of *Kompas*.

The Birth of Kompas and the Political Turmoil of 1965

It started with a phone call. One day in April 1965, General Ahmad Yani, the Minister of Defense in Sukarno's cabinet, called his colleague Frans Seda, who was a minister of *Perkebunan* in the same cabinet and also the chairman of the Catholic party, suggesting to him to start a newspaper. Yani argued that almost every political party at that period had its own newspaper, and therefore, the Catholic party should also have one. Furthermore, the main purpose of this newspaper would be to curb the influence of the communist press. In the words of Seda, as written in *Kompas* on its anniversary on June 28, 1980 in a piece entitled *"Along The Memorial Road"*:

> *The process of Kompas's birth was like the birth process of every creative business. It started with an idea. The idea came from General Ahmad Yani. The idea was that the Catholic group should have a daily newspaper to balance the PKI and its allies… This idea of General Yani*

> *was spread among the leaders of the Catholic Party and was seen as something difficult to be realized. (Ishwara, 2014: 214)*

The anti-communist tone of Seda was stronger in the documentary video made about Jakob Oetama, on the commemoration of his 84th birthday. In the video entitled *"Jakob The Kompas"*[8] Seda said: "The founding [of this newspaper] is the people's conscience. Our news is fulfilling what people want. People who want to be free, who are free, who do not like the PKI, who do not like communism"[9]. Seda then contacted his colleague IJ Kasimo (the General Leader of the Catholic Party), as well as his fellow Catholics: P.K. Ojong and Jakob Oetama, whom he knew as experienced professional journalists. Seda asked Ojong and Jakob to establish the newspaper, and they reluctantly accepted the idea.

The hesitation of Ojong and Jakob was recorded by Jakob in *Kompas* on June 2, 1980, in an article entitled *"Driving Ojong's Departure":*

> *We both felt hesitant to accept the request to establish Kompas daily newspaper. The economic and political environment, as well as the infrastructure, were not supportive. (But) the request was urgent and came at a time when some newspapers were labeled as "BPS"*[10] *and having an anti-communist stance, were closed down (by the regime). (The question then) was how to break through this oppressive news*

[8] The video was published on *Kompas.com* on September 29, 2015. The article shares the same name as the video: "Jakob Sang Kompas".

[9] In fact, the name of the newspaper was initially "Bentara Rakyat." While the word "Bentara" means the 'messenger of the king', the word "rakyat" mean people. The word "rakyat" was chosen to show that "rakyat/people" was not just the monopoly of the PKI. In the end, the name "Bentara Rakyat" was changed to "Kompas", which means 'guidance'. This was based on the recommendation of President Sukarno (Sularto, 2011)

[10] BPS was the acronym from Badan Pendukung Sukarnoisme (The Supportive Board for Soekarnoism) which was established by Murba Party at the initiative of Sumarto and Sayuti Melik. This board had the main aim to prevent the PKI from getting too close to Sukarno.

> *policy, since even the dominant Antara news agency had been labeled 'red'[11]. (Ishwara, 2014 : 317)*

From the extract above, it is clear that the founding of *Kompas* was initiated by the Catholic party at the suggestion of the military. The initiative of the Catholic Party can more clearly be seen by the fact that *Kompas* was established by an existing foundation, *Jajasan Bentara Rakyat*, which was founded earlier on January 16, 1965. The members of this group were elites of various Catholic organizations such as the Catholic Student Organization, the Catholic Youth Organization, the Catholic University and, above all, elites of the Catholic Party such as IJ Kasimo, founder of the Catholic Party and Frans Seda, its Chairman.

In this regard, Dhakidae (1991) argued that *Kompas* was the result of the Catholic community's efforts to be accepted in Indonesia, and that the historic process of the establishment of Catholicism in Indonesia was pursued through three stages. The first of these stages was missionizing in the narrow sense, where Catholic doctrines were propagated, but were viewed suspiciously by non-Catholics. At this point, there was no intention of becoming a member of any political group, nor to establish a Catholic party. In the 1920s, the changing role of the Catholic Church in Holland also impacted the role of Catholicism in the Dutch Indies. The rise of Catholic political power in Holland was followed by the development of Catholic activities, including non-profit development work. This ideology was carried out in Catholic missionary work in the Dutch Indies, concentrating mainly on medical services and education.

This marked the second stage of Catholic missionizing, which also included the founding of a Catholic Party in the Dutch Indies (*Indische Katholieke Partij*) in 1917, whose members were almost all Dutch. In 1923, an indigenous member, Kasimo, established a Javanese branch of the party. This branch eventually transformed into an independent political party in 1925. By this stage, there was a shift from the exclusivity of the earlier missionizing period to the

[11] Indicating that this news media was seen as having political ties with the communist party.

inclusivity of political Catholicism in Indonesia. Inclusivity in this case meant that there was no longer a gap between the indigenous population and the Europeans, since many Indonesian Catholics joined the *Indische Katolische Partij*. But Catholic activity was still seen as exclusive from the perspective of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, on which it was dependent.

When the Catholic party was dissolved in the 1970s due to government policy, the third stage of Catholic politics began, which is referred to as the liberalization of political Catholicism. It took two different forms. The first were the groups under the leadership of Jesuit father Joop Beek, who initiated the so-called *Kursus Kader Katolik* (Catholic Cadre Course). This course provided the bedrock of anti-communism and anti-PKI feelings, and liaised with a section within the Army known as Opsus (Specific Operations) (Dhakidae, 1991: 234). Dhakidae's view about the role of Pater Beek is in line with Wieringa (2015), who went further by arguing that Beek held a strong resentment towards the PKI and was supportive of the idea of mass killings of PKI members after the tragic attempted coup on September 30, 1965. She further believed that Beek played an important role in preparing, training and educating many youths who became influential figures in Indonesia.

Both Wieringa and Dhakidae share the view that Beek was also responsible for the birth of some prominent intellectuals such as Harry Tjan Silalahi. Harry was one of the founders of CSIS (together with Ali Murtopo), a think-tank which played an important role in formulating Suharto's developmental policy. Furthermore, Harry was also one of the Chairs of the Catholic Party. Despite its wider scope of activities which involved distancing itself from the control of the clerical hierarchy, this stage of Catholic politics in Indonesia was still marked by exclusivity, and a medieval, crusading anti-Muslim sentiment was apparent in its campaign.

The second form of liberalized political Catholicism in Indonesia occurred during the period of Vatican II (Concilium Vaticanum Secundum), and was very much influenced by the Vatican's policy for the Catholic Church to be more

open and be a blessing for the entire world. While the main activities of the first stage involved the so-called non-profit activities such as educational and medical services, taking the form of an elite Catholic school system and a host of high quality hospitals, the main activities of the second stage were in modern non-governmental organizations and communications.

This form started much earlier with some small scale general magazines and news weeklies such as *Basis* and *Penabur*, which were respected in terms of their content, but were not so successful in terms of circulation. In this sense, *Kompas* can be seen as the most phenomenal achievement of this stage, the most liberal of Catholic endeavors[12]. There were two main reasons for this. Firstly, *Kompas* journalists consisted of not only Catholic believers, but also Muslims - in fact, most of the journalists were Muslim. Secondly, *Kompas'* editorial policy was not just directed at Catholic readers, but to all Indonesian readers.

From the explanation above, it can be seen that anti-communist sentiment was deeply rooted in *Kompas*. It was advocated by some branches of the Catholic Church, which influenced the Indonesian Catholic Party as part of the overall Catholic mission. Therefore, *Kompas*, both as the result of Catholic missionizing in Indonesia, as well as being the product of the Catholic Party, was inevitably to carry the same sentiment. In fact, Yayasan Bentara Rakyat, which was the founding organization behind *Kompas*, consisted of elites from the Catholic Church as well as the Catholic Party, and therefore carried the mission of the Catholic Church.

According to Seda, it was not until the 1970s before *Kompas* was finally independent from the party (in Dhakidae, 1991: 244). The intense interaction

[12] In this case, Pater Beek also had an important role. He founded the Catholic school of Seminari in Mertojudan and Muntilan, Magelang, where Jakob Oetama was schooled. This experience of studying in the seminari influenced Jakob significantly in developing his journalistic ideas. This will be elaborated more in the chapter on Jakob Oetama and the 'Kompas Way'.

between *Kompas* and the Catholic Party only ended in 1971, when he had already resigned as the leader of the party. By 1973, the Catholic Party itself was also no longer in existence, as it had merged with several other parties such as the *Indonesian Nationalists Party* (PNI) and the *Indonesian Christian Party* (Parkindo). The merger of these parties resulted in the *Indonesia Democratic Party* (PDI), and was the result of the authoritarian regime's policy to weaken its political opponent and secure political stability. After the merger, there were only three political parties remaining (where before there had been ten). These were the PDI (as the result of the fusion of non-Islamic parties), the PPPP (as the result of the fusion of Islamic parties) and Golkar (the party of the regime).

Furthermore, from the illustration above, it could also be seen that there was a shared political interest between the military and the Catholic Party to counter the influence of the PKI in general, and especially its influence on President Sukarno. In a discussion conducted by the elites of both groups, they concluded that one of the secrets behind the PKI's success in approaching Sukarno was because the PKI had a newspaper that could function as the mouthpiece of Sukarno, which was vital for the authoritarian President to maintain his political populism among the Indonesian public. Therefore, it was no surprise that the Catholic Party had difficulty getting a license to publish *Kompas.* This was due to the fact that the Local Military Commander (KODAM) in Jakarta who had the authority to issue publishing licenses had already been infiltrated by the PKI, which obviously did not want to have an opponent in the media field. In the words of Seda: **"**the problem was that the apparatus which had the authority to give a publishing permit was influenced by the PKI." (Ishwara, 2014: 215)

Thus, there was a tense atmosphere due to a sharp conflict between the PKI on the one hand, and the military in coalition with the Catholic Party on the other, with both sides competing for political ties with President Sukarno. The Catholic Party saw the PKI as a threat to Indonesian politics, whilst on the contrary, the PKI saw the military in coalition with the Catholic Party as the greatest threat to their power. Thus the birth of *Kompas* clearly reflected the political

constellation that existed at that time, centering on the triangular balance of power between Sukarno, the PKI and the military.

As explained by Roosa (2006), during the beginning of the demise of the Old Order, the tension between these three forces increasingly heated up, until it exploded in the form of physical confrontation between the three. The earliest incident was an attempted coup by middle-ranking military officers, committed by soldiers who were allegedly influenced by the PKI. The failed coup took place on the night of September 30, 1965, and resulted in the attempted kidnap and eventual deaths of seven military generals, with the aim of weakening the power of the President. It was this incident that was then used by Suharto to launch a coup d'état, on the premise of ensuring national security. The killings of these military generals was further used as a pretext for the mass murders of suspected members or sympathizers of the PKI by Suharto, and killed at least half a million people. This massacre occurred between 1965 and 1966, and was initiated by the army with the help of civil society members, creating state sponsored violence and high civil unrest. It was the scale of these killings that has created deep fear and lingering trauma in Indonesia, and which has still not yet been fully resolved today. It was no doubt one of the darkest chapters in Indonesia's history.

During this period of killing, the military was aware of the importance of the mass media. They seized the national radio (Radio Republik Indonesia/RRI) and announced the killings of the generals by the PKI, declaring a military siege. Accordingly, the military closed down all the existing newspapers and only allowed one military-sponsored newspaper to operate: Berita Yudha. The aim was to disseminate propaganda to shape public opinion about what was occurring in line with the military's version of events. The newspapers were allowed to publish again only after they declared their loyalties to Suharto. It goes without saying that the newspapers affiliated to the PKI were never allowed to publish again. In addition, there were at least 26 newspapers which were banned, and hundreds of journalists and media workers arrested.

Moreover, many other journalists sympathetic to the PKI were killed in the large-scale massacres.

Even though *Kompas* had close historical ties with the army, it was also a target of the media ban. The ban lasted for five days from 1-5 October 1965, only three months after the newspaper was first founded. This further added to the fear in the minds of its journalists. Therefore, the end of Sukarno's terrifying authoritarian regime which has oppressed the media was replaced by another authoritarian regime with the same character under Suharto, who labeled his regime as "the New Order".

The New Order and the Second Ban

Apart from the initial ban surrounding the coup d'état by General Suharto, the new regime's relationship with the mass media was good at the beginning. The new government needed the support of the press to promote a positive image. Suharto issued the first Press Act in 1966, and its basic principles were very supportive of freedom of the press. In this Press Act, it was regulated that *"no censorship or bridling shall be applied to the national press"*. The act also stipulated *"freedom of the press is guaranteed in accordance with the fundamental rights of the citizens"*. Some journalists even recalled the early period of the New Order as the Indian summer of the Indonesian Press, which lasted from 1966 to 1971. During this period, even a critical newspaper such as *Indonesia Raya,* which was banned during the previous regime under Sukarno, was allowed to operate again in 1968.

In line with this, *Kompas'* relationship with Suharto was also good at the beginning. *Kompas* welcomed the New Order with great optimism, as Suharto had successfully eradicated the PKI and Communism, which had been seen as the main threat for the Catholic group. In its editorial in 1966, the daily wrote:

> *Bung Karno as the President has officially commanded The Highest Commander of the Army to act on his behalf to take any necessary action to save the people, (continuing) the Pancasila revolution and to*

> *guarantee the safety and the pride of the President…. As a consequence, we all have to obey the order and policy of Lieutenant General Suharto. (Kompas, March 14, 1966)*

This clearly showed the newspaper's support of President Suharto.

The newspaper went further by emphasizing the support of the army and the New Order in another editorial as follows:

> *Now Pancasila has been re-established again and saved from misinterpretation. The PKI was the complete manifestation of that misinterpretation… The New Order is essentially trying to put Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution in its rightful position… ABRI (the military) was the initiator of the New Order. (Kompas, September 28, 1966)*

Kompas' support was rewarded by the regime, which saw *Kompas* as its ally. This good relationship reached its zenith when Jakob Oetama was granted the Bintang Maha Putra award by Suharto in 1973 for his achievement in developing the Indonesian press.

During this honeymoon period, the more open climate gave the newspaper the chance to convey some bold criticism to the power holders. This criticism was written by Ojong in a special column, entitled *Kompasiana,* between April 4, 1966 to January 20, 1971 (Ojong, 1980). In total, there were 400 articles written, with comments such as:

> *There is a deprived minister partying with people's money, the result of the sweat of the people ... .Our objects are now ministers who are now in power and ministers who will overtake them. They have to work with the thought that there is always a stick ready to beat them if they misbehave. The stick is the free press. (PK Ojong, "The Press as "Social Control", Kompasiana, Kompas, April 4, 1966)*

However, as the regime grew stronger and strove to accelerate its development, its tolerance towards the press decreased.[13] In 1974, a series of bans was applied in reaction to the student protest against Suharto's foreign policy. On January 15, 1974, the government closed down several newspapers: six Jakarta dailies (*Harian KAMMI, Indonesia Raya, Nusantara, Abadi, Pedomandan the Jakarta Times),* two regional dailies (*Suluh Berita* in Surabaya and *Indonesia Pos* in Ujung Pandang) and four weeklies (*Mahasiswa Indonesia, Mingguan Wenag, Pemuda Indonesia* and *Ekspress*). Almost all of these newspapers were silenced permanently, except for two: *Abadi* and *Jakarta Times,* which appeared with new names and changed staff. Many journalists were also sent to jail without trial.

This first series of bans revealed the true nature of the regime towards the press. *Kompas* had actually been able to anticipate this change in attitude long before 1974, and had implemented some preventative measures. One of the earliest preventative measures taken was to cease publishing its column *Kompasiana* in 1971. This omission raised questions among media experts, as the newspaper did not provide any specific reason to its readers. But in 1980, when Ojong passed away, the explanation was clear. Giving testimony for Ojong, Mochtar Lubis wrote that when he asked Ojong why *Kompasiana* was decommissioned, Ojong answered:

> *I feel of no use. If we want to write, as we believe we should write, then the life of the newspaper will be threatened. If we write according to the request of the power holders, we cannot live peacefully with our conscience. Would not it then be better not to write?" (Mochtar Loebis, "PK Ojong Whom I Know" in Ishwara, 2014: 328)*

[13] I discuss the relation between the growing power of the regime and its more repressive attitude towards the media later in Chapter 5.

This was clearly an act of self-censorship conducted by *Kompas*, after becoming aware that the regime had become more repressive and less tolerant of criticism. The purpose was to avoid being banned by the regime.

Nevertheless, despite this a ban was eventually inevitable. When another series of bans happened again in 1978, *Kompas* was among the newspapers which were affected. The ban was applied to all media which covered the student protest demanding Suharto to resign from the Presidency. There were six other dailies which had also covered the student protest and were also banned, as well as seven student newspaper (Hill, 1994: 39). The government was so offended by the students that the military even occupied some campuses and arrested 223 students (Hill, 1995: 39). According to Sularto (personal communication 8 July 2014), a *Kompas* journalist who had witnessed the 1978 ban, *Kompas* was in a dilemma. On one hand, if they did not cover the demonstration, it would mean concealing significant journalistic facts. On the other hand, if they did cover the demonstration it would put them under threat of being banned. In the end, *Kompas* decided to cover the demonstration, which subsequently led to its closure.

This happened in January 1978. The phone call arrived on the evening of Friday 20, from the military. The call was from Lieutenant Colonel Anas Malik who was the Chief of Information Laksuda Jaya (kepala penerangan laksuda jaya), and it was received by Swantoro, one of the Senior Editors at *Kompas.* The message was short and clear: "*due to security reason, Kompas is one of the newspapers which is not allowed to publish tomorrow morning*." Swantoro then informed Jakob. Jakob, who was by then at home, immediately went back to the *Kompas* office to discuss the matter. All agreed that by this phone call, *Kompas* was officially banned. They did not know for sure how long the ban would last, as the political regime had not given any indication. Neither had they provided a reason. However, the *Kompas* staff could guess that it was related to their coverage of the student protests demanding the resignation of President Suharto.

In the editorial of the newspaper dated January 16, 1978, entitled "Students' Aspirations", *Kompas* took the view that the student demonstration needed to get adequate attention from the regime. The editor said: "The students' aspirations were correct and would bring benefits for development, equality, prosperity, *Pancasila* democracy, national defense, climate stability and innovation. We have to be honest and open, as we indeed do have the regime's interest at heart". *Kompas* was banned until February 5, 1978. It was permitted to publish again after Jakob agreed to sign a contract with the power holders on January 28, 1978. In the contract, Jakob had to apologize to the regime and promise not to cover any sensitive issues, as written in his biography:

> *After the letter was signed by Jakob, it was given back directly to the military. He recalled that there were some requirements, the most significant of which were these following four points: first of all, Kompas will not cover any issues about President Suharto and his family, as well as the origin of their wealth and prosperity. Second, Kompas will not question the double function of the military (dwi fungsi ABRI). Third, Kompas will not report on any issues related to ethnicity, religion, race and intergroup conflict (SARA). Fourth, Kompas will not on report any news which would contribute to any social conflicts. (Sularto, 2011: 24)*

While *Kompas* does not have the letter above, a copy was found in the personal achieve that belonged to Atmakusumah, an editor of *Indonesia Raya,* which confirms these stipulations. During the course of my interview with him on September 4, 2016, he explained to me that he believed that the copy of the letter he had is a duplicate of the original version. This version was then published by Atmakusumah (2009) in his book entitled *"Demand of the Era: Freedom of Press and Expression."* Although the content of the letter differs in detail from Jakob's recollection of the agreement as recorded by Sularto, it confirms both the spirit of that agreement, and the inclusion of a specific reference to the protection of Suharto's personal dignity and good name.

Four days after being allowed to operate again, Jakob met Suharto at the National Press day in Solo, on February 9, 1978. During the meeting, the Minister of Information, Harmoko, suggested Jakob apologize directly to the President. Following this suggestion, speaking in refined Javanese, Jakob said to the President as he shook his hand: *"Maturnuwun sampung dipun parengaken terbit malih (Thank you for allowing us to publish again)".* Surprisingly, Suharto looked upset. The iconic smile slipped from his face (Suharto was idealized as 'The Smiling General'). Staring at Jakob, Suharto also replied in Javanese, but not the refined version. He said: *"Ojo meneh-meneh (Never again!)"* (Sularto, 2013 : 28).

After 1978, a series of press bans remained the running theme of the authoritarian New Order, ensuring *Kompas* trod cautiously in political matters. In the 1980s, several significant media bans shaped and consolidated the boundaries of acceptable journalism in Indonesia. *Tempo* was banned for two months in 1982 due to its critical coverage of the general elections. *Jurnal Ekuin* (Economy, Finance and Industry Journal) was banned in April 1983 after reporting on the impending reduction in oil price for export. *Expo* magazine was banned in 1984 after its piece on the 100 wealthiest men in Indonesia, in which 39 of the first 40 were ethnic Chinese, and several were business associates of the Suharto family. In the same year, the news magazine *Topik* was closed after its article on poverty in Indonesia. In May 1984, the same fate befell *Fokus* magazine after it published a list of 200 Indonesian millionaires. In 1986, the daily newspaper *Sinar Harapan* was closed due to its commentaries on the Suharto family business monopoly, although some months later, after hard negotiations and a substantial restructuring, it was then allowed to reappear under the new name of *Suara Pembaruan*. In the same year, another established economic daily, *Prioritas*, was silenced for giving too much space to political news when its permit required it to publish at least 75% on economic news.

As Indonesia moved into the 1990s, it was generally believed to be entering a period of increasing political latitude and liberalism. Restrictions towards the

media were no longer considered appropriate in the era of global openness. Despite this, the most dramatic media ban since 1978 occurred on June 21, 1994, when the Minister of Information, Harmoko, withdrew the publication licenses of three major weeklies: the highly prestigious and widely read *Tempo* magazine (with estimated sales of 187,000), *DeTik* (with estimated sales of 200,000) and the weekly magazine *Editor* (with sales of about 80,000). This series of bans demonstrated that media restriction was a constant theme throughout the reign of the New Order, before it finally fell in 1998. This situation forced *Kompas* to remain cautious in its coverage, as the fear of being banned continued to linger in the minds of its journalists.

However, although the newspaper continued to be overshadowed by fear, it had succeeded in transforming itself into one of the largest business groups in Indonesia, consisting of dozens of subsidiaries. However, this success served to heighten the fear of its journalists, as it meant that the paper had to be cautious, not merely for its own survival, but also for that of its subsidiaries. The next section will elaborate further on this.

2.2 Kompas As an Economic Giant

Business Vision of PK Ojong

Although *Kompas* continued to be overshadowed by fear, it succeeded in transforming itself into an economic giant by diversifying its business activities, becoming one of the largest business groups in Indonesia. In this section it will be revealed that the experience of being banned in the past inspired the *Kompas* founders to diversify the business in anticipation of the newspaper being banned again. This vision could only be fully realized after 1972 when the media got financial support from the state. Thus, although the authoritarian regime had made *Kompas* fearful, it was also this regime that helped the daily become an economic giant. Interestingly, being economically strong did not make this newspaper bolder, but rather more fearful as there was now much more to be protected.

Although at first the founding of *Kompas* seemed to be an "accident": the result of outside pressure from both the army and the Catholic Party, from the beginning it was more than just a newspaper with an idealistic goal. It was also a profit-oriented business institution. It was evident from Jakob Oetama's expression that from the very beginning of its establishment, he and Ojong had carefully considered the economic situation of Indonesia at the time. In Jakob's words, *"the economy and political environment as well as the infrastructure were not supportive"* (Oetema, *Kompas,* June 2, 1980). This statement could only be understood as an attempt to ensure the economic survival of the daily, or in other words, to make profit.

This notion continued to evolve with the growth of *Kompas*, and found one of its most prominent forms in 1970, as revealed by Jakob Oetama:

> *Since 1970 (after we owned the printing machine) a change had happened in society…from an economic point of view, Kompas began to be a pioneer in the press business. The others did not even think to advertise as much as possible. Their emphasis was on the editorial side. That explained why the most highly placed were the journalists and the editors (yang hebat itu hanya wartawan, hanya redaksi). In Kompas, however, we left that concept behind. The press was an amalgam of editors, managers and printers. In other words, a newspaper should be supported by an organizational structure. That was why the men who took care of business management were those who had graduated from the University of Indonesia's Department of Economics. (Oetama in Dhakidae, 1991: 250)*

However, despite this explicit expression of the need to manage the newspaper as a business by Jakob, the "blueprint" of *Kompas* as a business institution actually started in the mind of PK Ojong. As described in Jakob Oetama's biography, Jakob saw Ojong as a teacher of business (Sularto, 2012). This was inseparable from the fact that Ojong was 10 years older than Jakob, and had experienced being the leader of three publishing companies: *Star Weekly, Keng*

Po and *Pos Indonesia*. Indeed, since the very beginning there was a division of labor in which Jakob managed the editorial side and Ojong took on the business side. Therefore, it was not surprising that Jakob panicked when Ojong died in 1980, because this meant that he must also handle the business side which had been previously been entrusted to Ojong. Several days after Ojong died, Jakob Oetama wrote in a *Kompas* editorial as follows:

> *The legacy of PK Ojong is surely the Kompas Gramedia group. For me, fellow chairmen and employees, that legacy is the vision, values, passion as well as corporate cultures which he has left behind. (Oetema, Kompas, June 2, 1980)*

Therefore, if we want to understand *Kompas* as a business operation, we need to understand the business philosophy of PK Ojong. In this regard, it is fair to assume that since Ojong was still studying under the direction of Khoe Woen Sioe, he had learned something of the importance of diversification by establishing other businesses besides the newspapers.

After the permanent banning of *Keng Po*, the directors tried hard not to dismiss the employees whose livelihoods depended on the newspaper. In order for their enterprise to avoid bankruptcy, they received printing newspapers and various magazines. They also worked with other publishers and individuals to publish magazines such as *Si Kuncung* weekly and *Varia* weekly. *PT Keng Po* also changed its name to *PT Kinta* (*Kertad dan Tinta,* which means “paper and ink”) and provided venues, employees, tools, means of distribution, and advertising, as well as capital loans. The diversification was made more extensive after the demise of *Star Weekly* and *Pos Indonesia.* Khoe Woen Sioe (the director of *Keng Po*) also founded a publishing company, *PT Saka Widya* which means “pillars of wisdom”, in which all former members of *Star Weekly* were declared as the founders and first shareholders. In this case, Ojong was considered a direct student of Khoe and was appointed as the Director of the publishing company, marking a new chapter in Ojong's life" (Ishwara, 2014: 170). With regard to

Khow Woen Sioe's important influence on Ojong, Ojong wrote in *Kompas,* on June 5, 1976:

> *(from Khow we learn) that the core of the problem we face is not the interests of a handful of shareholders. The main issue is the workers, the employees who work in the company, and who are now the unemployed. Their number was 400. Multiplied by 5 (plus wife and three children), this means that 5x400 = 2000 souls become victims by the death of the company. This is the point. Not small shareholders…Is this tragedy not preventable? (in Ishwara, 2014: 189)*

Inspiration from Khow and the experience of being banned in the past made Ojong constantly aware of this threat. When *Kompas* was only two years old and the atmosphere of political freedom was still very good because Suharto had just come to power in 1967, he still stayed alert to the possibility of being banned. In the *Kompasiana* column of *Kompas*, on May 3, 1967, Ojong wrote: "Well, if the press act were revoked and *Kompas* was banned, we would build a bookstore anyway". Three years later, this vision of Ojong materialized; in 1970, Ojong actually opened a bookstore owned by *Kompas.* (Ishwara, 2014: 292).

In the course of history, Ojong's fears were regularly confirmed, as the regime eventually became more hostile towards the media and banned a series of newspapers which they deemed subversive. The peak was when *Kompas* itself was banned. According to Isjwara, when *Kompas* was banned, the worst hit were Ojong and the former journalists of *Indonesia Raya* and *Pedoman Daily,* who had experienced bans in the past. They were well aware of what a ban meant. That was why the leadership of *Kompas Gramedia* started to think more seriously about how to be able to support all its employees and their families if the government dropped the arbitrary ban, and consider how it might be possible to accommodate existing employees if the disaster hit their media. In doing so, they even became pioneers in the business of hospitals and hotels, by for example, buying a small hotel in Bandung, Semarang and in Bali, which later

became the forerunner of the Santika hotels in several cities (Ishwara, 2014: 294-295).

In the oral and written history circulated among *Kompas* journalists, it is said that at the time there was a kind of dispute between Jakob and Ojong, where Jakob was considered more soft and pragmatic and willing to kowtow to the regime, whilst Ojong was unwilling and unyielding. The story goes that Ojong said: *"Jakob, do not apologize. Dead today is better than dying tomorrow*." Jakob responded: *"Corpses cannot fight. Only a living person can be persuaded to fight"*. The result of the quarrel was Ojong's retreat from editorial affairs altogether. As an idealistic, critical journalist, a friend of the controversial Mochtar Lubis, and the columnist for *Kompasiana*, Ojong strongly rejected the notion of swallowing your pride and pandering to the regime. But Ojong had another side: the other, entrepreneurial, pragmatic side of Ojong actually supported this behavior. This is not much known or recognized by *Kompas* journalists, but support can be seen from Ojong's article in *Our Buletin* as follows:

> *What does it mean when a company dies? Doors are closed, trademarks disbanded (merek diturunkan). Workers become unemployed… the invaluable experiences are irrevocably lost. Skills, honed over tens of years, for example the skill of color printing, the experience of quality control, of book importing, newsprint, managing plates, chemical materials, marketing skills, news selection, news writing, news reviewing and all of the skills of the company are irretrievably lost… A man ought to die, even if it brings sadness when he does. A company does not have to die. A company or an organization can live for centuries. That is why we are even sadder when a company dies. (Ojong. Bulletin Kita, no. 29, March 1980: 3-5)*

What happened to *Kompas* in 1978 strengthened Ojong's resolve to diversify in anticipation of the newspaper being permanently outlawed, as he wrote in March 1980, several months before his death:

> *In managing this company with its economic resources we have to resort to the social function of private ownership according to the following policy and implementation. We are not going to consume our profits for ourselves (for example, by dividing up profits among users by increasing the salary of the workers to the last cent of the profit). Instead, we have to utilize a part of the company's profit for society at large, for example, by establishing a new company of the same sort or of a different kind (diversification).* ***This new company helps to multiply the employment opportunities in our developing society, or safeguards our own workers when one of our companies is closed down."*** [14] *(Dhakidae, 1991: 339, emphasis added by author).*

From this section it is clear that from the beginning, *Kompas* was designed to not only be a media institution, but also a profit-oriented company. The idea came from Ojong, and was later developed by Jakob. Thus the experience of being banned in the past was instrumental to formulating the idea to diversify. The next section will explain how this idea was then manifested in practice.

Kompas and Its State-Sponsored Wealth

Like most newly formed business institutions, *Kompas* was originally a small newspaper. The daily was founded by the *Bentara* Foundation with an initial capital of IDR 100,000, or about US $ 400.00 (Dhakidae, 1991: 245, Sutamat, 2012: 18). In addition, the Catholic Party also provided additional capital - as much as five million rupiahs, or $ 2000. Jakob Oetama also received a *Mazda* car from the Catholic Party Chairman, Frans Seda. Another Catholic party leader, IJ Kasiomo, donated a pickup car for marketing (Sutamat, 2012: 19). This shows that since the beginning, *Kompas* received financial support from power holders in the form of the Catholic party, which had a close relationship with

[14] Dhakidae (1991) suggested that this is the original form of Ojong's first concept. It was then reworked several times, adjusted and reformulated to supposedly be elevated to the so called "Credo of Kompas Gramedia Group". In the version published in Ishwara (2014), the motivation to survive a ban had been erased.

the regime. When first published on June 28, 1965, the newspaper only had a circulation of 4,828 copies and only published as many as four pages. For technical reasons, this morning publication was also always published late, which made them the butt of the joke "*Kompas = komt pas morgen (will arrive tomorrow)*".

However, although the financial capital of the above investment was not large, the daily also had other capital because it had inherited the marketing network, financial management, and management and marketing personnel used by the Chinese newspaper, *Keng Po* daily, which had already been banned during the Sukarno era. Equally important, *Kompas* also inherited a print lease contract with *PT Kinta*, formerly used by *Keng Po* daily, which also published *Intisari,* a weekly magazine founded by Ojong and Jakob in 1963. The fact that at that time, *Intisari* was financially strong, provided additional financial backup for the establishment of *Kompas*. This fact shows that the newspaper has a historical connection with Chinese groups on the business side.

In October 1965, there were other events that indirectly helped *Kompas* to become more competitive. The first of these was the banning of the PKI newspapers, who were the main competitors of *Kompas*. The practice of restricting the mass media affected 46 of Indonesia's 163 remaining newspapers Soon after Suharto took over power and became President in October, 1965, these 46 newspapers were banned for their association with, or sympathy for, the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and its allies. Many hundreds of journalists or media workers were arrested. Moreover, many journalists sympathetic to the PKI were killed in the large-scale massacres which took place then. As written by Swantoro, after the banning of the PKI newspapers, *Kompas* experienced a considerable increase in circulation (in Dhakidae, 1991: 251). From what was originally only a circulation of about 10-15,000 before October 1965, this increased to 23,268 in November 1965, and then again to 45,161 in June 1966.. The surge in *Kompas*' circulation was also partly attributed to the special order from ABRI which then distributed *Kompas*

for free or half price (Sutamat, 2012: 55). So unintentionally and indirectly, the banning of other newspaper was a blessing in disguise for *Kompas* sales.

But the most significant support from the regime that boosted the influence of *Kompas* occurred in 1972, when the newspaper was no longer connected to the Catholic Party (since 1971), and after the *Kompasiana* column had also stopped being published in that same year. An enormous amount of capital aid from the state was given on November 25, 1972, as much as IDR 236 million ($ 94, 400), making it possible for the paper to purchase its own printing machine (Nainggolan in Sularto, 2007; Dhakidae, 1991). This assistance was part of the government's Domestic Investment Act given through the Indonesian Bank (BI). Related to this, Ojong wrote as follows:

> *Investment for this printing was about IDR 300 million. Only one quarter of this amount was collected by our shareholders and three quarters of it (75%) came from a loan from the Bank of Indonesia…. (as much as) IDR 236 million. Only one quarter of the investment came from private capital. This means, if our dear guests enter this publishing building and come across a four-legged chair, it can be said that only one leg belongs to us, and the other (three) legs belong to Bank Negara Indonesia 1946 or Bank Indonesia. Through these two banks, we want to thank the Indonesian government for its trust in us. (Ojong in Dhakidae, 1991: 249)*

Dhakidae does not mention specifically whether it was only *Kompas* who got financial support, however, considering the specific context of the period, it is obvious that not all media groups got this aid.

As explained by Hill (1994), the regime had started to ban newspapers viewed as critical, so these newspapers were not even allowed to operate, let alone get financial support from the state. The fact that *Kompas* got this aid means that the newspaper was seen as obedient to the regime and was expected to continue to behave accordingly. This lead Dhakidae (1991) to argue that the

media capitalists during the New Order were state-nurtured capitalists, thus providing the reason why the media during the New Order was economically prosperous but politically incapacitated.

With the existence of this printing machine, *Kompas'* performance became much more efficient. When hiring a printing press from *PT Kinta* whose capability was limited, the deadline of *Kompas'* reportage to go to print was at 6 pm. Since there was now a machine with a larger printing capacity, the deadline was moved later to 10 pm. This allowed the journalists four additional hours to work on the content of the newspaper. Furthermore, while the paper rental machine from *PT Kinta* could only print 20, 000 copies per hour, their new machine could print 96,000 copies per hour. This new equipment also enabled *Kompas* to increase the number of pages from eight to twelve pages. After gaining possession of this new printing machinery, *Kompas'* circulation increased more rapidly than at any time before, reaching 100, 000 copies or nearly double. There is no doubt that this new tool of production made the newspaper more efficient, and it was now on sale in the early morning, enabling it to shed its previous stereotype as the "arrive tomorrow/*komt pass morgen"* newspaper. The state's financial supported also allowed *Kompas* to build a new building in Palmerah Selatan, which they began to occupy in the same year.

The impact of the state's financial support also enabled the newspaper to realize its dream of diversification. With a big sum of money at hand, a series of other publications were soon established under the umbrella of *Kompas Gramedia Group* (*Kelompok Kompas Gramedia*/KKG), such as the famous Indonesian magazine for children, *Bobo* weekly (1973). It also further diversified its own publications. In addition to the *Gramedia Publishing Company* that was founded in 1974 for fiction and non-fiction books, *Kompas* also established a special press that published books on computers in *Elex Komputindo* (1985), another that produced children's books of primary and secondary education in *PT Gramedia Widiasarana Indonesia* / *Grasindo* (1990), and *Kompas* also formed *Library of Popular Gramedia* (KPG) and *Kompas Book*

Publisher (PBK) to republish all the articles ever published in the newspaper in 1996. In at least one case, that of the tabloid *Monitor Weekly* (of which more below), a *Kompas* venture was established as a public-private partnership, with the Indonesian government maintaining joint ownership of the venture.

The diversification of this effort also included the publishing of regional newspapers that started from 1987 under the name of the regional press group, *Persda*, which started in Palembang by taking over the daily *Sri Wijaya Post*. In 1988, this expansion was carried out in Aceh by taking over local *Swadesi newspapers*. In 1992, *Kompas Gramedia* took over *Pos Kupang* in Kupang and in 1994 took over *Banjarmasin Pos* in Banjarmasin, Kalimantan. In turn, *Kompas Gramedia* established a local newspaper in almost all provinces in Indonesia under the brand *Tribune*. Finally, in 1995, *Kompas* set up an online presence with the website *Kompas.com*.

This diversification also encompassed various other fields of business, such as radio with the establishment of *Radio Sonora* (1972) and film production with *Gramedia Film* (1976). *Kompas Gramedia Group* also established a tissue manufacturing company in *PT Graha Kerindo Utama* (GKU) in 1988, and built a successful hotel business in the name of Santika Hotel (1981), which is now one of the most renowned hotel chains throughout Indonesia. Diversifying further, they also established a TV company in 2000 called *TV7*, and even though it was subsequently sold, in 2009 *Kompas* again established a TV company with the name of *Kompas TV*. In 2005, *Kompas Gramedia Group* even established a university called *Universitas Multi Media Nusantara* (UMN).

In short, with this diversification, *Kompas Gramedia Group* (KKG) owned at least 11 subsidiaries consisting of online media, bookstores, printing press, publishing houses, radio and television stations, hotels, educational institutions, cultural organizations and events companies. As a whole, this group of companies employed at least 22, 000 employees throughout Indonesia. In 2016, Jakob Oetama was named the 21st richest person in Indonesia by the *Asia Globe*, with a total wealth of 1.6 billion dollars. The wealth of this *Kompas* founder and

the story above clearly demonstrates how the newspaper became an economic giant in a country of a quarter of a billion people.

However, *Kompas'* business ventures came with a price, as it had placed the newspaper in an ambivalent position towards the regime. Although the political regime had helped the daily to achieve its economic success by providing financial support, it also did not hesitate to ban the newspaper in 1978. Furthermore, in 1973 the regime designated Jakob Oetama a golden boy by giving him the award of *"Bintang Mahaputra Utama",* which means "a prominent shining star": the highest award given by the President to a civilian. Yet President Suharto also demonstrated his anger and displeasure towards Jakob after the incident of 1978, and warned him not to be critical towards the regime. In other words, *Kompas* was allowed to grow economically, but it was kept small politically. This situation resembles that of any other Chinese conglomerate in Indonesian and their relationship to the state (Baker, 2013; Chua, 2008).

Furthermore, becoming an economic giant did not necessarily mean that the newspaper could assuage its fears. On the contrary, its tremendous economic success compelled *Kompas* to be even more cautious. This is because the economic success meant that more people were working for the newspaper and relied on it to earn a living. As written in the biography of Jakob by Sularto, this was one of the main considerations that influenced his decision to apologize to the regime, and avoid being banned in 1978. His biography states:

> *The decision to apologize to the regime was due to consideration of, among other things: the lives of the workers…. In 1965, the number of journalists could be counted on the fingers of your hands and toes of your feet. In 1978, the number of workers was around 2000 people. The ban would be a huge catastrophe for them. (Sularto, 2011: 15)*

This shows that the growing size of the company made the newspaper more cautious.

Furthermore, with regard to its business groups, *Kompas* had to consider not only the survival of the newspaper, but also the survival of all business units under the umbrella of *Kompas Gramedia Group* (KKG). One of the best illustrations of the impact of a ban is the case of *Monitor Weekly,* which was banned in 1990 due to its coverage on sensitive issues on Islam. This will be explained in the next section.

Monitor Weekly and Kompas' Syndrome of "Islamophobia"

The 1990 *Monitor* case involved a weekly tabloid published under the management of *Kompas Media Group* (KKG). This case was triggered by the *Monitor*'s publication of the results of a reader survey about "The Most Admired" figures in Indonesia (Pontoh, 2013; Shiraisi, 1997). The survey findings showed that the most respected figure was President Suharto, followed by his predecessor, President Sukarno, at number two. Interestingly, the Prophet Muhammad ranked only 11th—below Arswendo Atmowiloto, the Chief Editor of *Monitor*, which rankled Indonesian groups with Islamic leanings.

After the publication of the survey, demonstrators destroyed the weekly's office in Jakarta. This was followed by a wave of protests in major cities such as Semarang and Surabaya. The protests were supported by the majority of Islamic leaders in Indonesia, who strongly criticized the editorial policy of the weekly. Those who questioned *Monitor* included some Islamic figures who were considered moderate, such as Nurcholis Madjid, a Muslim intellectual who was a former chairman of the Association of Islamic University Students (HMI), and Amin Rais, Chairman of Muhammadiyah, one of the biggest Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia.

Monitor's problems did not stop there. The weekly was finally closed down by the Minister of Information, Harmoko, on October 23, 1990. Arswendo, the Chief Editor, was summoned to court and sentenced to five years in prison. He was charged with blasphemy (article 156 of the Criminal Code) and the spread of contempt against the population (article 157 of the Criminal Code).

Interestingly, a similar article had been published by *Tempo* magazine in the 1970s. In an article dated June 3, 1978, *Tempo* covered the main findings of research done by a PhD student, Sarlito Wirawan, who suggested that Suharto was a more famous figure than the Prophet Muhammad. However, the *Tempo* article did not generate protest or anger like that directed at *Monitor*.

The case of *Monitor Weekly* was important for two reasons. First of all, even though this case was not directly related to *Kompas,* the public sentiment was that of hatred towards the newspaper, in no small part due to its Catholic background. Therefore, the protests from Islamic society were founded on the notion that such coverage attacking the Islamic prophet was an attempt by the Church to spread Catholicism and to initiate de-Islamization.

Secondly, the protest was nearly unstoppable, despite the fact that the ownership of the weekly was actually shared between *Kompas* as well as the government. 30 percent of the shares belonged to a state-owned foundation, *Gema Tanah Air*. In addition, a further 30 percent was owned personally by the Information Minister, Harmoko. *Kompas*, which managed the weekly, owned the remaining 40 percent (Sopian, 2002). Therefore, this incident taught *Kompas* that despite protection from the power holders, Islamic groups could still destroy them. Furthermore, the Islamic groups had developed into a political force to be reckoned with, as the regime could not exert control over them.

Although the *Monitor* case did not directly affect *Kompas,* it was enough to traumatize the owner, Jakob Oetama, who at that time was also the editor of the newspaper. As suggested by a senior journalist, the *Monitor* case left Jakob in great shock:

> *Because at that time he felt that Indonesia had grown along with Kompas into a tolerant society. But the Monitor event made him hesitate and ask: "Who are they actually? Apparently I do not know this society." This historical trauma was then to be carried by all*

> *generations of journalists after him. (Jimmy Laluna, member of Kompas editorial board, personal communication, August 23, 2016).*

At the time of the incident, Jakob had personally issued an apology for the coverage of *Monitor* by admitting that the weekly had been in the wrong. In the editorial of *Kompas,* Jakob wrote as follows: "Monitor was in the wrong by publishing such surveys. Therefore, we regret it and condemn it…. I suppose *Monitor* deserves to get its punishment. (*Kompas*, October 23, 1990).

The case of *Monitor* had added another dimension to *Kompas*' fears. While previously the sources of fear were communism and authoritarian rule, now the source of fear included conservative Islamic groups. The fact that *Monitor's* coverage was not wrong journalistically, and that it was not the only newspaper which had published such results, reflects the existence of discrimination towards the Catholic roots of the daily. It is worth noting that the *Monitor* case left lingering historical trauma in the minds of *Kompas* journalists, and that this trauma grew even stronger in the Reformation era, resulting in self-censorship. This will be discussed further in chapter 4.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter clearly shows that the development of *Kompas* as a newspaper involved internalizing a culture of fear, and yet it also managed to transform itself into an economic giant. At its conception, the fear was due to the fact that one of the *Kompas* founders, PK Ojong, was seen as a political outcast by the Old Order regime under Sukarno's Presidency. This label of political outcast was the result of a series of bans on his three publications, due to their critical tone towards the power holders. Those three publication were: *Keng Po, Star Weekly* and *Pos Indonesia,* which were all Chinese-orientated media published for the Chinese descendants living in Indonesia. This situation was made worse due to the fact that Chinese groups were the subject of political discrimination, as their loyalty to the new independent republic was doubted. Therefore, both due to his criticism of the regime and being an ethnic Chinese himself, Ojong

was suspected of being a disloyal citizen. Being a political outcast had restricted Ojong from working in the media, let alone establishing a newspaper. It is the reason why, when *Kompas* was first published, there was no single mention of his name in the newspaper.

This fear was compounded by the difficulty in obtaining a publishing permit, which reflected the strong political conflict at that period. Guided Democracy was dominated by three main political powers: the army, the communist party (PKI) and President Sukarno, who competed with each other to be at the top of the Indonesian political structure. *Kompas* was born amidst this competition, at the initiative of the army in coalition with the Catholic Party. The initial aim of this finding was to counter the growing influence of the newspapers published by the PKI, which was seen as a common threat both for the army and the party. However, to be able to be published, *Kompas* had to obtain a permit from a unit in the army (Laksusda Jaya) which was under the influence of the PKI. This situation created a difficulty for the newspaper, as the Laksusda Jaya laid down complex requirements for the license to be obtained. Despite this, *Kompas* finally managed to gain a publishing license, but the complexity of the political tension added to the fear of its journalists.

The transfer of power from President Sukarno to Suharto was colored by much bloodshed, which meant that the new ruler's power was based on hundreds and thousands of dead bodies, instead of on public consent through a democratic election. Suharto's presidency was therefore characterized by the constant need for political legitimacy, which was done through, among other things, keeping tight control of the media. Thus, the story of the New Order state was the story of a regime of power that was just as repressive as the previous regime, or even worse. In this political setting, the fear that has haunted *Kompas* since its birth continued during more than three decades of Suharto's regime, from 1965 to 1998. Throughout this period, *Kompas* constantly practiced a cautious style of journalism in order to avoid being banned by the power holders. Nevertheless, despite its consistent efforts to avoid being banned, the newspaper was closed from January 21 to February 5,

1978, due to its coverage of the student protest demanding Suharto to step down as President. This was a very critical situation for the daily, as there was a possibility that *Kompas* would never be allowed to operate again, especially as it was the source of frequent anger for the regime. However, *Kompas* was allowed to operate again on the requirement that its freedom was muzzled. The requirement was that *Kompas'* Chief Editor had to apologize to the regime, and sign an agreement with the government that the daily would never write, among other things, any coverage of the misconduct of the President, his families and friends.

Despite the fear that has continuously haunted its journalists, *Kompas* managed to transform itself into an economically successful newspaper, even securing financial support from the political regime. Furthermore, the daily also succeeded in expanding its business well beyond being a mere newspaper company. This success was due to the financial support from the political regime, which resulted in the newspaper's dependency on the state, and consequently kept it weak politically. However, this success could not be separated from Ojong's brilliant business vision: the product of his previous experiences working in the media. The vision was to see *Kompas* not only as a media institution, but also a business institution, and involved business diversification, with a publishing company, bookstores, hotels, tour and travels all under the *Kompas Gramedia Group* (KKG). This was done in the event that the newspaper would once again be shut down by the authorities, as diversification would give journalists another space to make a living. So, in this regard, the fear of a ban contributed to shaping Ojong's business vision.

Unfortunately, being a media group added another source of fear, as any mistake committed by *Kompas* could also impact other members of the business group. Equally, any mistakes committed by its subsidiaries would also have an impact on the newspaper itself. This can be seen by the case of *Monitor* weekly, in which the mistake of the weekly by covering a sensitive issue about Islam resulted in the Islamic groups attacking *Kompas,* and targeting the Catholic-ness of the newspaper. Underlying this attack was the

practice of discrimination from conservative Islamic groups in Indonesia, who were protected by existing Indonesian law. This was because of the existence of the law on blasphemy, which makes illegal any action that offends the religious feeling of the majority religious groups. In the case of *Monitor,* despite its coverage being journalistically sound, the weekly was seen as hurting the religious pride of Muslims who are the majority group in Indonesia. As a result, the Chief Editor Arswendo Atmowiloto was imprisoned for five years and the weekly was closed down forever.

This leads to the question: how exactly did the fears regarding the repressive political regimes and conservative Islamic groups impact the editorial policy of *Kompas*? This question will be examined in chapter 4, which discusses the practice of self-censorship in *Kompas,* and how it relates to *rasa* - an element of Javanese culture which is the basis for this self-censorship. This culture was very much influenced by Jakob Oetama, who acted as the Chief Editor of the newspaper over the first four decades of publishing. This made the journalistic values of *Kompas* a complete manifestation of Jakob's habitus. Therefore, before discussing self-censorship in chapter 4, the next chapter will discuss Jakob and his influence in shaping *Kompas'* journalistic culture.

Chapter 3

Jakob Oetama and the 'Kompas Way'

"Sailing on the foam is our way. 'To criticize while at the same time expressing empathy', 'Strong in principle but flexible in the way of delivering the message', 'There is no angel in this world' –these are some excerpts of wisdom which blend together with Kompas. It is Kompas, a newspaper which has positioned itself as a communicator, which is never explosive, but instead, always polite and aware of itself."

~Jakob Oetama, 50-year Kompas anniversary speech, June 28, 2015

It was my first day in the newsroom as I officially started my fieldwork. The newspaper was kind enough to give me a press card, which I wore on my chest for identification. With this card, I could easily pass the front desk as well as the security check at the main entrance on the first floor. The card also functioned as a key in which I could slide open the glass doors into the newsroom, located on the third floor. Once the doors opened, I faced a huge square room flooded by a sea of chairs and tables. From my previous visits I knew that the political division *(desk politik)*, where I would be focusing on my fieldwork, was just a few steps away from the newsroom entrance. This division consisted of around a dozen journalists seated in a cluster, all equipped with a computer on each table. One of the chairs and tables was for me. So was the computer; I knew

that this meant that I was to be treated as one of the journalists. Full of enthusiasm, I arrived very early on that morning of February 5, 2014. So early, in fact, that no-one else was around. It was on that day that I started to learn what working as a journalist for the biggest newspaper in the country was all about.

As the day wore on, one by one the journalists entered the newsroom. It went without saying that I eagerly introduced myself each time a journalist of the political desk arrived, except to the head of the political desk, as we had met on my previous visit. However, one of the most memorable events of that day happened later, in the afternoon. When the time came for lunch, I decided to explore the building that would be my new office. On the left side of the newsroom, close to the entrance, there was a smoking room, and it was here that I encountered two young journalists. They had both just graduated from university: one held a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from a reputable university in South Sulawesi; the other had a degree in History from the most prestigious university in Jakarta. As our conversation went on, I learnt that they had not yet been officially accepted as journalists at the newspaper. In their own words, they said that they were still *"cawar",* which is abbreviated from "*calon wartawan",* meaning journalist candidate. With a smile they added that *cawar* also means "*calon kelelawar"* (candidate of a bat), as they were currently being trained to stay awake late into the night in order to accomplish their journalistic tasks, becoming nocturnal like a bat. Impressed by their sense of humor, I began to enjoy the conversation with them. Unlike their senior fellows who were mostly polite and serious, these young men were sincere and talked easily. It was their sincerity that made me feel comfortable enough to ask them a more personal question: "*Why did you choose to become a journalist?"* To my surprise, Tituk, the historian, spontaneously answered: *"Journalism is not a profession, rather, it is a vocation…a personal calling."* Perhaps he noticed the look of surprise on my face, so he supplemented his answer with a laugh: *"That's not my own words…that is what* Pak Jakob *always teaches us."* This comment drew the three of us together in laughter.

Everyone in that smoking room knew who *Pak Jakob* was. He was the founder, general director, and owner of *Kompas*. As I spent time in the newsroom, I soon learnt that referring to Jakob in all journalistic matters was a daily habit of not only the young, but also the senior journalists of the paper. Jakob's views were quoted in the elite editorial meeting during disputes over the title of a headline. He was quoted in discussions about how the discipline of self-censorship should be practiced in the news-making process. Jakob's name was brought up in a meeting with the ombudsman board of the newspaper in a debate on the kind of watchdog function the news should adopt. His views were also cited when the paper was deciding their position amid the political polarization of the Indonesian presidential election in the middle of that year, 2014. The name of Jakob Oetama was even mentioned by a senior journalist as he was introducing himself to me. He amused me and all the other journalists present by pretending he was *Pak Jakob* himself. On many occasions, I found there was more than one journalist who could imitate the gestures and voice of the old man. Hence, my encounter with those two eager young journalists on the very first day of my ethnographic fieldwork gave me one of the most important insights into *Kompas:* that of the strong influence of the founder, Jakob Oetama. Indeed, in the one-year training for new journalists, an essential aspect they learnt was to internalize the values of *Kompas,* which also meant the values of Jakob Oetama.

Back in early September 2016 when I was visiting the *Kompas* office again having finished my fieldwork, I was once again surprised by the pervasiveness of his influence. Jakob was born on September 27, 1931, and there was a birthday celebration already underway when I arrived. I could smell the palpable air of celebration. The bust of Jakob had been moved to a prominent spot in the *Kompas* building. Masks with the face of Jakob Oetama had been specially made for the birthday celebration, so that journalists could wear them and take photographs. Dozens of paintings of the founder were hung on the wall to make the office more colorful. However, the gesture that struck me the

most was the publication of two books written by some senior journalists in commemoration of the man on his 85th birthday.

The first book was entitled the "*Kompas Way; Jakob's Legacy",* written by Sularto and Santoso (2016). They adopt the term the "*Kompas Way",* which they explain as being the legacy of Jakob Oetama to future generations of *Kompas* journalists. In the foreword of the book, they explain the phrase as follows:

> *The phrase the Kompas Way or 'the Way of Kompas' is a phrase which refers to Jakob's legacy, which he has developed, practiced, and finally left (as a legacy) for future generations. This is seen not just in the way he writes the editorials, but also in the way he has sailed the ship (of Kompas) to navigate the journalistic seas over 50 years, the way he writes and develops a story based on events and facts, the way he realized the independence of Kompas, and no less importantly, also in the way he developed Kompas as a business entity. All of these teachings are conveyed to his journalists and workers. (Sularto and Santoso, 2016: IX[15])*

In the view of Sularto and Santoso, the journalistic values of *Kompas* journalists is very much inspired by the journalistic values of Jakob Oetama. In line with this argument, Ninok Leksono emphasizes the important influence of Jakob in his book entitled: *"85 Years of Jakob Oetama; Let's Listen to What He Says".* In this book that compiles 80 aphorisms of Jakob Oetama, he suggests that *Kompas* has become so synonymous with its founder that *"eventually people*

[15] It is interesting that Sularto acknowledged in his introduction that the phrase the "*Kompas Way*" was inspired by his discussion with me. During my personal meeting with him in August 2, 2016, he admitted that he took the phrase from part I of my dissertation draft, which was entitled the same. He politely asked for my permission to use the term as the title of his book, which I gladly gave.

see Kompas as Pak Jakob, or on the contrary, Pak Jakob as Kompas." (Leksono, 2016: XXV).

From the illustration above it is clear how important Jakob Oetama is for the newspaper, as almost all journalists, from the novices up to the most senior journalists, all acknowledge his influence on *Kompas,* seeing him as the personification of the paper. This observation raised some questions for me: why is Jakob so influential at the paper, despite the fact that *Kompas* was founded not solely by him, but also by another journalist, PK Ojong? What are the ideals and values of Jakob, as both a man and journalist, which have shaped the specific journalistic style of *Kompas*, and in which all *Kompas* journalists are socialized? Finally, how is this journalistic style socialized among, and internalized by, *Kompas* journalists across generations?

This chapter will be dedicated to answering the questions above, and will be structured as follows: first I will draw a brief historical trajectory to explain why Jakob Oetama played a more dominant role in guiding editorial policy at *Kompas* than Ojong. Then, I will trace the biography of Jakob, focusing on the most important aspects of his life which have shaped his ideals and values as a man, as well as a journalist. Next, I will examine the specific kind of journalistic style that has been developed by Jakob, and how this journalistic style has been internalized by *Kompas* journalists across generations. Following this section, the challenges from within the newsroom on the influence of Jakob will be discussed. Finally I will sum up the main findings of this chapter in the conclusion.

3.1 Some Historical Turning Points

As described in the previous chapter, *Kompas* was actually founded by two people: PK Ojong and Jakob Oetama. However, since the very beginning, there has been an agreement between the two founders that the editorial policy of the newspaper would mainly be the remit of Jakob Oetama, while Ojong would focus mainly on managing the business aspect of the newspaper and its

development. One of the main considerations behind this was the fact that Ojong was still seen as a political outcast by Sukarno's regime in June 28, 1965. Therefore, in order to avoid the paper being banned by the regime, Ojong decided not to be conspicuously involved in the editorial policy. In fact, in the first issue of the newspaper, there was not even a mention of his name on the list of journalists at *Kompas,* let alone on the list of editorial staff.

Even though there is no formal or written account which explicitly explains this division of labor between the two founders in the early period, it is common knowledge amongst the journalists in the newsroom, and has been shared orally from generation to generation. In a three-part documentary officially released by *Kompas TV* entitled "50 Years of Kompas",[16] part one: *"The Two Kompas Founders",* narrates how since the beginning, there was a clear job division between the two founders, whereby Jakob was in charge of the editorial policy while Ojong managed the business matters (Kompas Video, 2015). In part two entitled: *"The Limited Movement of Kompas"*, there is an interview with Hellen Iswara, *Kompas* journalist and biographer of Ojong, where she explains that it was a new role for Ojong to act as the director of a newspaper, as all his previous roles were as editors (Kompas Video, 2015). However, he still managed this role well, according to Iswara, as he was focused and meticulous which was conducive to managing financial matters.

Therefore it is clear that since the very beginning, Jakob was the central figure in the newspaper for editorial matters. Furthermore, a dramatic event in 1978 made his influence even stronger, when the paper was banned for the second time on January 21, 1978 and *Kompas* was forced to apologize to the regime before being allowed to operate again. A serious debate was had between the two founders, in which Ojong refused to fulfill the regime's requirement. He

[16] This interview was broadcast in a three-part documentary released by *Kompas* to commemorate its 50-year anniversary, entitled "50 Years of Kompas" (YouTube, July 24, 2015). It is no longer available.

believed it was better to let *Kompas* close down forever now, as they could be threatened with closure again at any time in the future. In his words: "*Jakob, pleased don't apologize…sooner or later, they will close us down again anyway*" (Sularto, 2011: 9). Jakob, on the contrary, agreed to meet the regime's demand. He also agreed to fulfill another requirement of the regime by signing a letter of promise that *Kompas* would never again publish any kind of news that criticized the regime. He believed that the struggle to fight the authoritarian regime must continue, and this could not be done with a dead newspaper. In his words: *"You can't make a corpse your ally"* (Sularto, 2011: 10). As a consequence of these differing positions, Ojong fully withdrew from all editorial matters and fully delegated that job to his colleague.

Another dramatic event that changed the course of *Kompas'* leadership once and for all was the death of PK Ojong in 1980. Since then, Jakob has been the sole manager and founder. He took full responsibility for *Kompas,* both as Chief Editor as well as General Director of the newspaper. In a video broadcast by *Kompas TV*, it is clear that Jakob was terribly sad when Ojong passed away, as this meant that he now had to take over the managerial aspect of *Kompas* as a company. He describes that moment, eyes overflowing with tears:

> *My colleague, Swantoro, who acted as the Vice Chief Editor, told me the sad news about the death of Ojong. He said: 'brother, it will be hard. You will be the one who has to take care of the company'... and it turns out that Pak Swan was right. It was hard, but fortunately, my Pastor convinced me that I could handle it, as I have an ability for ngemong (a Javanese term which means 'to take care of', and usually refers to a mother's ability to take care of a baby). (Kompas Video, 2015)*

Jakob Oetama stayed in the position of Chief Editor until 2000, a position he held for 35 years. From the explanation above, it is clear that *Kompas* was mainly directed by Jakob Oetama. In the words of Randu Rahardjo, *"Jakob*

Oetama is the DNA of Kompas" (Personal communication with Rahardjo, vice chief editor of *Kompas,* 9 July 2014). This strong influence of Jakob was described perfectly by Daniel Dhakidae, who acted as the Head of the Research Division of *Kompas* and is the current Head of *Kompas* ombudsman, as follows, "The influence of its Chief Editor, Jakob Oetama, has been unchallenged. Since the day Ojong passed away, Jakob has been the personification of Kompas journalism." (Dhakidae, *Kompas*, June 28, 2015).

From the historical background above, it is clear that Jakob has been dominant in directing the editorial policy of *Kompas* since the founding of the newspaper, and became increasingly dominant due to various historical events that changed the course of the newspaper's history. The question then is: what are the ideals and values of Jakob himself, and how has the socialization of these values been achieved in the newsroom? The next part will be dedicated to discussing these questions.

3.2 The Habitus of Jakob

To understand the strong influence of Jakob at *Kompas*, it is important to investigate the figure of Jakob Oetama: his origins, his childhood, his educational background, as well as other important life experiences that shaped his ideals and values as a person, as well as a journalist. In this case, this research will borrow the concept of habitus as theorized by Pierre Bourdieu, who believed that every person has a habitus, which is a set of values that is internalized, and created through a long process of socialization which then influences a person's way of thinking and behaving. Bourdieu defines the concepts as being:

> *systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations*

> *necessary in order to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating of a conductor. (Bourdieu, 1977: 72)*

In the quotation above, Bourdieu argued that habitus is both structured and structuring. By the term "structured", he wanted to suggest that habitus is the result of someone's past life, meaning that sets of experience happening in the earlier life of a person will contribute to form the habitus of a person. Furthermore, by the term "structuring", he wanted to suggest that even though habitus is a product of the past, it shapes the way people perceive social reality, and therefore how they then act based on this perception. That is why he also suggested that habitus is a system of dispositions embodied in a person which influences his practices, without him even being aware of this influence. That habitus generates spontaneous action within particular social contexts, which he theorized as 'field', is described by people as having a 'feel for the game' (Maton, 2008: 54). Thus, habitus is the product of the past, which influences the practices of an individual in the present, as well as in the future. It links the individual with the social, the subjective with the objective, and structure with agency (Maton, 2008: 53).

In line with Bourdieu, in order to understand the habitus of Jakob, it is important to understand the life of Jakob Oetama. While it is impossible to delve into all of his life experiences here, I would argue that there are four distinguishing life experiences that very much shape his habitus as a person, and more importantly, as a journalist. These are: that he was born a Javanese; he is a Catholic, having been formally education in the gymnasium *(sekolah seminari*) which are schools intended to create pastors; he worked as a teacher in an elementary and junior high school; and he had formal training and experience in journalism.

Born and raised as a Javanese man

Jakob was born on September 27, 1931, in a village named Jowahan, located near Borobudur Temple, Magelang, Central Java. It is noteworthy that Jakob was not born as a common Javanese, but rather into an aristocratic family, marking him out as an elite in Javanese society. This can be inferred from the fact that his father was an educated man named Raymundus Josef Sandiyo Brotosoesiswo (1911-1975), and the headmaster of the Kanisius elementary school *(sekolah rakyat)* in a village named Wates, Kulonprogo. He was born in the time when Indonesia was still occupied by the Dutch; a period in which only the Indonesian elites might enjoy school. Meanwhile, his mother, Margaretha Kartonah Brotosoesiswo (1914-1999) was also of the gentry, so it can be said that Jakob grew up in a culture of Javanese refinement and aristocracy. It is therefore no surprise that when Jakob Oetama was a child, he was usually addressed by the aristocratic term *Raden Bagus* (Sularto, 2011: 38), a term only used to address the son of a Javanese aristocrat who still has blood ties to the Javanese king.

As is typical with Javanese men, Jakob was very close to his mother. This can be seen from the fact that at the most crucial moment in his life -when he wanted to leave the *Seminari* school, a special school for training priests- he sought his mother for advice. Interviewing the younger brother of Jakob, Sularto wrote:

> *Mas To (Jakob's nickname in his family), went to our mom who lived in Mangkuyudan, Yogyakarta. He told her that he was confused with life. He wanted to leave (Seminari School). Mas To was very close to our mom, Ibu (mom) Kartonah. Whatever my mom said would always be obeyed by him (dipatuhi). He was ajrih (afraid) of, and also asih (loving) to, our mom. (Sularto, 2011: 4-5)*

In the interview above, it is interesting to see the use of the Javanese word "*ajrih",* which is the refined version of *wedi,* which actually means "fear". However, in the quotation above, fear is mentioned not as a negative connotation, but instead as a demonstration of virtue in which a son shows

respect to his mother. As suggested by Geertz (1960), *wedi* is an emotional feeling which demonstrates a person's ability to show the principle of respect, which is fundamental in Javanese social interaction.[17] Furthermore, *wedi* usually comes as a response to threats arising from social interaction, which can also refer to a physical threat. A Javanese child would be praised if he could apply this feeling in the right social settings, such as showing this feeling to his parents due to their ability to punish. The punishment itself, however, is also seen positively as a way of disciplining a child to respect their elders.

In turn, this value of fear as a Javanese virtue influenced Jakob in carrying out his journalistic work. In his speech at Gajah Mada University in 2003, when he was granted *Doctor Honoris Causa,* he used the word "fear" to illustrate his discretion in taking crucial editorial decisions. Fear is translated into the journalistic style of the newspaper, which is characterized by a strong sense of cautiousness. In a recent editorial piece, Jakob suggested that this journalistic style was intentionally chosen in response to the newspaper ban by Suharto in 1978:

> *The experience of being banned between 20 January 1978 and 5 February 1978 was a great lesson for Kompas… in practicing journalism, many issues and events which are extremely sensitive need to be, quoting the words of philosopher Soren Kierkegaard, conducted 'in fear and trembling'. (Oetema, Kompas, June 28, 2015)*

From the quote above, it is clear that even though fear is a key virtue in Javanese values, its adoption as an integral part of the *Kompas* journalistic style has been driven by the specific political circumstance under the New Order

[17] Two other feelings which also demonstrates a person's ability to show the principle of respect are *isin* (shy); and *sungkan* (hesitatent). *Isin* is a complex reaction which includes not only fear but also lowered self-esteem, and refers only to social interaction rather than to any physical threat. A child, for instance, will feel *isin* if he gets caught doing something wrong, like stealing food. Meanwhile, *sungkan* is a lighter version of *isin,* and means feelings of respectful politeness. A guest will feel *sungkan* if offered more food by a host, except if the host insists.

regime, which kept very tight control of the media. Swantoro, a senior journalist who also witnessed the ban, confirmed the argument by suggesting as follows, "*Jakob, in the period of Suharto, was the only one who capable of writing editorials, because his Javanese style worked. So he could, mmm, say something indirectly. That was why his editorials were always of great length*." (Swantoro, personal interview, July 21,2014).

During the commemoration of *Kompas'* golden anniversary, Jakob proposed that this journalistic style is part of the secret of the newspaper's success in enduring authoritarian periods and surviving to the current era, making it the oldest national newspaper in Indonesia. Furthermore, the adoption of fear as a demonstration of respect to the power holders, who were also capable of generating physical threats, has confirmed the Geertz's theory on the function of fear in Javanese culture as outlined earlier.

As one of the principle values in Javanese culture, respect is based on the belief that all social relationships are hierarchically ordered, and maintaining this social hierarchy is a moral imperative. Therefore, another principle in Javanese culture is the maintenance of harmonious social appearances, which is summed up in Javanese as *rukun.* This notion is based on the belief that emotional balance, and emotional stasis, is the highest virtue, therefore it is a moral imperative to control one's own impulses, or at least leave them unexpressed, so as not to set up reverberating emotional responses in others. The value of respect is a guide to social behavior in many different contexts, from respect towards neighbors to respect towards government officials. Even though in modern Java the bases for social status is changing, the traditional view persists that men are created unequal, and that respecting those in a higher social status to maintain social harmony is a must.

This book argues that it is for the sake of establishing the principle of respect as well as conflict avoidance that Jakob developed his specific journalistic style, which involved a strong sense of indirectness, politeness and cautiousness

towards those of a higher status in the social hierarchy in order to maintain social harmony. This was stated clearly by Jakob in an interview during the *Kompas* golden anniversary commemoration, in which he says:

> *I am a person with a Javanese background. Haha… This means, of course, to be **indirect**. The tendency to be **less direct**. Sometimes people yell at me for being **too indirect.** Of **not being to the point**. But…this is because I don't see problems in a black and white sense. (Oetema, Kompas video in it 50th anniversary, 2015, bold emphasis added by author).*

This statement of Jakob emphasizes the indirectness in his way of conveying messages, and his specific journalistic style was the result of long exposure to Javanese values, which were internalized as he was grew up. Kees De Jong, a researcher who studied *Kompas* in 1990, said:

> *Jakob told me that as a Javanese, he always learned to communicate in an indirect way. One day, Jakob wished to go out on a Saturday night date and wished for permission from his father. However, it would be considered impolite to put this directly to his father. So, he merely sat in the chair near his father, staring longingly out the window, and said: "the night sky is bright. I can see a lot of my friends going out on dates." He did this in the hope that his father would understand that he, too, wanted to go out for dinner, and that his father would give him permission to do so. (De Jong, personal interview, March 22, 2015)*

The statement above is also confirmed by Ashadi Siregar, a member of the ombudsman board of *Kompas,* who sees it as the unique selling point of the newspaper. He further argues that this is the secret behind the newspaper's survival under authoritarian rule:

Kompas has developed a specific kind of journalistic style in delivering its message, in which it conveys the message indirectly, but the readers know what *Kompas* means. For instance, under the New Order, when they wanted to criticize the corruption of the regime, they reported the practice of corruption in foreign countries (Ashadi Siregar, personal interview, March 2, 2015)

Underlying the journalistic style of Jakob lies the concept of *rasa,* a spiritual element in Javanese culture which connects the outer aspect of life with the inner one, and links together three major teachings of the Javanese gentry's religious life: etiquette, arts and mystical practice. More about this concept and how it is implemented into journalistic practice, as well as how it is shaped by political and economic forces outside the media, will be explained in chapter 4.

Surprisingly, while the impact of Jakob's Javanese values and ideals on his work as a journalist are recognized and understood by *Kompas* journalists, his private life has always remained a mystery to them. During my observations within the newsroom, there was very little discussion about Jakob's family. I got the strong sense that discussing the private life of this most respected of figures was taboo. All articles or books about Jakob, whether written by *Kompas* journalists or by outsiders, have hardly discussed his personal life (Djaeng, 2013; Leksono, 2016; Sularto 2011 & 2013; Sularto & Santoso, 2016). Even in the book written by Sularto, a senior journalist who was commissioned by Jakob himself to write his biography, this matter is hardly discussed. Whilst the book touches briefly on Jakob's childhood, there is no single mention about his family life: neither the name of his wife, nor how many children he has.

When I put this matter to the *Kompas* journalists, they were always reluctant to answer. One of the very few pieces of information they could share with me was an open secret: that Jakob had been married twice. The first wife was believed to be a villager from a humble family. Junior and senior journalists alike revealed that Jakob almost never brought his wife into the newsroom, nor to any official events. Some informants believed that this was part of the

reason why Jakob got married a second time, this time to a woman from the upper class. Yet, her public appearances in front of journalists were also very rarely witnessed. Interestingly, it is common knowledge that Jakob converted from Catholicism to Islam in order to secure his second marriage, as marrying more than once is forbidden in Catholicism. However, many journalists also witnessed that Jakob had started visiting the Catholic Church again in recent years.

Equally mysterious are the number of children Jakob has from each wife. Some of the journalists confessed that they really had no idea about this matter. However, all journalists shared a common observation that Jakob hardly ever brought his children to the *Kompas* office, giving the impression that Jakob did not intend to make any of his children his successor. That is why it was to the surprise of many when Jakob appointed his own son, Lilik Oetama, as the Chief Executive Officer of *Kompas Gramedia Group*. Whilst it is unknown from which marriage Lilik is from, some journalists believe that he is the eldest son of Jakob's first wife. The fact that Lilik was a relatively new face on the media scene and had never worked as a journalist before, unlike his father, cast doubt over his ability to handle the newspaper successfully, especially at such a crucial time when the newspaper's circulation is in decline. Some even believed that he might sell the newspaper if he thought that it would no longer be profitable.

Regarding Javanese father-son relationships, literature suggests that Jakob's relationship with his own biological children was typical. As described by Geertz (1960), the typical father-son relationship in a Javanese family is distant and formal. What is emphasized in this relationship between father and son is respect rather than a demonstration of affection. The figure of the father is expected to be, above all, the patient and dignified head of the family *(kepala keluarga)*, leading his wife and children with a gentle and firm hand, not involving himself in the quarrels between them, and acting as a fair judge to disobedient children. The distance between father and son does not decrease,

even when the son becomes an adult, so that an aging man in need of a sharper brain in business or a strong pair of hands in the rice fields would more likely turn to his son-in-law than his own son (Geertz, 1960: 121).

From the evidence gathered above, I argue that the Javanese aspects of Jakob have shaped not only his journalistic style, but also the way he managed *Kompas*. In terms of journalistic style, Jakob's Javanese upbringing formed his indirectness and politeness in conveying his message, especially towards those in authority. The sense of fear in conveying the message is in accordance with the value of a Javanese child towards a person in authority. Similarly, Jakob's Javanese background also influenced the way he managed *Kompas,* building a close relationship with his journalists and treating them as if they were his own children. Indeed, he played the role of a father for the journalists, of one who is unfailingly caring but at the same time, demands obedience and loyalty. As he showed fear, or *wedi*, towards his own mother to show respect, he also demanded his subordinates to be fearful of and respectful to him. In contrast, it seems he treated his wives and his own biological children in a more distanced way when it came to his work as a journalist. Despite the irony here, this is actually also in accordance with Javanese values, where the separation between business matters and private family matters is considered a virtue.

Raised as a Catholic believer

The second most prominent feature about Jakob is that he is a Catholic. From the names of both his parents, it is clear that they both were Catholics, and the name 'Jakob Oetama' is also a Catholic name. During his teenage years, Jakob dreamed of becoming a priest, and he publicly admitted this in the video of the 50-year *Kompas* celebration: "I went to an elementary school, called Boro. It was bit far from Jogja. Then I wanted. I had a dream to be a priest. A father. So I went to a Gymanisum in Jogja." (Oetama, *Kompas* anniversary speech, 2015)

Jakob attended elementary school at *SD Pangudli Luhur* and continued his junior high school there, graduating in 1945. Afterwards, he pursued his dream

of being a priest by attending the medium school of theology *(sekolah seminari)* for six years, which specially prepared students to become priests, before graduating in 1952. During his studies at the *Seminari,* Jakob moved from one place to another: Jogjakarta, Ambarawa (Semarang), Ganjuran (Bantul City) and Muntilan (Magelang). During that period, he lived in the special dormitory of the school (*asrama pastor)*, which reflects how intensive the training to be a priest was. After finishing the medium school of theology, Jakob continued further to the high school of theology to show his commitment to becoming a priest.

However, he resigned from this school after only three months. Despite the fact that he dropped out, the experience at the *Seminari* heavily influenced Jakob's way of seeing life. One of the lessons he learnt was about humanism, which he generally defined as respect for humanity. He believed humanism should be the essential spirit of journalistic work. In his own book entitled *"Indonesian Press, Communicating in an Insincere Community",* he wrote:

> *Humans and humanity, and therefore people's problems and sufferings, their aspirations and passion, their glory and humiliation; these are the central factors of the vision of Kompas daily newspaper. Therefore, humans and humanity have to always be the essence of its content. (Oetama, 2001: 147)*

The spirit of humanism in *Kompas* is also reflected in the credo of the newspaper's saying: "*Menghibur yang Papa, Mengingatkan yang Mapan"*, which means "entertaining the poor and reminding the have-gots". For Jakob, a deep understanding of humanism is a key element to being a good journalist. Based on his experience, he believed that senior journalists who had experience in studying philosophy and who had studied the concept of humanism had a more comprehensive journalistic view, a more civilized political view and were able to write deeper and more colorful journalistic pieces. Furthermore, he believed that the journalists who had been studied

philosophy and humanism were also more capable of controlling their personal political interests, because they had more concerns for and solidarity with humanity (Oetama, 1987: 207). Accordingly, Jakob suggested that all of his journalists should attend a school of philosophy either formally or informally, especially the philosophy of logic and anthropology. In 2006, he even conducted a short course of philosophy for *Kompas* journalists by inviting Franz Magnis Suseno, Professor of Philosophy from Driyarkara High School of Philosophy (Sularto, 2012: 41).

Kompas' strong endorsement of the idea of humanism was also captured in the study of De Jong (1990), who suggested that the spirit of "transcendental humanism" has been at the heart of the newspaper. By the term "transcendental humanism", he referred to a humanism that also believes in the existence of God, or at least of the existence of something transcendental. He elaborates by suggesting that this is not the same kind of humanism such as socialism or communism, which does not believe in the existence of God. Instead, this is a humanism which believes in the existence of a Creator, and suggests that in this way, humanity will reach a state of complete realization. Based on interviews with Jakob Oetama and thirteen *Kompas* journalists, de Jong argues that it is this very idea of transcendental humanism which is the spirit of these journalists in doing their job. This spirit, however, cannot be separated from the broader ambient of the Catholic Church at that time. The Second Vatican Council's new doctrine that Catholic believers should strive to be a blessing for all mankind, regardless of their religion, is viewed as the inspiration of this *Kompas* ideology, as it provided inspiration for *Kompas'* founders, who were mostly Catholic.

If Jakob's Catholic background is placed against the backdrop of Indonesian society as a country, which has the biggest Muslim population in the world (95% of its citizens are Islamic believers), there are several consequences. It highlights that Jakob grew up as part of a minority group in Indonesian society. In fact, PK Ojong, the other founder of *Kompas,* was also a Catholic, as were

most of the first generation of journalists at the paper. Living as a minority made him aware of the importance of promoting pluralism in Indonesia; it is only within a plural and harmonious society that the minority Catholic group had a place and position. Jakob's commitment to pluralism is manifested in his company, where he ensured diversity in his newsroom by recruiting journalists from various different ethnic and religious backgrounds. In his writings, Jakob described as follows:

> *The big family of Kompas Gramedia grows to be a little Indonesia (Indonesia Kecil). Here, through collaboration and interaction, we are building a new Indonesia, we continue to realize our nation and build its character. Together we build mutual understanding and a common vision, through the culture of an open company (perusahaan yang terbuka) that carves out a creative and respectful place for pluralism. We try to breathe dignity and transcendentalism (nafas yang mulia dan transcendental) into our works. (Oetama, 2001: 14)*

With the term "open company", Jakob does not mean selling *Kompas* stock to the public, as *Kompas* is actually a family business. He meant that everyone from any background can be a journalist at the newspaper.

Aspired to be a teacher

The third significant life experience that has formed the habitus of Jakob is his teaching experience. For more than five years (1952-1956), Jakob worked as a teacher before changing career to become a journalist. Between 1952-1953, Jakob was a teacher at Mardijuwana junior high school in Cipanas, West Java, and then between 1953-1954, he taught at a vocational school at Lenteng Agung, Jakarta. Finally, between 1954-1956, he taught at Van Lith Junior High School, Jakarta. In his interview, Jakob confessed that he had actually dreamed of being a university lecturer and was planning to pursue his Master's degree in the Netherlands. He was even offered a position as a lecturer at Parahyangan University in Bandung, and got a scholarship to continue studying in The

Netherlands. However, instead, he resigned from his position as a lecturer and canceled his plans to study abroad. This decision was inspired by his conversation with a Catholic priest, JW Oudejans, who suggested he become a journalist instead of a teacher or lecturer. Jakob describes this incident as such:

> *When I was teaching in Junior High School, I took a course to get a teaching certificate (B1) in history. Since I passed with cum laude, I won a scholarship to study in the Netherlands. But at that time, this Dutch priest, Oudejans, said to me: "Jakob, there are too many teachers already, but not enough journalists. (Oetama, personal interview, February 27, 2014)*

Despite changing career, Jakob saw journalism as a way to continue his mission to educate by using his newspaper as a way to enlighten people, and to enlighten the nation:

> *I think both professions have something in common. I feel that they have same basic essential motivation and spirit. Writing is conveying ideas to people; so is teaching. But through writing, we can teach students far beyond the boundaries of the classroom. (Jakob Oetama, personal interview, February 27, 2014)*

Indeed, his previous background as an educator has influenced his journalistic values. For Jakob, one of his missions as a journalist is to educate and enlighten the nation. This is an unusual perspective, as in most countries, journalists see their mission as that of a watchdog, holding to account those in power, or else they act as opportunist facilitators for the power holders (Hanitzsch, 2011).

Background as an educated and professional journalist

The last significant life experience that shaped the habitus of Jakob is his educational and professional background in the world of journalism. Jakob was formally trained at the high school of publishing at Gadjah Mada University, and graduated in 1961, making him one among the very few numbers of

Indonesian journalists who has enjoyed a formal journalistic training. Furthermore, alongside his university studies, Jakob also worked as a journalist between 1956-1963 at *Penabur Weekly*. Here, he developed his journalistic skills, progressing to the position of editor. This long track record as a journalist reached its culmination when he met PK Ojong in 1963, and the two of them finally founded *Intisari Weekly.* This combination of formal journalistic training and professional journalistic experience, as well as being the founder of *Intisari* weekly, provided a strong foundation for Jakob to act as Chief Editor when he finally founded *Kompas* with PK Ojong on June 28, 1965.

Considering Jakob's background above, it is unsurprising that *Kompas* is considered as having one of the highest standards of journalism in the Indonesian media. David T Hill, Professor of Media from Murdoch University, comments on this:

> *The English term which is often used to describe Kompas daily newspaper, is "the newspaper of record" or "the newspaper that records" the actual situation. It is Kompas coverage which is considered as the most accurate, objective and complete in comparison to other media….for 50 years Kompas has created a specific journalistic style which is accurate, neutral, without prejudice, and unbiased." (Hill, Kompas, June 28, 2015)*

In the quote above, Hill used the words accurate, objective, complete, without prejudice and unbiased, to describe the high quality of *Kompas* journalism. In line with Hill, Bagir Manan, who is also the Chairman of the Indonesian Press Council, shares the same opinion, "*Kompas* has been recognized by many levels of society as being 'well written' journalism, comprehensive, carefully researched and often seen as too cautious". (Manan, *Kompas,* June 28, 2015). It is clear that this seal of quality that *Kompas* possesses is in no small part down to Jakob.

3.3 The Socialization of Jakob's Values

The question is how have the values of Jakob been socialized amongst *Kompas* journalists, to the extent that the newspaper became the manifestation of Jakob himself? As mentioned earlier, from 1965 until 2000, Jakob acted formally as the Chief Editor of the newspaper. Therefore, he had the power and responsibility to ensure that the newspaper content conformed to his journalistic values. After 2000, despite Jakob no longer acting as Chief Editor, he still attended editorial meetings at least once a week until 2010. During these visits, he would give a weekly evaluation of the content of the newspaper and supervised the editorial team. Many *Kompas* journalists have observed that on each visit, he would give a lecture to the journalists like those of a teacher lecturing his students. In this weekly pep talk, the socialization of journalistic values according to Jakob was disseminated, so that all journalists could understand what the '*Kompas Way*' meant.

Despite no longer regularly attending weekly meetings in the newsroom after 2010, it did not mean that Jakob's teachings and journalistic values became forgotten or abandoned, as there are still many other ways for the socialization of *Kompas* values to occur. In the course of my on-site observations in the newsroom, I identified two general ways that the socialization of Jakob's values persisted. The first is the formal way, which takes place through the daily processes and procedures of news production, and the second is the informal way that occurs through the daily social interaction among the journalists. Both shape the dynamics within the newsroom.

3.4 The Daily News-Making Process

The formal socialization of values which occurs through the daily news-making process in the newsroom consists of a cycle of activities, starting from editorial meetings, to news reportage by journalists in the field, news editing, and finally, to the printing of the news on the day *(naik cetak)*.

The editorial meetings at *Kompas* consisted of four meetings: the monthly meetings, the weekly meetings, the daily meetings in the morning and the daily meetings in the afternoon. The monthly meetings were held within a certain desk or division in the *Kompas* newsroom, where all the journalists of that desk would attend. One of the monthly meetings that I joined during my fieldwork was the meeting for a special issue focusing on the legislative election on April 9, 2014. This meeting, led by the editor of the political desk *(kepala desk)*, was also attended by Chief Editor Arif Subangun, and it was here that the editorial position of the newspaper towards the election was decided, in line with *Kompas* values. Every journalist was free to speak and raise their points as to what kind of editorial position the newspaper should take. However, the final decision was made based on the journalistic values of the newspaper. In the meeting, for instance, one of the journalists raised a question which triggered a debate as to whether the newspaper should side with Prabowo or Jokowi. The debate was brought to a close when Arif Subangun suggested that *Kompas'* position should be neutral and should that the newspaper should not side with either presidential candidate during the election. This is because according to the values which have been practiced by the newspaper since its inception, *Kompas* has always been neutral. Arif suggested, more specifically, that a neutral stance was the default position of the founder, Jakob Oetama, and that this position had become the editorial policy of the newspaper which all journalists must comply with. [18] In this way, the Chief Editor, who was relatively more senior than anyone else in the room, functioned as a caretaker of Jakob's values.

The role of the caretaker of Jakob' values was taken up not only by Arif, but also by other senior journalists who had experienced the period when Jakob was still Chief Editor. It is important to note that at *Kompas,* the Chief Editors as well as all members of the editorial boards were selected by Jakob himself.

[18] This will be discussed more in chapter 6, about *Kompas'* neutrality during the Indonesian presidential election.

Therefore, it is no surprise that the values of Jakob are very much disseminated in every editorial meeting, and the weekly editorial meetings which are intended to make an evaluation of the week's news coverage are no exception. To illustrate this point, I observed a debate over a headline which stated the name of a prominent elite: *The Name of Boediono Is Mentioned 67 Times* (*Kompas*, 7 March 2014). There was disagreement between the editor of the political desk, who had written the title, and the Chief Editor, who insisted that the title did not reflect the values of the newspaper.[19]

The daily editorial meetings, which are held every morning and every afternoon in the newsroom, displays another illustration of how the values of *Kompas* are socialized. The meeting is only attended by the elites of the newspaper, which consist of the members of the editorial board and editors of each desk. In this regard, there are around 11 desks[20]: the politics and law desk (responsible for news on national politics and laws); the article desk (responsible for selecting and editing the opinion columns); the economy desk (produces news on economic affairs); the humanity desk (responsible for news on humanities); the international desk (covers news on foreign affairs); the metropolitan desk (responsible for local news on Jakarta city); the regional desk (responsible for local news from all over Indonesia); the multimedia desk (produces news content on multiple platforms, including online and video content); the sports desk (covers sport), the Sunday desk (produces news for the special Sunday edition), and the Muda desk (covers lifestyle news).

[19] This case will be further discussed in chapter 4 on self-censorship.

[20] The number of desks can change over time according to what is considered important at any given moment. For example, around 2004, there was a Swara desk which focused on covering women's issues. However, this desk no longer exists as it is no longer considered relevant.

The morning editorial meeting which is held at 9 am every day, except Saturday and Sunday, functions as a brainstorming session to discuss the general issues in Indonesia and identify any pressing events which have news value. In this meeting, editors of every division are asked one by one about the most acute issues in their division on that day. The meeting usually runs slowly and leisurely. The conversation is quite often mixed with jokes and laughter, like that of families who have known each other for a long time. However, in the afternoon meetings held at 4 pm, the atmosphere is more serious as they have to list all of the coverage for every desk in more detail, and also decide the headlines for the next day. It goes without saying that all of these elites were seasoned *Kompas* media workers, who know and have internalized the journalistic values of the newspaper. It is this meeting which theoretically has the biggest impact on the shaping of every editorial policy.

After the agenda for the next day's coverage is agreed upon and set by the editors, the reporters go out into the field, pounding the pavement to chase up leads, find sources and interview them, conduct documentary research when necessary, and finally, write up their stories. Later in the night, usually not later than 8 pm, these reporters send their stories to the editors, who read and edit them before finally sending them on to the Managing Editor for a final check. The Managing Editor has a team of editors (*penyunting*), usually consisting of three people who work until very late at night to do the final checks of the news, and more importantly, of the headlines. It is in the hands of these editors where the fate of a story is decided. To what extent a story is cut or edited, or even not covered at all, is decided by these editors. While in a technical sense, these editors function to ensure that a story is of the necessary caliber to be published by the paper, they are also ensuring that the journalistic values of the newspaper are being applied. It is in this everyday editing process that the power of an editor is almost unchallenged. They could even change a headline which had already been agreed upon in the afternoon meeting, if they think that it necessary. In the words of a journalist:

> *There are three institutions where hierarchical order was respected the most. The first is in the Catholic Church, the second is in the military and the last one is in the newsroom. Just like in the church and in the military, the higher the position of an editor in the newsroom, the more power he has. In the everyday editorial process, an editor has absolute power to edit, or even to completely un-publish, a story. (Dina, personal interview, February 5, 2015)*

From this illustration of the daily news production process above, it is clear how the mechanism that preserves *Kompas'* values operates. How, then, did Jakob's views influence the everyday social dynamics inside the newsroom?

3.5 A Portrait of the Newsroom

While the formal socialization of the values of Jakob are disseminated through a hierarchical structure that is formally institutionalized in the newsroom, the informal socialization of the journalistic values of the newspaper occurs through an informal, but no less influential, institution, namely the everyday interactions within the newsroom. It is in these everyday interactions between *Kompas* journalists that I could sense every aspect of Jakob's habitus being lived in the newsroom. The first and most prominent aspect is the Javanese values of respect and social harmony as a guiding principle in the daily interactions among the journalists. As explained earlier, the underlying assumption behind the principle of respect is that men are created unequally and it is a moral virtue to treat everyone according to their position in order to establish and maintain social harmony.

In the newsroom, showing respect is expressed in many ways: by posture, gestures, tone of voice, term of address, and above all, by language. It is impossible for two journalists to meet and to speak each other without precisely indicating their respect for their relationship with each other; such specifications are inherent in the structure of the Javanese language, just as the indication of time -past, present, or future- is inherent in the English language.

In the newsroom, everyone calls Jakob by his nickname: *Pak,* which literally means father. It is only Jakob who is addressed in this way, to demonstrate that he is the father of all journalists. Indeed, every time Jakob came down to the newsroom on the third floor of the *Kompas* building from his office on the sixth floor, every journalist treated him with great respect. They would bow, shake his hand, and sometimes even kiss his hand. Each time a celebration is taking place, whether it is the newspaper's anniversary, the New Year celebration, or the celebration of Jakob's birthday, his presence would be expected, as well a speech proffering wisdom and guidance. Furthermore, as all journalists are considered his sons and daughters, they address each other according in the manner of Javanese children addressing their siblings: a younger journalist will address senior or older male journalists as *Mas,* which is the nickname for older brothers in the Javanese family. Meanwhile, a younger journalist will call senior or older female journalists *Mas,* which is the nickname for older sisters.

The influences of Javanese culture are not only demonstrated by the use of such nicknames, but also by the language used in the newsroom. As a national newspaper publishing in the Indonesian language, it is understandable that people use this language in the newsroom. However, everyday conversation is very often mixed with the Javanese language. What impressed me was that everyone understands the Javanese language, even if they do not come from Java or are not Javanese themselves. Asep Setiawan, the editor of the political desk who is Chinese and grew up in a Sundanese culture, is one such example. Another example is Arif Subangun, the Chief Editor, who comes from the eastern part of Indonesia but can also speak Javanese.

Javanese proverbs are also very often cited by journalists, sprinkling their daily conversations. For instance, in a briefing before an editorial meeting of the political desk, Randu Rahardjo cited the proverb: *"yen wani ojo wedi-wedi, yen wedi ojo wani-wani"* (Randu Rahardjo, personal communication, 18 March 2014). This proverb means that if you are courageous, do not be afraid, and if you are afraid, then do not dare to try. This aims to convey a message that once

the newspaper has decided on a certain editorial position, it has to be consistent. On another occasion, Tyas Kuncahyono, a member of the editorial board, cited the proverb: "you may pinch, but don't hurt" (Ryaas Cahaya, 12 March 2014). This aims to say that we may criticize other people, but must not hurt them. Another proverb that is very often cited is: "*ngono yo ngono ning ojo ngono, apike ngene bae",* which means, "you are free to do it that way, but please don't. It is better to do it this way." This suggests that journalists can be critical of those in power, but only with moderation.

Ninok Leksono, a senior journalist at *Kompas,* provides a good example for this. If, for instance, an issue about the scarcity of fertilizer has been the headline for three consecutive days, Jakob would remind the journalists by asking: *"Sudah cukup kan Mas?"* which literally means: "It's enough, right?" This expression usually means that he wants to politely instruct the journalists to stop covering the issues, or at least, that he wants the issue to no longer be the headline news. Instead, it is placed on another page in a much smaller space. It suggests that the journalists may, to some extent, cover an issue considered to be critical of the power holders; however, that coverage should not be too much. In this regard, covering the problem of fertilizer scarcity means addressing the government's failure to provide the fertilizers for the farmer. In other words, putting the government under scrutiny.

Besides being manifested in verbal communication, the Javanese culture is also embodied in nonverbal communication. Body gestures are one example. On an occasion when the journalists were in casual conversation with their guest, a gesture of *Ngapurancang* was often demonstrated. This is a standing position with two hands put in front of the lower part of the body, usually demonstrated by a Javanese when he is stood next to an eminent person. I observed this gesture demonstrated by Jimmy Laluna, a journalist from the eastern part of Indonesia. Furthermore, this gesture was also displayed by Sularto, the Vice Director of the newspaper, as he was taking a picture in a standing position with the presidential candidate, Joko Widodo.

The nonverbal manifestation of Javanese culture also took place on other social occasions, such as in the seating arrangements at gatherings. A senior journalist once told me an interesting story about this. In a meeting which was attended by Jakob Oetama, a female journalist coming from a non-Javanese culture arrived late. When she came in, she took a seat in the front row, causing the senior journalists to smile pointedly at her. According to *Kompas* culture, what she did was considered inappropriate: she should have sat in the back row instead of the front, as the seating reflects the social strata in which the higher the position of a person, the further to the front they will be seated. The fact that the young journalist was late made the case even worse. However, the senior journalists did not directly voice such objections. They only smiled. This was because Javanese culture expects someone to be sufficiently self-aware without needing any direct instructions. Therefore, in this case, the smile functioned as a polite reminder.

The Javanese culture is also manifested in the performance evaluation of a new journalist. Jedi, a new journalist who was still on his probationary period, told me a story. He said that his poor understanding of the Javanese culture almost put him in danger of getting fired. In his first three-month evaluation as a new journalist, he got a poor mark. This was because he often argued with his superior, who was responsible for evaluating him:

> *This really made me feel shocked. In my [Bugis] culture people always put the parang (sword) in front of their bodies. This reflects an openness. It means that if you don't like someone or disagree with his argument, we will talk openly about it. In Javanese culture, people put a keris (knife) in the back of their body. They hide their weapon. It means that if they do not like someone or disagree with him, they do not immediately complain. Instead they wait until the problem becomes really serious. This is what happened to me. I got a bad mark in my evaluation because I liked arguing with him. If he didn't like me, he should have said it openly. If he preferred that I don't argue with*

> *him, he should have said it. But don't just give me bad mark. I only found out about this after Mbak Poppy, the Manager of Human Resources, explained to me what actually had gone on. (Jedi, personal interview, February 18, 2014).*

The illustration above also provides an example on how the new journalist was slowly forced to internalize the Javanese culture.

In Indonesia, the ethnicity which is believed to be closest to Javanese in terms of indirectness, is Sundanese. However, a Sundanese editor also complained about the extreme indirectness of Javanese. He said in an interview:

> *I would still ask 'why?' if an editor did not publish my story. After he explained, I would understand. But my friend from Java, when I did not publish his story, did not complain or ask why. But the next day, he treated me differently. He was not as nice as before. The Javanese don't express their agreement or disagreement, but inside they hide and plan revenge. (Cecep, personal interview, August 26, 2016)*

Some journalists believe that the domination of Javanese culture is a positive thing for the newspaper. A senior journalist suggested, "In the cultural diversity in the newsroom, Java becomes the umbrella. This is exactly the reason why we are strong." (Joyono, personal interview, April 23, 2015).

Indeed, most *Kompas* journalists are Javanese, or born in and raised in Javanese culture. The Human Resources department of the newspaper supplied me with information about the background of the journalists: out of 227 *Kompas* journalists, 179 of them were born in Java. This amounts to 78.8% of the total *Kompas* workforce. Those 176 journalists could be listed in more details as follows: from Central Java (46 journalists), from Jakarta (37 journalists), from Jogjakarta (36 journalists), East Java (34 journalists) and from West Java (26 journalists). While the statistics above provide a clear picture about the domination of Javanese journalists in the newsroom,

I am aware that it is problematic to homogenize them. First of all, the place where a journalist is born does not necessarily mean that he or she grew up according to the culture of that place. People who were born in Central Java, for instance, could grow up in a Minang culture if the parents are of Minang ethnicity. Second, not all the provinces in Java have the typical Javanese culture. People in West Java, for instance, grow up in a Sundanese culture and speak Sundanese in their daily lives. Furthermore, people in Jakarta usually group together in a multicultural environment, as the city is the place where people from all places, ethnicities and religions in Indonesia come together to live. Thirdly, not all provinces in Java enjoy the same degree of Javanese culture. It is generally believed that people from Central Java or Jogjakarta have a stronger Javanese culture than people from East Java. The Javanese language used in Central Java and Jogjakarta, for instance, is generally believed to be more refined than the Javanese language used in East Java.

Diversity in the Catholic leadership

As suggested in the earlier part, the Catholic-ness of Jakob, making him part of a minority group in Indonesia, influenced him to support the idea of pluralism. This idea has been also manifested in the newsroom, as seen in the diverse religious background of the journalists. This can be seen in this following table (from *Kompas* database as collected by its human resource division):

Table 1
Kompas Journalists Based on Religious Affiliation

Religion	Number	Percentage
Buddhism	3	1.3%
Hinduism	2	0.8%
Islam	117	51.5%
Christianity	21	9.3%
Catholicism	84	37%
Total	227	

From the table above, it can be seen that most of the journalists are Islamic believers (51.5%). Following Islam, in second rank were Catholics (37%). The other three religions: Christianity (9.3%), Buddhism (1.3%), and Hinduism (0.8%), are only embraced by a small minority of the journalists. From this composition, it can be seen that there is indeed religious pluralism within the newsroom. However, this composition does not quite reflect the composition of religious believers in Indonesia, in which the majority are Islamic believers and other religions only share a minority percentage. According to the Indonesian Center for Statistics Bureau (BPS), the composition is as follows: Islam (87.18%), Christianity (6.95%), Catholicism (2.90%), Hinduism (1.6%) and Buddhism (0.71%)[21]. Therefore, in contrast to the Indonesian population where the number of Catholic believers is in a vastly lower proportion than the number of Islamic believers, at *Kompas* the difference is less prevalent. This is where the role of Jakob, as well as PK Ojong, as Catholic believers, plays a role.

[21] The complete figures of religious believers according to the Center for Statistical Bureau (BPS) in 2010 are: Islam (207.176.162/87.18%), Christianity (16.528.162/6.95%), Catholicism (6.907.873/2.90%), Hinduism (4.012.116/1.6%), Buddhism (1.703.254/0.71%), Khonghucu (117.091/0.04%) and other religions (299.617/0.12%).

The recruitment process is done in such a way so that the number of Catholic believers is not so much less than the number of Islamic believers. This can be seen from the composition of new journalists recruited in 2013-2014 when I was conducting my fieldwork, in which out of 12 new journalists, 5 were Catholics, 6 were Muslim, and the rest were Christian. Therefore, almost half of the new journalists are Catholics.

There are many thoughts about the reasons behind this. Some journalists believe that the large numbers of journalists who are Catholic believers at *Kompas* is not intentionally orchestrated. Rather, it is simply because they share a similar attitude and perspective with their senior fellows who recruited them. However, this affinity has been the subject of envy from other journalists. A Sundanese Islamic journalist told me, in a disparaging but even tone, that it would be impossible for him to ever be a Chief Editor, and the same applied to his other non-Catholic colleagues.

Moreover, it is a historical fact that most of the members of the *Kompas* editorial board were Catholics believers. In the book of Sularto (2007), which listed the members of the editorial board from 1965 until 2006, it could be deduced from their names that at least 80% of the members were Catholic believers. If we look into the names of *Kompas* chief editors from 1965-2016, they are mostly Catholic believers too, except in the two periods of Suryopratomo and Bambang Sukartiono. Consecutively, they both served as a Chief Editor of *Kompas* from 2001-2007 and 2007-2009. But since then, all the Chief Editors have been Catholic believers: Arif Subangun (2009-2014) and Randu Rahardjo (2014 until the current time). Therefore, only nine years out of more than a half-century has the newspaper been led by non-Catholic believers. While the selection of Chief Editor is under the full remit of Jakob Oetama, and only he himself knows the reasons for his choices, a senior journalist hypothesized that the selection is purely based on merit. He suggested that the journalists who have the best qualifications to be Chief Editor or board

members were only coincidently Catholic believers (Jimmy Laluna, personal interview, May 24, 2017).

The world of well-educated men

The *Kompas* newsroom is also dominated by men. Out of 227 journalists, 160 (70,5%) of them are men. Furthermore, in more than half a century of the newspaper's operation, there has only ever been one woman who has held a position on the editorial board: Ninuk Mardiana Pambudy. In an interview with a senior male journalist, he explained that the reason for this was that female journalists usually refuse to be appointed to the editorial board as they want to avoid spending too much time in the newsroom, mainly so that they can spend more time with their family. Indeed, there were some cases where female journalists resigned from the newspaper, as their husbands wanted them to have more time at home. Therefore, while the fact that Jakob is a man must influence the gender composition in the newsroom, the scarce number of female journalists also reflects the patriarchal nature of Indonesian society, in which men are entitled to play the role of breadwinners for the family.

The composition of the newsroom is also dominated by highly educated staff, which can be seen from the statistic that out of a total of 227 *Kompas* journalists, 216 (95.1%) of them are university graduates. As Jakob is a well-educated person himself, it seems reasonable that he expects his staff to be as well.

Challenges to Jakob's influence

Although Jakob Oetama is the central figure at *Kompas*, his influence does not go unchallenged. During the course of the newspaper's history, which has lasted for more than five decades, there have been many challenges to Jakob's authority inside the newsroom. The conflict in relation to the labor union and stock ownership was arguably the biggest challenge to Jakob's influence. This conflict divided the newspaper journalists: there were those who favored the union and those who favored Jakob. Furthermore, this conflict also attracted

attention from media practitioners from outside the newspaper, both at the national and the international level.

This conflict first took place in 1988. It was triggered by an attempt by some *Kompas* journalists to build a labor union for themselves and their colleagues. One of the main initiators was Albert Kuhon, who was also supported by Irwan Julianto, Maruli Tobing, and Arif Subangun. The idea to create a labor union came after *Kompas* changed from being a foundation (yayasan) which is a non-profit institution, to a business company (PT) on November 23, 1983. (Nainggolan, in Sularto, 2007: 157). According to Dhakidae (1991), this transformation from a foundation to business entity was a consequence of the change in government regulation enacted in 1982, that prohibited a foundation from making a profit. In line with this shift in status, Kuhon and some other journalists signed a letter of petition demanding the creation of a labor union.

This idea of creating a union was seen as a direct attack on Jakob, as the founder and main business owner of *Kompas Gramedia Group*. This is because the union demanded the right to access 20% of *Kompas* stock, as stipulated in the law. This meant that Jakob had to decrease his ownership of the paper, and consequently stood to lose his absolute and complete control of the company. However, Jakob successfully tamed this attack in a rather Javanese manner. To the union, he suggested that *Kompas* was actually built around the sense of family-ism *(kekeluargaan),* with all workers as members of the family. Therefore, a labor union would be seen as a threat to the sense of kinship and collectivity. This "polite" approach was combined with some "repressive" approaches such as not publishing the pieces by Albert Kuhon,[22] one of the initiators of the union, and through sending Irwan Julianto, another initiator, to

[22] Kuhon eventually resigned from *Kompas* as a result of this conflict.

work in another city. Jakob's approach successfully thwarted the challenge, and for a moment, the journalists forgot the idea.

Ten years later, in 1998, the attempt to create a labor union was revived. *Kompas* journalists Syahnan Rangkuti and Bambang Wisudo were among the initiators. Initially starting with just a handful of journalist who supported the idea, gradually the majority of journalists came to join the cause. In the early stage of this movement, the idea to build a labor union was indeed supported by most *Kompas* journalists, including that of the ownership of 20% of *Kompas* stock by the union. The fact that Indonesia was undergoing radical political change after the fall of Suharto was seen as the right time for demanding freedom to build a union for *Kompas* workers. However, just like in the previous decade, this idea was again opposed by Jakob and other *Kompas* elites. In response to Wisudo, Jakob said:

> *All of you are my children, aren't you?" But then we said: "Sorry sir, our position is equal. There is no father and no children here." Then, Jakob said: "Okay, then, if you don't want to be regarded as my children". (Bambang Wisudo, personal interview, June 12, 2014)*

In addition to this soft approach, Wisudo was isolated at the newspaper. He was still allowed to work, but no longer got any assignments. Furthermore, any stories that he wrote based on his initiative went mostly unpublished by the editors. On top of this, he was then sent to work in Ambon in an attempt to cut him off from the union. In response, Wisudo opted to resign from the newspaper.

Unlike in 1988, the conflict with Wisudo triggered internal division within *Kompas.* The newsroom was divided between those who supported Wisudo and those who defended the company. This internal conflict within *Kompas* also attracted attention from media practitioners in the Independent Journalists in Alliance (AJI), who supported Wisudo, arguing that *Kompas* had violated the rights of its journalists. Support also came from the Legal Aid

Institute, who helped Wisudo file a lawsuit against the paper. Furthermore, academics as well press freedom activists attacked *Kompas* by sending petitions to the newspaper, and a complaint was also sent to *Kompas'* Chief Editor from the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), condemning the violation of Wisudo's journalistic rights.

Interestingly, whilst Jakob and the elites of the newspaper never successfully managed to tame the conflict, there was a prevailing view among the journalists that they were, indeed and above all, members of one big family at *Kompas*. Jakob was seen as a father and Wisudo was seen as one of his children. Furthermore, when a quarrel inevitably arose between child and father, other family members should always side with the father, who has the highest position in the family and deserves to be treated with respect. While there were explicit moves of support for Wisudo by some journalists, the fact that many more favored Jakob is evidence of his influence on his staff, exercised over many years of socialization. The fact that these workers never got what they wanted – a labor union - was another piece of evidence of Jakob's hegemony. While Jakob still insisted on not sharing any form of ownership with his workers, he promised to give journalists some percentage of the profits. It is noteworthy, however, that most journalists still do not know how much the annual profit of the company is, let alone the amount that the company should share.

Surprisingly, despite the sharp conflict among them, both Kuhon and Wisudo still view Jakob with great respect and love. According to Pontoh, a journalist from Pantau, Kuhon said:

> *In the meeting (to discuss our dispute), Swantoro gave me no chance to speak. But Jakob said to him: "Kuhon is here. Why don't we give him a chance to have his say?" That is why I still very much respect Jakob. (Pontoh, 2013: 31)*

The same sentiment was also expressed by Wisudo. Recalling his personal relationship to Jakob, he said:

> *My personal relationship with Pak Jakob is good. Other journalists described it as a love-hate relationship. If Pak Jakob went to the political desk, the first member of staff he tried to find was me. This lead new journalists to say: "Mas Bambang is very powerful." (Wisudo, personal interview, June 12, 2014)*

Even though this remark may seem surprising, it is actually the expected outcome of a typical conflict between father and son in a Javanese family. As suggested by Jay (1969), even when a case of dispute between a son and a father takes place, a Javanese child usually still views his father with respect and admiration. The enduring dedication of Kuhon and Wisudo to Jakob suggests that the notion to view Jakob as a father has provided the most potent tool for the socialization and preservation of Jakob's values and influences.

The illustration above presents how *Kompas* is managed with a strong sense of family-ism *(kekeluargaan)* and father-ism *(bapak-ism)*. Interestingly, this feature resembles the way in which the New Order state was also managed by Suharto (Bourchier, 2015; Pemberton; Reeve, 1987; 1994; Shiraishi, 2000). Therefore, while there was political pressure from the New Order regime which was the cause of fear and anxiety for Jakob, as explained in Chapter 2, the ideology of *kekeluargaan* and *bapakisme* came just as naturally to Jakob as it did to Suharto. It was something, (and not the only thing), that the management of *Kompas* shared too, and not out of fear or compulsion. In this sense, *Kompas* and the New Order government were natural bedfellows.

3.6 Conclusion

Even though *Kompas* daily newspaper was founded by two people, PK Ojong and Jakob Oetama, the journalistic practice and outlook of the newspaper was very much inspired by Jakob Oetama. The historical setting in when the

newspaper was founded, as well as the historical trajectory of the daily, has made Jakob the central figure in the newspaper. The fact that Ojong was a political outcast when the newspaper was founded pushed Jakob to adopt more functions in guiding the newspaper's editorial policy. The closure of *Kompas* by President Suharto in 1978 made the role of Jakob even bigger, as this incident made Ojong withdraw completely from the newspaper's editorial policy. Furthermore, the death of Ojong in 1980 was another significant historical event, leaving Jakob the sole owner to guide the *Kompas* ship. Therefore, it is the habitus of Jakob which has very much influenced the ideals and values of the newspaper, its journalists, as well as its journalistic style.

In summary, the habitus of Jakob can be best formulated as the habitus of a man who has been born and raised as a Javanese as well as a Catholic believer, who worked as a teacher, and who also enjoyed formal journalistic training, before gaining considerable professional experience as a journalist. Even though these various aspects of Jakob's habitus have all shaped his journalistic style, his Javanese-ness has been one of the most defining influences. It is for this reason that, when confronted with the fact of having to live under an authoritarian regime that strongly controlled the media, his Javanese background inspired Jakob to develop a particular kind of journalistic style, characterized by a strong sense of indirectness, politeness as well as cautiousness in conveying its message to the readers, especially when reporting on those in positions of power. I describe this style and ideology as being the *Kompas Way*. It is also the Javanese values of Jakob - and to a lesser degree, his Catholic-ness- that has also shaped the organizational structure and the everyday social interactions within the *Kompas* newsroom, where the hierarchical structure means that the decision-making process is very much under the control of the newsroom elites, with Jakob at the top. Meanwhile, the daily social interactions within the newsroom have been guided by the principle of respect and harmony, where every journalist is regarded as being a member of a family, with Jakob as the one and only father. These two factors

have provided the medium for the socialization of Jakob's habitus to be internalized among the journalists.

Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that this influence of Jakob inside the newsroom has not gone entirely unchallenged. As explained in the last section of this chapter, there were indeed some challenges within the newsroom as demonstrated in the case of the labor union, as well as the question of share ownership. Although the case is not directly related to any editorial issues, it is enough to show that there is an attempt to counter the influence of the newspaper owner. Furthermore, resistance to Jakob also occurs in the realms of editorial policy, including when it comes to journalistic style. The subsequent three chapters will examine this: Chapter 4 will discuss the practice of self-censorship within the newsroom, Chapter 5 will examine the watchdog function of *Kompas* in their coverage of corruption, and Chapter 6 will investigate the position of the newspaper during Indonesia's presidential election in 2014. These three chapters will illustrate clearly the obedience as well as the resistance of *Kompas* journalists in implementing the *Kompas Way*.

Part II

Ideals and Pragmatism in Practice

Chapter 4

Rasa as the Basis of *Kompas* Self-Censorship

"We try our best not to hurt others' feelings; that's part of Javanese culture. What's the advantage of hurting others, right? I could write whatever I want, but will other people feel fine with that? Would they be angry or not? Would other people feel offended? Would their hearts feel the call?"

~Arunata, former Kompas journalist, personal communication, March 3, 2015

It was Friday night in the *Kompas* newsroom. Even though the clock on the wall showed that it was almost midnight, the newsroom was still crowded with journalists: a normal everyday scene. As midnight approached, the editors became even busier, striving to meet their deadlines. In one corner of the room, something unusual was happening. Five journalists were seated around a table near the political desk. Two of them were senior editors, while the rest were young journalist candidates, still in their probationary period. This was the last day of the their training at the political desk and the three-month evaluations

were being carried out. This evaluation is important in determining whether these candidates get appointed as permanent employees or not.

On one side of the table was a young woman named Sheryl. She was a fresh graduate from a prominent university in Indonesia and had been working as a trainee at *Kompas* ever since. Asep, the Chief Editor of the political desk, was chastising her for a recent mistake involving two very important news sources. The first source was a former military general, who was also one of the former Vice Presidents in the Suharto era, Tri Sutrisno. The second was Harry Tjan, a senior political researcher from CSIS, an important think tank organization during Indonesia's New Order regime. Reporting on a seminar held by "The Movement of Strengthening Pancasila *(GPP)",* of which Try Sutrisno was the chair and Harry Tjan acted as the main speaker, Sheryl was said to have quoted the words of these news sources incorrectly. This was significant, not just because these important news sources were both influential political figures, but also because they had close ties with *Kompas*' media owner, Jakob Oetama.

The seminar had discussed the notion of returning to the old constitution. This was the 1945 Constitution (henceforth, UUD 1945), which was created by Indonesia's founding fathers. UUD 1945 proposed that the Indonesian People's Assembly (henceforth, MPR) should come back to its function as the highest state institution that represents the people. This means that the power to elect the president and to create the blueprint for Indonesian development (henceforth, the GBHN) would be returned back to MPR. Sheryl, in this case, had written an article as expected, entitled: *"Perubahan UUD 1945, kembalikan Fungsi MPR dan GBHN"* (The Amendment of the 1945 Constitution, Giving Back the Function of MPR and The GBHN*)*, and it had appeared on the second page of the newspaper, dated Thursday, February 20, 2014. The headline of the article was as follows:

> *The Movement of Strengthening Pancasila argues that the amendment of the 1945 constitution conducted in 2002, which has erased The GBHN and decreased the power of MPR, needs to be reconsidered. (Kompas, February 20, 2014)*

Early in the morning on February 20, Harry Tjan made a direct complaint to the newspaper as he felt that he had been cited incorrectly. He agreed with the point about MPR and the reconsideration of the 2002 amendment, but he argued that The GBHN part had not been properly quoted. He did not think that The GBHN -the state policy guidelines made by the People's Assembly (MPR) during the New Order period should be brought back. He argued that this was because The GBHN did not only direct the president's policy over five years, but had to also guide the developmental policy for decades. Therefore, in response to Tjan's complaint, everyone was looking at Sheryl. The secretary of Jakob Oetama (*Kompas'* President Director) had called the Chief Editor asking for her. Asep, Head of the political desk, then called Sheryl directly at home. It was a shocking morning for the young trainee, and she was extremely nervous about the evaluation meeting to be held the following day.

Sheryl believed that Tjan had made the point about bringing back The GBHN, and Asep, in fact, believed her. In discussing Sheryl's work that night, Asep made it clear that it was no-one's fault. Yet, he suggested that it would be good to issue an apology. He said:

> *This is not your fault. People easily get offended by us. If other newspapers slapped people in the face or knocked them down with the stories they published, people are fine with that. But if we're the one who does it, even just a tiny little thing, people get deeply offended. In Javanese, we say, "ngono yo ngono ning ojo ngono" (you may behave that way, but please behave like this instead). (Asep, evaluation meeting, February 21, 2014).*

Asep argues here that, whether *Kompas* was right or wrong, apologizing would always be a wise move. In doing so, he emphasized the importance of *"rasa"* in conducting reportage in the field and in doing journalism in general to these young reporters. With regard to this concept of *rasa,* on another occasion, Asep defined it to me as follows:

> *[It is] an ability to show sympathy to all humans, regardless of whether they are a good or a bad person, because of one's understanding that one is not an angel oneself, and who therefore, can also make a mistake. (Asep, personal interview, November 26, 2017).*

That night, Asep advised the trainees that revealing someone's mistake in news coverage is not always wise. He gave an example of how a previous journalist once wrote a story about a car accident without revealing the fact that the driver was drunk, because the driver had subsequently died. In his view, this was done out of respect towards someone who had already passed away. He questioned the benefit of writing negatively about a person, when that person had already suffered. He ended his advice with the remark: *"rasa* will provide you with guidance as to whether a story should still be explored further or not." (Asep, evaluation meeting, February 21, 2014).

However, in the example above, one could ask Asep, that while *Kompas* wanted to respect the death of a person by not revealing that he was drunk, did it not also mean that the newspaper had failed to teach the reader a lesson about the dangers of drink driving? With regard to Sheryl, one could ask why the paper should apologize, if they were actually right?

This chapter will examine the particular form of self-censorship that *Kompas* engages in. I will argue this self-censorship is informed and legitimized by the interpretations of *rasa.* Subsequently, I will argue that this emphasis on *rasa* is influenced by the political economy interest of the newspaper. Indeed, the reluctance of *Kompas* to criticize power holders is related to its interest in

securing its economic interests and to obtain protection through its elite contacts. These interests make the newspaper wary of offending its influential and useful associates. In this regard, both cultural factors as well as political economy factors have intertwined in shaping *Kompas'* journalistic practice.

This chapter will be divided into six parts. The first part will discuss the concept of *rasa* as found in the literature on Javanese culture and examine how this concept is understood by *Kompas* journalists. Next, it will present the use of *rasa* in the case of self-censorship of the newspaper's coverage of power holders. The third part discusses the use of *rasa* in framing the headline title of a news article on corruption, illustrating how self-censorship operates at *Kompas*. The fourth part will discuss how *rasa* has been internalized as the habitus of the newspaper's journalists, and finally, I will discuss several cases of the use of *rasa* in the newspaper's conflicts with conservative Islamic groups. I will argue that even though *rasa* is a cultural value, its implementation has very much been influenced by some political economy factors. To being, I will start my discussion by outlining briefly the theorization about *rasa* in Javanese culture according to the existing literature in the next section.

4.1 What is Rasa?

Literature on Javanese culture has highlighted *rasa* as one of the central concepts to understanding the Javanese way of life, especially in relation to Javanese beliefs or religion (Geertz, 1960; Mulder, 1978; Stange, 1984; Suseno, 1997). One of the most prominent scholars was Geertz, whose theorization on *rasa* has mostly been adopted by other scholars. Geertz perceives of *rasa* as being a common element existing in three main aspects of the religious life of the Javanese gentry: etiquette, art and mystical practice. These three aspects represent the Javanese's effort to discipline himself, moving away from the outer aspect of life and focusing on the inner. By 'etiquette' he refers to the polished interpersonal behavior that smooths daily interactions with other people. 'Art' is seen as a dual discipline of mind and body which manifests in inner significance being revealed in outward gesture. 'Mystical practice' refers

to the intensive regulation of thought and feeling to marshal an individual's spiritual resources for the attainment of ultimate enlightenment.

In defining *rasa,* Geertz argued that *rasa* has two primary meanings: "feeling" and "meaning". As "feeling" it refers to both the five physical sensations such as seeing, hearing, talking, smelling, and tasting, and also the emotional "feelings" of the heart such as sadness and happiness. Meanwhile, as "meaning", *rasa* applies to the perception and understanding of what is hidden between the lines of the words in a letter, poem, or even daily verbal interaction. Furthermore, it also applies to external physical movements which represent the internal, such as the movement in a dance, polite gesture, or a smile. Indeed, while it is hard to examine whether someone has internalized *rasa* and therefore is at inner peace with himself, people can deduce it from his external appearance, especially in regard to his etiquette. In the words of Geertz, "the more refined one's feeling, the more profound one's understanding, the more elevated one's moral character, the more beautiful one's external aspects." (1960: 239). A Javanese who possesses *rasa* and therefore an inner peace will demonstrate refined and polite behavior towards others, which will also make those surrounding him feel an inner peace within. The ultimate end is the creation of social harmony, ensuring every person lives in a state of tranquility.

This conceptualization of *rasa* as suggested by Geertz has been shared by other scholars such as Mulder (1978), Stange (1984) and Suseno (1997). Mulder (1978), for instance, relates the Javanese emphasis on *rasa* to the principles of harmony, oneness, and even coincidence, which are expressed in Javanese social life. Meanwhile, Stange (1984) suggests that a harmonious society is inseparable from good leadership, as a good leader not only understands and reflects the will of the people, but becomes the physical embodiment of the collective. In a similar vein, Suseno (1997) suggests that expressing respect for hierarchical order in society is extremely satisfying to the gentry, as it contributes to the maintenance of a system where everybody has his place and

everything is in order, and therefore, all aspects of society can progress smoothly. No-one needs to fear confrontation, surprise or disappointment. This feeling of being bound together in an ordered society gives him an inner feeling of peace, and ensures an absence of conflicting emotions and tensions, all of which fulfill his idea of a good life. It is in this regard that when there is a dispute or argument, a Javanese would prioritize and seek harmony. Suseno explains, "The decisive issue is not the question of truth, but whether this world-view is experienced as "fitting" and whether it presents itself through a meaningful rasa." (1997: 132)

In this sense, rasa is interpreted as an obligation to social order or harmony which takes priority over an obligation to speak or seek the truth. This is encapsulated in a Javanese proverb: *"bener durung mesti pener"* which means conveying the truth is not always right if it violates social harmony. The case of the drunk driver above illustrates this interpretation of *rasa*. For Asep, it was a journalistic truth, or *bener,* that he was drunk; however, revealing this would be considered *ora pener* (not fitting).

As I will discuss in the next section, such a concept of *rasa* is useful in interpreting the news production process in the *Kompas* newsroom. It helps to explain how on many occasions, a reluctance to criticize power holders does not stem from a conscious act of self-censorship. Rather, it comes from an almost embodied sense of social obligation, of knowing what proper behavior is, or as Suseno puts it, what is 'fitting', which often clashes with the difficult ideal of 'speaking truth to power holders'.

4.2 Rasa as a Basis for Resolving Complaints

How was Sheryl's case above solved? Later on the same day, at Jakob Oetama's request, Sheryl was asked to come to the house of Harry Tjan to apologize. She was accompanied by Heru, one of the editors at the political desk. On the way to Tjan's house, Heru gently warned Sheryl to just be quiet and politely listen to whatever Tjan had to say:*" Don't argue. Just answer, 'Yes.' "* To Sheryl's

surprise Harry Tjan was not angry at all. He seemed even happy to see them both and warmly welcomed them into his house. Then, as the discussion went on, Tjan explained the reason why he had made a complaint. He explained that he had never agreed with the idea of bringing back The GBHN in the Indonesian Constitution, and that he had even said so in some previous seminars. Sheryl told me, "*As ordered, I just listened politely to his complaint, smiling, nodding, and saying yes when necessary."*

On the next day, Friday, February 21, 2014, a smaller news article appeared on the same page as the original article Sheryl had written, entitled: "*Pembukaan UUD 1945 Memuat Tujuan Negara Indonesia* (The Opening of the 1945 Constitution Admitted Indonesian State's Aim). The article, which was only one paragraph in length, did not adequately clarify the error made in the original article. In relation to The GBHN, this second article only said that "Harry Tjan argues that The GBHN is no longer relevant to the current situation, as a president will only maximally work for ten years." (*Kompas*, February 21, 2014). This insufficient clarification was obvious considering the content of the article above compared to the original article:

> *The People's Assembly has to function as the highest state institution which conducts the people's mandate and also enacts The GBHN as stated in the 1945 Constitution, before the amendment. (Harry Tjan, Seminar of Restudying the Amendment of the 1945 Constitution, Granadi Jakarta, February 19, 2014)*

These two messages have the potential to convey different meanings and to confuse the readers, since they contradict each other.

The source of the confusion lies within the inconsistent message showing the same news source speaking about The GBHN. The original article said that according to the source, Indonesia should return to The GBHN, while the revised article stated the opposite - that according to the source, Indonesia should not use The GBHN. The supposedly revised article did not show any

notification statement saying that it was meant to be a revision (*ralat*) of the previous day's article. In terms of quantity, the clarification was insufficient as the latter article was much shorter that the first one: while the first article was 8 paragraphs and 6 columns in length, the second was only one paragraph and one single column in length. This imbalance in the length of coverage may suggest that the latter article did not properly clarify the issue and explain the contrasting statement given by the sources. However, no complaint appeared the next day. Both parties seemed happy. Try Sutrisno, the Chair of The GPP, even made a phone call to the newsroom conveying his gratitude for the coverage.

Both Try Sutrisno and Harry Tjan believed that they were right and *Kompas* was wrong. In this kind of situation, the Indonesian Press Law as stated in the Regulation of the Press Council (*Peraturan Dewan Pers*) number 3/2006 regulates that the press has to give the news sources the right to answer (*hak jawab*) and the right to correct (*hak koreksi*) sufficiently (*secara proposional*). The latter article published on February 21 never stated that it was meant to clarify the statement made in the previous article. At the same time, the news sources, despite their complaints, did not push the case further by claiming their legal rights. So, were the news sources right? Or had the newspaper made no error in its coverage, as the Chief Editor believed? If so, why were they willing to apologize? This is where *rasa* came into play. The newspaper did not want to disrespect Tjan by refusing his request; on the other hand, Tjan did not want to embarrass the paper by making an explicit confession that it had been wrong.

4.3 Rasa as a Guide to Framing Corruption Stories

Rasa also informs the way in which stories of corruption are covered. The particular way in which *Kompas* deals with corruption coverage reflects the cautious character of *Kompas* reporting. A particular case can illustrate this.

It was Wednesday, March 12, 2014. At *Kompas,* the weekly meeting was about to start at 10 am. People were gathered in the main meeting room, and *Kompas* Chief Editor, Arif Subangun, opened the meeting by discussing a recent complaint made about the news coverage of the Indonesian Vice President, Boediono. The complaint concerned an article dated March 7, 2014, entitled: "*Nama Boediono Disebut 67 Kali*" (Boediono's Name was mentioned 67 times.)"

The article covered the judicial process of Budi Mulya, Deputy General of Indonesian Bank. The Indonesian Central bank was, through its relation with the Century Bank scandal, involved in a mega scandal involving corruption that cost the state more than $ 547 million (7,45 trillion rupiah). The article said that during the prosecution, the judge had mentioned Boediono in his position as the Governor of the bank in 2008. He suggested that Boediono was involved in the bank's policy to bail out Century Bank, a policy that was only intended to lend the flailing bank about $ 49 million (632 million rupiah). In reality, however, Century Bank was lent a much bigger amount. The *Kompas* article – particularly its headline - left readers with the impression that there was a possibility that Boediono was involved in the scandal.

On the day after the article appeared, the spokesman of the Vice President's office, Yopie Hidayat, came to *Kompas* to complain directly about this headline. According to Asep, the Chief Editor of the political desk who was responsible for the headline, there was a strong indication that the Vice President himself had called the President Director of *Kompas,* Jakob Oetama, that day. In the meeting, Arif said, *"one of the things which has been criticized by the Vice President's office…. [is] about Kompas, that [the newspaper] seems to be losing its character."* (Arif Subangun, weekly editorial meeting, March 12, 2014). In response, Asep answered:

> *A staff member from the Vice President's office has complained about… for example, eemmm… the title of 67 having no meaning. This is a journalistic matter… in my view, even if the Vice President's name appeared only one time in our paper, it will still appear in other*

> *newspapers. I think it's a hugely significant fact that [Boediono's name] has been [mentioned] 67 times. This [scandal has led to] a big loss for the country (Asep, weekly editorial meeting, March 12, 2014)*

Here, Asep defended his position that, journalistically, there was nothing wrong with the headline title. His opinion was that there was news value in the fact that the judge believed that Boediono might have played a role in the scandal, which any media would surely cover.

In this regard, Asep had a point. Various other media had also covered the story of Boediono being summoned as a witness at this trial. They, too, had stated that it was *alleged* that he played a role. While *Kompas'* title only implied that the name of Boediono was mentioned, several other media were more explicit. One day prior to *Kompas'* article, on March 6, 2014 , *BBC.com* covered the story with the title: *"Century Indictment Revealed Boediono's Involvement."* While *Kompas'* headline only implied his involvement, the BBC's title explicitly stated that Boediono was involved according to the indictment of the judge. On the same day as the BBC article, *Tempo.co* wrote a story entitled: *"Century Scandal, JK: Boediono Must Be Responsible."* This headline suggested that Boediono should be made accountable according to Jusuf Kalla, the Indonesian Vice President of Century Bank at the time of the Century case in 2008, who had been the direct superior of Boediono. Still in the same month, *Koran Sindo,* on March 28, 2014, went even further by framing a story with a headline that suggested Boediono should resign from his position as Vice President: *"Being a Witness for Century Scandal, Boediono Was Pushed to Resign."*

In the meeting, Asep conveyed his suspicions over the complaint by asking Arif if the real reason behind it was because of the close relationship Boediono had with Jakob, the owner of *Kompas*. If this was the case, he would wholeheartedly acquiesce not to write any more critical stores about Boediono anymore. However, he insisted that the newspaper should be transparent. In his words: *"If it's because of Pak Jakob's relationship with Boediono (that I am*

not allowed to write about it), it's okay. But please make this explicit beforehand." (Asep, weekly editorial meeting, March 12, 2014).

Interestingly, Arif, the Chief Editor, agreed that there was nothing wrong with the content of the news article. The problem lay in the way *Kompas* had delivered the message, which needed to be softer. With a warm smile on his face, he said:

> *There was nothing wrong with what was written in that article. Let's talk about the way we convey the message. We are hard in principle but flexible in our way. So we do not differ in terms of principle. We should convey the reality. But the way to deliver it has to be more sophisticated… As for Pak Jakob, he never asked me to drop the news story. He did not intervene. But he did say: 'Boediono itu orang baik. Kasihan ya' (Boediono was a good man. It's sad to hear about this situation…). (Arif , weekly editorial meeting, March 12, 2014)*

After the meeting, which was only attended by a dozen editors, I posed a question to Ryaas Cahaya, a senior journalist and one of the vice chief editors on the editorial board. I asked whether the title had been correct in his view. His response was that the headline had been wrong. It was not a typical headline of a *Kompas* article. He said:

> *From my point of view, it was not Kompas. I mean, if we talk about that title. For better or worse, Boediono is the Head of the State. We must respect him… This is where culture becomes important. We need to explain to the young journalists about the character of Kompas. We pinch, but it should not hurt. (Ryaas Cahaya, personal interview, March 12, 2014)*

Interestingly, this view of Ryaas was also supported by other senior journalists, such as Budi Rahardjo, who was then also a vice chief editor of *Kompas.* He said Suseno's description of the importance of respecting those higher in the

hierarchical order echoes with what Ryaas Cahaya said when asked about Boediono: *"For better or worse, Boediono is the head of the state. We must respect to him."* (Ryaas Cahaya, personal interview, March 12, 2014).

Months after the meeting, on the afternoon of October 5, I had a chance to talk to Asep about the incident. He still believed that it did have something to do with the close relationship between Jakob and Boediono, and pointed out that both were originally from Jogjakarta and therefore aware of the Javanese values of respecting each other and trying their best not to enter into any direct confrontation. He implied that whilst Jakob might not have explicitly complained to Arif about it, but they all knew that if the owner said something like *"He was a good man, it's sad…,"* it means the journalists must pay strict attention to the implication. As explained in chapter 3, in the big family of *Kompas,* Jakob was regarded as the father of the journalists, who were seen as his children. Therefore, no journalist in the newsroom wanted to make Jakob, their father, feel sad. It was expected that *Kompas* journalists should have enough sensitivity and self-awareness not to put Jakob in this situation, without having to be told. This is especially true considering that everyone in the newsroom suspected that there had been phone calls between Jakob and Boediono in regard to the coverage.

As a journalists working for the newspaper for more than 15 years, Asep understood the importance of not offending Boediono's feelings, and the importance of using *rasa*. However, he thought his mistake lay in the fact that his *rasa* was not yet sufficiently refined in comparison to the newspaper elites in the higher positions. In his words:

> *Perhaps it was because of the different level of our (understanding about) rasa. That was why we had different interpretations on what kind of headline was considered appropriate. There is, for instance, no problem for young journalists like me to mention (the phrase) 67 times, but for senior journalists it might be considered inappropriate.*

> *Perhaps for them it was seen to be too confrontational." (Asep, personal interview, October 5, 2014).*

Such an explanation suggests that *rasa* was a shared journalistic value in the newsroom, of which both Asep and the editorial elites mutually understand. In this regard, both parties were aware that corruption stories should be conveyed in such a way that will not cause offence to those in power. Therefore, the disagreement between Asep, who had written the headline, and the senior editors, did not indicate the absence of *rasa*, but rather, confirms that the existence of *rasa* was an internalized social norm in the newsroom.

4.4 Rasa as a Strategy to Deal with Islamic Hardliners

Rasa was also used as a strategy to deal with attacks from Islamic hardline groups. Paying close examination to *Kompas'* history, this study found that every time the newspaper received complaints or even attacks from Islamic groups due to its coverage of Islam, it always preferred to apologize and admit that it had been wrong. This admission was made even when the journalists believed that they were actually accurate from a journalistic point of view. In this regard, what matters for *Kompas* journalists is not being right or wrong, but rather how to avoid conflict in order to maintain social harmony. These following stories will illustrate this point.

It was June 16, 2016. For Muslims in Indonesia, it was one of the days for celebrating the fasting month, Ramadan. On this day, a rather unusual event was going on inside the *Kompas* newsroom. Tens of uninvited guests, mostly dressed in white costumes, were visiting the office of the media group. They were the elites and members of the Islamic Front Defenders (FPI), an Islamic hardline group who were well-known for their sporadic raids in Indonesia, mostly in the name of defending Sharia law. Two days before, a letter had been sent to *Kompas* from the FPI[23], mentioning that they wanted to make a visit to

[23] See appendix 1.

discuss some of the recent coverage. That night, one of the journalists said to me with a bitter smile: *"This is a special exception where a guest determines the date and time of their visit without waiting for approval."* Therefore, as planned, at around 1 pm on June 16, these special "guests" were seated in one of the newspaper's conference rooms, being welcomed by the Chief Editor, Randu Rahardjo. In attendance were also some elites of the media group from *Kompas.TV* and *Kompas.com*.

In a video that went viral on YouTube, however, people could see that the ensuing discussion was rather one-sided. It was the members of FPI who dominated, while the journalists mostly listened passively to them. One of the most noticeable figures in the discussion was Munarman, the spokesperson of the FPI. Speaking in a loud voice and occasionally pointing a finger at the seated journalists, he accused the media group of covering recent events in an unfair manner. In particular, it was the news relating to the latest raid of street vendors by the Public Order Apparatus (Satpol PP) that involved a middle-aged woman, Saeni, who sold food during the daytime in Serang Regency, on June 11, 2016.[24] Munarman believed that the raid had been done with the aim of preserving good virtue, namely enforcing the implementation of Sharia law. However, he believed that *Kompas* had reported the news in such a way that portrayed Saeni as the victim and the Satpol PP as the perpetrators, and the raid as unjust. Thus, in the view of the FPI, *Kompas* had misrepresented Muslims in a negative light and had not considered their perspective.. Indeed, Munarman evoked the same term that *Kompas* journalists use to describe their manner of reporting*: perasaan* (feeling). In his words: *"Why does Kompas so often offend us? This is hard to measure, indeed, as it relates to feelings… (But) it is negative, and it hurts,"* (Munarman, meeting at *Kompas*, June 16, 2016).

The complaint from the FPI members did not merely stop at asking for explanations, as more offensive statements were also launched by Munarman,

[24] During the month of Ramadan, it is forbidden for a Muslim to eat during the daytime.

as well as other FPI members. In an aggressive tone, Munarman warned the *Kompas* journalists sitting before him that such coverage could lead to another '1998'. With '1998', he was referring to the mass riots in the days approaching the forced resignation of President Suharto on May 21, 1998, which involved brutal ethnic violence towards Chinese minorities. Thousands of stores owned by Chinese Indonesian were destroyed, robbed and burnt, and hundreds of Chinese women were sexually abused. There is still an ongoing debate about the underlying reasons why the Chinese were targeted; however, rumors suggested that this was part of the strategy of the regime to deflect the public's anger away from the weakening President Suharto.

Now, Munarman was implying that a similar incident could also happen to *Kompas,* and even more ominously, would therefore target not just ethnic minorities, but a religious minority too. He specifically targeted the historical roots of the newspaper, which had a close relationship with the Catholic Church, and went even further by suggesting that *Kompas'* coverage could be seen as an insult from Catholic believers to Islamic ones:

> *Do you wish for Kompas to be perceived in that way? Kompas: the pastor's commander? (Kompas = Komando Pastor?) Do you want the old riots to start again? I don't think you want that.… If a media as big as Kompas leads people in this direction, don't blame the people if they get angry. We serve as an alarm… the FPI is an alarm. It's better than if we were just silent and then suddenly the 98 incident erupted again. And it can get even worse, as there is also religion involved… If Kompas is perceived to be under the command of the pastor, it would be a target. We don't demand a lot. We don't want you to defend Islam. But please, be balanced and proportional. (Munarman, FPI member, June 16, 2016)*

Interestingly, despite believing that *Kompas* was not wrong in journalistic terms, their journalists responded to such an attack with submission. Responding with a smile and a soft voice, Randu Rahardjo answered the guests as follows: "*If we*

are seen as having crossed the boundaries (kebablasan), please kindly let us know…". (Randu Rahardjo, June 23, 2016). In line with Randu, the journalists from *Kompas TV* responded as follows: *"Now that we have been advised that we might have crossed a line in our reportage, we will really take this as a lesson…."* . The other senior journalists who acted as representatives of the *Kompas* media group wisely elaborated, saying: *"Thank you for your reminder."* Instead of arguing that they had, in fact, been correct journalistically, they decided to admit that they were wrong and asked for forgiveness from the Islamic hardliners.

To put *Kompas*' submissive attitude in context, it is important to emphasize that Kompas was not the only newspaper who reported on the attack by the FPI members on the vendor. There were at least 10 other online media news outfits that also reported on the raid by Satpol PP on Saeni: *Republika, SindoNews, DW, BBC, BeritaSatu, Detik, Tempo, The Jakarta Post, Media Indonesia* and *Viva.* Of all these, *Republika* –an Islamic platform newspaper, was one of the most critical of the raid, and explicitly wrote that Saeni was the victim of the Satpol PP. On June 13, 2016, they wrote: "Johan (the spokesperson of the President) said that the President had given special support to Saeni, who was the victim of Satpol PP" (Republika, June 13, 2016). This line was written in an article entitled: *"(President) Jokowi Gave Charity to a Mother Who Sold Food."* Furthermore, the use of the word "victim" implied that there was a perpetrator, namely Satpol PP, who had committed a crime. However, the FPI did not attack *Republika* or any of the other media. It was only *Kompas* which was the target of their fury.

The FPI's attack on *Kompas* was not, in fact, triggered by its coverage of the Saeni incident, but rather, by the coverage of other media outfits that belong to the *Kompas Group*: *Kompas.com* and *Kompas TV.* The first coverage of the incident was made by *Kompas.com* on June 11, 2016, in an article entitled: "*This Mom Was Left Crying As Her Food Vendor Was Raided In the Daytime During Ramadan".* On the same day, *Kompas TV* too, reported the raid

immediately after it occurred. In this broadcast of 13 minutes, the audience could watch how the Satpol PP outfit had raided the area, while Saeni herself was seen crying and begging for the raiders to stop. The video moved a young man, Dwika Putra, so much, that he then shared the footage of *Kompas TV* on Twitter, announcing that he would start a donation for the poor woman. Only one day after the announcement, on June 12, 2016, he was surprised by the amount the fund had received: more than a quarter billion rupiahs (or almost $ 20,000) from more than two thousand people.

It was only two days after this coverage appeared on *Kompas.Com* and *Kompas TV*, on June 13, 2016, that the news about Saeni finally appeared on the front page of *Kompas* daily newspaper. It was entitled: *"Food Raid, The Tears of Saeni Triggered Sympathy."* This coverage appeared in the form of a feature telling the story of the raid and how it had triggered widespread sympathy from the Indonesian public, including from President Jokowi himself. On the same day, the paper also wrote an editorial entitled, *"Lessons from Saeni",* which criticized the Indonesian government for letting the local government in Serang create regulations about Sharia law, which according to the editorial's view, had gone against the Indonesian Constitution. However, the newspaper only wrote a total of three articles about Saeni, which is far fewer than *Kompas.Com,* which had written 75 articles.

However, despite this, the FPI had targeted *Kompas* daily newspaper. In the salutation of the complaint letter written by the FPI, it was addressed to the Chief Editor of *Kompas Daily Newspaper, Kompas TV* and *Kompas.Com.* It seems that the Islamic hardliners were fully aware that Jakob Oetama was still active as the general director of the daily newspaper, and that he also owned the entire group. The FPI was right. Despite most of the coverage coming from *Kompas.Com* and *Kompas TV,* the power to stop the coverage fully lay in the hands of Jakob Oetama.

Following the attack from the FPI, a heated debate started within the *Kompas* newsroom. This internal debate revolved around two main arguments: the first

suggested that *Kompas* had been wrong in not realizing how sensitive the issue was. *Kompas* might be right journalistically, but, the argument ran, the coverage itself was a violation of the journalistic values inherited from the *Kompas* founder. On many occasions, Jakob had taught his journalists the important of being mindful of sensitive issues relating to religion. In his speech, given when he was granted the title of Doctor Honoris Causa from Gajah Mada University in 2003, he said: *"Towards the various groups whose views and perspectives on life are varied and could be sensitive, the media tends to tread more careful."* Therefore, the FPI's attack was seen as a consequence of the failure of the *Kompas* journalists to be aware of the sensitive nature of the issue.

The opposing argument was that *Kompas* had not been in the wrong, as they possessed all of the data and facts to support their story. Indeed, they were not the only ones who had covered the story in such a way that favored the food seller, and had even been invited to be present at the raid, showing how the story was prompted at the initiative of the state. Therefore, it was not the intention of *Kompas,* nor any other media, to put the tears and despair of the middle-aged woman under the spotlight. As a consequence of this viewpoint, it was suggested that *Kompas* should defend themselves. A few journalists even believed that they should bring the case to court. Needless to say, they also believed that self-censorship following the attack was unnecessary. The supporters of this argument were mostly young journalists working for *Kompas.com* and *Kompas TV.* They were a minority in the newsroom and possessed little power and authority.

Of these two opposing views, most media workers supported the position adopted by the founder, Jakob. They felt the journalists should accept that they had been wrong in writing the story, and the follow-up editorial policy and action of *Kompas* was in line with this mainstream opinion. They believed that they should keep their promise to the FPI to self-censor themselves by no longer covering the issue. Moreover, they also initiated special training for the

socialization of *Kompas* values predominately for the younger journalists at *Kompas TV* and *Kompas.com,* who were not seen as being sufficiently cognizant of the journalistic values of the newspaper. In the words of Asep: "they barely know the values of our media, so their warning bell doesn't ring when a dangerous situation is approaching." (Asep, Vice Chief Editor, personal interview, July 30, 2016).

Besides socialization, the majority of *Kompas* journalists also believed that going to court to defend their coverage was not an option. This conviction of the uselessness of going to court was based on historical experience: in the past *Kompas* had always lost such trials. In the words of Randu Rahardjo: *"Pak Jakob always says: don't give up your business to other people",* which illustrates Jakob's skepticism about the extent to which the judicial process would work in their favor. This statement of Randu Rahardjo was no exaggeration, considering the repeated unpleasant experiences the newspaper had endured. Protests by Islamic groups have affected *Kompas* several times.

Other Attacks by Islamic Groups on Kompas

A second incident relating to Islamic sensitivity occurred in 2012, when *Kompas* published a book (through *Gramedia Publishing)* entitled *"The Five Most Influential Cities in the World" (*https://www.eramuslim.com/berita/nasional/gramedia-mulai-membakar-buku-5-kota-paling-berpengaruh-di-dunia.htm#.WzFARiN97Zs). This publication sparked protests from members of the Islamic Front Defender (FPI). The FPI claimed one of the pages of the book contained an insult to the Prophet Muhammad by describing him as a robber and murderer. On page 24 of the book, it was indeed written as follows "*Prophet Muhammad was a robber who orchestrated a murderous attack on the caravans in Makkah City." (*cited at *Nahimunkar.com, June 8, 2012).* The FPI then reported the case to the police, although this was later revoked after a peaceful solution was found. One of the requirements contained in the agreement to drop the case forced *Gramedia* to withdraw all the books that had been circulated, and burn them. In addition to the withdrawal and burning

of the books, the director of *Gramedia* also publicly apologized for their "mistake" and promised not to repeat it again (Detik.com, June 13, 2012). In this regard, *Kompas Gramedia Group* fulfilled all of the demands of the protesters. The burning of the books was carried out on June 13, 2012 and was covered by many other Indonesian media, such as in the following picture by *Tempo*:

Source: Tempo.co, June 15, 2015

At the book burning conducted in front of the *Kompas* office, the Indonesian Muslim Assembly (MUI) leaders were also present, in addition to the leaders of the FPI, and the leaders of *Kompas* daily newspaper and *Gramedia* publishing. In one press conference, one of the chairmen of the MUI, KH Ma'ruf Amin, stated that he fully supported the burning of the books and saw it as a good solution to avoid a larger conflict (*BBC News.com*, June 14, 2012). He was, interestingly, also a prominent elite in Nahdlatul Ulama, one of the biggest Islamic organizations in Indonesia, and considered one of the more moderate ones.

A similar incident also happened in 1997. This time, it was directly related to *Kompas* daily newspaper, the first and core business of the *Kompas* media group (KKG). Perhaps surprisingly, this case had nothing to do with any domestic affair in Indonesia, but rather was triggered by *Kompas'* coverage on the political controversy taking place in Algeria. Although there were dozens of stories published about this conflict, outrage was leveled at mainly two editorial articles of the daily, entitled *"Violence Making Algeria Runyam, Victims Continue to Fall"* (dated August 28, 1997); and *"Algeria's Situation is Unscrewed, Hundreds of People Slaughtered"* (dated September 2, 1997). Both of these editorials sparked the anger of Muslims because they felt it framed the Islamic party in Algeria, the FIS, as a violent group. For certain Islamic groups who came together to form the Indonesian Committee for the Solidarity of the Islamic World (KISDI), this coverage was considered to cultivate a fear of Islam from the Indonesian public, and of any party carrying an Islamic symbol. The KISDI went further by suggesting that even though *Kompas'* coverage was about the Islamic party in Algeria, the coverage was equally damaging for the image of Islam in Indonesia.

The anger over the book led to a subpoena, submitted to the court by a group of lawyers calling themselves the *Team of Islamic Defenders* (TPI Team), together with KISDI. This team of lawyers claimed to act on behalf 119 Islamic figures in Indonesia, including on behalf of Amin Rais and Ahmad Syafi'ie Ma'arif, both of whom were prominent figures in the Islamic Muhammadiyah mass organization, which was perceived to have a more tolerant attitude towards Indonesia's religious diversity. However, the lawsuit was later withdrawn through a peace deal requiring *Kompas* to apologize publicly and pay substantial damages to the team of lawyers for the immaterial loss they had suffered. Furthermore, Arif Subangun, the author of the two editorials, was dismissed from his position as editor (Personal interview with Arif Subangun, *Kompas* journalist, June 9, 2017). This case clearly taught the media group how dangerous it was to touch on sensitive religious issues.

The most traumatic case of all, however, was the case of *Monitor Weekly,* a subsidiary media group under the *Kompas Gramedia Group.* As I explained in chapter 2, this case was triggered by the publication of a survey result on the most popular figures in Indonesia. While the survey put the then President Suharto in first rank, it placed the Prophet Muhammad only in 11th place. The fact that Muhammad was placed much lower than Suharto, and even below the Chief Editor of *Monitor*, Arswendo Atmowiloto, who was nominated in 10th place, triggered the anger of the Islamic community, resulting in a wave of demonstrations in many big cities in Indonesia. It also sent Arswendo to jail for five years, and lead to the permanent closure of the weekly.

All these cases have a number of characteristics in common. Firstly, they were all sparked by *Kompas'* coverage of something related to Islam –sometimes, as in the Algerian example, only remotely related. The coverage was then taken up by certain offended Islamic groups, who framed the issue as an attack on Muslims. These groups, who declare themselves as the mouthpiece of Indonesian Muslims, used it as a justification to launch an attack on *Kompas.* The articles they criticized were not necessarily published by *Kompas* daily newspaper itself, but were predominately published by other media outfits under the group. Yet the attack was always directed at *Kompas* daily newspaper, as well as at Jakob Oetama, the owner of the *Kompas Group*. In fact, in every dispute, journalists from the other media outfits under *Kompas* always came to offer support, as *Kompas* considered itself part of the *"*Big Family of Kompas Gramedia" *(Keluaga Besar Kompas Gramedia)*, in which the daily newspaper was the oldest brother. Finally, no matter what the conflict with the Islamic groups might be, and regardless if they were journalistically sound or not, *Kompas* journalists always confessed that they had been wrong and conveyed regret, or apologized publicly. Sometimes, when there was an especially inflamed dispute, it was *Pak Jakob* himself who apologized, like in the case of *Monitor Weekly,* in which Jakob wrote: "Monitor was wrong in publishing its surveys. Therefore, we regret this and condemn it…. I suppose Monitor deserves to get its punishment." (Kompas, October 23, 1990)

From the several cases above, it is also clear that besides apologizing, *Kompas* has always been committed to self-censorship whenever faced with a conflict with the power holders or with powerful groups in Indonesian society. The basis of this self-censorship is *rasa,* one of the values in Javanese culture which emphasizes the important of not hurting the feelings of others and avoiding conflict in order to maintain social harmony. The next chapter will illustrate how *rasa* has been an integral part of the habitus of *Kompas* journalists.

4.5 Rasa as the Habitus of Kompas Journalists

In each case above, there is evidence on how *rasa* has been embodied among the newspaper's journalists as an integral part of their habitus. Referring to Bourdieu (1977), as explained in chapter 3, habitus is defined as a set of values that is internalized by humans, created through a long period of socialization, which then forms the person's way of thinking and acting. The fact that the set of values is internalized over a long period of time means that the person who carries such habitus is not aware that his predisposition has been structured by his previous life history, and that is why sometimes habitus is also described as having a "feel for the game" (Bourdieu in Maton, 2008: 54). In the case of the complaint by Harry Tjan, Heru voluntarily instructed Sheryl to remain quiet and smile at whatever Tjan said to her. This was because Heru, as a mid-level editor, was aware of the importance of maintaining harmony, regardless of whether Sheryl was right or wrong. It was in that moment that Sheryl, as a new journalist, was taught what *Kompas* was about.

Meanwhile, in the case of the Century Bank scandal with Boediono, Arif Subangun was already aware that the headline title was not fitting with the *Kompas Way*, even if Jakob Oetama had not explicitly condemned it. The same thing goes for the conflicts involving protests by Islamic groups: the cases of Saeni, the book about Five Cities, the newspaper's editorial on Algeria, as well as the article by *Monitor*. In each case, *Kompas* journalists preferred to admit that they were wrong and ask for forgiveness, despite believing that they had

been right journalistically. This is because by doing so, they could rebuild and repair their relationship with the power holders.

The journalists in the newsroom know what kind of information should not be delivered to the public in order to maintain respect for others. According to Arunata, a former journalist at *Kompas*, every *Kompas* journalist understands the following principle:

> *We try our best not to hurt others' feelings, that's Javanese culture. What's the advantage of hurting others, right? I could write whatever I want, but will other people feel fine with that? Would they be angry or not? Would other people feel offended? Do their hearts feel the call? (Arunata, personal interview, March 3, 2015)*

Asep advocates the same philosophy:

> *The culture of Kompas is rooted in the values of the Kompas founder, Jakob Oetama, and prescribes never to attack people and make them cry. Don't make people who are already suffering, suffer even more… [we are] different from other newspapers such as Tempo, which always want to attack. We situate the problem comprehensively, in an indirect way, using refined language. (Asep, personal interview, February 7, 2014)*

Both interviews above show how *rasa* has been internalized as the main value among *Kompas* journalists.

Furthermore, internalizing *rasa* is a sign that a person has become a true Javanese. Sularto, the Vice General Editor of the paper, suggests that *Kompas* is never "vulgar in choosing its topic, words…[it exercises] self-control, and becomes *njawani* (Javanese)" (Sularto, personal interview, February 11, 2014). In this concept of "becoming Javanese/*njawani",* it is suggested that the extent to which a person can be considered a Javanese can be determined by the

degree to which he integrates *rasa* in his writing. In the case of Asep, he believed that his "failure" in writing an appropriate headline title about the Boediono case was because his *rasa* was not yet refined enough. In fact, for a Javanese, *rasa* is manifest in their every social interaction, such as in the way they greet and smile people, the way they stand, and even the way they sit. This is because they have already internalized the value of *rasa* as part of their habitus, which emphasizes the importance of keeping social harmony. It is only by protecting social harmony and avoiding conflict that a Javanese can keep their own inner peace, which for him is a virtue. Indeed, for a Javanese, inner peace is a reflection of a good life.

4.6 The Political Economy of Rasa

Even though as explained above, *rasa* reflects the idea of a good life for a Javanese, its manifestation into practice is also shaped by some political economy factors. While *rasa* can be seen as a cultural value, it has to be emphasized that this cautious respect for social obligations also aligns with particular political economy features in which *Kompas* operates.

In this regard, there are four factors which have influenced the implementation of *rasa* in *Kompas* journalism. First of all, there is the historical trauma caused by the ban between January 21 and February 5, 1978, due to some coverage deemed critical by the Suharto regime. As explained in chapter 2, before finally being allowed to publish again on February 6, 1978, *Kompas* was required to sign a contract with the regime to never cover the following four things in their news coverage: (1). they would never write about the President's family and their wealth; (2) they would never question the double function of the military (security function and political function); (3) they would never write about issues related to ethnicity, religion, intergroup conflict and racial issues; and (4) they would never write about any sensitive issues which could trigger social conflict related to religion, ethnicity, race and other minority groups (Sularto, 2011:24). This last requirement specifically prohibited covering sensitive issues relating to religion.

Three days after the reopening of the newspaper, the *Kompas* President Director, Jakob Oetama, was met the President at the Press Commemoration event. The President said to Jakob in Javanese: *"Ojo meneh-meneh*", which means "Never Again" (Sularto, 2011: 22). This warning, which was said in Javanese instead of the Indonesian language, indicated that the President was very upset about the coverage. The same warning was repeated by Suharto in another meeting with Jakob in 1980, when Jakob asked the President whether they would be allowed to cover the student protest. The answer was even stronger: "*Tak gebuk*". In the Javanese language, this means: "*I will hit you [hard*]!" The effect of the message was shocking, as Suharto complimented his words with the gesture of a clenched fist (Sularto, 2011: 22-23). In the biography of Jakob Oetama, it states that *Kompas* was warned many times by the military elite during the New Order period. Against this political background, in order to survive the New Order, *Kompas* had to conduct journalism in such a way that avoided offending the regime. According to Arunata, "For 30 years, we have to live with those values. We were raised and molded in this way". (Arunata, personal interview, March 3, 2015).

As also mentioned in Chapter 2, the historical trauma also related to the case of *Monitor Weekly.* In this case, a wave of demonstrations took place in several big cities across Indonesia and involved the destruction of *Monitor's* office. Furthermore, the weekly was banned forever, and the chief editor declared guilty of violating the blasphemy law. He was sent to prison for five years. It was this incident which shook Jakob the most, as *Monitor* was part of *Kompas Gramedia Group*. In the words of a journalist on the *Kompas* editorial board:

> *At that time he felt that Indonesia was growing with Kompas into a tolerant society. But the Monitor incident made him hesitate and ask: "Who are they actually? Apparently I do not know this society." This historical trauma must then be carried by all future generations of journalists after him… (Jimmy Laluna, personal communication, August 23, 2016)*

It is noteworthy that *Monitor Weekly* was not the first newspaper to compare the popularity of the Prophet to other figures, which served to make *Kompas* journalists aware that they were targeted due to their Catholic-ness. As explained in Chapter 2, the founders and first generation of *Kompas* were mostly Catholic, and some were Chinese in terms of ethnicity. Moreover, *Kompas* was historically founded and initiated by the Indonesian Catholic party in 1965, and had organizational ties with the Catholic party until 1971 (Dhakidae, 1991).

The fact that the newspaper belonged to the Catholic minority group forms the second factor why *rasa* is the basis of self-censorship at *Kompas*, utilized in order to avoid offending Islamic believers who are the majority group in Indonesia. The repeated experiences of being attacked by hardline Muslims have made *Kompas* fearful of Islamic groups. In the words of a *Kompas* journalist:

> *What has happened to Kompas, in my view, is a syndrome of "Islamophobia". However, this phobia of Kompas has to be put in quotation marks, as this phobia is not the result of our poor understanding of Islam, as we understand it very well. Kompas realizes that it carries original sin as the newspaper was born Catholic. This original sin is something latent, which haunts it…that they might be attacked at any time because of their Catholic-ness. Indeed, historical experiences have confirmed that what we consider as latent has manifested in real attacks. (Hikmah, personal communication, August 23, 2016)*

As argued by many scholars, as Indonesia was entering the Reformation era after the fall of Suharto, the practice of intolerance from majority Islamic groups has been on the rise (Crouch, 2012; George, 2016; Lim, 2017; Wiratraman, 2014). It is for this reason that the use of *rasa* has persisted and to some extent intensified even more, despite the regime change.

This second factor compels the newspaper to secure protection from the power holders, which provides the third factor underlying the practice of *rasa.* In this regard, the power holders refer are members of the political regime as well as the powerful informal Islamic groups in Indonesia, such as Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, the two biggest Islamic organizations in the country. By staying close to the power holders, *Kompas* hopes to secure protection from the potential threat posed by these conservative groups. This protection could come indirectly, from the public perception that the newspaper has an alliance with the power holders, making these groups pause before launching an attack. This close relationship can be seen by the fact that all Indonesian elites, from politicians such as President Joko Widodo, Vice President Jusuf Kalla and party leaders such as Abu Rizal Bakri, to religious leaders such as the Chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama, Said Aqil Siraj and the former Chairman of Muhammadiyah, all officially congratulated the newspaper on its 50-year anniversary on June 28, 2015. These articles appeared in a special edition entitled: *"50 Years of Kompas: Putting Indonesia On Stage",* published on the same day.

This protection by association could turn into concrete support when the newspaper is in actual danger. This can be seen from the case of the incident with *Monitor Weekly. Kompas* was supported by Abdurrahman Wahid, the Chairman of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Wahid announced in the media that there was nothing wrong with the survey results conducted by the weekly. He suggested that perhaps most of the readers of *Monitor* were not Muslim, so it was understandable that the Prophet Muhammad was not ranked in first place. Despite this, *Monitor Weekly* was still targeted, but journalists believe that the outcome could have been still worse without Wahid's support. Meanwhile, support also came from NU in the case of the *Five Cities* book publication, which was condemned by the Indonesian Front Defender (FPI). According to Mohammad Bakir, the Managing Editor of the daily, the newspaper got support from Nur Iskandar, a respected religious leader from Nahdlatul Ulama. Nur Iskandar was the religious teacher of Rizieq Shihab, who was the Chairman of the FPI. It is for this reason, he believes, that the newspaper did not have to pay

a large amount of money to settle outside of court, unlike in other such incidents with the group. In this case, the paper was "only" required to burn all of the books and never to publish them again.

This close relationship is surely not without a price, as to some extent, dependency on power holders restrains *Kompas'* reporting. Besides the cases above, where *Kompas* preferred to apologize for their news articles in order to maintain harmony, the paper also voluntarily self-censors itself before any complaints can be made. In order to secure a close relationship with NU, for instance, the newspaper has tried to avoid covering certain events which might offend NU followers. The Indonesian People's Tribunal in The Hague on November 2015 was one such event. This people's tribunal was held at the initiative of the families or sympathizers of the victims of Indonesia's mass killings in 1965, and brought together international civil society organizations from around the world. It aimed to gather testimonies and other evidence linking the Indonesian military government under Suharto to the killings of thousands of Indonesians, who were suspected members of the communist party. These killings were carried out by civilians but initiated and sponsored by the military. The reason the newspaper did not properly cover the event nor investigate the issue, was because it did not want offend Nahdlatul Ulama followers, whom were believed to be involved in the killings. In the words of Jimmy Laluna, a senior journalist and member of the editorial board: *"…We don't want to hurt the feelings of NU, who are our friends".* (Jimmy Laluna, personal interview, November 22, 2015)".

Finally, there is an economic interest underlying the practice of *rasa*. Implicit in the practice of *rasa* is the need to survive under both regimes: the New Order era and the Reformation era. By surviving, *Kompas* was able to secure its economic interest - not just the economic interest of the media owner, but also of all the journalists working there. If *Kompas* had been banned permanently under the New Order, the workers would have lost their jobs. Similarly, in this Reformation era, if *Kompas* was attacked by the Islamic radical groups and the

newspaper was shut down, or went bankrupt, the journalists would also lose their jobs. Furthermore, the several cases above demonstrate how *Kompas* had to bear the consequences of "mistakes" made by its other business subsidiaries, such as in the case of *Monitor Weekly,* the *Five Cities* book, as well as the case of Saeni. This has made the newspaper, in its role of "big brother" or even "father" to these other media, tread even more carefully. This is because the mistakes made by the newspaper could cause collateral damage to other business groups living under the same management of *Kompas Gramedia Group* (KGG) and belonging to the same owner, Jakob Oetama.

As long as the newspaper still exists, the minority groups working for it can still make a living in Indonesia. This can be said to be the indirect business interest of *Kompas*. However, *Kompas* also provides a direct economic interest to the minority, as a place where the Indonesian minority groups can make a living. In one interview, retired *Kompas* journalist Ludwig Swara said:

> *I graduated in the time when it was hard to find a job. It was 1965, and the Old Order regime had left Indonesia in serious economic crisis. And I am Chinese so I can't work as civil servant. No Chinese would be appointed in the state apparatus. Kompas was the reasonable place to work for me. (Ludwig Swara, personal interview, December 24, 2014)*

It is noteworthy, however, that while *rasa* is sensitive towards the needs of those who are powerful, it is not always sensitive to the needs of those who are weak. By not covering the tribunal held by the victims of the mass murders, for instance, meant that *Kompas* did not take the side of the hundred thousand murdered victims. Since the beginning of the Reformation era in 1998, the problems of religious intolerance have been on the rise.

One of the incidents often cited as evidence of this is the eviction of Ahmadiyah believers from various places such as Nusa Tenggara Barat and Bangka Belitung, because they were seen as violating the mainstream Islamic teachings as

agreed on by the Indonesian Islamic Leaders Council (MUI). The newspaper was aware that the eviction had violated the Indonesian Constitution, but they preferred not to expose it in order to avoid causing offence to the NU and Muhammadiyah elites, who were the main members of the MUI (Arif Subangun, *Kompas* Chief Editor, personal interview, February 13, 2014). In this regard, it is clear that *rasa* has mainly served those in power, because it is the power holders who can generate a threat to the newspaper. *Rasa* has therefore been used as a tool for survival for this minority newspaper, safeguarding it from the threat posed by the majority groups in Indonesia.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the role of Javanese values – particularly *rasa* – in shaping and legitimizing a form of self-censorship at *Kompas* daily newspaper. More specifically, *rasa* has been used as the basis (a) to accommodate complaints about articles from close friends, as demonstrated in the case involving Harry Tjan, (b) to deal with the complaints regarding corruption coverage, as in the case of the Century Bank scandal involving Vice President Boediono, (c) to settle attacks from Islamic groups, as demonstrated in the case of Saeni, the *Five Cities s*urvey results discussing the Prophet, and the tragedy in Algeria. In all these cases, the journalists agreed to confess their wrongdoing and apologize, despite believing that they were journalistically correct. As a consequence, they accepted the demand of the protesters by not covering the stories which triggered the protest, or at least, covering them in a more positive manner. In some disputes, they even agreed to pay compensation to the protesters as part of the settlement. Lastly, *rasa* has also been used as the basis for deciding whether to cover any issues considered sensitive for Islamic groups, such as in the case of the tribunal on the mass killings of 1965 and Ahmadiyah's eviction.

With these illustrations, I argue that *rasa* has been an integral part of the habitus of *Kompas* journalists, which they have internalized through a long process of socialization within the newsroom. This habitus has, in turn,

provided a certain kind of formula which directs the journalist's way of thinking and acting in the daily production of news. In the spirit of *rasa,* journalists try to avoid covering issues in such a way that would offend the power holders, or in other words, to pre-empt complaints arising from these power holders. And when the newspaper did cover such sensitive issues and complaints arose, *Kompas* would swiftly acknowledge this and apologize, regardless of whether they were right. These compromises are often legitimized with reference to the concept of *rasa.* What matters, according to this cultural value, is not to find which side was right, but rather, to minimize the possibility of conflict and a confrontation with those in power. *Rasa*, in this sense, prioritizes the maintenance of social harmony over the quest for "truth". Indeed, both *rasa* and the maintenance of social harmony are two important values in Javanese culture.

However, even though *rasa* is a cultural entity, its manifestation into practice is also influenced by political economy factors and the vulnerabilities of the newspaper. In this chapter I highlighted the relationship between *Kompas*' conscious style of reporting and its vulnerabilities. First of all, it is the historical trauma from the ban during the New Order period which required the newspaper to refrain from covering certain issues in order to be allowed to operate again. The second factor is the fact that the newspaper is owned by a Catholic group, which has made any critical coverage of Islam subject to be perceived as an attack from a minority towards the majority Islamic group in Indonesia. In the course of its history, the newspaper has experienced repeated attacks from Muslim groups due to its coverage on Islamic issues, and consequently, *Kompas* has sought protection from the power holders. This has led to the third factor which influences the use of *rasa,* which is the practice of self-censorship that it applies. Lastly, the use of *rasa* was influenced by an economic interest to secure the newspaper's survival, not only that of *Kompas* daily newspaper itself, but also all the other media falling under the umbrella of KKG. This is because any damage occurring in one unit will bear consequences for the whole business group.

The next chapter will focus on how *rasa* informs the coverage of corruption across different political regimes. I will elaborate on how *rasa* operates in the newspaper's coverage on corruption through the concept of a *polite watchdog.* By this concept, I will argue that while *Kompas* still covers the incidents of corruption by power holders, but does so in such a way that will not cause offence to the power holders, thereby avoiding any direct confrontation with them, or at the very least, reduces the risk of complaints arising.

Chapter 5

Polite Watchdog: Kompas' Coverage on Corruption

*"The classical formula of a watchdog can't be delivered in black or white. The representation needs to come with tolerance (tenggang **rasa**) and self-awareness (tahu diri). This means that we have to be critical while showing empathy to the person we are criticizing at the same time. This can be manifested as straightforward (tegas) at one time, and indirect (miyar miyur) at another time. This flexibility reflects our wisdom. This wisdom is like that of a teacher who never forces (memaksa), but rather, suggests. Kompas is in the middle with **ngono yo ngono ning ojo ngono, apike ngene bae** ("you are free to behave like that, but behave like this instead"), including in distinguishing its dependency and independency."*

~Jakob Oetama, Keep the Voice amid Noise, Kompas, June 28, 2015

It was an evening in the fasting month of Ramadan, on July 18, 2014. The ombudsman board of *Kompas* was conducting its monthly meeting with the senior editors of the newspaper. This ombudsman board consisted of a handful of experts who have the responsibility to evaluate the newspaper's coverage on a monthly basis. Therefore, unlike the weekly evaluation performed by the journalists of the newspaper, this monthly meeting provided the view of the experts from an external perspective. Among the members of the boards were: Daniel Dhakidae –a media scholar who also previously worked as the chair of

the research division of the newspaper; Ashadi Siregar –a media expert who was also an academic at Gadjah Mada University, a prominent state university in Jogjakarta; Ignatius Haryanto –a senior media researcher who also worked as an academic at the newly established private Media Nusantara University in Jakarta; Faisal Basri –an economist as well as an academic at the illustrious Indonesian University in Jakarta; and finally, Nurul Augusta, an environmentalist who is also an activist in the non-governmental sector focusing on environmental issues. While the first three members focus on the evaluation of media issues, Faisal Basri focuses on the evaluation of the economic news of the newspaper. As an environmentalist, Nurul focuses on the coverage of the environmental issues in the newspaper. During this meeting, the members of the editorial board of the newspaper as well as the representatives of journalists of the relevant desks were all present. Therefore, the evaluation of the ombudsman board could be conveyed directly to the journalists, who could follow-up with a discussion afterwards.

The meeting was held in a conference room, on the third floor of the *Kompas* building on South Palmerah Street. The initial purpose of the meeting was to evaluate and reflect upon *Kompas'* coverage of the presidential election, which had just been concluded on July 9, 2014. Inside the room, the members of the ombudsman board were joined by the editorial elites: Sulastro (Vice General Director of the newspaper), Tryas Kuncahyono, Randu Rahardjo, Sutta Dharmasaputra and J Osdar. As with any other *Kompas* meeting, the discussion was running in a casual and relaxed manner. We could hear joking and laughter emanating from the room, as if the meeting were a warm family reunion.

However, approaching the hour of the sunset Maghrib prayer, the supposedly relaxed meeting suddenly turned heated. The debate was triggered by the protest of Faisal Basri, one of the members the ombudsman board with expertise in economics. He was distressed that his statement mentioning the name of the entrepreneur, Muhammad Riza Chalid, whom he believed was

involved in a corruption scandal on oil production in Indonesia, had not been covered by *Kompas.* The statement was made in an interview with a *Kompas* journalist after a seminar discussing the economic program of one of the then presidential candidates: Jokowi Widodo. Emil Salim, the former Environment Minister under Suharto, who had shared the panel with Faisal, had also mentioned the name of Muhammad Riza Chalid in connection with the scandal. However, the daily had not published this statement by Emil either. In an article dated July 3, 2014, entitled: *"Emil Salim mentions the existence of oil mafia"*, the paper only wrote a story saying that Emil acknowledged that there was an oil mafia in Indonesia *(mafia migas)*, but it did not report the names of its members.

From the tone of his voice, it was obvious that the absence of this detail in the coverage had really upset Faisal. Faisal argued that it would not harm the paper to mention a person's name, if they are merely quoting someone else. He confronted the journalists at the meeting by demanding whether they doubted him as a credible source who has authority of the issue, or if the omission was because they were too cowardly to write the name. The concerns of Faisal obviously demanded an answer. In an attempt to provide one, another journalist was invited to come into the meeting room. His name was Suranto. It was Suranto[25] who served as the Chief Editor *(kepala desk)* of the economic desk, and was one of the authors of the article[26]. With a smile on his face, Suranto explained to those in the room that he had a different opinion to Faisal's. He believed that Emil had not actually mentioned the name of Muhammad Riza Chalid at all.[27] However, he admitted that Faisal had

[25] Suranto was not present at the meeting at the beginning, because the meeting was initially dedicated to discussing the political coverage of the paper, which is the remit of the political desk.

[26] There are some pages in *Kompas* that are dedicated to specially covering current economic affairs.

[27] It is interesting to note that in the news coverage of Indonesian online media, *Detik.Com,* it was reported that Emil Salim did mention the initial of the person involved in the oil

mentioned the name. He went further by explaining that even if Emil had revealed the name, it was not possible for him to publish this, as there was no legal evidence suggesting Muhammad's involvement in the corruption scandal.

This statement of Suranto triggered more debate in the room between two opposing groups. The first group argued that the editorial policy of the economic desk was understandable. Journalists such as Asep Setiawan and Sularto argued that mentioning the name of a reputable person in a scandal of corruption could damage the person's reputation unnecessarily, especially if there was no strong evidence to back it up. Interestingly, though, they acknowledged that it was a public secret that Muhammad was involved in the scandal. The second group, led by journalists such as Ryaas Cahaya and Poppy, argued that it was correct to quote that statement, as it is the source who is responsible for the statement - not the publisher.

The debate did not seem to be nearing an end as night was drawing in, and the time for breaking the fast for Muslim journalists had arrived. Therefore, those in the room agreed that they would discuss the matter more at the next monthly meeting of the ombudsman board. In particular, they planned to discuss whether the daily had carried out its function as a critical watchdog of the power holders when it came to the story of corruption. More generally, they would also discuss whether the paper should even aspire to conduct investigative journalism, or seek to conduct investigations into the wrongdoings of the power holders. Ignatius Haryanto, one of the ombudsman members,

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corruption scandal. He intimated that the initial of the person was "R" and that he was of Pakistani descendancy. The article was entitled: *"Emil Salim Confirmed that there is Oil Mafia",* dated July 2, 2014. (http://finance.detik.com/energi/2626171/emil-salim-benarkan-ada-mafia-minyak-di-ri). More interestingly, the statement of Emil Salim as well as Faisal Basri were reported more completely in another online media, *Tribunnews.com.* In the article entitled *"The Involvement of Oil Mafia is Revealed",* it was reported that Emil as well as Faisal mentioned the initial of the mafia member. *http://www.tribunnews.com/nasional/2014/07/04/keterlibatan-mafia-migas-dalam-pilpres-semakin-terkuak*

suggested that the title for that next meeting should be *"Jurnalisme Investigasi Yang Pas Untuk Kompas ('Investigative journalism that suits Kompas culture')."* The proposal brought smiles to the faces of those in the rooms. There seemed to be a mutual, unspoken understanding among them that there were cultural constraints to applying the principle of watchdog or investigative journalism at the newspaper. This was not the kind of topic that the journalists discussed with ease, but despite this, no one in the room disagreed with Haryanto's title.

Having been in the newsroom for almost half a year by the time that meeting occurred, I was aware that something extremely interesting was being debated. As I returned home, I jotted down some questions in my field notes. Apart from the debate following the protest by Faisal Basri above, I wondered about how the newspaper had actually been covering the story on corruption so far? Had the coverage lived up to the idea of watchdog or investigative journalism? Furthermore, how exactly had the news on corruption been manufactured in the newsroom? Does the news-making process implement or undermine the idea of watchdog journalism at *Kompass*? Finally, given the fact that the newspaper has operated for more than 50 years, does the character of the corruption coverage change or persist across time and under different political regimes? What are the underlying forces behind the changes and continuities?

This chapter will argue that *Kompas* journalists do not implement this watchdog role according to the western ideal. This is because, in the first place, they do not actually aspire to carry out investigative journalism, which focuses on exposing the misconduct of public officials. The absence of investigative journalism can be seen in their coverage on corruption, which relies heavily on official sources and largely restricts the coverage to discussing ongoing court cases of corruption. In other words, *Kompas* rarely endeavors to unearth the misconduct of the power holders of its own initiative. This is reflected in the absence of a special investigative desk and the lack of journalists tasked with exposing cases of corruption. The way the daily covers news on corruption is simply by sending their journalists to attend the press release from two main

institutions: the Indonesian Special Commission for Corruption Eradication *(Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi/KPK)* and the Special Court for Corruption Trial *(Pengadilan Tindak Pidana Korupsi/*Pengadilan Tipikor). Interestingly, this way of producing and covering news on corruption in the current era is not much different compared to the way *Kompas* covered corruption during the New Order. There are some possible explanations for this. Under Suharto, this tepid reporting of corruption cases was motivated by the need to avoid being banned. Nowadays, it is to maintain political connections, avoid legal suits and due to financial considerations. Furthermore, the absence of the tradition of investigative journalism in the past has also formulated certain cultural constraints which prevent the idea from being implemented in the recent era.

The argument above will be explored in the following section, where firstly I will discuss contesting theories on watchdog journalism. These theories serve as a lens in which to analyze the form of watchdogging being practiced at *Kompas.* The next section discusses the design of my content analysis, which examines the newspaper's coverage of corruption scandals throughout its existence, spanning more than 50 years. I will then present the findings of this content analysis, followed by a discussion of the dynamics of the newsroom in the manufacturing process of news on corruption. The final part of this chapter is a discussion of the underlying factors that influence the watchdogging practices of the newspaper, and situate it in the broader context of journalism practice around the globe. The chapter will close with a conclusion and some predictions about the future of watchdog journalism at *Kompas.*

5.1 Conceptualizing Watchdog Journalism

In order to examine whether or not the journalists aspire to, and actually implement, the idea of watchdog journalism, a clear definition of the concept is inevitably required. In this regard, this study follows the conceptualization of most media scholars who suggests that watchdog journalism is actually synonymous with the concept of investigative journalism (Coronel, 2010; Kalogeroupulus et.al., 2015; Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2007; Lateef and Sherlock,

2003; Starkman, 2004; Tong, 2011). These scholars believe that both watchdog journalism and investigative journalism are equally characterized by the exposure of the misconduct of power holders at the initiative of media workers, in order to hold them to account. The tone of the coverage is, therefore, critical of or adversarial towards those in power.

Coronel (2010), for instance, defines watchdog journalism as *"exposure journalism*". She believes that unearthing the misconduct of those in power is at the heart of watchdogging activities. In an eloquent description, she suggests:

> *Watchdog journalism is exposure journalism. The ethical standards of the journalist or the quality of the reporting may be high or low. What distinguishes watchdogging is the exposure of wrongdoing in the public interest. Whatever motivates the journalist or the news organization that publishes a muckraking report is not the issue; what matters is that the reporting warns citizens about those who are doing them harm and empowers them with the information they need. (2010: 112-113)*

In line with Coronel, Kovach and Rosenstiel believe that playing the role of watchdog means that the media monitor the power holders, thereby "discovering the usual cheats in the great games of the Kingdom." (2007: 141).

The definition of watchdog as suggested by the scholars above is similar to the definition of investigative journalism. Scholars like De Burgh (2000), and Lateef and Sherlock (2003), define investigative journalism as the discovering or exposing of corrupt officials by shining a light on their activities for the attention of the public. Therefore, it is no surprise that scholars like Coronel (2010) argue that investigative journalism is the most perfect manifestation of watchdogging. Jingrong Tong (2011) even uses the term "watchdog journalism" interchangeably with "investigative journalism". It is also important to note that concerning investigative journalism, most scholars suggest the originality of the journalistic work, which is based on the initiative of the journalists and

does not simply rely on the investigation of those in authority, to be another characteristic of this journalistic form. This notion has been the generally accepted theory on watchdog journalism.

Following the theorization above, a media is seen as living up to watchdog journalism if they expose the wrongdoings of the power holders, based on their own initiative, from an adversarial position to those in power. It is this definition which will be used as a theoretical framework to analyze *Kompas'* coverage on corruption, as well as examine the manufacturing process of its news on corruption.

5.2 The Coverage on Corruption: a Content Analysis

In this section, I will examine *Kompas* newspaper's coverage of corruption through a qualitative content analysis, and here I outline the method and methodology to be used. Referring to Hsieh and Shannon, qualitative content analysis is defined as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (2005: 1278). Meanwhile, the approach that is used in this qualitative method is the *directed* approach, meaning that I use the theory on watchdog journalism outlined above as a starting point for categorization and coding. Using the theoretical framework discussed above, I will pay particular attention to whether (1) the coverage on corruption exposes the wrongdoing of the individual or power holders; (2) the coverage is based on journalists' own initiative, and (3) whether the coverage has an adversarial position towards the corruption suspect as well as to the practice of corruption, or in other words, whether the coverage presents the practice of corruption (and the corruption suspect) in a negative light. In this research, factors number 1 and 2 will be seen as manifested in the coverage when fulfilling two criteria: *sources* and *themes*. Factor 3 will be determined by the *tone*.

Criteria 1: News Sources

The sources of the news will be seen as meeting points number 1 and 2 when the sources used are whistleblowers, archival documents and journalists' own observations. Deborah Potter defines "source" as a person or document who can give information about a certain topic, including from first hand observation, if he also witnesses the news event (2006: 16). She further points out that there is no single source which can provide all the complete information. Therefore, it is necessary for a reporter to verify by having multiple sources in order to have a credible story. This means that the journalist does not rely solely on official sources, such as government officials or legal apparatus. The underlying assumption is that such initiatives to conduct exposure journalism will be possible only if the journalists do not solely follow the official version of the corruption scandal, and instead, they try to find alternative sources such as whistleblowers or archival documents that have been hidden by the authorities. With regard to sources, Shoemaker and Reese (1996: 46) argue that the heavy reliance on the official sources when reporting on news about presidents, ministers as well as other government apparatus reflects that the newspaper is legitimizing the government, rather than holding it to account.

Criteria 2: The Themes

In terms of themes, factors number 1 and 2 are seen as manifested in the coverage when the theme of the story is a whistleblower or exposure theme. In this regard, there are five potential themes which I analyze in the texts[28]: first of all, the legal theme **(L)**. An article will be categorized as having a predominantly legal theme when it is framed in the legal narrative by covering the ongoing judicial process. Some of the phrases that might be found are: corruption *(korupsi)*, judge *(hakim)*, attorney *(jaksa)*, lawyer *(pengacara)*, allegation *(dugaan)*, witness *(saksi)*, punishment *(vonis)*, graft *(suap)*, bribes,

[28] Any article that does not fit any of these five themes is classified as 'Other'. See appendix 2.

suspect *(tersangka)*, investigation *(penyelidikan)*, National Commission on Corruption Combat (KPK), law *(hukum)*, jail *(penjara)*, bill *(undang-undang).*

Second*,* there is the guilty man theme **(GM)**. An article will be categorized under this theme if corruption is framed as the story of a guilty person with a criminal background, making him the suspect of corruption. Some of the phrases which might be found are: bad politician *(politisi busuk)*, criminal *(penjahat)*, dishonest (*tidak jujur*), corruptor (*koruptor*), political mafia (*mafia politik*), nation betrayer *(pengkhianat bangsa)*.

The third theme is the civil society organizations movement theme **(CSO)**. An article will be categorized as predominantly CSOs when it is framed as the movement of the civil society to combat corruption. Some potential phrases are: corruption *(korupsi*), demonstration (*demonstrasi*), protest (*protes*), action (*aksi*), to fight (*melawan*), refuse (*menolak*), the citizen (*warga*), the students (*mahasiswa*), the mass organization (*ormas*), the civil society organization (*LSM*) and movement *(gerakan)*.

Fourthly, there is the whistleblower/exposure theme **(WB)**. An article will be seen as using a whistleblower theme when it tells the story of an insider leaking the existence of corruption in his own institution. Some of the phrases that might be appear are: insider (*orang dalam*), expose *(membongkar)*, document from the inside *(dokumen dari dalam)*, and bank note (*rekening bank*).

The last theme is the anti-corruption theme (**AC**). An article will be categorized under anti-corruption if the story is framed as an anti-corruption campaign or campaign for corruption eradication without specifically presenting any particular case of corruption. Observable phrases are: corruption levels get worse (*tingkat korupsi makin parah),* corruption causes state's lost *(korupsi merugikan Negara),* and corruption threats democracy (*korupsi mengancam demokrasi*).

Criteria 3: The Tone

Meanwhile, factor number 3 of the coverage to be investigated (the adversarial position) will be determined from the *tone* of the coverage, by examining whether the incident of corruption is reported in a favorable or unfavorable tone. In conjunction with the themes mentioned above, a story is seen as having a negative tone when it is framed in the guilty man theme (GM), legal theme (L), civil society organization theme (CSO) and whistleblower theme (WB). This is because in all of these themes, corruption practices as well as the perpetrator of corruption is seen as violating the social norm.

Therefore, in summary, the content analysis of this research will look at three different categories: *news sources*, *the frame* and *the tone* of coverage, as an analytical tool to examine the idea of watchdog journalism. In this regard, a news story will be seen as functioning in a watchdog role when factors number 1 (exposes wrongdoings of power holders), 2 (based on journalist's initiative) and 3 (journalist's adversarial position) are manifested in the text.

The Periods of Analysis

Having described the indicators to be used to examine whether a news item on corruption is living up to the ideal of watchdog journalism, this part will explain the periods for the content analysis. In order to answer the question whether or not the coverage on corruption has changed along with the changes of the political regimes, I will look at the news on corruption in three different periods: firstly, the Old Order regime under Sukarno's Presidency, which lasted from 1959-1966. The second period is the New Order regime under Suharto's presidency, which lasted from 1967-1998. Those two regimes are the authoritarian regimes which in total ruled Indonesia for 39 years. The last period is the reformation era, which is characterized by the radical changes in the political environment from an authoritarian to democratic political system.

Units of Analysis

Since the purpose of the content analysis is to examine the way news coverage on the misconduct of the power holders are framed, the units of analysis in the

content analysis are only articles that cover the misconduct of the power holders themselves, or to make it clear, all articles that cover the practice of corruption of the power holders. In this case, this research used the database of *Kompas* newspaper, which has archived every edition since its very first publication, until the most recent editions This database is provided by the research division of the newspaper and is available online, at *Pusat Informasi Kompas* (Center of Kompas' information). This website is equipped with a special search engine which enables the researcher to find any kind of article by typing some key words. In order to find the articles on corruption, I typed the word "korupsi" (corruption) in the search engine, where it then displayed the number of articles dealing with this in any given year. By doing this, I could identify the quantity of articles dealing with corruption every year.

Sampling Units

By typing the key word *"korupsi"* (corruption), it appears that there are hundreds of articles that mention corruption every single year. That means there are thousands of articles containing the word "corruption" over the past 50 years (1965-2015). It is impossible for me to analyze these thousands of articles, considering the time constraint and resources for this piece of research. Therefore, in addition to selecting some distinctive years for each political regime, this study will also use research sampling by referring to the theory of Stempel (in Krippendorf, 2004: 123). This is a theory of sampling commonly used in communications research, which believes that in the analysis of a newspaper's content, an increasing sample size of more than 12 will not make any significant difference to the result. Stempel, who has conducted an exploration of effective and efficient sample sizes, has found that 12 issues from two consecutive weeks of a daily newspaper can effectively represent the content of an entire year. In this regard, he operationalized two consecutive weeks from Monday to Saturday (without Sunday) in any given year. Based on this consecutive weekly period, he conducted an experiment with 12, 18, 24, and 48 issues, and found that the results are not significantly different. Therefore, this research only examines 12 articles from each selected year. It is

noteworthy, however, that during the time when the research was conducted, *Kompas'* database of articles from 1965 to 1994 were not yet fully accessible. They were only available in PDF format and had not yet been filed into a systematic sequence. In order to read them, I had to use a computer at the office of PIK Kompas. Therefore, due to this restriction, instead of rigorously following Stempel, this research selected the first 12 articles that could be found during my visit to the PIK Kompas. This means that my research applies Stempel by extension or by analogy. Furthermore, to maintain the consistency in the way I collected the data, I also selected articles from 1994 onwards in the same manner of data collection.

The analyzed years were selected based on their significance to each political regime: the Old Order (1965), the New Order (1967, 1971, 1974, 1978, 1983, 1994, and 1998) and the Reformation era (2000, 2003, 2009, and 2015). Therefore, in total, the sample of the content analysis will be 144 articles, consisting of 12 articles from the Old Order, 84 articles from the New Order and 48 articles from the Reformation era. Further elaboration of these selected years will be explained in the next part of this chapter.

5.3 Coverage on Corruption during the Old Order

The Selected Years

As explained in the chapter 2, the Old Order period actually begun in July1959, when Sukarno declared the beginning of guided democracy. This period ended on March 11, 1966, when Suharto took over power through Supersemar (Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret), which literally means *"Letter of Instruction on the 11th of March"*. In that letter, Sukarno signed a paper in which he gave a mandate to Suharto to stabilize Indonesian politics and resolve the security situation, following the killings of seven generals in the night of September 30, 1965. However, the newspaper was not formed until June 28, 1965. Therefore, this research only conducted content analysis on *Kompas*' coverage on corruption during the last 10 months of Sukarno's presidency (June 1965 – March 1966).

Furthermore, following the rule of Stempel as mentioned above, this research selected 12 articles from the year of 1965.

The Findings

From the samples, it can be seen that in 1965, the news sources of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption are as follow:

Table 1

News Sources of Corruption Coverage 1965

Num	Sources	Percentage
1	Legal apparatus	47.1%
2	Government official	17.6%
3	Corruption suspects	17.6%
4	Civil Society activists	11.8%
5	Whistleblower	-
6	Document	-
7	Observation	-
8	Unclear source	5.8%
	N	17 sources

From the table above, it can be seen that most of the sources are legal which make up 47.1%. Legal apparatus are all persons who play a role in the legal proceeding of a corruption case, from the preliminary investigation (p*enyelidikan*), the investigation (*penyidikan*), the prosecution (*penuntutan*), advocacy or legal defense (*pembelaan*) to the punishment (*penjatuhan hukuman*). So this legal apparatus refers to all the people involved in the process of a corruption trial in the court, such as the police, prosecutor, general attorney, judge, lawyers, and witness. The second most cited sources are governmental, such as the governor of Jakarta and other government officials, which provides 17.6% of the news source. This percentage is equal to that of

sources from corruption suspects (17.6%), whose statements are cited during the legal process. Considering that the legal apparatus, government officials, as well as the statement of corruption suspects during the trial all portray official versions, therefore, it can be said that 82.3% of the cited sources are official sources. Meanwhile, there are no sources which reflect journalists' initiative to expose corruption such as whistleblowers, documentary or journalists' own observations. Therefore, it shows that there is next to no coverage which is based on the journalists' own initiative.[29]

In terms of themes, or the way a story on corruption is framed, the content analysis founds as follows:

Table 2
Theme of Corruption Coverage in 1965[30]

No	Theme	Percentage
1	Legal	50%
2	Guilty Man	8.3%
2	CSO movement	8.3%
4	Whistleblower	-
5	Anti-Corruption	33.3%
	N	12 articles

From the table above, it can be seen that most of the articles convey information in the legal frame (50%), indicating that the news mainly reports on the legal processes in the case of a corruption suspect. An example of such an

[29] In this research, with regard to initiative, news stories that simply report the story of civil society group's protest is not seen as being a journalist's own observation.

[30] For coding results, please see table 1, appendix 2.

article framed in the legal theme is entitled *"Corruption Perpetrators Get Punished"* dated August 31, 1965, as follows:

Corruption Perpetrators Get Punished

Padang State Court, in its corruption trial on Monday, punished all of the suspects in the case of corruption of Lebak Buaja bridge development, with a sentence as long as 3 years 11 months and 23 days in total. The corruption suspects were Dalmin Kasimin BRE, Danis Katar and Sjahrun Sirun who got, in sequence, 1 year 5 months 23 days, 1 year 4 months and 1 year 2 month. Each has been in jail since 7 March 1964.

Those suspects were accused of committing 7 kinds of violation against the law: creation of a fake document, involvement in the tender of a project which should have been under their supervision as civil servants, theft, larceny of wood supplies, bolts, of stone, and embezzlement of funds to the tune of more than 1.7 million rupiahs.(Kompas, August 31, 1965)

Furthermore, as can be seen in table 2 above, 8.3% of articles are framed in the CSO's movement theme, showing that the coverage tells the story of activists demanding that a corruption case is seen to by the authorities, or that a corruption suspect is prosecuted by the attorney. An example of this type of article is as follows:

PKI Stole 700 Million Rupiahs, North Sumatera and Mass Organizations Demand the Liquidation of PKI

The union of counter-revolution eradication in the north Sumatera level, consisting of political parties and mass organization affiliated to them such as: PNI, NU, PERTI, IPKI, PARKINDO, the Catholic Party, and

> *Golkar, as well as 58 other mass organizations, are conveying their intention to ask that the government to liquidate PKI… The statement was triggered by the involvement of PKI members in the stockpiling of rice and corruption in a public plantation company to the amount of 700 million rupiahs. (Kompas, October 27, 1965)*

Similar to the CSO's movement theme, 8.3% of the coverage focuses on the guilty man theme. This means that the story portrays the corruption suspect as a criminal or as someone who is guilty in a corruption case. It can be seen in this following article:

> *M.H. Lukman Embezzled 250 million of People's Money*
>
> *Another piece of evidence has been found on how low the mentality of the Communist party (PKI) leader is. They always point their fingers to others as counter revolutionaries, feudalists, capitalist bureaucrats, but they actually are all of these things themselves. This can be seen in the case of PKI housing scandal, involving the minister, as well as Vice Chairman of the parliament, MH Lukman, from the PKI. On August 31, 1963, a house owner in Gondangdia street gave up his house to MH Lukman to be made as his private house. (Kompas, November 23, 1965)*

Meanwhile, 33.33% of the articles use anti-corruption themes, where the coverage of corruption does not focus on the legal process of a certain corruption case or corruption suspect, but rather, conveys an anti-corruption discourse. An example follows:

Economic Robbery (Pentjolengan Ekonomi)

The problem of economic robbery is now being discussed again. It is discussed again because it has been often discussed before. What the people wait for now is not just talk about it, but concrete action: grab them, prosecute them, punish them, hang them, shoot them!

Some issues need to be raised here: is there really an economic robbery underway? Yes, there is. The press often covers it. Let's say the press is being partisan because it has a vested interest; nevertheless, the fact is that economic robbery does indeed exist. Evidence is also seen in the phenomena in this capital city of Indonesia: Jakarta, where a small number of people live in luxury and become increasingly richer, whilst those who are poor are suffering more. Those luxuries mostly come from economic robbery. (Kompas, September 14, 1965)

5.4 Coverage on Corruption in the New Order

The Selected Years

The second period of the content analysis is the authoritarian New Order under Suharto's presidency, since the time Suharto was granted the mandate through Supersemar on 11 March 1966 until the time when he was forced to step down because of the People Power protest in May 1998. Therefore, the period of time to be analyzed spans 32 years. Although the New Order lasted more than three decades under President Suharto, some scholars argue that the character of the Suharto regime changed over time.

According to Mackie and MacIntyre (1994: 5), the New Order can be divided into three periods: 1965-74, 1974-1984 and 1984-1990. In the first period, the government was weak, but getting stronger as economic growth increased revenues and control over resources. In this first phase, the political climate was open, marked by high political participation and there was relative

freedom of expression. There was, however, an exception for those who were seen as affiliated to the communists. In the second period which spanned from 1974 until 1984, the state became increasingly strong and autonomous as oil revenues soared. Unfortunately, society participation as well as freedom of the press became increasingly limited. The third period was marked by a strong and highly autonomous state, despite the falling oil revenues. There was only little popular participation in politics as well as much tighter control on the media during this period, as the regime became more authoritarian in its character. Even though the two scholars did not theorize about the period from 1990 until 1998 when Suharto was forced to resigned from his Presidency, this study believes that the character of the regime at that time was very much the same as the characteristic of the third period.

Interestingly, the theorization by Mackie and MacIntyre (1994) which analyzed the New Order regime solely from a political economy perspective, found a parallel with the life of the Indonesian media in general, and the situation of media freedom specifically. Indonesian journalists as well as Indonesian media scholars believe that the dawn of the New Order from 1967 until 1974 was the period in which the Indonesian media enjoyed the most freedom. The previously banned newspapers under the Sukarno period, such as *Indonesia Raya*, were allowed to publish again. The media in general could freely write critical pieces of the power holders. This bred hope that the new regime would be supportive of the freedom of the Indonesian media, and this period was popularly named the "Indian Summer" of the Indonesian press. However, this freedom lessened after the 1971 election, when the regime got stronger after winning the election.

Furthermore, as the state became stronger politically, buoyed by the election as well as economic improvements due to the rise of oil revenue from 1974-1984, the regime began to reduce political participation and clamped down on media freedom. As explained in chapter 2, there was a series of press bans in 1974 affecting six Jakarta dailies (Harian KAMMI, Indonesia Raya, Nusantara,

Abadi, Pedomandan the Jakarta Times), two regional dailies (Suluh Berita in Surabaya and Indonesia Pos in Ujung Pandang) and four weeklies (Mahasiswa Indonesia, Mingguan Wenag, Pemuda Indonesia and Ekspress). Except for two: Abadi and Jakarta Times, all other newspapers were closed permanently, and many journalists were thrown in jail.

Another significant press ban happened in 1978. As a response to emerging criticism of government development policies, Chinese financiers, the role of foreign investors and government officials, as well as direct criticism by university students, the government closed a further seven Jakarta-based newspapers, including *Kompas* and *Sinar harapan* for two weeks. It also closed seven student newspapers and arrested more than 200 students, and the university campuses were even occupied by the military. As explained in chapter 2, the 1980s saw further media bans. Newspapers and magazines such as *Tempo, Jurnal Ekuin* (Economy, Finanace and Industry Journal), *Expo* magazine, *Topik* and *Fokus* magazine were all banned temporarily or permanently for publishing items deemed controversial or critical of the state. Therefore, in the third period theorized by Mackie and MacIntyre above, and arguably until the end of the New Order in 1998, the regime was seen as growing in strength and became even more restricting of mass participation and the mass media.

In the 90s, even though this period was expected to be more free as Suharto's presidency approached its end, a series of press bans occurred again. On June 21, 1994, the Minister Information, Harmoko, withdrew the publication license of three major weeklies: the highly prestigious and widely read *Tempo* magazine (with estimated sales of 187,000), the critical political tabloid of the 1990s *Detik* (with estimated sales of 200,000) and the weekly magazine *Editor* (with sales of 80,000). The ban was triggered by the coverage of these media on a dispute within the government over an agreement to buy thirty-nine second hand warships from the former East Germany. The dispute was between the Minister of Research and Technology, BJ Habibie, and the Minister

of Finance, Marie Muhammad, as well as some military officials in the navy. Both the Finance Minister and the navy officials considered that Habibie had overstepped his authority, and should have consulted them. A few days after the coverage, President Suharto made a speech accusing the media of having provoked controversy and disturbed national stability (Steele, 2005: 234). These bans triggered a wave of protests from Indonesian journalists and political activists, which was believed to be the foundation for the widespread civil protests in 1998.

Considering the big amount of data, the study focuses only on significant periods in the New Order era as presented by Mackie and MacIntyre (1994)**,** and to capture the dynamics of this period, this study will pick six different years of the New Order to be analyzed: 1967, 1971, 1974, 1978, 1983 and 1994. 1967 was chosen as this represents the beginning of the New Order regime. This is the year when Suharto formally declared himself as President; while in 1966 he was already in power as a caretaker (*pemegang jabatan sementara*) surrounding the coup d'état of Sukarno. The year 1971 was chosen because, as explained in Chapter 2, it is in this year that *Kompas* began to self-censor by dropping one of its popular columns: *Kompasiana*. It can be seen that the regime's restriction of the media began in this year. The year 1974 was chosen because, as argued by Hill (1990) above, this was the beginning of widespread media bans during the New Order. This wave of bans occurred in 1978, 1983 and 1994, and provides the reason for the selection of these three years. Meanwhile, 1998 was chosen because, despite Suharto having stepped down from power earlier that year, the authoritarian law regulating and restricting the press remained in place (number 11/1966). It was not until 1999 that Indonesia implemented a new press act (number 40/1999) which promised more freedom for the press. Considering that each year there are 12 issues to be the sampled, there are therefore 84 articles on corruption which are analyzed in this section.

The Findings

From these 84 selected issues of *Kompas* newspaper during the New Order, the coverage on corruption is as follows:

Table 3

Sources of the Corruption's Coverage in the New Order

Num	**News Sources**	**Number in percent**							**Total Average (10)**
(1)	**(2)**	1967 (3)	1971 (4)	1974 (5)	1978 (6)	1983 (7)	1994 (8)	1998 (9)	
1	Legal apparatus	22.2	70	52.1	95	74.2	46.1	40	57.1
2	Government official	23.3	15	17.3		5.7	30.7	33.3	17.9
3	Corruption suspect	11.1	15	26.1	5	17.1		6.6	11.5
4	Civil Society activists	33.3		4.3			23.1	20	11.5
5	Whistleblower					2.8			0.4
6	Document	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	Observation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Unclear	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	N	9	20	23	20	35	26	15	148

From column number 10 of table 3 above, it can be seen that the highest number of sources cited during the New Order period are official sources, consisting of legal apparatus, government officials and the statements of corruption suspects on trial, which together provide 86.5% of the sources. A far lower percentage of sources cited are civil society activists with 11.5%, and the lowest number of cited sources are those who provide the element for investigative journalism, namely whistleblowers, documents and journalist observations, which only provide 0.4% of the total cited sources.

It is interesting to note that civil society activists are cited the most during the first year of Suharto's presidency in 1967, with 33.3% (row number 4). The period in which the New Order regime was approaching its twilight in 1994 (23.0%) and 1998 (20%) provide the second and third rank in terms of citing civil society activist sources. Contrastingly, in these three distinctive years, official sources are the lowest cited in comparison to other years. In the year 1967 the official sources provide 66.6% of the sources, while in 1994 and 1998, they provide 76.8% and 83.9% of the sources. This is significantly lower than in 1971, where official sources made up 100% of the news sources, and also in 1974 (95.1%), 1978 (100%) and 1983 (97%), where they made up nearly all the news sources.

There are clear parallels between *Kompas'* coverage on corruption and the observations made by Mackie and MacIntyre (1994) on the media in Indonesia. As suggested by these scholars, in the period between 1974 until 1984, *Kompas'* coverage on corruption relied more on official sources compared with other years. Following their argument, this was indeed the period when the political regime was increasingly powerful and media freedom was increasingly limited. In fact, it was in the year of 1978 that *Kompas* was closed down by the regime. However, there are divergences. In 1971, which Mackie and MacIntyre characterize as a period in which the media was still relatively free, it is interesting to see that the newspaper had acted cautiously by relying 100% on official sources. It was only in the earliest period of the regime, in 1967, where the newspaper was courageous enough to give relatively more space to unofficial sources.

The tendency to rely on official sources as illustrated in table 3 above also had implications on the content of the coverage of corruption under the New Order. In column number 10 of table 4 below, it can be seen that most of the stories were framed in the legal theme (65.4%). In sharp contrast, articles framed in the civil society movement against corruption only occupied 8.3%, and the theme of anti-corruption only framed 26.15% of the news stories.

Table 4
Theme of Corruption Coverage during the New Order[31]

Num (1)	News Sources (2)	Number in percent							Total Average (10)
		1967 (3)	1971 (4)	1974 (5)	1978 (6)	1983 (7)	1994 (8)	1998 (9)	
1	Legal	16.6	66.6	66.6	100	100	58.3	50	65.4
2	Civil Society Movement	8.3	33.3				8.3	8.3	8.3
3	Guilty Man								
4	Whistleblower								
5	Anti-corruption	75		33.3			33.3	41.6	26.1
N		12	12	12	12	12	12	12	84

An interesting parallel can be inferred with regard to the anti-corruption theme. In row number 5 of table 4 above, it can be seen that in the weakest period of the regime, 1967, the frame of anti-corruption in the coverage is the strongest (75%); this was a transition year when Suharto had just taken over the presidency. There was also an increase in anti-corruption news items in the year 1998, which was the demise of the New Order. In both these periods, there was a promise of more freedom for the press, which chimes with the demand for corruption eradication.

[31] For coding, please see tables 2-8, appendix 2.

5.5 Corruption Coverage in the Reformation Era

The Selected Years

In terms of freedom of the press, this study argues that the Indonesian Reformation era did not begin until the government enacted the Press Act number 40/1999. Under this new law, the state was no longer allowed to close down press offices, and government permits to establish a media company were no longer needed. This research selected four different years which fall under different presidents in the Reformation era, and can be seen to be representative of this era up till 2015. The years selected are 2000, 2003, 2009, and 2015. The justification for selecting these particular years is that each of them fell under a different Indonesian president: 2000 was the time when BJ Habibie and Abdurrahman Wahid governed the country; 2003 was the time of the Megawati's presidency; 2009 was the period of Susilo Bamban Yudhoyono; while 2015 falls under the period of the current president, Joko Widodo. Despite the changes in presidency, all of these presidents have governed an Indonesia characterized by a more democratic and open political system; an extremely different political environment than in the previous two eras. As with the previous eras to be analyzed, there are 12 articles for each of the four years to be analyzed, therefore there are 48 articles in total.

The Findings

From the 48 articles analyzed, it can be found that despite the regime change, the sources of news on corruption still rely heavily on the official sources. This can be seen as follows:

Table 5
Sources of Corruption Coverage in the Reformation Era

Num (1)	News Sources (2)	Number in percent				Total Average (7)
		2000 (3)	2003 (4)	2009 (5)	2015 (6)	
1	Legal apparatus	36.8	27.7	60	40	41.1
2	Government officials	26.3	44.5	20	40	32.7
3	Corruption suspect	-	-	6.6	5	2.9
4	Civil Society activists	36.8	27.7	13.3	15	23.2
5	Whistleblowers	-	-	-	-	-
6	Documents	-	-	-	-	-
7	Observations	-	-	-	-	-
8	Unclear	-	-	-	-	-
N		19	18	15	20	72

In column 7 of the table 5 above, we can see that the use of official sources in the coverage on corruption in the selected samples is as much as 76.7%. This percentage comes from the legal apparatus (41.1%), government officials (32.7%) and corruption suspects (2.9%). This is lower than the official sources cited in the Old Order era (83.2%) as well in the New Order (85.5%). However, this is still a high number, especially if we contrast it to the complete lack of non-official sources, such as documents, journalist observations, as well as whistleblowers, reflecting that any journalistic initiative to expose is lacking. This is even lower than in the New Order era, where 1.1% of the sources reflected non-official journalistic sources. However, it is similar to the situation during the Old Order.

During the Reformation era, the use of civil society activists as news sources is significantly higher (23.2%) than during both the New Order (11.5%), and the Old Order period (11.8%). This means that together with the decrease in the

use of official sources, there is also an increase in the use of unofficial sources from civilians. This does not necessarily mean that exposure journalism is being implemented, but rather that the newspaper started to follow the anti-corruption agenda initiated by civil society. This might be an example of a shift towards democratization and greater press freedom in the way corruption is covered in the reformation era.

In parallel to the high reliance on official sources, the framing of articles on corruption is dominated by the legal theme (59.6%) as illustrated in the table 6 below.

Table 6
Theme of Corruption Coverage in the Reformation Era[32]

Num	**Theme**	**Number in percent**				**Total Average**
(1)	**(2)**	2000 (3)	2003 (4)	2009 (5)	2015 (6)	**(7)**
1	Legal	50	33.3	75	80	59.6
2	Civil Society Movement	8.3	-	-	-	2.1
3	Guilty Man	-	-	-	-	-
4	Whistleblower	-	-	-	-	-
5	Anti-corruption	41.6	66.7	25	20	38.3
	N	12	12	12	12	48

From the table above, we can see that the second highest percentage is the anti-corruption theme with 38.3%, and the civil society movement theme only occupies 2.1% of the coverage on corruption.

[32] For coding, please see tables 9-12, appendix 2.

5.6 The Coverage Across Different Political Regimes

From the coverage on corruption across different political periods, *Kompas'* news sources on corruption are as follows:

Table 7
Sources of Corruption Coverage Across Different Political Regimes

Num	News Source	The Old Order	The New Order	The Reform Era
1	Legal Apparatus	47.1%	57.1%	41.1%
2	Government Officials	17.6%	17.9%	32.7%
3	Corruption Suspect	17.6%	11.5%	2.9%
4	Civil Society Activists	11.8%	11.5%	23.2%
5	Whistleblower	-	0.4%	-
6	Document	-	-	-
7	Observation	-	-	-
8	Unclear Sources	5.8%	-	-
	N	17	148	72

From the table above, it can be seen that in every period, most of the news sources for the stories of corruption are official sources, which consist of: legal apparatus, government officials and corruption suspect. While in the Old Order, official sources make up 82.3% of the total news source, during the New Order it increased slightly to 86.5%. This strong reliance on official sources was understandable in both periods, as Indonesia was under an authoritarian regime. By using predominantly official sources, the newspaper positioned itself as the mouthpiece of the government and avoided the risk of offending those in power. However, there is a surprising finding in the table above: 76.7% of the news sources are official sources in the Reformation era, indicating that

the preference for official sources was continuously maintained after the fall of the authoritarian regimes, when the media now enjoyed much more freedom.

In terms of the themes of these articles, corruption coverage across different political regimes is displayed below:

Table 8
Theme of Corruption Across Different Political Regimes

Num	Theme	The Old Order	The New Order	The Reform Era
1	Legal	50%	65.4%	59.6%
2	Civil Society Movement	8.3%	8.3%	2.1%
3	Guilty Man	8.3%	-	-
4	Whistleblower	-	-	-
5	Anti-Corruption	33.3%	26.1%	38.3%
	N	12	84	48

From the table above, it can be seen that in every period, the dominant theme has always been the legal one. While during the Old Order, 50% of the articles were framed by a legal theme, during the New Order it sharply increased to 65.4%. This focus on a legal theme reflects how articles published on corruption were framed as a legal process officially conducted by the legal apparatus. By following the lead of the official process, the newspaper prevented itself from covering a story that was not anticipated by the regime. Therefore, it also reflected how the newspaper wanted to protect itself by avoiding the risk of being banned by the authoritarian regime. While such a theme is understandable during the authoritarian periods, it is surprising that after the regime changes in 1998, stories on corruption continued to be framed mainly in the same legal theme (59.6%). Therefore, despite the regime change, the

editorial preference to frame stories on corruption in terms of the legal proceedings has not changed.

This overall consistency in terms of news sources and the themes of coverage, as well as in the orientation of the coverage on corruption, is noteworthy. In all of the 12 selected years from 1965 to 2015, the tone or orientation of the coverage on corruption cases are always unfavorable and presented in a negative light (please see appendix). Therefore, to some extent, *Kompas* can be seen to have taken an adversarial position to those suspected of corruption or corruption practices. This adversarial position is one of the elements of a watchdog function. However, this research shows that *Kompas* does not meet the requirement of factors number 1 and number 2, which are exposing cases of corruption and reporting incidents of corruption based on its own initiative.

5.7 Some Changes

Despite the continuities in the way the newspaper covered corruption across different regimes as presented above, it would be misleading to assume that there have been no changes at all. To some extent, after the fall Suharto in May 1998, there were at least two obvious aspects that changed: the amount of coverage given to corruption, and the content of this coverage. As can be seen in table 9 below, there was a significant increase in the amount of articles on corruption in the newspaper since 1998.

Table 9
Number of Corruption Coverage
Across Different Political Regimes

Year	Number of Corruption Articles
1965	*43*
1967	240
1971	151
1974	111
1978	193
1983	371
1994	721
1998	***2189***
2000	***2464***
2003	***2245***
2009	***3110***
2015	***3397***

Whilst before 1998, the amount of corruption coverage each year numbered only a few hundred articles, it rose to thousands of articles per year since 1998. This reflects the change in the political climate in Indonesia, where one of the main agendas of the People Power movement in 1998 was the eradication of corruption, as well as the downfall of corrupt politicians, including President Suharto.

The second apparent change in the corruption coverage after the fall of this authoritarian regime relates to corruption suspects: the type of people who could be the subject of a corruption story. During the previous authoritarian regimes, presidents, vice presidents, and the president's close friends and

families could never be the subject of a corruption story in *Kompas*. As explained in chapter 2, this is because *Kompas* had agreed to never cover such stories, having been banned in 1978. However, during the Reformation era, the President and Vice President could both be the subject of corruption investigations. As explained in chapter 4, for instance, Boediono appeared at the center of an article about corruption in the Century Bank scandal (*Kompas,* March 7, 2014). Much earlier, even President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono himself was the subject of a corruption allegation. This can be seen in the article dated December 2, 2009, entitled: *"President Denies Again, The House of Representative Agrees to Use the Right to Question on the Century Bank Scandal".* The article describes this as follows:

> *President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono again expressed concern because of the growing news about the flow of Century Bank bailout funds to his campaign during the last presidential election. The president called it slander that contains no truth….The President reiterated his denial in the commemoration of National Teachers' Day 2009 and the 64th Birthday of the Teachers' Union of the Republic of Indonesia in Jakarta, Tuesday (1/12). Previously, the president had condemned the growth of the news in a special statement on 23 November….The President mentioned that it was a hoax, defamation, and character assassination that he and his family have to endure, and that it potentially undermines democracy. "If the politics we hope for is to be more dignified as a reflection of a more mature democracy, and then it is suddenly filled with intrigue, slander, I must point out, justice can be trampled, democracy can be damaged, and civilization can be polluted," he said. (Kompas, December 2, 2009)*

A news headline and content which specifically addressed the possibility of a president's involvement in a corruption case could never have appeared when Suharto or Sukarno were in power in the previous authoritarian eras.

However, despite these changes, the way a corruption story was presented remains unchanged when seen in terms of a watchdog function. As illustrated above, the newspaper had avoided conducting any investigative reporting which initially exposed the wrongdoings of the power holders. This is because even in the Reformation era, the newspaper still relied on official sources. In the case of Boediono, as explained in chapter 4, the news sources are the statements of the prosecutors during legal proceedings. Meanwhile, in the case of President Yudhoyono, the news sources were the President himself, who expressed denial about his involvement. *Kompas* did not investigate the scandal itself by using whistleblowers or documents to reveal or determine who was actually responsible.

5.8 Constructing News on Corruption

How is the news on corruption as presented above manufactured at *Kompas*? How does the daily routine of making the news operate in the newsroom? In the findings above where the coverage on corruption does not reflect the idea of investigative journalism, does the manufacturing of the news on corruption also undermine the idea of exposure journalism? As I consider these questions, my mind travels back to the night of February 14, 2014. This was the first time I accompanied a journalist into the field, as he was kind enough to give me permission to shadow him as he did his job.

His name was Syamsudin; but his journalistic name was Slamet. He was a man in his 30s with a strong Javanese accent, and he worked as a journalist of the political and law division, which is responsible for covering all the political as well as legal events in Indonesia. But Slamet had a special, specific task: to write about the latest incidents of corruption. At *Kompas,* this meant that he has to be "headquartered" in the office of the Indonesian Commission on Corruption Eradication (KPK) located in Kuningan street. It is from this office that the latest cases of corruption involving important politicians are released. On one day, a politician from parliament could be caught and brought to the KPK office, whilst on another an important minister could be identified as a new corruption

suspect. For those who closely follow the cases of corruption in Indonesia, they will be very familiar with this unit's commission.

For Slamet, the KPK was his second office as he visited it almost every day. So, on that Valentine's day, I found myself sitting behind Slamet on his motorbike, on our way to Kuningan street. As we reached the KPK, there were already many journalists sitting in the lobby. Bill introduced me to some of them. From the way they talked to him, I realized that these other journalists greatly respected *Mas* Slamet. As the evening progressed, I became aware that this was not any ordinary night: there was reason why the office was flooded with so many journalists. On that night, a suspect who had close ties with a powerful politician from Serang was brought to the commission for investigation. Once this man had arrived, the KPK's spokesperson, Johan Budi, made an announcement through a conference to all of the journalists present. These journalists call these Friday nights *"Jumat Keramat",* a Javanese phrase which means "Sacred Friday." This is because on this day, KPK usually announces new cases of corruption.

To my surprise, Slamet did not go home after the press conference. He said he was not satisfied with the conference's session, nor with the question and answer session that came afterwards. Approaching midnight, his cellular phone rang. The call was from the KPK spokesperson himself, who asked Slamet to come upstairs to his office. The security officers, evidently were familiar with the journalist, easily gave him permission to enter with me. We took the elevator to reach Johan's room on the top floor. In there, the three of us spent one or two hours smoking and casually talking about the recent case, though the conversation also touched on almost every other topic, just like a conversation between old friends.

On my journey back to the *Kompas* office with Slamet, he explained that this was the way he approached his source. *"It takes much effort and militancy to build trust with your sources. I guess it's just like you with your research."* He explained further, claiming that he has a special relationship with Johan, and

that it is only he who has the privilege to be invited to the office of the KPK spokesperson at midnight, allowing him to write more stories than any other journalist. He believed it is for this reason that *Kompas* has become the most comprehensive newspaper in its corruption coverage, as he could share information that other journalists did not have because his source gave him exclusive access to information.

Hearing the story of Slamet above, it soon becomes obvious that the newspaper relied highly on official sources. Johan Budi is, with all due respect, a person of authority and part of the establishment. He is not a whistleblower. He is the spokesperson of the KPK. His job is to make sure that the works of the commission appear in the media. Therefore, despite Slamet's pride, it is in Johan's interest to build a close relationship with all journalists. Furthermore, given the large circulation as well as the influence of *Kompas,* Johan knows that he needs to treat this newspaper's journalists differently to that of other newspapers. The way in which Slamet focused solely on getting quotes and information from KPK illustrates that *Kompas*' coverage of corruption relies heavily on official sources, and Slamet does not spend much time uncovering new cases of corruption. With regard to the principle of investigative journalism, this is not the way journalists should work.

When I put this to Slamet, he admitted that he did not do investigative journalism. He believed that investigative journalism was not fitting for a newspaper which has to inform the public on a daily basis. He suggested that investigative journalism is more suitable for a weekly magazine such as *Tempo.* He also mentioned, however, that there are constraints from the newsroom. He had often experienced a situation in which when he came to writing the critical part of the story involving a corruption scandal, his article was dropped by the editor. In other words, Slamet was suggesting that it is not the policy of the newsroom to engage in exposure journalism when covering corruption.

This statement of Slamet is no exaggeration. Just a day before my trip with him, as I was in the newsroom interviewing *Kompas* Chief Editor, Arif Subangun, I

found confirmation of Slamet's statement. According to Arif, investigative journalism is not among their policy:

> *What is important for now is not to find a new name that is involved in a corruption scandal, it is to encourage the legal process for the already revealed cases…. Is there any solution? This is not just about exposure. Kompas supports the existing cases of corruption scandals to be prosecuted. That is the policy of Kompas. (Personal communication with Arif Subangun, February 13, 2014)*

This view of the *Kompas* Chief Editor above was manifest in the dynamics inside the newsroom. As I was attending the editorial meetings of the politics and law division *(Desk Politik dan Hukum/Polhuk)*, I noticed that the news on corruption was delegated mainly to two journalists. One of them was Slamet who was "headquartered" in the KPK office. The second was Fajar, who was "headquartered" in the Special Court for Corruption Trials (*Pengadilan Tindak Pidana Korupsi/Pengadilan Tipikor*), which was part of KPK. While the first post was a special position to gather the new names of corruption suspects announced by KPK, the second was tasked to write about the court trials of those named. This desk, *Polhuk,* is responsible for filling pages two to five of the newspaper, where readers can expect to read the news on corruption. In some instances when the corruption story involves the political elite, we can also read about it on the front page of the newspaper. The corruption trial involving Vice President Boediono, as explained in Chapter 4 on self-censorship, is one such example. Apart from these two roles, there has never been a special investigation desk to investigate the misconduct of the power holders. Needless to say, with this kind of media setup, it is difficult for journalists to pursue or uncover new cases of corruption.

This reluctance to engage in exposure journalism is, in fact, nothing new for *Kompas.* In an interview with a retired journalist who worked under the New Order period, Bambang Wisudho, it is clear that investigative journalism was not implemented during his time. He explained that there are cultural

constraints from within the newsroom when it comes to exposing scandals on corruption. He even experienced a situation in which his article was dropped by the editors, because its in-depth coverage would unintentionally reveal the names of the people involved in corruption at the Department of Education. (Personal communication with Bambang Wisudo, June 12, 2014) This practice was confirmed by other journalist elites, which I will elaborate on in the following section.

5.9 Some Underlying Forces

After a month of waiting curiously, the meeting of the ombudsman on investigative journalism - the follow up to the previous meeting colored by the protest of Faisal Basri - was finally held. As is clear from the introduction of this chapter, the motivation for the meeting was a demand for more investigative journalism. As I was sitting amid the board members and *Kompas* journalists that Friday, 22 August 2014, the demand was once again articulated. The ombudsman believed that *Kompas* should be more courageous in its journalism by implementing investigative reporting on corruption. They believed that there was no longer any reason to be cautious. On the other hand, tight competition and the increasing decline of newspaper circulation had forced the daily to come up with something new for the readers. In his concluding remarks, Daniel Dhakidae, the Chairman of the board, ended his recommendation speech with a big question: *"The world out there has already changed; are we going to remain the same?"*

This question triggered reactions from all the journalists in the room. These reactions, however, were not always expressed straightforwardly, as we could expect in any *Kompas* meeting and discussion. Some young journalists rather hesitantly agreed with the suggestion of the ombudsman -that *Kompas* should be more courageous. Nevertheless, considering that many of their seniors were present in the room, they still avoided arguing directly or too forcefully that more investigative reporting should be undertaken. Interestingly, some senior journalists who were not part of the editorial board supported the idea without

hesitation. They shared the same view with those members of the board, and insisted that *Kompas* should implement such a policy. Answering this demand with a smile on his face, Daniel explained that the power to make such decisions did not lie in their hands, as the job of the ombudsman board is simply to make recommendations.

All of those in the room knew that the only person who could answer the question was Randu Rahardjo. He was the Vice Chief Editor of the paper, and the only editorial member who had joined the meeting. Therefore, as Daniel's eyes fixed on the face of Randu who sat on the other side of the table, all eyes in the room were also drawn to him, and the *Kompas* Chief Editor knew that there is no way to escape. Before anyone posed a further question, he responded quickly by saying: "If the question is directed at me, I could only respond like this." The answer drew laughter from everyone, followed as it was by a gesture of obeisance, with Randu's two palms meeting in front of his chest. The journalists all knew that this was the favored gesture of Jakob Oetama.

After the laughter died down and a brief period of silence, Randu elaborated on his statement. The Vice Chief Editor suggested that the paper needed to refer to Jakob if they were to implement such a new editorial policy. He believed that it was not possible in that moment, however, to realize such a change, as Jakob would not agree. In a speech under the gaze of everyone in the room, he explained his view as follows:

> *If we talk about Pak Jakob, I have hardly heard him mention the words "investigative reporting." Never once have I heard "investigative reporting" from him. Instead, he always uses the term "in-depth reporting". To give meaning to an event. To provide comprehensive reporting. I have never heard him ask: "this one needs to be investigated."… From Pak Jakob, we have never heard that this or that needs investigating, and now over time this has become our culture. (Randu Rahardjo, August 22, 2014)*

A year later, on June 28, 2015, when the paper celebrated its 50-year anniversary, Budiman's statement above was confirmed by Jakob Oetama. On the front page of the newspaper, the old man - a living legend at *Kompas*, wrote:

> *The classical formula of watchdog can't be delivered in black or white. The representation needs to come with tolerance (tenggang **rasa**) and self-awareness (tahu diri). Critics with understanding, which can be translated as both straightforward (tegas) at one time, as well as indirect (miyar miyur) at another time, shows our wisdom. It is a wisdom of a teacher who never forces (memaksa) but suggests. Kompas is in the middle with **ngono yo ngono ning ojo ngono, apike ngene bae** (you are free to behave like that, but behave like this instead), including in distinguishing its dependency and independency. (Oetema, Keep the Voice amid Noise, Kompas, 28 June 2015)*

In the writing above, we can see how the *Kompas* founder emphasizes the importance of carrying out the role of watchdog, but not in a strict sense. In his words, the watchdog function *"can't be delivered in black or white."* Those who do not understand Javanese culture cannot immediately grasp Jakob's intention in the statement above. But for *Kompas* journalists, the message was clear: the founder of the newspaper emphasized the importance of carrying out a watchdog function with a sense of politeness, which was accentuated in words such as: *tenggang rasa* (tolerance), *tahu diri* (self-awareness), and more importantly, *ngono yo ngono ning ojo ngono, apike ngene bae* (you may behave that way but please don't, it's better this way).

From Jakob's words above, it is obvious that while the journalists admit that they do not carry out any investigative journalism, they believe that they still function as a watchdog of the power holders. It is for this reason that this study theorizes the *Kompas Way* of functioning as a watchdog of the power holders as being a 'polite watchdog'. The emphasis on politeness when covering the misconduct of the power holders was also expressed in many of Jakob's teachings, and developed into catchy expressions in the newsroom: "*Sebisa*

mungkin jangan menyakiti perasaan orang lain (Try your best not to hurt other people's feelings)", *"Tak ada malaikan di muka bumi ini (* There is no angel in this world)," *"Njiwit ning ojo lara* (Pinching without hurting)" as well as *"Jangan memukul orang sampai jatuh (*Don't beat people till they fall)".

When I introduced my term "polite watchdog" as a way to describe the implementation of the watchdog function at the newspaper at my occasional meetings with *Kompas* journalists, they all agreed with it. The journalists believed that the concept perfectly captured their idea of watchdog journalism, which has been adapted to Indonesian culture. Sularto, a senior journalist who acted as the Vice Director of the newspaper, personally thanked me for introducing the term to him, and cited it in the introduction of his book. Randu Rahardjo concurred with the term in my meeting with him on September 8, 2016. Previously, at a lunch together with Sutta Dharmasaputra, the Vice Executive Editor of the newspaper on 30 July 30, 2016, he also praised the term as fitting well with *Kompas'* values. Having known all these people for years, I have no doubt that they are being sincere when expressing their opinion.

The sense of politeness of the newspaper is not just the claim of journalists themselves, as their readers also share the same view. In the newspaper's special edition where *Kompas* invited Indonesian elites to write in with their impression of the newspaper, 'polite' was seen as one of the dominant characteristics of the newspaper. Out of 44 writers, 17 of them (38.6%) have written that the newspaper has been polite in their writing. They express it using these following words and phrases: humble, good language, refined, indirect, cautious, critical but with understanding, Javanese way. In a piece by Abu Rizal Bakrie, a political elite from the Golkar party, the newspaper is described as follows:

> *Kompas has always been the same: very polite and comforting. The heart of the Reformation era has almost never been able to touch the politeness and cautiousness of Kompas, which has been a feature*

> *since the newspaper since the beginning. (Bakrie, Kompas, June 28, 2015)*

Nevertheless, despite the strong influence of Jakob Oetama behind the idea of polite reporting, the politeness of the newspaper does not merely come from the Javanese background of the *Kompas* founder.

Rather, it was forced by political circumstances during both authoritarian eras, where the newspaper had to deliver critique of the regimes in such a way as to avoid a press ban. In an article entitled *"Talking Out Loud Among the Crowd",* Jakob admitted that the experience of the newspaper ban by Suharto in 1978 had very much influenced the culture of politeness in the writing style of the newspaper. Writing on June 28, 2015 on the front page of the newspaper, Jakob said as follows:

> *The experience of being banned on 20 January 1978 until 5 February 1978 has been a great lesson for Kompas. We answer the call to be more aware of our position, explicitly agree to commit to good intentions, and conduct ourselves in a good way, without prejudice.*

The findings of the content analysis also reflect Jakob's view above. Despite the fact that *Kompas* has never conducted investigative journalism, there were fluctuations in the use of unofficial sources. The percentage of civil society sources in the year of 1967, 1994, and 1998 during the New Order where relatively higher than in any other year (see table 3). As explained in the earlier part of this chapter, those years correspond to the dawn and the twilight of Suharto's regime, when it was still weak and undeveloped, or else weakening. In addition, the use of civilian sources is increasingly higher in the Reformation era, when Indonesia no longer lives under an autocracy.

However, while the press ban on *Kompas* occurred in 1978, the way the paper has carried out watchdog journalism has remained consistent throughout. As revealed in the content analysis of their coverage on corruption, the news

sources and the theme of the content in the Old Order era do not differ significantly with the coverage during the New Order. Accordingly, the use of civilian sources is relatively low. This indicates how the authoritarian political environment has influenced the newspaper throughout its history.

Surprisingly, as explained earlier, the idea and practice of *"polite watchdog"* journalism has continued in the current Reformation era at *Kompas*. One of the reasons is because the practice of polite watchdogging in the past has created a journalistic culture that does not automatically disappear alongside the disappearance of political autocracy. In the words of Randu:

> *From Pak Jakob we have never heard the instructions for conducting investigative journalism. It has eventually become our culture… Every time we have a conflict, every time we get sued (by corruption suspects), he always suggested a solution away from the courts…. Please, step back brother. Please, step back… Because he didn't want it. I read it as a sign that he prefers to establish harmony (and avoid conflict)… You may behave that way but please don't… This provides cultural obstacles for investigative journalism to flourish. (Randu Rahardjo, Kompas meeting, August 22, 2014)*

From the quote above, however, we can observe that besides the cultural legacy of journalistic practice at *Kompas*, there is another constraint in the form of the judicial system in Indonesia. The journalists at *Kompas* have learned, based on many experiences involving legal cases in the past, that it is very unlikely for them to win at a trial. At the very least, they will suffer tremendous material loss. They believe that the legal system in Indonesia in not yet fully supportive of the implementation of media freedom, and more specifically, investigative journalism. This view supports other studies into the Indonesian legal system, which suggests that despite the Press Act supporting media freedom, there are many other laws that still constrain it. Some of them are the absence of laws on the protection of whistleblowers, as well as the

maintenance of the law on defamation (Lateef and Sherlock, 2003 and Wiratraman, 2014).

If we put the findings above in the context of journalism practices around the globe, the *Kompas* case interestingly resonates with the studies done by Waisbord (2000) and Pinto (2009) on journalism in a number of South American countries. These scholars believe that the idea of exposure journalism, which characterizes the investigative journalism model, does not suit countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Peru, which labor under an authoritarian legacy. The threat from the authoritarian regimes has fostered a tradition of playing a watchdog role without being investigative. They also believe that the absence of the rule of law supporting press freedom compounds this. Furthermore, investigative reporting needs a huge investment in terms of time and money, which acts as another deterrent to investigative journalism. They did admit, however, that there were some cases where investigative journalism was carried out, and it is becoming increasingly popular, but not in the same way as the muckraking journalism evident in the US or some other advanced democratic countries.

The same situation is also found in some Southeast Asian countries, as demonstrated in the study of Hanitzsch (2005) in the case of Indonesia and in the study of Adibah et al. (2014) in the case Malaysia. They share the same perspective about the existence of different kinds of watchdog journalism, which differ from the western democracy model. However, even though both studies examine Southeast Asian countries, they attribute different factors for the practice. Adibah et al. (2014) argue that like in Latin American countries, the authoritarian political environment has made the press serve more as a lap dog to the power holders. Hanitzsch, however, downplays this factor and suggests that cultural factors are very influential: “The cultural background of the journalists’ socialization seems to play, to some extent and under certain circumstances, a role in defining their professional role in society.” (Hanitzsch, 2005: 506).

While admitting the important role of culture as argued by Hanitzsch, this study suggests that the political regimes under which journalists work significantly influences the extent the journalists conduct their watchdog role. As explained in chapter 2 on the history of *Kompas,* since the very beginning the authoritarian regimes have not only influenced the way the watchdog role was carried out, but also determined the acceptable kind of watchdogging. Experiences of being banned in the Sukarno era (due to Ojong's previous publication before he established *Kompas)* compelled the *Kompas* founders to always act cautiously. Furthermore, the *Kompas* ban in 1978, in which the regime forced the media owners to sign a letter agreeing not to cover any sensitive issues related to the president and his family, has directly constrained the freedom of the journalists to write their stories. Therefore, the political regime has provided an environment for the practice of polite watchdogging to flourish inside the newsroom.

5.10 Conclusion

This chapter started with a simple question as to whether *Kompas* newspaper lived up to the ideal of watchdog journalism in their coverage on the misconduct of the power holders, as well as in their manufacturing process. Examining the implementation of this idea using a western conception of watchdogging, which is synonymous with investigative reporting, this study suggests that *Kompas* tells a rather different story. While investigative journalism requires initiative from the journalists to expose the wrongdoings of, as well adopt an adversarial position towards, the power holders, this chapter clearly demonstrated that *Kompas* journalists did not aspire to this. Content analysis of their coverage on corruption in the current Reformation era reveals that they still rely heavily on official sources. Consequently, when the coverage is analyzed in terms of their themes, they are mainly framed in a legal theme. This means that they simply tell the story of the corruption according to the version of the authorities, without any attempt to discover new cases of corruption based on their own initiative. Interestingly, the result of the content

analysis is consistent across different political regimes, from the twilight of the authoritarian Old Order (1965-1966) to the rise and fall of the authoritarian New Order (1966-1998) and under the current Reformation era, when Indonesia is no longer an authoritarian state.

Meanwhile, the study also found that the manufacturing process of the stories on corruption in the newsroom reflect more or less the same tendency. Ethnographic observation, as well as in-depth interviews with current as well as retired journalists of the newspaper, suggest that an attempt to conduct investigative reporting has never been made in the newsroom. In the Reformation era, the media routine for covering news on corruption is set according to the agenda determined by the authorities. The placement of some journalists in state office such as in the Commission on Corruption Eradication (KPK) as well the Special Court on Corruption Trial (*Pengadilan Tipikor*) is one example of this system. Indeed, many of the *Kompas* journalists themselves admit that investigative journalism has never been their aspiration. Instead, they favor more the idea of in-depth or comprehensive reporting as proposed by the founder, General Director, as well as owner of the newspaper, Jakob Oetama, who also acted as Chief Editor of the newspaper for 45 years, from 1965 until 2000.

It is from Jakob Oetama that these journalists learnt to apply the wisdom from Javanese culture in conducting their watchdog function. The journalists believe that it is important to hold public officials to account, but they equally believe it is important to play this role in a polite way. Underlying this politeness is an intention to avoid conflict with those in power in order to maintain harmony. While this view is indeed rooted in the Javanese culture, the implementation into practice was forced by political as well as economic considerations. During the authoritarian regimes, this polite style of watchdogging was internalized in the newsroom as a strategy to avoid being banned. However, the habitus of polite journalism has not automatically disappeared with the fall of the authoritarian regimes.

Besides the cultural legacy of the old period, some other factors have provided the reason for the absence of exposure journalism. The rule of law that does not support the implementation of investigative watchdogging is among one of the main factors. Experiences in the past where *Kompas* lost in a court trial or suffered a big amount of financial loss has deterred the editorial board from initiating a special investigative desk in the newsroom. Obviously, it is also in the interest of the *Kompas* owner, Jakob Oetama, to prevent his newspaper from suffering such economic loss. Many journalists also believe that they always need to remain close to the power holders in order to secure political patronage due to their Catholic and Chinese background. This is an additional reason to nurture a polite reporting style into the misconduct of power holders.

However, despite the dominant polite watchdogging culture in the newsroom, this practice does not go without challenge. As demonstrated in the introduction of this chapter, the ombudsman board of the newspaper strongly encouraged the daily to start more investigative reporting. However, this board does not have the power to force their recommendations onto the elites of the newspaper's editorial board. There is also growing disappointment from the younger generation of journalists at the paper, who see the newsroom as being too cautious. In the words of Asep, a young editor who was also the head of the political desk: *"We have stepped back, even before we punch!"* Indeed, they believe that in many cases, the newspaper very often retreats before even attempting a step that puts the powerful under scrutiny. On the other hand, the continuously decreasing circulation (see chapter 8) of the print newspaper due to the explosion of online media is an incentive to provide something new for the readers. Some of the journalists believe that more critical watchdog journalism might be the answer. Would these factors be sufficient to be able to change the dominant culture inside the *Kompas* newsroom?

This study suggests that if such a shift could happen, we will not see it in the near future. Whilst this chapter has described how the attempts to cultivate close relations with the power holders is conducted through the way the

newspaper covers stories on corruption, the next chapter will explain how *Kompas* positioned itself amid fierce political competition between elites during the 2014 presidential election in such a way that they maintained close ties with whoever won. Chapter 6 will also elaborate on the challenges to maintain such a position from within the newsroom.

Chapter 6

The Appearance of Neutrality: Kompas' Position in the Presidential Election 2014

"Whoever might win the election, Kompas had to win."

~Arif Subangun, Kompas Chief Editor, 18 March 2014

2014 was an important year for Indonesian democracy. In this year, the country held its third direct presidential election since entering the new democratization era in 1998, after the fall of the New Order. Even though there were many names which appeared in the public debate, in the end the election featured two official candidates: Prabowo Subianto and Joko Widodo. Prabowo ran together with Hatta Rajasa (Hatta) as his Vice President. He was supported by five political parties: Gerindra, PAN, Golar, PPP and PKS. Joko Widodo (Jokowi) ran with Jusuf Kalla as his Vice President, and was supported by four political parties: PDIP, Nasdem, PKB and PKPI.

Prabowo was a former military general who was also a founder of the Gerindra political party. Having run twice in the previous presidential elections, Prabowo was very popular among Indonesians voters. Appearing frequently on national Indonesian television over the past ten years, he had successfully constructed an image of a strong leader, highlighting his military training and achievements as the Commander of Elite Military Army (Kopasus). His eloquent stage performances as he delivered speeches during his various campaigns

consistently portrayed him as a decisive leader: the perfect antidote to the previous President, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who was seen as doubtful and indecisive. Being the ex-son-in-law of President Suharto, Prabowo was seen as the perfect answer for most Indonesians, who missed the authoritarian figure of Suharto and his successful development of the Indonesian economy. In short, Prabowo was undoubtedly the strongest candidate to replace Yudhoyono. However, Jokowi came out of nowhere onto the Indonesian political scene and instantly caused a stir.

Jokowi was the antithesis of Prabowo. While Prabowo was born into the Indonesian elites (he is the son of Soemitro Djojohadikoesoemo, a famous Indonesian economist who held an important role during the New Order era), Jokowi was a modest, ordinary man who had started his career as a successful entrepreneur in Surakarta city. Jokowi embarked on his political career by twice being elected Mayor of Surakarta in the local elections of 2005 and 2010. His evident success in reforming Surakarta led him to be nominated as *Tempo's Leader of Choice* by *Tempo Weekly* (2008), and he received a *Changemakers Award* from *Republika Daily* (2010). At the international level, Jokowi was ranked third place in the World Mayor nomination by the World Mayor foundation headquartered in London in 2012. The rapid rise of Jokowi saw him win the 2012 election to be Governor of the Indonesian capital, Jakarta. But he did not stop there. His rocketing popularity and massive support from the Indonesian public allowed him to put himself forward as an alternative candidate in the ultimate election: the Indonesian presidential election of 2014.

The competition between these two popular presidential candidates created strong political polarization at every level of Indonesian society. As mentioned above, the political parties were grouped into two opposing camps: those who supported Prabowo and those who supported Jokowi. The competition equally polarized Indonesian citizens, as evident in the fierce debates that erupted on social media in the approaching weeks before the election. This reflection of the Indonesian public's sentiment on social media is significant, considering

that Indonesia has 69 million Facebook users, making it the fourth largest country of Facebook users after the United States, Brazil and India (Wall Street Journal, June 27, 2014); and the fifth largest amount of Twitter users worldwide, with 29 million users (Jakarta Post, August 29, 2014).

The Indonesian media, too, was also dragged into this polarization. The two main Indonesian television news broadcasters, *Metro TV* and *TV One*, took up opposing positions. *Metro TV*, which is owned by Surya Paloh, the founder of Nasdem Party - a supporting Political Party for Jokowi - was seen as strongly supportive of Jokowi throughout its coverage, whilst *TV One*, which was owned by the General Leader of the pro-Prabowo Golkar political party, Abu Rizal Bakria, demonstrated support for Prabowo in its coverage. Indonesian newspapers too, were seen as either being favorable towards Jokowi in their coverage, or more sympathetic to Prabowo. The preference of presidential candidate by each media groups was evident by the frequent appearance of one of the candidates in the news coverage, and was determined by the political affiliation of media the owner.

Adding to this potent partisan atmosphere, the 2014 elections were marred by disturbing rumors circulating among the Indonesian media and intellectuals about the dark past of one of the candidates: Prabowo. He was alleged to be involved in human rights abuses, including the abduction of pro-democracy student activists during the 1998 Indonesian student protest, as well as the massacre of civilians during a counter-insurgency operation in East Timor in 1983 (Klinken, April 27, 2014). This was the reason why *The Jakarta Post,* a media with no direct affiliation to any political party, decided to endorse Jokowi, as it was motivated by the need to prevent Prabowo from winning the election. This endorsement of Jokowi ran as follows:

> *We are further perplexed at the nation's fleeting memory of past human rights crimes. A man who has admitted to abducting human rights activists, whether it be merely carrying out orders or of his own volition, has no place at the helm of the world's third-largest*

> *democracy…. Rarely in an election has the choice been so definitive. Never before has a candidate ticked all the boxes on our negative checklist. And for this reason, we cannot do nothing….Therefore The Post feels obliged to openly declare its endorsement of the candidacy of Joko Widodo and Jusuf Kalla as president and vice president in the July 9 election. It is an endorsement we do not take lightly. (Jakarta Post, July 4, 2014)*

Jakarta Post was not the only newspaper that supported Jokowi. Goenawan Mohammad - the founder of *Tempo Weekly* as well as *Tempo* daily newspapers - openly declared his support for Jokowi, and believed that being neutral was not an obligation (*Tempo* daily, June 25, 2014). For the same reason, many Indonesian intellectuals also decided to convey their support for Jokowi. For instance, 333 intellectuals living in the Netherlands announced their support on social media with a campaign saying: "If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor" (Kompas.com, July 4, 2014). In short, due to the murky track record of Prabowo, who was seen as a threat to the future of human rights and democracy in Indonesia, some Indonesian media and intellectuals believed that preventing Prabowo from winning the election meant saving Indonesian democracy.

However, despite what was at stake with regard to the future of Indonesian democracy, and despite the media polarization, Kompas took an ambiguous position. Officially, the newspaper took a neutral position in its formal editorial policy. It opted not to side with either candidate. The newspaper endeavored to give equal space in its coverage to both pairs of candidates. It described both candidates mostly in a favorable tone, while avoiding being too critical in exposing the weaknesses of both candidates. Nevertheless, the overall tone of the coverage was more favorable towards Jokowi-JK, and most of the journalists personally supported Jokowi-JK. This showed in various ways. Some of the senior editors gave advice to the campaign, while some reporters even

attended the campaign, wearing t-shirts with a picture of Jokowi and JK on it. While individual journalists were mostly sympathetic to Jokowi, Kompas endeavored to appear to be neutral, in order to avoid conflict with whomever might win the election.

This chapter will discuss why Kompas took such an ambiguous stance. I will argue that this ambiguous neutrality was informed by economic considerations, as well as a long-standing tendency of Kompas not to anger ruling politicians. During the elections, Kompas could profit from receiving advertisements from both candidates, helping to ensure that Kompas would have a good working relation with the future president, whoever it was. In this sense, this chapter applies some of the arguments I developed in earlier chapters. As I argued in chapter 2, for Kompas, the maintenance of good relations with power holders was instrumental to securing economic gain in the form of financial support from the regime. Furthermore, as I argued in chapters 2 and 3, this neutrality was also informed by Kompas' longstanding preference to maintain a good relationship with power holders. It is, in other words, a heritage from Indonesia's authoritarian past that a newspaper like Kompas would prefer to avoid publishing critical articles that might be seen as favoring a particular candidate. These values, which developed primarily under the previous authoritarian eras, have become embodied as part of the habitus of Kompas journalists. This situation is surprisingly similar to the case in post-authoritarian Mexico, in which the legacy of the authoritarian past still influences the current state of its journalism.

To elaborate further on the argument above, this chapter will be divided into five sections. The first part will briefly discuss the concept of media neutrality in the literature of journalism. The second part will discuss Kompas' official editorial policy of neutrality. Next, it will discuss the individual position of most Kompas journalists who were in favor of Jokowi, in sharp contrast to their formal editorial policy. Meanwhile, the fourth part

will explain how this tension between the institutional policy and individual preference manifested in contesting definitions between journalists about the meaning of being neutral. The fifth part will explain the election coverage of the newspaper and suggest which notion of neutrality actually prevailed in the newsroom, and the last part will explain the underlying factors behind such an ambiguous position.

6.1 Neutrality as a Contested Theory in Journalism

In the literature on journalism, neutrality is broadly viewed in three different ways. The first group of scholars view neutrality as simply being equal and balanced. This definition usually emerges in discussions of media positions during general elections (Deloire, 2012; Hopmann et al., 2011; Marquez-Ramirez; 2012; Semetko, 2010; Tapsell, 2012 & 2017). Here, being neutral in the election means giving equal treatment to each candidate by allocating equal media coverage to both. In doing so, it is suggested that a political bias towards one of the candidates can be avoided:

> *A journalist must devote equal and balanced attention to all parties and candidates...one way of ensuring impartiality is to provide equal amounts of coverage to each candidate….with each party's position balanced by the others. (Deloire, 2012: 19-20)*

Deloire elaborates further that in order to be neutral, a journalist has to avoid giving his personal judgment.

This simple definition of neutrality, however, has been challenged by the second group of scholars who define neutrality as not only giving balanced and equal coverage, but also providing as many different perspectives as possible about a certain story or issue (Hanitsch, 2006; Sambrook, 2012). In this regard, neutrality is not just seen as an output which is manifest in the news content, but also as input, which refers to the process of news production:

> *Impartiality is to be distinguished from balance (the allocation of equal space to opposing views) and objectivity (by which journalist usually mean an effort to exclude subjective judgment). Impartiality involves no more than the attempt to regard different ideas, opinions, interests or individuals with detachment. (Sambrook, 2012: 5)*

In the quote above, Sambrook emphasizes that providing space for different ideas and opinions is at the heart of neutrality. He suggests that neutrality requires an effort from the media institution to be transparent about itself, laying bare its political affiliations, corporate interests and how it gathers its information. The ultimate aim of this neutrality as a process is to gain the trust of the readers and to give them a chance to evaluate the credibility of the information for themselves. However, despite defending the notion of neutrality, he also suggested that its implementation is not without exception He believes in the notion of moral relativism, where neutrality might no longer apply to reporting groups, movements or individuals if they generate a threat to the survival of democracy, which is the basis from which neutrality can emerge. In the words of Sambrook: "you cannot be neutral in a situation of national or democratic survival". (2012: 25)

Finally, there is the third view which does not see neutrality as one of the core values in journalism. One of the supporters of this notion is Patterson & Donsbach (1996), who argue that journalists' political beliefs will always affect their news production. In line with this, Boudana (2016) believes that neutrality is a "delusive position"; instead of being neutral or impartial, she suggests that journalists turn to the concept of accuracy and fairness. Meanwhile, Jensen (1992) sees neutrality as an "illusion" which would be better replaced by the concept of objectivity, which is supporting a story with facts and evidence (1992:20). Confirming this notion of neutrality as illusionary, Kovach & Rosenstiel (2007) argued in their famous hand-book *The Elements of Journalism,* that neutrality is a myth in the mind of journalists and should be replaced by the concept of independency. In their words:

> *It is worth restating the point to make it clear. Being impartial or neutral is not a core principal of journalism… Journalists must maintain independence from those they cover…It is this independence of spirit and mind, rather than neutrality, that journalists must keep in focus. (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2007: 115-118)*

By the statement above, they wanted to convey that journalists should remain unattached and somewhat distant from the subjects they cover, and rather, simply aim to tell the truth to citizens, who are the sole group they owe loyalty to.

From the discussion above, it can be seen that there are three different theories about neutrality: seeing neutrality as being equal and offering spatial balance, seeing neutrality as offering multiple perspectives, and lastly, seeing neutrality as an elusive notion which should not be of journalistic value. While the first two theories still believe that the media should be neutral or impartial, the last theory believes that this notion should be replaced with other ideals such as independency, objectivity or fairness. As will be clear in the section that follows, *Kompas'* institutional policy is closer to the first definition above, which sees neutrality as synonymous with balance by giving equal space to both pairs of candidate during election.

6.2 Neutrality as Official Policy

Tens of journalists gathered around a table at *Kompas* newsroom on that evening of March 18, 2014. The internal meeting of the political desk was being held. On one side of the table sat the head of *Kompas* political des, and some journalists in his division. However, unlike the previous meetings, the Chief Editor was also present, and it was he who gave the opening speech. Also present at the meeting were the Vice Chief Editor and some other senior journalists. They were discussing the newspaper's agenda for the most important political event in Indonesia in the last five years: the Indonesian presidential election, which would be held on the July 9, 2014 - less than four months away.

During the discussion, one of the reporters at the political desk raised a critical question:

> *I have not done any content analysis of our coverage approaching this election; however, I felt that Kompas was supporting Jokowi. Was this, in fact, our editorial policy? (Dina, Kompas journalist, March 18, 2014)*

Her question was a reflection of the growing tension within *Kompas*, especially at the internal political desk, in which strong debates had been going on among the journalists about the newspaper's position. Outside the newsroom, there was strong suspicion, including from Prabowo himself, that *Kompas* had not acted neutrally and had sided with Jokowi.[33] In response to the question, the Chief Editor clearly answered that *Kompas'* editorial position was neutral:

> *So, we emphasize here that we did not take sides, because our position is neutral. We hold our independence, our neutrality, and our integrity by not endorsing any candidate. Our main focus is, still, our journalistic values. (Arif Subangun, Kompas' Chief Editor, March 18, 2014).*

Therefore, it can be seen that Arif interpreted neutrality as not taking the side of either candidate.

This statement that *Kompas'* position was neutral was also clearly declared in the editorial column of the newspaper on July 8, 2014 as follows:

[33] On a youtube channel dated August 4, 2015 by *Kompas TV,* there was a video showing how Prabowo had refused to be interviewed by a journalist from *Kompas TV,* as he believed that all the media belonging to the *Kompas Group* had been biased (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UcAc_P0wrY). In his words: "*Kompas* group was not fair and not just to me." Even though this video was only uploaded around a year later, the event itself took place around the election period in July 2014.

> *It has never happened before that the public has been so enthusiastic in a legislative election as this 2014 one, and also for the presidential election next Wednesday. With only two pairs of presidential and vice presidential candidates, the competition could escalate into a conflict between two groups, and the mass media (print, electronic and digital) is right in the middle of this turbulence. The mass media, as part of society, is in a very vulnerable position, as if walking on wot ogal-agil. The position and identity of the mass media, which should be free from practical political interest, is on trial. (Kompas editorial column, July 8, 2014)*

The editorial column above was written by the *Kompas* Vice Director, who later told me that the overall purpose of that editorial had been to emphasize *Kompas'* neutrality:

> *Wot ogal-agil, a Javanese term for a narrow and unsteady bridge, usually made of a single piece of bamboo to cross a river, and usually found in a village. The bamboo is so small and weak that it shakes as we walk on it. Therefore, it is very important to walk slowly and carefully to keep our balance, as a failure to do so would mean we fall into the river below, where many wild crocodiles wait for us… So, through this editorial, we want to convey the message that we are neutral… We also would like to imply that even if in our hearts we hope for Jokowi, as an institution we are neutral. (Sularto, Vice General Director of Kompas, July 8, 2014)*

From the quotation above, it can be seen that besides providing balanced reporting, *Kompas* also further defines neutrality as not taking sides with any candidate. However, the interview also suggests that *Kompas*' Vice Editor was aware that there was tension between the institutional position of the newspaper and the individual desires of most journalists, who supported Jokowi. To what extent did *Kompas* journalists support Jokowi? The next section will address this question.

6.3 Individual Positions of the Journalists: Mostly in Favor of Jokowi-JK

Unlike its institutional policy to be neutral, *Kompas* journalists were mostly in favor of Jokowi-JK. These individual political preferences were manifested in various ways from simply giving moral support to the candidates, to giving political advice to the Jokowi-JK campaign, and attending the campaigns themselves. This section will elaborate further on these findings.

The first and most surprising show of support from journalists at the newspaper was that coming from Jakob Oetama. Whilst I was working in the newsroom, there was a rumor among the journalists on the third floor that an important political event was happening on the sixth floor of the *Kompas* building. It was on this floor that Jakob's office was located. This important political event was a visit from the presidential candidate, Jokowi, to ask Jakob for his political support. The meeting was only attended by a handful of elites in the newsroom. However, in March 2014, a picture was circulated among the journalists on the third floor in which they could see Jakob Oetama standing next to Jokowi, who was then still a candidate running for the presidency:

Picture 1
Jokowi's Visit to *Kompas* Newsroom

Jakob Oetama, number three from the right, a man with grey hair
standing next to Jokowi, who is the man standing in the center wearing a long brown batik shirt,
March 2014, four months before the presidential election on 9 July.

In the picture above, besides Jakob himself, other *Kompas* elites such as Sularto, the Vice Director, are also present (the man with the brown shirt, standing first from the right); Arif Subangun, the Chief Editor (in a white shirt standing to the far left); as well as D Oscar, a senior journalist (wearing a red shirt, standing next to Jokowi). When I confronted some of the elites with this picture, they were reluctant to admit that it was, in fact, evidence of support for Jokowi. Some of them explained to me that *Kompas* would have welcomed any candidate who wished to pay a visit to their office. Therefore, they believed the picture did not necessarily mean that the newspaper was supporting Jokowi (personal interview with *Kompas* journalist, March 20, 2014). However, despite the early denial of some journalists, the meaning of the picture was made clear

by the then Vice Chief Editor. In a casual conversation with him one day after the presidential election was over, he suggested that the reason why Prabowo lost was because he had not paid a visit to Jakob. In his words: "Prabowo lost because he did not meet Pak Jakob" (Personal communication, July 10, 2014). This means that Jokowi's visit and Prabowo's failure to pay a visit made *Kompas* inclined to believe it could rely more on Jokowi than Prabowo. Therefore, they decided to support him.

The picture above fits well with the fact that Jakob also personally supported the vice presidential candidate of Jokowi, Jusuf Kalla (JK). While the picture above did not contain explicit words of support for Jokowi from Jakob, it was understood that Jakob supported JK. At an editorial meeting in early March 2014, I saw evidence of this as Jakob endorsed JK. He suggested that JK should become a presidential candidate, or at the least, be paired as Jokowi's vice presidential candidate. In Jakob's view, JK, who was a senior politician from the Golkar Party and whom he had known personally, would make a better presidential candidate than Jokowi. One of the senior journalists confirmed that Jakob had personally known Jusuf Kalla, who had often been invited to *Kompas* for a series of discussions on the Indonesian economy in the 1990s. In the words of Sularto:

> *In the beginning Mr. Jakob said that Jokowi was still untested (belum teruji) ...(to the contrary) JK was good when he acted as a vice president in the era of SBY (Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono). He could even mask the weakness of SBY…. Mr. Jakob believes this person is professional. He has known JK for a long time through a series of discussion held by Kompas. JK has proved successful as an entrepreneur and when he got into politics in the Golkar party, it was a good chance for him, because to become a leader one has to join a political party. (Sularto, Vice General Director of Kompas, personal communication, July 8, 2014)*

In his message congratulating the newspaper on its golden anniversary, Jusuf Kalla confirmed the statement of Sularto above, by suggesting that he was often invited to the paper and appeared in the coverage of the daily in that period (Jusuf Kalla, *Kompas*, June 28, 2015). It was for this reason that during Jakob's meeting with Megawati, the Chairman of the PDIP party, which won the parliamentary election on April 9, Jakob suggested Jusuf Kalla be selected as a candidate for vice chief president endorsed by PDIP and paired with Jokowi.[34] To this support of Jusuf Kalla by Jakob, the Director of Communication at *Kompas,* Nugroho F Yudho, explained that while Jakob accepted and supported all politicians who came to him, this support was not translated into *Kompas'* editorial policy., which remained neutral.

Personal support also came from the editorial boards of the newspaper where *Kompas'* Chief Editor, as well as the Vice Chief Editor, occasionally met Jokowi to offer personal advice for his campaign. For instance, on the day when the legislative election took place, on April 9, the Chief Editor shared a story with other journalists in the newsroom. Speaking almost in a whisper, as if there were Prabowo supporters in the newsroom, Arif said:

> *Yesterday I met Jokowi. He told me how surprised he was by the political support shown for him, as he did not feel like a rich person, nor a particularly charming man… he also asked for our input, which we happily provided. (Arif Subangun, April 9, 2014)*

It is clear, therefore, that Arif had supported Jokowi by giving him political advice on how to win the election.

[34] Tempo Weekly, March 17-23, 2014, "Drama Jokowi, Di balik penetapan Gubernur DKI sebagai calon presiden dari PDI Perjuangan"; Tempo Weekly, April 21-27, 2014, "Kutak-Katik Calon Pendamping"; Tempo.co, May 19, 2014, Perjalanan JK Sampai Mendampingi Jokowi.

It is noteworthy, however, that Arif himself was not a member of Jokowi's campaigning team. In line with Arif, *Kompas*' Vice Chief Editor Randu Rahardjo also demonstrated his support for Jokowi. In a casual conversation in the newsroom, he shared his experience with other journalists:

> *Sometimes I want to write a book about what goes on behind the scenes of Kompas. When Jokowi visited us yesterday, he looked panicked. It was because Prabowo was closing in (in the polls). Sadly, I don't have the heart to write such a book. (Randu Rahardjo, July 10, 2014)*

In the quote above, Randu is showing his colleagues that he had been of much assistance to Jokowi, so much so that he could write an entire book about it.

These statements showing support for Jokowi by members of *Kompas* elites were further confirmed by one of the Jokowi's campaign managers, Priyadi Subangkit, who went on to serve as President Jokowi's Special Staff in Political Communication. He explained that in the period leading up to the vote, on July 9, polls by several survey institutes showed support for Prabowo and Jokowi to be closely tied. *Kompas* was one of the institutions which had conducted such a survey. In response to this situation, Priyadi visited *Kompas* and asked for further details of the survey in order to identify where Jokowi was losing support, and how to address this. Based on this data from *Kompas,* he designed a campaigning strategy which targeted this problem (Interview with Priyadi Subangkit, September 5, 2016).

The Head of the Political Desk, Asep Setiawan, also supported Jokowi, though not necessarily because he liked him, but more because he believed that if Prabowo won the election, it would pose a danger for Indonesian democracy. So strongly did he hold this view that he threatened to resign from his job as a journalist if Prabowo won the election:

> *I feel that even now, when the (political) situation is relatively free, Kompas is not yet able to tell the truth straightforwardly to the public. It will be worse if Prabowo became President. We could sink even lower. (Asep Setiawan, personal interview, October 5, 2014)*

Asep went further by suggesting that in his view most *Kompas* journalists were in favor of Jokowi, not because they believed in Jokowi himself, but because they shared the desire to prevent Prabowo from winning the election and thereby secure the future of Indonesian democracy. Despite these strong assertions, as will be discussed later, Asep refused to publish any critical coverage of Prabowo which would indicate that the newspaper favored Jokowi-JK.

As well as from the elites, support for Jokowi was also reflected in the newsroom. In the build up to the election, I observed a sense of euphoria in the air. Every single day, journalists exchanged the latest political gossip and intrigues, and jokes and laughter about the election colored every editorial meeting. What was interesting was despite *Kompas*' institutional policy to be neutral, it was clear that most journalists in the newsroom displayed strong support for Jokowi. As stated in the words of the Managing Editor of the newspaper:

> *In one meeting, I was criticizing Jokowi. However, I was soon attacked by members of the editorial boards, so I quietened down immediately. In the editorial meetings, it seems it is only Pak Jakob (the owner of Kompas) who has the audacity and authority to criticize Jokowi. (Jimmy Laluna, Managing Editor, April 9, 2014)*

The above statement illustrates how since the majority of *Kompas* journalists supported Jokowi, the minority who supported Prabowo felt reluctant to voice any criticism of Jokowi. And indeed, it was only a very small minority who were rumored to support Prabowo, such as the journalist Ninuk Mardiana Pambudy, who was a member of the *Kompas* editorial board. Her support of Prabowo was due to the fact that her

husband was one of the elites in the Gerindra Party, of which Prabowo acted as the chairman. But apart from her, it was hard to find journalists who obviously displayed their support for Prabowo. It is for this reason that only the *Kompas* owner, having the most authority to express his opinion, could freely criticize Jokowi. Indeed, as explained above, Jakob initially favored JK to be the presidential candidate instead of Jokowi.

Considering the dynamics within the newsroom, it was not a big surprise that many *Kompas* journalists attended the last day of Jokowi's campaign on July 5, at the Gelora Bung Karno stadium in Jakarta, together with tens of thousands of Indonesians. The rally became the headline of *Kompas* the next day, on July 6, 2014. In the words of one of the senior editors:

> *The night before the event in the GBK (Jokowi's last rally), we handed out Jokowi campaign t-shirts on the Kompas third floor. There were hundreds of t-shirts. People wore them and we took pictures in the middle of the newsroom. The passion and preference for Jokowi* ***which had been kept hidden*** *so far, was finally expressed. We then joined the rally the next day. (Suranto, Kompas Senior Editor, July 10, 2014, emphasis added by the author)*

Confirming the statement of the *Kompas* editor above, the following picture depicting the event was circulated among the journalists:

Picture 2
Journalists Support for Jokowi

Kompas journalists wearing t-shirts with the pictures of the presidential candidates, Jokowi and Jusuf Kalla, and making the gesture of the number 2 with their fingers.

The picture above was taken in the newsroom of *Kompas,* on Friday, July 4, the evening before Jokowi's final rally at the Gelora Bung Karno stadium. It can clearly be seen that most *Kompas* journalists were in favor of a Jokowi-JK win.

Therefore, the difference between the newsroom's formal policy and the individual preferences of the journalists forced them to restrain themselves from any public expression of their political preference. They did this in several ways, such as keeping any personal communication they might have had with Jokowi away from public attention, ensuring their activities on social media were free of any indications of political support, as well as not involving themselves as official members of Jokowi's campaigning team, despite some journalists giving advice to his campaign. An example of such control was the photograph of Jokowi's visit to *Kompas* as mentioned earlier, when D Oscar, one of the journalists who appears in the picture, made it his profile picture on his blackberry application. But a few hours after posting, he deleted it due to

protests from other journalists who feared the picture, which would be seen by all his contacts, would be interpreted as *Kompas'* support for Jokowi.

How was this tension between the newspaper's institutional policy of neutrality, on the one hand, and the journalists' individual positions as citizens who have the right to support a candidate on the other, to be reconciled, whilst remaining professional? To be more specific, how did the journalists caught up in this dilemma, define the concept of neutrality amid the political competition between the running candidates during the presidential election? In the section that follows, it will be explained that just like there are contested theories about neutrality in journalism, there is also a contested definition of neutrality in the *Kompas* newsroom among the journalists.

6.4 Defining Neutrality Differently

Interviewing various groups of *Kompas* journalists, I found that they all agreed with the notion to be neutral; however, each of them defined neutrality differently. These differences were influenced to some extent by their position on the editorial board: I found that the higher the position of the journalist, the more similarly they defined neutrality as "giving the same space to the two opposing candidates". On the contrary, the lower the journalists were hierarchically, the more they struggled to define the concept. For example, the Chief Editor of *Kompas*, Arif Subangun, defined neutrality as follows:

> *So perhaps we need to clearly state here that we did not take sides with either of the candidates… that is, in terms of institution… In terms of culture, taking sides does not fit with our culture… To be honest, my priority is our safety. We gave exactly the same centimeter, same number of pages and also same column length [to each candidate]… I don't care if people see me as too technical. (Subangun, Chief Editor, March 18, 2014)*

Arif's statement shows that 'neutral' was measured both qualitatively and quantitatively: the coverage should not be in favor of any one candidate, while equal space has to be dedicated to both candidates.

However, this very idealistic notion of neutrality was hard to implement in the day-to-day, news making practice. Suhartono, one of the Senior Editors at the political desk, shared his view on this:

> *I personally still cover both candidates, but differentiate the tone, for instance in the case of a photo. There is a photo of Prabowo getting down from his landed helicopter, while alongside it, a photo of Jokowi in the rice fields. The photo of Jokowi was good. But I did not prohibit any photo coverage of Prabowo, for instance with a reason that it could damage Prabowo's image. In fact, Prabowo is like that in real life. So we keep covering both but with different tones. (Suhartono, Senior Editor, October 7, 2014)*

The above statement shows that even though quantitatively, it might be possible to give the same space to both candidates, qualitatively it is impossible to provide an equally neutral tone. In the case above, Suhartono could not control the implication of any coverage being unfavorable for Prabowo. The picture in question shows Prabowo getting down from his helicopter, which could be interpreted as being elitist and distanced from common Indonesian people (the picture will be displayed and elaborated on in the next section). Thus, Suhartono defined neutrality as merely giving the same space in quantitative terms.

Jimmy Laluna, whose position was Chief Executive Editor of *Kompas,* shared the same view as Suhartono. He argued that in practice, even though *Kompas* gave the same space to both candidates in its coverage, it was evident from the newspaper's tone who was the favored candidate. He explains: "Neutral is giving chances for everyone to speak. But in practice, sometimes we used other people's mouths to articulate our preference." (Jimmy Laluna, July 10, 2014).

However, differing from all these editors, Asep Setiawan, the Head of the Political Desk who was in charge of editing the day-to-day works of all reporters in the political division, argues that it is practically impossible to give even the same space in quantitative terms or the same tone in qualitative terms. The reason for this is not technical, he claims, but ideological. He describes:

> *When we talk about the presidential election, it is clear that we are talking about one person. And I told our friends (the reporters), that for me, it was impossible to score these candidates 50:50. The fact was, that one of these candidates (Prabowo) had defects against the law, while the other candidate didn't… So we have to score 60:40 in favor of Jokowi, or even 70:30. For me, it was wrong to give the same starting score 0-0 for both candidates… There were indeed some friends at the political desk who initially disagreed with this. But after I explained to them, they understood. (Setiawan, Head of the Political Desk, October 5, 2014)*

Asep further explained that as journalists, they were all well aware of the fact that Prabowo was involved in serious violations of human rights, including the kidnapping of university student activists during the 1998 Indonesian riots when he was on duty as the Commander General of the Special Military army (Kopassus), and which lead to the resignation of Suharto. For him, this was evident as legal evidence of the incidents had been released by the Indonesian National Commission of Human Rights (KOMNASHAM), and remained unchallenged by Prabowo himself.

Taking a more cynical stance, Edna, one of the reporters at the political desk, echoed Sutta, but furthermore doubted whether the policy of neutrality was even implemented by *Kompas* at all. She said:

> *I think it is nonsense that we were neutral during the presidential election. Even now, half a year after the election, most people in the newsroom are still in favor of Jokowi. What I did as a reporter was to*

> *keep reporting what I believed as having news value, then I left it to the editors to decide whether my work was published or not. (Dina, February 25, 2015)*

From these above statements, it is clear that the definition of neutrality differed among *Kompas* journalists. While the editorial elites believed in the idea of neutrality as being a spatial, quantitative balance which was achieved, the junior editors and the ordinary reporters suggest that such balance is impossible to achieve, and therefore that journalists should simply convey the truth regardless of the consequences. Their position is closer to the concept of independency and objectivity. The question then is: which definition prevails at the newspaper, as manifested in its content?

6.5 Kompas' Actual Coverage: Equal in Space, Taking Sides in Tone

In order to study the content of the newspaper, a qualitative content analysis was conducted of the newspaper coverage during the period of the presidential campaign. This research did a census (total sampling) of all *Kompas'* coverage during the presidential campaign. According to the regulation from the Indonesian Electoral Commission (KPU) as stipulated in the Decision of KPU Number 457/2014, the period of the campaign actually started from June 4 and ended on July 5, or four days before the election day on July 9. However, considering that the news coverage right until the election day could still influence the decision of voters, this research will conduct a content analysis starting from June 4 to July 9, 2014. This period was chosen as it was when both candidates poured all of their financial resources into the final round before voters came to the ballot box. Based on the articles from this period, it was found that there were 190 articles and 89 photos/pictures covering the candidates.

Every article and every photo/group of photos that appeared in the newspaper was selected as a unit of analysis to examine the tone of the coverage, and three categories of tone were determined: favorable, unfavorable or neutral.

The tone of the coverage was classified as favorable if an article covered a candidate or pair of candidates in a positive way that encouraged support from readers. This could range from describing a candidate as having a positive track record as a public official to possessing the positive quality of a leader who is close to the people ('down to earth' or *merakyat).* Meanwhile, the tone of coverage was interpreted as unfavorable if it portrayed a candidate or a pair of presidential candidates in a negative light, encouraging the reader not to vote for him. This ranged from describing a candidate as a weak leader, corrupt, or a criminal who had committed violations of human rights. Finally, the tone of coverage was determined as neutral when it covered a candidate or pairs of candidate in neither a positive or negative way.

In the case of *Kompas,* sometimes an article had a positive tone at the beginning (article lead) and yet a negative tone in the last paragraph, or vice versa. When such a case happened, the interpretation was made based on the title and lead of the article. This is based on the assumption that the title is the first sentence read by the newspaper readers, and as it is written in a bigger font, it is more noticeable to the readers. In addition, news is structured in a pyramidal form in which the more important details are revealed first. Therefore, the title and lead more accurately reflects the position of the newspaper. It is important to note that despite this explanation of my methodology, my researcher's subjectivity might influence my interpretation of the tone. Nevertheless, this interpretation is always based firmly on the data.

Based on the qualitative content analysis of the *Kompas* coverage from June 4 until July 9 2014, it is revealed that *Kompas* managed to keep a relative balance in terms of space given to both candidates; however, the tone of the coverage was in favor of the Jokowi-JK candidate pair. The balance in terms of space can be seen in the number of articles covering both candidates in table 1 below[35]:

[35] For coding, see tables 1-2, appendix 3.

Table 1
Number of Article Coverage

Pair of candidates	Amount of Coverage
(1). Prabowo – Hatta	52 (27.3%)
(2). Jokowi – JK	62 (32.6%)
Combination	76 (40%)
Total	190 (99.9%)

From table 1 above, it can be seen that there were 190 articles covering both candidates in total. These 190 articles appeared in many forms: news articles, features, political columns, opinion pieces, editorials, and 'corner' (a satirical piece which was placed in the corner of the opinion column of *Kompas*). Out of these 190 articles, most of them (40%) cover both Prabowo and Jokowi in the same articles. Meanwhile, there are 62 articles (32.6%) covering the Jokowi - Jusuf Kalla pair, focusing on either one or both of them in the same article. Slightly fewer than this, 52 (27.3%) of articles, focus on either one or both of the Prabowo - Hatta Rajasa pair. Overall, the coverage of both pairs of candidates can be seen to be fairly balanced in terms of number of articles.

However, a slightly different result is found in terms of article orientation, in which the newspaper is more favorable to pairs of candidate number 2 (Jokowi – Jusuf Kalla), as can be seen in table 2 below:

Table 2
Orientation of Article Coverage

Pair of candidates	Orientation
(1). Favorable to Prabowo – Hatta	40 (21.0%)
(1). ***Unfavorable to Prabowo – Hatta***	12 (6.3%)
(2). Favorable to Jokowi-JK	78 (41.0%)
(2). ***Unfavorable to Jokowi - JK***	-
Neutral for both candidates in coverage combining both pairs	60 (31.5%)
Total	190 (99.8%)

The table above shows that the tone of the articles are predominately favorable to both candidates (62%), or neutral (31.5%). In sharp contrast, only 6.3% of articles were negative in tone towards Prabowo-Hatta, which reflects the tendency of the newspaper to avoid critical reporting of both candidates. However, when both pairs of candidates are compared, the tone of the articles which are positive about Jokowi-JK is 41%, covering either Jokowi, Jusuf Kalla, or both of them in the same article, thereby encouraging readers to vote for them. Meanwhile, only 21% of articles portray either Prabowo or Hatta, or both of them, in a positive light.

One of the articles in favor of Jokowi-JK can be seen in the article entitled *"It's Time For The People To Give Their Voice"* as follows:

> *I am not a king//I am just an ordinary person//who is always made to be a doormat for the king…". This song which contains satirical lyrics and is entitled "King", was sung by the band Rif in the concert "Greeting of the Two Fingers" in the Desire of Bung Karno Stadium (GBK), Jakarta, on Saturday 5 July. This concert involved about 200 musicians who supported the candidacy of Joko Widodo and Jusuf Kalla. (Kompas, July 6, 2014)*

The article above covered a story during the campaign of Jokowi and Jusuf, and framed them as the representation of the people through its title as well as its story. The main message was to inspire and compel the crowd gathered there in the stadium to vote for Jokowi and Jusuf Kalla in the election, which was to take place only three days after the concert, and encourage them not to be complacent. The lyrics fit with the narrative constructed by Jokowi's campaigning team, who consistently portrayed him as the first presidential candidate to come from humble origins, and who could therefore relate to the Indonesian people. One of their popular slogans was: "Jokowi Is Us *(Jokowi Adalah Kita)."*

Meanwhile, one of the articles in favor of Prabowo can be seen in an article entitled "*Seven Chop Steaks For Prabowo",* as follows:

> *Arrive in Bandung as twilight approached, Prabowo Subianto directly went to visit the Chop Steak and Curry Restaurant of HM Harris. It looks like Prabowo was treated by Aburizal Bakri. "I asked him to come here. He said yes. So we came here" Said Aburizal. (Kompas, June 5, 2014)*

The paragraph above illustrates the close friendship between Prabowo and the Chairman of the Golkar Party, Aburizal Bakri, who supported him as a presidential candidate, and this close relationship is shown by the two of them having dinner together in a restaurant.

However, 6.3% of the articles analyzed covered Prabowo-Hatta Rajasa in an unfavorable tone, which might have discouraged readers from voting for them. One such example of this is in the article entitled *"Prabowo's Team Was Not Worried",* as follows:

> *The campaigning team of candidates Prabowo-Subianto was not worried about the circulation of a document, a letter of notice (surat keputusan) written by former Indonesian President BJ Habibie in 1998, about the dismissal of Lieutenant General Prabowo Subianto as well as a letter of recommendation by the Soldier Ethical Board in 1998. They believed it wouldn't disturb the electability of their candidate for the presidential election on 9 July 2014. (Kompas, June 12, 2014)*

This article was reporting the story of two letters that were circulated around that period, about the decision from President BJ Habibie who was then the superior of Prabowo, as well as a letter from the Soldier Ethical Board, both of which confirmed the dismissal of Prabowo from the army as he was proven guilty of violating the ethical conduct of the military corps. This violation could not be separated from the widespread rumors among Indonesians of Prabowo's involvement in the activist abduction of 1998. Whether the rumors carried by the letters were true or false, and despite the headline of the article stating that Prabowo's team were not worried about this rumor, it is clear that the story was unfavorable towards Prabowo's candidacy.

Besides analyzing written articles, this study also examined the content of the pictures, photos, diagrams, and cartoons which covered the pair of candidates during the period of the presidential campaign. From the data collection, it was again found that *Kompas* had given a relatively equal space to both pair of candidates; but that the overall tone was in favor of Jokowi – Jusuf Kalla. The equal space for both pairs of candidate can be seen in table 3 below[36]:

[36] For coding, see tables 3-4, appendix 3.

Table 3
Amount of Picture Coverage

Pair of Candidates	Amount of Coverage
(1). Prabowo – Hatta	33 (37.5%)
(2). Jokowi – JK	31 (35.2%)
Combination	24 (27.2%)
Total	88 (99.9%)

The table above shows that the amount of coverage given to Prabowo-Hatta (37.5%) is relatively equal to Jokowi-JK (35.2%). Furthermore, just like with the analysis of articles, the tone of most of the pictures are favorable or neutral towards both candidates, as shown in table 4 below:

Table 4
Picture Orientation

Pair of Candidate	**Orientation**
(1). Favorable to Prabowo – Hatta	30 (34.0%)
(1). ***Unfavorable to Prabowo – Hatta***	3 (3.4%)
(2). Favorable to Jokowi-JK	38 (43.1%)
(2). ***Unfavorable to Jokowi - JK***	-
Neutral for both candidates	17 (19.3%)
Total	88 (99,8%)

From table 4, we can see that 77.1% of articles were favorable in tone, 19.3% were neutral and ***only*** 3.4% were unfavorable; but the total unfavorable coverage was directed at Prabowo-Hatta.

Just as with the articles, when the statistics for both pairs of candidates is compared, a higher quantity of pictures are relatively in favor of Jokowi – JK (43.1%), whilst those favorable towards Prabowo-Hatta is slightly lower at 34%. There is no unfavorable coverage of Jokowi-JK.

An example of photos favorable to Jokowi, as well as photos that were unfavorable to Prabowo, can be found in the coverage on the same day: June 14, 2015, in a piece that serves to illustrate the contrasting campaigning styles of the candidates, with a clear promotion of Jokowi:

Picture 3

The Contrasting Campaigning Style of Both Candidates

Prabowo Meets The People
Kompas, Wednesday, 14 June 2014, page 4

Jokowi Greets Fishermen and Farmers
Kompas, Wednesday, 14 June 2014, page 5

From picture 1 it can be seen that *Kompas'* coverage displayed pictures of both candidates on the same day. While the picture of candidate number 1, Prabowo, appeared on page 4 (on the left), candidate number 2. Jokowi, appeared on page 5 (on the right). From both pictures, we can see a contrasting theme framed by the newspaper. While both pictures cover the activities of each candidate meeting the Indonesian people, Prabowo is framed as an elite

who uses a helicopter in order to meet his people, while Jokowi is framed as a humble leader *(merakyat)* who is comfortable in the rice fields. Despite the article on Prabowo being entitled *"Prabowo Meets the People"*, the picture only shows him being welcomed by his assistants on arrival. There is no picture of the common people in the frame. This contrasts with the picture of Jokowi, which is entitled *"Jokowi Greets Fishermen and Farmers"*, where we can see him shaking the hands of the farmers directly. If selecting a president is about finding the right man who is truly committed to the people, then the picture of Jokowi is surely more convincing. Thus, these pictures show that *Kompas* was more in favor of Jokowi in its tone. In fact, whilst I was in the newsroom, one of the editors told me that Prabowo's campaigning team had come to the newsroom to complain about the picture, pointing out that there were many pictures of Prabowo among the crowds or people in the street, so why did *Kompas* publish such a picture? (Asep Setiawan, personal interview, July 18, 2014).

In summary, this section has provided evidence that *Kompa*s' coverage has mainly reflected the definition of neutrality to mean not taking sides and covering both candidates in a balanced manner by providing equal space for both of them. However, there is an ambiguity, as despite the neutrality in terms of space, the tone of the coverage was less neutral. While most of the coverage portrayed both candidates in a positive or neutral tone, when the two were compared it was found that the number that favored Jokowi-JK was higher than Prabowo-Hatta. How can this ambiguous neutrality be explained?

6.6 Underlying Factors Behind Kompas' Ambiguous Position

Based on in-depth interviews as well as on-site observations, I found that the underlying reason for the neutral position taken by the newspaper corresponds with the reason why it conducted its watchdog function in a polite way, as proposed in chapter 5. The combination of cultural as well as political economy factors are intertwined, and together, they shape the newspaper's position.

First of all, by not siding with either candidate, the newspaper aimed to ensure it would remain close to whoever might win the election. As explained in previous chapters, this close and congenial relationship with the power holders was crucial to avoid being banned during the authoritarian period (Chapter 2), while in the current democratization era, this close relationship was important in securing political protection against attacks from conservative, anti-Catholic groups (Chapter 4). The newspaper's aim to remain close with the power holders by staying neutral can be seen in the statement of Arif Subangun, the Chief Editor of the paper: "Politics is dynamic. If now we support Jokowi…we hold on to this, but then it breaks…don't you think it's scary? …Whoever might win, *Kompas* had to win." (Arif Subangun, March 18, 2014). The line above suggested that the newspaper maneuvers to always be on the side of the winner, which might not have been possible if they explicitly supported one candidate over the other. Arif fears that if the candidate they supported lost the election, they would end up being the enemy of the power holder. This view was confirmed by Sularto, the Vice Director of the newspaper: "If *Kompas* explicitly declared support for Jokowi, we would obviously make an enemy of the other. You are my enemy's media, just like *Metro TV* (who explicitly endorsed Jokowi)… they (Prabowo) would use us as their shooting target." (Sularto, *Kompas* Vice Director, July 8, 2014)

Secondly, the position to be neutral reflects the economic interest of the newspaper, both to maintain its readership, whom they believe were politically divided over the two candidates, as well as to maximize the chance of receiving advertising revenue from both candidates. The first factor to maintain its readership can be seen by these words of Sularto: "I think it will be unfair for those who don't like Jokowi. The readers of *Jakarta Post* are not the only followers of Jokowi. I think they are being too pragmatic [in endorsing Jokowi]." (Sularto, *Kompas* Vice Director, July 8, 2014). In the lines above, Sularto questions the position of *The Jakarta Post* who endorsed Jokowi. In his view, *The Post* did not consider that their readers were politically divided. By

suggesting this, he is implying that maintaining their readership was one of the underlying factors contributing to *Kompas'* neutrality.

Meanwhile, the newspaper also had an economic interest to maximize its opportunity for gaining advertising revenue from both candidates, and by staying neutral, or at least, not explicitly declaring its position during the election, it could achieve this. From all of this coverage from June 4 to July 9, it was found that indeed, both pairs of candidates advertised their campaigns in the newspaper. While the first pair of presidential candidates spent around 1 billion rupiahs (66,666 euros) to advertise in the daily, Jokowi and Jusuf Kalla spent more than six billion rupiahs (416,898 euros) on advertising in the paper (Appendix 4).

There is, indeed, no direct evidence that the advertising revenue has influenced the journalists in their coverage on the election. However, the advertising as well as considerations of the market did influence journalists at the elite level, such as stated by the Vice Director of *Kompas* above. Furthermore, Randu Rahardjo, the Vice Chief Editor of *Kompas,* expressed in one of our casual conversations together: *"*now my concern is not just about editorial matters, but also managerial and business matter." (Randu, personal communication, July 22, 2014).

Furthermore, as a profit-oriented company, it is obvious that the newspaper expected to gain advertising revenue from both candidates. The fact that *Kompas* in nature is not just a newspaper, but also a business in which advertising is an important stream of revenue, was stated by its founder and owner, Jakob Oetema, decades ago:

> *From an economic point of view, Kompas began to pioneer the press business. The others did not even think of maximizing advertisements. Their emphasis was on the editorial side. That explained why the most highly placed were the journalists, the editors (yang hebat itu hanya wartawan, hanya redaksi). At Kompas, we left that concept behind.*

> *The press was an amalgam of editors, managers, and printers. In other words, a newspaper should be supported by an organism, an organizational structure. That was why the men who took care of business management were those who graduates from the University of Indonesia's Department of Economics. (Oetema in Dakidae, 1991: 250)*

From the quotation above, the importance of advertising revenue for *Kompas* as a media company is clear, and therefore it seems reasonable that being friendly to both candidates would increase their chance to be used as a medium of advertising for both campaigns.

Here again, we can observe the impact of the particular Javanese habitus that, as I argued in the previous chapter, shapes the character of reporting at *Kompas*. The neutral position has been justified by the shared cultural belief among the journalists to not hurt the feelings of the power holders, which was very much shaped by the Javanese values to respect those in power in order to maintain social harmony. As suggested by Geertz (1960), maintaining social harmony is important even if it is only a veneer. This is the reason why, unlike Sambrook (2012), who has suggested that neutrality should involve transparency, the individual support of *Kompas* journalists for Jokowi was not made transparent by the newspaper in its editorial, nor formalized as an official endorsement.

This situation reflects the habitus of the newspaper, which developed during the authoritarian era to always be indirect and cautious in their political position. In the words of one of its senior journalists:

> *The journalists from the generation of Mas Randu as well as those before him often got a phone call from Pak Jakob; this also shaped their character…as the younger generation, we have never experienced the call from Pak Jakob in which he would direct his anger… I believe this has provided the reasons why the more senior*

> *journalists do not want to take up a straightforward position…Pak Jakob himself had experienced being banned by Suharto, forcing him to be more cautious… to some extent this past experience must still have influence. (Asep, Head of Political Desk, October 5, 2014)*

Despite believing that the cautious practice of journalism, which according to Asep was mainly performed by senior journalists, he himself also confirmed this cautiousness. He believed that exposing the wrongdoings of the power holders bluntly does not suit the values or style of *Kompas,* which emphasizes not causing offence. It was for this reason that he refused the idea of some reporters to fully unearth Prabowo's involvement in the human rights violation. For this, he suggested: "we might write about it, but it has to be in the *Kompas* way…" (Asep, personal communication, October 5, 2014).

But more than that, he also decided to drop some articles written by his colleagues, which he considered too critical. Very often, it resulted in complaints from them. In his words:

> *They (Prabowo's supporters) were surprised when I told them that we did not publish many news items related to human rights. I said to Hasyim (Prabowo's brother), there were many articles which were already written, but we dropped them. On the contrary, when the news was not good about Jokowi, we never dropped it. For example, in the writing of Ong. He often complained to me, but we gave him an explanation. Our principle is not to hurt the feelings of Prabowo supporters. (Asep, personal communication, October 5, 2014)*

In the lines above, Asep explained that Prabowo's brother had come to *Kompas'* office to protest against some stories published by the newspaper, but that in response, Asep explained how he had already enforced much self-censorship to be favorable towards Prabowo. Such practices even resulted in protests and outrage from his own colleagues, but he persisted in order to be respectful towards the feelings of Prabowo supporters.

Apart from these colleagues that Asep mentioned who disagreed with his policy, I also found from my interview with Dina, another journalist from the political division, how upset she was that many of her stories about Prabowo were rejected: "For me, let's just expose all of the candidates without exception, not just Prabowo but also Jokowi: all of their strengths and weaknesses. However, the elites did not agree. You could see here many investigative reports were dropped." (Interview with Dina, February 27, 2015). Here it can be seen that unlike Asep, the Chief Editor of the political desk, the journalists in the lower ranks like Dina and Ong were more courageous in expressing their position. However, these reporters were powerless against their seniors. Even middle management supported the newspaper's position, as evidenced in the example of Sutta, who despite being young is middle management, and this indicates how he had internalized the *Kompas Way* as part of his own habitus.

To some extent, the case of *Kompas* is surprisingly similar to the media position during the general election in the case of post-authoritarian Mexico. As argued by Ramirez (2012), neutrality is understood as equal space for the running candidates, although the angle might be less neutral. Furthermore, this neutrality is not so much motivated by a commitment to high journalistic standards nor to support democracy, but more as a catch-all strategy for gaining audiences and maintaining close relationship with any would-be president. No less importantly, the neutrality is aimed at avoiding confrontation with the next election winner, who might make them suffer economic disadvantage, seeing as government advertising remains one of the main sources of economic revenue for the media in Mexico. She further argued that this situation is influenced by the journalistic culture developed under the old authoritarian era in which the political parties, the government, and the state agencies had been the main advertisers for the print and the smaller broadcast media (Ramirez, 2012: 243). In the case of *Kompas,* the close relationship with the power holders as well as the need to avoid conflict with them was even more pressing, as there is also the additional interest to secure political protection from conservative Islamic groups.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that *Kompas* maintained an ambiguous form of neutrality during the Indonesian presidential election of 2014. On one hand, the journalists embraced a formal institutional policy of neutrality, which is defined as not siding with either pairs of presidential candidates – Jokowi and Prabowo - running in the election. But on the other hand, most of the individual journalists at *Kompas* actually favored and supported Jokowi. This individual support from these journalists manifested in various forms, from giving political advice to Jokowi's campaign, to attending his campaign celebration. This support was displayed at various levels, from Jakob Oetama, the owner, to members of the editorial board, the Chief Editor of the political division, to the ordinary reporters, and it could be seen in the daily dynamics within the newsroom as election day approached.

In turn, the tension between the formal policy to be neutral and the individual preferences towards Jokowi-JK translated into the newspaper's ambiguous coverage of both pairs of candidates. *Kompas* managed to provide equal space for covering the campaigns of both candidates, both in the form of articles as well pictures. However, the tone of the coverage, both in written and visual form, was more in favor of Jokowi-JK. This favorability was reflected in the fact that there were no unfavorable articles or photographs of Jokowi, while 6.3% of articles and 3.4% of photos were unfavorable towards Prabowo. Furthermore, despite the number of unfavorable articles and photos of Prabowo being relatively small, the tone reflects a critical message, and tends to depict Prabowo as an elite who was distant from the people, and who has a history of human rights abuse. In contrast, Jokowi was framed as a leader who was humble, down to earth and committed to the people.

There are political, economic as well as cultural reasons underlying this ambiguous position. Politically, *Kompas* adopted the position to be neutral in order to stay close, and to avoid conflict with, whoever won the election. Economically, this position was taken to maximize its economic interest to

maintain its readership, and to keep gaining advertising revenue from both candidates. Finally, this position has been influenced by the habitus of the journalists themselves, which was developed primarily under the previous authoritarian era. This situation is surprisingly similar to the case in post-authoritarian Mexico, in which the legacy of the authoritarian past still has a hold on the current state of its journalism.

This chapter is consistent with the previous chapters in this *Ideals and Pragmatism* section: chapter 4 on self-censorship as well as chapter 5 on being a polite watchdog. All of the chapters have suggested that cultural factors are intertwined with political economy factors in shaping the ideals and practices of *Kompas* journalists. One of the political economy factors is the interest of the newspaper to stay close to the power holders. In the next chapter, it will be discussed how the newspaper's success in establishing a close relationship with the power holders has allowed it some influence over them and in the government's decision-making process at some crucial moments in Indonesian political history.

Part III

Kompas: The Minority with Power

Chapter 7

An Influential Minority

"As President, I made Kompas one of my main references to oversee what is going on in society, to understand what the strategic issues of public concern are, to monitor the impact of our policies as well as many other aspects. Data and news have become an integral part of the information that we gather in order to decide the next strategy and steps to take, so that our policies can benefit the entire society."

~President Joko Widodo, Kompas, June 28, 2015

This chapter discusses the political influence of *Kompas* - that is, its power, as opposed to its fear that has been the keynote of the foregoing chapters. This power can be said to take two forms. The first and perhaps most obvious is the influence the newspaper has exercised, after 1998, on the electorate and its voting choices, both directly and via leaders and shapers of public opinion among *Kompas* readers. I have already discussed *Kompas*' position during the presidential election of 2014, which may have swayed voters to support Jokowi, and thereby played a role in his victory. A second and more unusual form of power exercised by *Kompas*, however, is that from time to time it appears to have exerted pressure directly on political decision-makers themselves.

In the previous chapters I highlighted the considerable caution that *Kompas* takes when reporting, particularly when their reports consider the interests of the elites. I argued that this caution is an inheritance of the New Order, when *Kompas* faced sanctions at several moments of its history. I showed how during the election campaigns, the newspaper aimed to maintain a balance in its reporting in an attempt to avoid alienating either Jokowi or Prabowo. In short, a recurring theme of this research so far has been a particular form of self-censorship that resulted from the perceived need of *Kompas* to maintain good relations with those in power.

In this chapter I want to refine that conclusion somewhat. I want to illustrate how sometimes, *Kompas* does talk 'truth to power', in the sense that the newspaper sometimes does express criticism of power holders. And when it does, *Kompas* is often quite influential, as politicians and policy makers are not only avid readers of *Kompas*, but also quite mindful of the opinions expressed in its pages. I will illustrate this in two particular cases, by discussing the way *Kompas* pushed Suharto to step down in 1998, and how the newspaper campaigned for upholding direct elections of Indonesian local heads at the city/regency level, as well as provincial level in 2014.

While I provide these examples to expound on the earlier conclusions that *Kompas* places great value on maintaining good relations with elites, the examples in this chapter also indicate that *Kompas* only expresses such criticisms in specific circumstances. The two cases to be analyzed were not controversial, in the sense that they did not pit large parts of the population against the other. Therefore, in articulating its position, *Kompas* was in touch with the general mood and desires of Indonesian society at large, and thus avoided adopting a position that could be disliked by a sizable group of its readers. Furthermore, these issues involved presidents who were nearing the end of their term in power. I will take this observation up in the conclusion of this chapter, when I argue that sometimes, *Kompas* does indeed criticize power holders, but only when the risk of negative repercussions are minimal.

7.1 The Media of the Indonesian Elite

Kompas: Profile of its Readers

What groups or sections of the Indonesian society are most susceptible to being influenced by *Kompas'* reporting? One of the ways to answer this question is by looking at the profile of its readers. Based on the data from the *Kompas'* research division released in 2014[37], the newspaper had 507.000 circulations and is circulated in 33 provinces across the Indonesian archipelago. This makes the newspaper the most read newspaper, not only in Indonesia, but also in Asia (Lim, 2011). Therefore, it is safe to say that the paper is read by more than half a million readers. From this amount of readers, it can be seen that in terms of education, *Kompas'* readers make up a highly educated part of Indonesian society, as can be seen in the following pie chart:

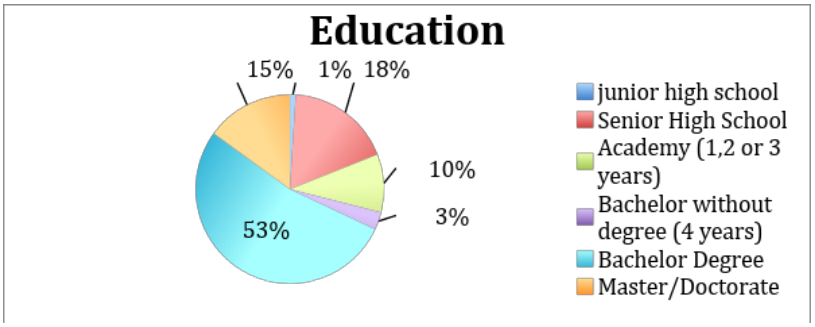

Figure 1: *Kompas* Readers in terms of Education (Kompas Media Kit, 2014)

[37] I tried to find other sources on *Kompas*' readership, as well as the profile of its readers; however, no other institution has this data. In Indonesia, figures of newspaper circulation are something of a secret as every media outlet wants to hide this data from the public. One of the reasons for this is because the amount of circulation determines the price of advertisement on its pages. However, it has been agreed by media scholars like Hill (1994) and Lim (2011) that *Kompas* is the largest newspaper in Indonesia, with a circulation reaching more than 500.000 copies per day. This figure, however, is believed to be declining recently. In this regards, *Kompas* has also been believed as the most influential newspaper in Indonesia (Anderson, 1994; Hill, 1994; Lim, 2011).

From figure 1, it can be seen that most *Kompas* readers are university graduates, making up more than half of its total readership (53%). The second biggest group of readers are those who have finished senior high school (18%). In third position are postgraduates, namely those who have obtained master or doctorate degrees (15%), and fourth are those who have finished academy degrees (10%). In Indonesia, this academy degree is taken after a person has finished senior high school and its length can be one, two or three years. In fifth rank are those who have the qualification of bachelor studies without a degree, which is a lighter version of a bachelor's and in Indonesia lasts for four years (3%). The smallest number of readers are those who only finished junior high school (1%). Therefore, if we define highly educated people as those who take additional studies after senior high school, then 81% of *Kompas* readers are highly educated. It is noteworthy that there are no readers who have only completed elementary school, or less than that.

In parallel with its educational level, *Kompas* readers are also those who occupy a high economic status in Indonesian society. This can be seen from the figure of *Kompas'* monthly expenditure as follows:

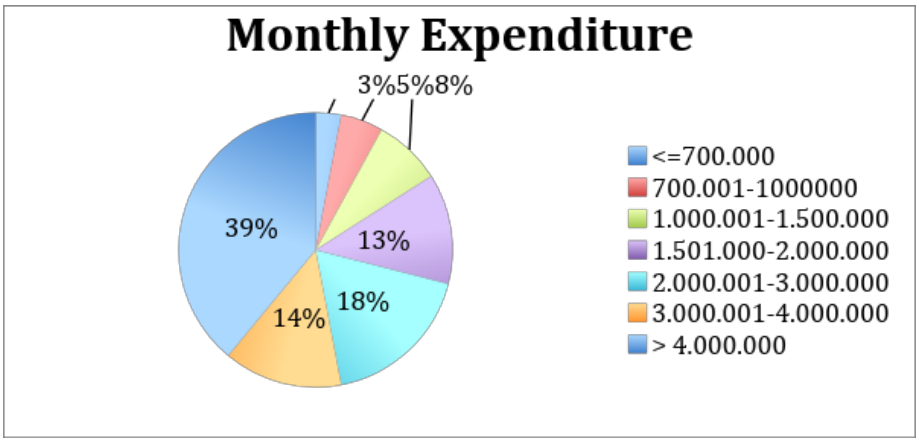

Figure 2: *Kompas'* Readers in Terms Expenditure (Kompas Media Kit, 2014)

From figure 2, it can be seen that most *Kompas* readers' expenditure is more than 4 million rupiahs per month (39%). This is more than 10 times higher than those living on the poverty line in Indonesia (which is 26.853 rupiahs a month), according to the Indonesian Statistic Bureau (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2014). The second biggest group of readers are those spending between 2 million to 3 million rupiahs a month (18%), followed by those who spend between 3 million to 4 million rupiahs a month (14%). In the fourth position are those who spend between 1.5 million to 2 million rupiahs a month (13%), and fifth are those who spend between 1 million to 1.5 million rupiahs a month (8%). In sixth rank are those who spend between 700,000 rupiahs to 1 million rupiahs a month (5%), and the smallest group of readers spend less or equal to 700, 000 rupiah a month (3%). This means that 97% of *Kompas* readers live significantly above the poverty line.

In summary, from the data above, it can be concluded that *Kompas* is the most widely read newspaper in Indonesia, and that its typical readers are highly educated and enjoy a good living standard. This also means that *Kompas* is mostly read by those who occupy a high social class. Related to this, the next section will demonstrate that *Kompas* is also the most read newspaper by the Indonesian power holders in the legislative and executive bodies.

The Most Read Newspaper Among Indonesian Power Holders

Kompas is also the most read newspaper by Indonesian power holders. In addition to the figures above, I conducted a small survey of 53 power holders, consisting of 38 people working as Indonesian parliamentary members[38] and 15

[38] These 38 parliamentary members consisted of both the members of the house of representative (DPR) and the house of regional representative (DPD) who were chosen through a simple random sampling method. I visited the meeting room of the Indonesian parliamentary members as they were gathering, then I interviewed them during their break. In this regard, I surveyed only those who were willing to make time to answer my questions.

people working in the Indonesian executive body[39]. Most respondents read *Kompas* daily, as can be seen in table 1:

Table 1
The Most Read Newspaper

Name of Newspaper	Percentage
Kompas	68,6%
Media Indonesia	11,7%
Republika	7,8%
Bisnis Indonesia	3,9%
Koran Tempo	1,9%
Jawa Pos	1,9%
Koran Sindo	-
Rakyat Merdeka	-
Others	3,9%
Total	100%

[39] These 15 people were first of all, 2 (two) Special Staff members in the president's office, with the level equal to Ministers. The special staff functions as the daily 'whisperer' for the president, advising him closely. This team is like that of the west wing in the United States. They play a very important role in influencing the policy making processes of President Jokowi. Secondly, there were 5 (five) government officers in the Ministry of Economic Affairs, who hold positions as assistant deputy, or two levels under the Minister. With this role, they are in the strategic position to implement the policy of their ministry. Finally, there were 8 (eight) government officials from two institutions for elections in Indonesia, namely KPU (General Election Commission) and DKPP (The Election Organization Ethic Council). The first institution has the power to conduct general elections in Indonesia, while the second holds the power to supervise the work of the members of KPU at every level. There were 6 (six) KPU members who were surveyed and 2 (two) members from DKPP.

From table 1 above, it can be seen that *Kompas* is the first choice of most of the power holders, with nearly 70%. This number is dramatically higher than any other newspaper, including *Media Indonesia* which is second and was only chosen by 11.7% respondents. In third, fourth and fifth rank are *Republika* (7.8%), *Bisnis Indonesia* (3.9%), *Koran Tempo* (1.9%) and *Jawa Pos* (1.9%). It is interesting to note that in many interviews, respondents often immediately mentioned *Kompas* when asked about which newspapers they read. They often answered with this response before I, or my other surveyors, could provide them with the list of newspapers to choose from. This statistic also confirms my personal observation, where I often see editions of *Kompas* on display for perusal when entering an office of a legislative member or an executive officer.

The question then is: when did those power holders start reading *Kompas?* They were not asked for the exact year when they started to read it, but rather, were only asked to recall in which political regime they started reading *Kompas.* The results are as follows:

Table 2
Period Starting Reading *Kompas*

Political Regimes	**Number**
Suharto	33
Habibie	1
Abdurrahman Wahid	-
Megawati Soekarnoputri	-
Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono	3
Joko Widodo	-

From table 2, it can be seen that most power holders have been reading *Kompas* since the time of President Suharto's regime, and are therefore not

new readers of the newspaper. Furthermore, the fact that Suharto's regime ended almost two decades ago reflects how *Kompas* has endured as their main source of information over a long period of time. The newspaper has informed and influenced Indonesian elites for decades.

From the findings of the survey, the following things can be surmised. First of all, *Kompas* is the most read and therefore the most influential newspaper for Indonesian power holders. Secondly, *Kompas* has held sway on current Indonesian power holders for decades, since the time when Indonesia was still in the authoritarian era under Suharto. In fact, as will be demonstrated in the following section, *Kompas* has had direct influence on presidents across different political regimes, from President Suharto during the authoritarian period to President Yudhoyono in the current Reformation era.

7.2 The Direct Influence of Kompas on Two Indonesian Presidents

Pressurizing Suharto to Resign

As explained in chapter 2 on the history of *Kompas*, Sukarno's presidency ended when he passed his power to General Suharto on March 11, 1966, through a controversial letter: the "Letter of Instruction on 11th of March" *(Supersemar).* It is considered controversial because the original letter mysteriously disappeared and has never been found. As is clear from the course of history, however, this letter provided the basis of legitimation for Suharto to seize power. It suggested that Sukarno give Suharto full power to take control of national security, including that of domestic affairs. While Suharto claimed that this letter was aimed to establish security after the killing of military generals on the night of September 30, 1965, it was generally seen as a forced transfer of power.

However, despite the political controversy surrounding this letter, *Kompas* declared its support for General Suharto soon after he was granted power by the President to stabilize the situation in the country. This was done through an editorial entitled *"Salus Populi Suprema Lex"*:

> *Salus Populi Suprema Lex. The safety of the people is the highest law. Bung Karno as President has officially instructed the military commander Lieutenant General Suharto to act on his behalf to save the people, to prevent a revolution and to secure the safety of the president himself… As a consequence we have to obey whatever decisions are taken by him, and whoever disobeys him is against the legitimate holder of power, and therefore, against most of the Indonesian people. (Kompas, March 14, 1966)*

As shown in the editorial above, *Kompas* was among the first to give legitimacy and political support to Suharto, marking the first attempt of the newspaper to build a good relationship with him.

Nevertheless, as explained in chapter 2, having made a political investment through supporting Suharto did not mean that *Kompas* was free to write. The newspaper was compelled to establish and maintain a close relationship with the regime in various ways: first of all, by signing a contract that they would not cover certain issues deemed sensitive by the regime. This was done after *Kompas* was closed down by on January 21, 1978. In addition, it strove to only ever criticize the regime in an indirect way. One of these was by writing two editorials everyday: the first editorial was about domestic affairs and the second one about foreign affairs. The editorial on foreign affairs was the way in which *Kompas* criticized the government, for instance, by admonishing the practice of corruption in Indonesia by reporting on the practice of corruption elsewhere in other countries. *Kompas* also regularly provided a platform for the regime. In a personal interview with a *Kompas* journalist, I was told: "It was easy. In the time of Suharto, as long as we frequently provided a stage for the president by covering him on the front page of the newspaper, everything would be alright." (*Kompas* journalist, personal interview, March 17, 2014). Thus, it can be seen that *Kompas* played a symbolic role in establishing the basis of legitimacy for the new president.

Finally, the newspaper also regularly employed people who were close to power holders. When I was in the newsroom, two journalists told me that there was a minister's daughter who worked there, and that once this woman handed in her notice for family reasons, as she felt that being a journalist took up too much of her time and she was not able to fulfil her roles as wife and mother. Jakob Oetama personally asked her to stay, and as an incentive, she was transferred to the Sunday desk, which focused on the Sunday issue and therefore only required two days a week. According to these reporters, this was Jakob's strategy to retain the minister's daughter and keep her network close (Personal interviews with Wisudho, June 12, 2014 and Laluna, April 15, 2014).

As elaborated by Dhakidae (1991), besides creating *Kompas*, the Catholic movement also created the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), which was to become Suharto's main think tank. CSIS has remained very close to *Kompas,* and there are several CSIS people who were also the founders of Bentara Foundation, the founding parent company of *Kompas*. Until now the good relationship between CSIS and *Kompas* has flourished. I illustrate this in chapter 4, in the incident involving Harry Tjan, who received special treatment by *Kompas* through his proximity to Jakob. When he complained about an article published by the newspaper, Jakob responded immediately; Tjan is one of the founders of CSIS. Therefore, having CSIS as Suharto's think tank is another strategy of *Kompas* to stay close to power.

However, despite all these strategies to ensure proximity to the power holders, once there were signs of the Suharto presidency breaking down, *Kompas* began to withdraw its support. An interview with Bambang Wisudo, a retired *Kompas* journalist who witnessed the fall of Suharto, show this:

> *In that period, I was a journalist for the education desk. This gave me a chance to look closely at the dynamics of student activism in Jakarta. Prior to 1998, I wrote about the student protests against the president in Jakarta. However, none of the protesters were from Universitas*

> *Indonesia (UI). Then I came to UI and I pinned the clipping of my article on their wall of magazines (majalah dinding). My intention was to kindle their desire to join the protest. As if I was saying: "hey, students from other universities have already staged protests. Why are you still silent?" In my view, it was very important that students from UI also joined the protest, so we could really break the regime down. (Wisudo, personal communication, June 12, 2014)*

It can be seen here that *Kompas* actively contributed to creating the conditions for the fall of Suharto.

The statement of Wisudo above was in line with Jimmmy Laluna, who explained as follows:

> *We tried to trigger Suharto to make a statement that he would be willing to step down, and this happened on his journey from Cairo to Jakarta. We actually know that he did not intentionally say that he would step down. But we asked: "What if the people do not want you anymore?" He responded that if the people did not want him anymore, he would give up his power. This is different from him intentionally choosing to step down. So, we created a situation where he was obliged to consider stepping down. (Laluna, personal communication, April 15, 2014).*

By saying this, Laluna is referring to an article printed in *Kompas* dated May 14, 1998, entitled: *"If The People Don't Want Him Anymore: Suharto is Ready to Resign".* In the article, *Kompas* wrote as follows:

> *President Suharto said, if the people no longer want him to be president, he is ready to resign. He will not keep his chair with a gun. He will resign and dedicate himself to God, his family, children and grandchildren. However, the president highlighted that all this would have to be done in a constitutional way. "If there are people who want*

> *to do it unconstitutionally, this would mean betraying Pancasila and the 1945 constitution", said Suharto in a meeting with Indonesians living in Egypt." (Kompas, May 14, 1998)*

By writing the lines above, *Kompas* was aware that Suharto actually did not intend to resign soon, but was rather referring to the possibility of losing power through a democratic election. However, by writing such an article, *Kompas* sought to imply to its readers that Suharto was ready to resign soon. They wanted to create the impression that Suharto was responding to the student protests pressurizing him to step down.

This fact, however, was not mentioned by Suharto and he clarified this statement through his minister, which became the headline the next day, in an article entitled: *"President Declared that He Never Said 'Ready to Resign'."* *Kompas* wrote as follows:

> *President Suharto clarified that he never said that he was ready to resign. What he said, however, was that he was fine if the people no longer trusted him to be in power….therefore he will not maintain the mandate of the people with gun. This statement was made by the Information Minister (menteri penerangan,) Alwi Dahlan in his house in Jakarta. (Kompas, May 16, 1998)*

This revision, however, did not erase the initial impression given to the readers as a result of the previous article.

The attempt of the newspaper to push the president to step down was made again through another headline, entitled: *"Welcome to the New Government, 11 Ministers Resigned from Office".* Luhulima explained that when the article was written, they was a rumor that the president would step down very soon, possibly on May 21, 1998. However, in order not to trail behind other news outlets, *Kompas* wrote a piece welcoming the new government in order to give the impression to its readers that they were in full possession of the facts and

already knew the president would resign. In the case that Suharto did not step down, the newspaper anticipated covering itself by claiming that they had been referring to the 11 ministers who had resigned from office. Luhulima explained further: "This means that there would be new ministers appointed, and since a lot of new ministers would come, we could say that it's like having a new government." (Luhulima, 2001: xii)

On the same day, *Kompas* also wrote other articles to pressurize the president to resign by giving space to Suharto's political rivals. In an article entitled: *"Megawati Supported the Students",* the paper wrote:

> *The chairman of the struggling Indonesian Democratic Party (PDIP), Megawati Soekarnoputri, was consistent in his support of the ongoing student protests. This is because reformation, the eradication of corruption and pressure on Suharto to step down are all also the goals of PDIP." (Kompas, May 21, 1998).*

On the very same day, on page 10 of the daily, an article entitled *"Artists Support Pak Harto to Step Down"* was published. In line with this, an article on page 12 entitled: *"The Foreign Minister of the United States Suggested Suharto to Resign*" was published. All these articles helped apply subtle pressure for the resignation of Suharto.

Suharto stepped down from power on May 21, 1998, passing the presidency onto Habibie. *Kompas* immediately threw their support behind Habibie, as shown by this article, entitled: *"BJ Habibie Wants the People to Support Him":*

> *In his first speech in the Merdeka Palace, President BJ Habibie hopes for the full support of the Indonesian people in his new position as the third president of Indonesia. "I am hoping for support from all of the people so that we can get out of this political crisis, which might destroy the entire nation." Habibie became President of the*

Indonesian Republic early on the day that Suharto stepped down." (Kompas, May 22, 1998).

This support from *Kompas* was evidenced by the placement of the article on the front page, with pictures as follows:

HARIAN UNTUK UMUM

KOMPAS

AMANAT HATINURANI RAKYAT

Harga Eceran di P Jawa Rp 1.100

JUMAT, 22 MEI 1998 — HARIAN PAGI TERBIT 12 HALAMAN — NO. 317 TAHUN KE-33

Jakarta Seusai "Lengser Keprabon"

BJ Habibie Minta Dukungan Rakyat

Jakarta, Kompas

Pengaturan presiden tampaknya tak terlalu menjadi perhatian warga di sejumlah Jakarta. Tidak terlihat adanya harapan kegembiraan berlebihan atau kecemasan-kecemasan berlebihan warga berkaitan dengan kota menyambut presiden baru. Tampaknya warga tidak begitu peduli akan peristiwa besar itu.

Di seluruh penjuru kota, suasana tampak normal. Walau hari libur, lalu lintas kendaraan cukup ramai, seperti dijantan Kompas di Jl Jend Sudirman, Jl MH Thamrin, Jl Kwitang, Jl Kramat Raya, Jl Salemba, Jl Gajah Mada, Jl Mangga Besar, Jl Gunung Sahari, Jl Jatinegara Timur, Jl Otista, Jl Dewi Sartika, Jl Kalibata, Jl Pasar Minggu, kawasan Mampang Prapatan. Beberapa warga terlihat bergerombol di pinggir jalan, antara lain di Jl Gunung Sahari, Jl Otista, tetapi tidak membicarakan presiden baru. Mereka hanya sedang menunggu angkutan umum.

Kerumunan massa yang bergembira menyambut pengunduran diri Presiden Soeharto justru banyak terlihat di Gedung DPR/MPR dan sekitarnya. Para mahasiswa yang mengerumuni pesawat televisi di lobi Lekarannabha DPR berteriak dan bersingkrak kesenangan begitu mendengar Presiden Soeharto mundur. Setelah berpelukrak dan bersalam-salaman. Mereka berlarian ke tangga utama DPR sambil menyanyikan lagu *Syuuk-syuuk Rengeeshss.*

Seiring berkumandangnya lagu kebangsaan *Indonesia Raya*, mereka menaikkan bendera Merah Putih setengah tiang menjadi satu tiang penuh. Jaket almamater yang berwarna-warni dilepaskan, karena mereka beranggapan bahwa aksi telah berubah menjadi pesta rakyat. Bahkan, belasan mahasiswa mengekspresikan kegembiraan dengan menceburkan diri ke kolam air mancur di halaman depan Gedung DPR/MPR.

Seorang mahasiswi Institut Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik (IISIP) menetaskan air mata setelah mendengar berita mundurnya Soeharto. "Saya bahagia sekali," ujarnya singkat sambil terus menangis. Sementara Ari, mahasiswa Fakultas Matematika dan Ilmu Pengetahuan Alam (MIPA) Universitas Indonesia mengatakan, perjuangan

(Bersambung ke hlm 5 kol 1-5)

Jakarta, Kompas

Dalam pidato pertamanya di Istana Merdeka, Kamis (21/5) malam, Presiden BJ Habibie mengharapkan dukungan sepenuhnya dari seluruh lapisan masyarakat dalam menjalankan tugas sebagai Presiden ke-3 Republik Indonesia. "Saya mengharapkan dukungan dari seluruh rakyat Indonesia untuk bersama-sama dapat keluar dari krisis yang sedang kita hadapi, yang hampir melumpuhkan berbagai sendi-sendi kehidupan bangsa," katanya.

Habibie jadi Presiden RI setelah pagi harinya Soeharto menyatakan berhenti dari jabatan itu di Istana Merdeka. Habibie mengucapkan sumpah untuk jadi presiden yang baru dari negeri berpenduduk keempat terbesar di dunia ini.

Pengalihan kekuasaan yang berselarah itu berlangsung 16 menit di ruang kredensial resmi Istana Merdeka, Jakarta, Kamis (21/5) semalam, yang disiarkan oleh beberapa stasiun televisi dari ribuan massa mahasiswa, yang dibelakang para cendekiawan, tokoh masyarakat, pemuka agama, dan ibu-ibu rumah tangga di berbagai kota di negeri berpenduduk 202 juta jiwa ini.

Sesaat Habibie mengucapkan sumpah, Menteri Pertahanan Keamanan/Panglima Angkatan Bersenjata (Menhankam/Pangab) Jenderal TNI Wiranto antara lain mengatakan, ABRI akan tetap menjaga keselamatan dan kehormatan para mantan Presiden/Mandataris MPR, termasuk mantan Presiden Soeharto beserta keluarga.

Angin segar

Menurut Habibie, perjuangan mahasiswa dalam mempercepat proses reformasi merupakan angin segar yang menghembus memasuki abad ke-21. "Saya memperhatikan dengan sungguh-sungguh dinamika aspirasi yang berkembang dalam pelaksanaan reformasi secara menyeluruh, baik yang disampaikan oleh mahasiswa dan kaum cendekiawan, maupun yang berlembang dalam masyarakat serta di kalangan Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat.

Ia mengatip pula aspirasi tentang peningkatan kehidupan politik yang sesuai dengan tuntutan zaman dan generasinya, ke penseritahan yang bersih dan bebas dari inefisiasi dan praktek korupsi, kolusi dan nepotisme, serta kehidupan ekonomi yang lebih memberi pehuang bersaiha secara adil. "Saya telah tangkap aspirasi rakyat," katanya.

Habibie juga berkomitmen melakukan reformasi secara bertahap dan konstitusional di segala bidang, dengan memilihkan kehidupan sosial-ekonomi, meningkatkan kehidupan politik demokrasia, menghirti tuntutan zaman dan generasinya, dan menegakkan kepastian hukum sesuai Pancasila dan UUD 1945.

Pemfaatkan itu, katanya, akan segera diusun kabinet yang sesuai dengan tuntutan zaman, aspirasi, dan kehendak rakyat, yaitu kabinet yang profesional dan memiliki dedikasi serta integritas tinggi.

Tugas pokok kabinet itu, katanya, menyiapkan proses reformasi. Di bidang politik, antara lain dengan memperbarui berbagai perundang-undangan dalam rangka lebih meningkatkan kualitas kehidupan berpolitik yang bermuara pada Pemilu selanjutnya yang dilaksanakan oleh Gara-garia Besar Haluan Negara (GBHN).

Di bidang hukum antara lain meninjau kembali Undang-undang Subversi. Di bidang ekonomi, mempercepat perpelesaian undang-undang yang mengkilangkan praktek-praktek monopoli dan persaingan yang tidak sehat.

Ia juga menyatakan akan tetap melaksanakan komitmen yang telah disepakati dengan pihak luar negeri, khususnya dengan melaksanakan program reformasi ekonomi sesuai kesepakatan dengan Dana Moneter Internasional (IMF).

Kepada segenap potensi bangsa, ia menyerukan, "Mariah kita

(Bersambung ke hlm 5 kol 1-4)

• Sajian Foto, hlm 6-7
• Reaksi LN, hlm 12

KURS MATA UANG

INDEKS PASAR MODAL

Pasar Uang Grogi

PENGGANTIAN presiden ditanggapi pasar uang secara berhati-hati. Umumnya masih tetap skeptis menanggapi "berita besar" pengunduran diri Soeharto. Kamis (21/5). Kurs mata uang regional terhadap

KURANG VITAMIN? ENERVON-C

Kompas, May 22, 1998

From the picture above, *Kompas* wanted to convey the message that another transformation of power had occurred, and that the newspaper had played a significant role in this.

In summary, this section has demonstrated that *Kompas* managed to build a close relationship with President Suharto and, in doing so, the newspaper was well positioned to influence him to step down from power. However, this attempt to persuade him to step down from power was made indirectly and politely, a strategy that will be elaborated on further in this chapter. But before that, in the section that follows, I will provide another example of how Kompas exerted influence on power holders, in this case on President Yudhoyono in the Reformation era.

Convincing Yudhoyono to Annul the Law on Local Elections

After the fall of Suharto in 1998, Indonesian politics was transformed from an authoritarian into a democratic political system. A series of amendments to the 1945 constitution was conducted to provide the basis for this process. One of its initial consequences was the implementation of democratic processes at every level of government, where citizens would vote directly for their president, governor, city mayor and city regent. While the direct presidential election had already been regulated in article 22 E of the 1945 constitution, the election of local leaders came to be regulated in law number 32/2004. Thus, while the direct presidential election was conducted for the first time in July 2004, the election of local heads was held for the first time in June 2005. However, this was short-lived, as parliament went on to change this system of local election by passing Law number 22/2014, which eliminated the direct election of governors, city mayors and regents by the people, and instead, they would be appointed by local elected legislatures.

This change in democratic process was initiated in 2012, when the Home Minister, Gamawan Fauzi, suggested that only city mayors or regents would continue to be directly elected by the people, while governors should be elected by Provincial Parliamentary members (DPRD) instead (*Kompas,* June 7, 2012; *Tempo.co,* September 11, 2014). Governors, he argued, were a representation of the central government and should act as coordinators of cities or regencies in the region. This notion then became one of the main

points in the bill for local elections proposed by the government to be discussed in Parliament (DPR). One of the main reasons for this suggestion was to avoid the practice of vote buying during direct elections. Fauzi argued that the practice of direct local election by the people had generated the massive practice of vote buying during the governor election, and consequently, the cost of the local election was extremely high for every candidate. This, in turn, made the successful candidate susceptible to practices of corruption after being elected, in order to retrieve the money spent. He believed this high-cost politics could be prevented if governors were elected by the local legislative members instead, and it would be easier to monitor the behavior of tens of parliamentary members than millions of voters in a direct election (*Kompas,* July 21, 2012).

This idea from the Home Minister appeared three times in *Kompas'* coverage in 2012. The three articles were as follows:

Table 3
Kompas' Coverage on the Local Election Bill in 2012

Num (1)	Date (2)	Page (3)	Headline Title (4)	Type (5)	Tone (6)
1	7 June	4	*Pilkada*: Government Proposed Governors Should be Elected by Local Legislatures (DPRD)	SN	Neutral
2	21 July	4	Vulnerable for Political Cartel, Governor Election by Local Legislatures Close the Chance for Individual Candidates	SN	Unfavorable
3	18 Sept	2	Ignoring Participation, the Elimination of Direct Election Doesn't Effectively Erase Vote Buying	SN	Unfavorable

SN = straight news article

From the table above, it can be seen that the issue of the Bill of Local Elections appeared in *Kompas* for the first time on June 7, 2012, with a neutral tone. This means that the newspaper did not adopt a position of either supporting or opposing the idea, and it was formulated as follows:

> *The government has proposed that governors should be elected by local legislatures… This idea was raised by the Home Minister, Gamawan Fauzi, as he was reading the government's note on the Bill of Local Election (RUU Pilkada) in front of Commission II of DPR and DPD in Jakarta… The chairman of Commission II, Agun Gunanjar, said 9 factions in DPR will respond to the government's bill on 13 June 2012." (Kompas, June 7, 2012)*

In this article, *Kompas* simply wrote that the idea was raised by the Home Minister and reported on the schedule as to when the legislative members would respond.

However, this first neutral article was then followed by two unfavorable articles, which opposed the bill for local elections. On July 21, 2012 for instance, *Kompas* wrote that the indirect election would give a chance for the political cartel to flourish. Furthermore, it would also limit the chance for individual candidates to run for election. In an article entitled *"Vulnerable for Political Cartel, Governor Election by Local Legislatures Close the Chance for Individual Candidates", Kompas* wrote:

> *The bill for local elections proposed by the government would create the chance for political cartels to evolve and thrive. With the requirement that political parties must have some seats to be able to propose a candidate, it would also limit the number of political parties joining the competition. Besides this, it would restrict chances for individual candidates. Political parties would rule National Parliament*

> *(DPR), Provincial Legislatures (DPRD Provinsi) and City/Regency Legislatures (DPRD Kabupaten/Kota). This was said by a member of the Election Supervisory Board, Endang Wihdatiningtyas, on Friday in Jakarta" (Kompas, July 21, 2012)*

From the quotation above, it can be seen that the tone of the coverage opposes the idea of indirect elections, and *Kompas* quoted a source who argues about the dangers of returning to indirect elections..

In line with this position, the last article published by the newspaper covering the bill was also against the idea of indirect elections by DPRD. In the article dated September 18, 2012, entitled *"Ignoring Participation, the Elimination of Direct Election Doesn't Effectively Erase Vote Buying", Kompas* covered the opinion of various political actors who opposed the idea. Firstly, it quoted pro-democracy activist, Ahmad Fauzi Ray Rangkuti, who said that those who oppose direct elections ignore the importance of political participation. Secondly, it also quoted the statement of national legislative member, Nurul Arifin, who believed that indirect elections would not be able to erase the practice of vote buying. Lastly, *Kompas* also cited another legislator, Arif Wibowo, who argued that vote buying could be prevented without necessarily changing the system of the election.

Therefore, in 2012 *Kompas* covered the issue by adopting an overall oppositional tone. This tone is continuously seen in their coverage of the issue throughout 2013. In this year, there were 15 (fifteen) articles written by the newspaper, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 4
Kompas' Coverage on Local Election Bill in 2013

Num (1)	Date (2)	Page (3)	Title (4)	Type (5)	Tone (6)
1	15/2	5	The Representative System Was Under Question, Government Proposed Gubernatorial Election by DPRD	SN	U
2	16/2	6	The Wave of Democracy in Reverse	E	U
3	19/2	15	Direct Election versus DPRD's Election	O	U
4	8/3	6	Bill on Election and Progressive Solution	O	U
5	22/3	5	Bill on Election: Government Change the Proposal on Election Mechanism	SN	N
6	25/3	6	Electing the Governor	O	U
7	15/4	6	Questioning the Local Election Mechanism	O	U
8	24/6	6	Local Head Must Be Elected	O	U
9	6/7	6	The Charm of Direct Election	O	U
10	9/7	5	Deadlock on the Discussion on the Bill of Local Election, Lobby Would be Conducted	SN	N
11	18/7	4	Bill on Local Election, Election of City Mayor and Regent Still Being Discussed	SN	N
12	30/7	4	Governor Would be Elected by The People, Regent by DPRD	SN	N
13	28/9	4	Bill on Local Election: Government and Parliament Still Disagree	SN	N
14	12/10	2	Direct Local Election Brings More Damage	SN	F
15	11/2	4	Bill on Local Election: Debate on the Election Mechanism	SN	N

SN = straight news article
E = editorial
0 = opinion column

Column 6 of the table portrays the tone of each article, where it can be seen that out of a total of 15 articles, there were 8 unfavorable (U) ones (53,33%), indicating that more than half of the coverage was against the idea of direct elections by DPRD. Meanwhile, there were 5 articles (33,33%) which were neutral in tone, neither supporting nor opposing the idea of indirect elections. Lastly, there were only 2 articles (13,33%), which supported the bill. Therefore, the overall message of *Kompas* in 2013 was one that opposed the bill for local elections.

An example of such an unfavorable article was entitled "*The Wave of Democracy in Reverse"*. This article, which takes the form of an editorial, strongly opposed the idea of election by DPRD in the gubernatorial elections, stating:

> *The concerns over the expensive cost of democracy need not be addressed by taking away the rights of the people to vote. What needs to be found is a way to reduce costs. The idea to conduct a series of local elections in many regions at the same time would be one such method. In the end, it would also minimize the tendency of corruption by the elected officer. Taking back the rights of the people would be a reverse of the wave of our democracy. (Kompas, February 16, 2013)*

The article above scrutinized the government's argument, which claimed that local elections created high cost politics. The editor argues that there is another way to reduce the cost of local elections, such as holding multiple elections. The article further argues that changing the election mechanism would threaten the ongoing democratization process.

As can be seen in table 4, this article was followed by two more articles which adopt a similar tone. The first article is dated February 19, only three days later, and is entitled "*Direct Election versus DPRD's Election".* This article is an opinion column written by a political analyst from the Center for Strategic and

International Studies (CSIS), J. Kristiadi. In this column, Kristiadi criticized the idea of gubernatorial election by DPRD as follows:

> *This would potentially bring political instability as the City Mayor or Regent would have more power and legitimacy than the Governor. Some of these Mayors or Regents might feel that they have more support from the people and would disobey the Governor. Problems would worsen when political parties suffer a crisis of trust from the people, like what is occurring nowadays." (Kompas, February 19, 2013)*

Therefore, we can see the escalation of Kompas' coverage on the issue, and the consistently negative tone.

Kompas did not stop there. One month later, there was another opinion column that forcefully scrutinized the proposal. The column was written by Laode Ida, a member of Regional Representative Council (DPD), who opposed the bill, claiming that distinguishing the mechanism for election of the regional head at the provincial level from those at the city or regency level would be a practice of discrimination. Therefore, he suggested that both have to be elected in the same way. Secondly, he argued that democracy meant that the individual right to participate in politics, and therefore the most democratic mechanism for electing regional heads, would be direct election by the people. Thirdly, he stressed that if the government really minded the high costs of elections, the elimination of direct elections should be directed towards the city mayor or regent elections (*Kompas,* March 8, 2013).

These three articles above, to varying degrees, reflected *Kompas'* position on the proposal. It is clear that the first article reflected *Kompas'* position as it took the form of an editorial, which are written by a member of the editorial board, and quite often by the Chief Editor himself. Meanwhile, the opinion column also reflected the newspaper's position, as opinion columns were tightly edited by a team of special editors, usually the senior ones, and are considered to be

one of the most popular sections of the newspaper. Every day, hundreds of articles written by many experts come to the desk of editors at "Opini". The editors have full power to decide which article should appear in the column, and one of their main considerations is whether the article supports *Kompas'* ideology. This is why quite often, *Kompas* invites certain experts whom they know support their position to write on a specific issue. Thus, it is clear that *Kompas* strongly opposed the proposal to eliminate direct gubernatorial elections.

As if in response to these articles described above, the government changed the proposal. This is illustrated in a news article dated March 22, entitled; "*Bill on Election: Government Change the Proposal on Election Mechanism".* This article wrote:

> *The government changed the proposal on the mechanism for regional heads in the bill of elections for local heads. The governor is going to be elected by the people, while city mayor/regents would be elected by DPRD. This idea was raised and agreed on in a closed meeting between the government and commission II of the DPRD." (Kompas, March 22, 2013)*

From the article above, a parallel can be observed between the article of Laode in *Kompas,* on March 8, and the subsequent change in policy taken by the government. Did *Kompas'* articles, then, influence this change in government policy? As will be illustrated later in the chapter, the articles of *Kompas* did indeed influence the government policy from having indirect gubernatorial elections into indirect regent/mayor elections. However, prior to this, in the next section, *Kompas'* coverage of the issue in 2014 will be examined, as the resulting change in policy to have city mayors and regents elected indirectly did not meet the expectations of *Kompas'* editorial board. What *Kompas* had advocated was that there be no elimination of direct elections at any level,

both at city or regency levels, as well as at the provincial level. Therefore, *Kompas* remained doggedly focused on this issue in 2014.

2014 was a crucial moment in Indonesian politics. In this year, the 2014 general election would be held to elect new legislative members at every level to serve in office until 2019, so it was the last year in office for the current serving legislative members. Therefore, the discussion for the bill within the parliament was very much intensified, and was also manifest in *Kompas'* coverage that year. While there were only three articles on the issue which appeared in 2012 and 15 articles in 2013, there were 80 articles that appeared from January until October 2, 2014.[40] The details of the coverage is as follows[41]:

Table 5
Kompas' Coverage on Local Election Bill
1 January – 2 October 2014

Page		Type			Tone		
Head Line	**Non HL**	**Straight News**	**Editorial**	**Opinion**	**Unfavorable**	**Neutral**	**Favorable**
30	50	59	5	16	78	2	-

From the table above, it can be seen that from January until 2 October 2014, there were 30 articles (37.5%) which appeared as front page headline news, indicating that *Kompas* considered this issue to be very important. Secondly, most of the tone of the coverage was unfavorable towards the prospect of eliminating direct elections (78 articles), and therefore 97.5% of articles were framed to support direct elections. It can also be seen that most of the articles

[40] It is important to note here, that this research limits its investigation on *Kompas'* coverage until October 2, which was the time when President SBY officially annulled the law on Indirect Local Elections, passed by the parliament by issuing regulations in lieu of law (Perppu) about Direct Election for Regional Head.

[41] For the title of every article, please see appendix.

appeared in the form of straight news (59 articles, or 73.75%), showing how the newspaper tightly monitored the progress of the issue. Sixteen of the articles (20%) appeared in the form of opinion columns, where *Kompas* used the view of the experts to support their position for refusing the elimination of indirect elections. Finally, *Kompas* expressed its concern on the proposal by writing five editorials, both to emphasize the importance of the issue and also to explicitly express the position of the newspaper.

The next important feature to note is that the most intensive part of *Kompas'* coverage on the bill occurred after 4 September 2014. As can be seen in the appendix, from January until 4 September 2014 (8 months), there were only 12 articles discussing the bill on *Pilkada (*Indonesian name for local elections). However, from 5 September until 2 October 2014, in the space of less than a month, there were 68 articles covering this issue. This reflects the political context surrounding the discussion in the parliament, where the notion for the elimination of direct elections proposed by the government was initially rejected. In 2012, as mentioned earlier, this rejection of the DPR was represented in *Kompas'* coverage through citing the response of two legislators: Nurul Arifin as well as Ari Wibowo (*Kompas,* September 18, 2012). In 2013, the parliament still disagreed with the government, and a rejection of the proposal can be seen in an article dated September 28, 2013, entitled: *"Bill on Local Election: Government and Parliament Still Disagree".* In this article, it was reported as follows:

> *The discussion of the bill for the election of regional heads which started in 2012, is still far from finished. The government and the parliament still have differing opinions, especially in terms of the mechanism for electing regent and city mayors. The government proposed that elections for regent and city mayors be conducted by local legislators (DPRD). It was supported by the Faction of the Unity of Development Party, the Faction of Democratic Party and Regional Representative Council (DPD), but seven other factions*

> *in the parliament rejected the proposal and want to maintain the ongoing direct election system." (Kompas, September 28, 2013)*

Thus, at this stage, in September 2013, most members of the Indonesian parliament disagreed with the government's proposal, and refused changing the system to allow elections by DPRD.

This refusal of most of the political parties in the parliament was maintained until May 2014. However, a very crucial event occurred in Indonesian politics in the middle of 2014 that instantly changed the political constellation in the parliament and their position towards the government's proposal. It was the direct presidential election, held on July 9, 2014. There were two candidates running for president, supported by various political parties. The first candidate, Prabowo, who paired with Hatta Rajasa as his vice presidential candidate, was supported by five political parties: Gerindra, PAN, Golar, PPP and PKS. The second candidate, Joko Widodo, who paired with Jusuf Kalla as his vice president, was supported by three political parties in the parliament: PDIP, Nasdem and PKB. As explained earlier in chapter 6, the political rivalry was so sharp that it divided the Indonesian parliament, and arguably, has polarized Indonesian society until today.

The political rivalry in the presidential election translated into shifting attitudes towards the bill in parliament, as the parties who supported Prabowo were now in favor of the bill, while those who supported Jokowi refused the bill. In an article dated September 4, 2014, entitled *"5 Factions in DPR Changed Their Position, Political Constellation Impacts the Bill on Local Elections", Kompas* wrote:

> *Five out of six factions in the People Representative Council (DPR) were united in the Red-White Coalition, and suddenly changed their position towards the mechanism of the election of local heads. If previously they were in favor of direct election for governors, regents and city mayors, now they propose an election by local legislative council (DPRD). Those five factions are: Democratic Party, Golkar*

Party, National Mandate Party, Unity of Development Party and Great Indonesia Movement. One of the members of the Red-White Coalition, however, the Prosperity and Justice Party, still seeks to maintain direct elections." (Kompas, September 4, 2014).

Thus, there was now increasing support for the bill.

The article was accompanied by a diagram as follows:

Diagram 1
Changes of Parties Political Position
on the Regional Head Elections

Source: Kompas, September 4, 2014

Diagram 1 illustrates the sharp contrast in the position of the political parties before and after the presidential election on July 9. The underlying reason behind this political change was that those who supported Prabowo wanted to secure their choice of regional heads among their own coalition. They believed that if the power to choose regional heads was in the hands of the local legislators, they could secure the position of governor, city mayor and regent among their own coalition. With the fact that those six parties were united in the Red-White Coalition and therefore dominated most of the seats at most

regional levels, they would easily gain victory in most of the regions. Thus, they were determined to pass the bill on having elections by DPRD.

As the political constellation had dramatically changed and the discussion on the bill was coming to an end, the meetings in the parliament were intensified, with the Red-White Coalition determined to pass the bill. At the same time, a wave of protest came from outside the parliament, with *Kompas* newspaper playing two roles. Firstly, it played the role of political actor by pressuring the parliament as well as the government to annul the law, and secondly, it provided a platform for those who insisted on maintaining direct elections. These vital roles were played out through its coverage on the bill, which sharply increased to unprecedented levels. In total, 68 articles appeared in the paper opposing the proposal.

A day after the change of the political constellation in the parliament, *Kompas* covered the protests from various civil society activists. In an article dated September 5, 2014, entitled: *"Bill on Election of Local Head: Refuse the Election by DPRD',* the newspaper reports as follows:

> *The refusal of local head elections by DPRD is widespread and persistent. The change in the election mechanism is seen as a setback for the democratization process at the local level, and has betrayed the message of our reformasi as it eradicates civil rights to participate in the government…. Deputy director for the Union for Election and Democracy, Veru Junaedi, believes that the reason proposed by the government, namely the high costs of elections, does not make any sense. The high cost of elections could be minimized by limiting the campaigning budget of every candidate… Director Executive of the Center for Political Studies, at the Faculty of Social and Political Science at Indonesian University, Sri Budi Eka Wardani, has argued that election by DPRD will not prevent high cost politics. It will only move the practice of vote buying from the people into the council….*

> *Executive Director of Local Autonomy Monitoring Committee, Endi Jaweng, believes that if local heads are elected by DPRD, they will accommodate the political interest of the council over the people in their every policy." (Kompas, September 5, 2014)*

The article above was headline news, appearing on page 1 of the paper, and shows how the media prioritized the protests and became a medium for the people to articulate their discontent.

The next day, *Kompas* went further to emphasize the protests by writing an editorial that clearly stated the position of the media. The editorial had a bold, provocative title: *"Hijacking Democracy",* and said:

> *As the representation of the people, DPR should listen to the people whose rights are being taken. Polling conducted by our research division shows that 87.6% of the people still want to stay with direct elections. We hope that our legislators do not hijack our democracy by taking away the rights to vote from the people. Please refer to our constitution!" (Kompas, September 6, 2014)*

By writing this editorial, *Kompas* acted as a political actor and put pressure on the government. As I will explain later, this pressure articulated through its editorial was also accompanied by an offline lobby.

But before going there, I will examine how *Kompas* functioned itself as the medium for the intellectual elite to articulate their protest. This function was done by providing these intellectual elites with a space to write in *Kompas'* opinion columns. One of them is an expert on the constitution from Andalas University, Sladi Isra, who wrote an article entitled *"Robbing People Sovereignty".* In this article, he argued:

> *If we carefully read article number 56 law number 32/2004, it uses the phrase "to be elected in a democratic way." The most concrete*

> *manifestation of the word "democratic" is direct vote by the people. Election by the council would mean people lose their sovereignty. Based on previous experiences, it is clear that the representative system often violates the people's mandate. This is exactly the reason why we amended the 1945 constitution. Therefore, eliminating the people's right to vote would be a serious violation of the constitution itself." (Kompas, September 9, 2014)*

In the article above, *Kompas* used the authoritative power of an expert to pile on more pressure on the legislators in the parliament. However, it seems that the council did not seem to take *Kompas'* position very seriously. The legislators who were united in the Red-White Coalition were determined to pass the law that served their interest the most.

Realizing that their voice was being ignored, *Kompas* changed tactics and started targeting the president himself to achieve the goal of blocking the changes to the electoral system. This is because they knew that even though the parliament passes the law, the president has the power to annul them. In addition, the paper realized that President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) was very sensitive towards the media and paid great attention to any media coverage of himself. The Vice Chief Editor of the political desk of *Kompas* illustrates this:

> *SBY is very sensitive to the media. He really cares about how people see him. He does not want to look bad. Based on years of experience serving as a journalist for the president palace, I have an interesting example that reflects this. Before a press conference, SBY took great care over his appearance and attire. He asked me about his peci (a type of hat for Indonesian people)… He said: "How is my peci Wisnu? Does it look good?" And I answered: "Yes, it looks good pak." You know, he really cares about these details…. That is why, I believe, he is also the father of the media (Bapak Media). Because he is the first*

> *president to ever use the right to answer (hak jawab) to show his protest to our coverage. He wants to be seen as a president that was friendly towards the media. (Anton Wisnu Nugroho, personal communication, June 14, 2016).*

For these reasons, *Kompas* started to direct its criticism at the president in their coverage.

Such critical articles can be seen in this following table:

Table 6
Kompas' Coverage Directed at President SBY

Num	Date	Page	Title
1.	8/9	1	**SBY** is Asked to Protect Democracy, KPK: Pilkada by DPRD Could Allow Corruption to Flourish
2.	10/9	1	6 Factions Opposed the Voice of the People, The Public Hope, **President SBY** Doesn't Take Away Their Political Rights
3.	12/9	1	Local Head Reminds **SBY**, KPU: Election by the People is the Strength of Indonesian Democracy in the World
4.	15/9	6	Waiting for **SBY's** Legacy
5.	17/9	2	Open Letter to **SBY**, President's Advisory Council Support Direct Election
6.	18/9	1	Bill on Election: **President** Could Refuse the Ratification (*pengesahan)* of the Bill in the Collective Meeting
7.	22/9	6	**Yudhoyono's** Political Step
8.	24/9	6	Waiting for Special Present from **SBY**
9.	27/9	2	Law on Local Election: All Fingers Are Pointed to **the Chairman of Democratic Party**
10.	27/9	1	Bad Legacy of **SBY's Regime**: Bill on Election is Parliament's Product that Ignores the People
11.	28/9	1	Law: **SBY** Promises to Struggle to Change the Law on Local Election
12.	29/9	1	**SBY's** Promise Is Being Asked, Citizens Collect Identity Cards to Protest Law on Local Election
13.	1/10	1	President **SBY** Prepared for *Perppu*, Experts, Public and PDIP Party

			Gives Compliment
14.	2/10	6	Option for *Perppu* was Taken by **SBY**

From the table 6, it can be seen that there are 14 articles which explicitly mention the name of the president, therefore directly putting pressure him. These articles were dated between 8 September and 2 October 2014, and all appeared after the changes to the position of the parties in the parliament towards the bill on September 4. Eight of them (57,14%) were front-page headlines, reflecting the degree of importance of the issue, four of them are on page 6, meaning that either they are opinion columns or editorials. The opinion columns show how *Kompas* tried to harness the authority of experts to put pressure on the president, whilst the editorials clearly express *Kompas'* position to the president.

If we take a closer examination of one headline, for instance this article entitled, *"6 Factions Opposed the Voice of the People, The Public Hope* ***President SBY*** *Doesn't Take Away Their Political Rights",* which was dated on September 10, it informed the readers that group inside parliament that supported election by DPRD had increased, now consisting of 6 factions. This was because the Prosperity and Justice Party had now joined the coalition. However, the article suggested that President SBY could still save democracy:

> *A recent survey conducted by Indonesia's Round Survey (LSI) suggested that 81.25% of the public wanted to stay with the direct election system…therefore, in making this happen it would reflect how President SBY is a real statesman. People hope that, at the end of his presidency, President SBY did not support the parliament to eliminate their rights. If the President fails to do so, it will be a black mark on his leadership." (Kompas, September 10, 2014)*

Here, it can be seen that *Kompas* used the result of the polls to support their claim that they really represented the voice of the people. This claim was based on academic research, which was important for SBY. *Kompas* editors knew that

SBY was greatly interested in science and academia, even holding a doctorate degree, and he was happy to be viewed as a scientist. The statement above was a warning to the president that if he did not follow the people's voice, as reflected by the survey, it would be a blemish on his record of leadership.

Besides giving a warning to the president, sometimes *Kompas* attempted to persuade SBY with friendlier words. This can be seen from an article dated September 24, entitled; *"Waiting for Special Present from **SBY**".* This article, which was an opinion column written by Saldi Isra, an academic professor in the Andalas University, states:

> *If the legislative process in the parliament was ended by voting and then the option for direct election was lost, SBY would be remembered as the president who left a coffin carrying the death of the people's sovereignty. However, if the president was successful in controlling his party members in the parliament and won the vote, he would leave a special gift at the end of his work. Pak SBY, people are waiting for your special present!" (Kompas, September 24, 2014)*

From the quote above it can be seen that, again, *Kompas* used the authority of experts, in this case social scientists, to put pressure on SBY, by publishing an opinion column from an expert that seemed to be friendly and gentle in its title, but in fact was no less pressuring in its content.

Nevertheless, despite *Kompas*' ruthless and persistent efforts to prevent the bill of direct elections, parliament decided to go ahead and pass it. On September 26, 226 of the parliamentary members voted for indirect election by DPRD. Another 135 legislators from PDIP, PKB and Hanura voted against the bill, whilst 124 legislative members from the Democratic Party, of which SBY was the general chairman, walked out of the meeting and abstained from voting. This act allowed those in favor of the bill to win by a majority, and the result of the victory was law number 22/2014 on the Mechanism of the Election for Governor, Major and Regent. In article 28 point 1 of the law, it says: "Votes

were taken, counted, and announced in an election which was held at a complete meeting attended by the Provincial Legislative Council, as well as Regent and City Legislative Councils". In addition to this article 28, in article 31 number 1 it was regulated as follows: "Every member of this council gave its vote only to 1 candidate of Governor, candidate of Regent and candidate of city Mayor." From these two articles, it was clear that the new law regulated the regional head to be elected by the local legislative council. This law was to come into effective (*mulai diundangkan*) starting from October 2, 2014.

In response to this latest political development, *Kompas* wrote a strongly critical piece that appeared on their front page, entitled: *"Bad Legacy of **SBY's Regime**: Bill on Election is Parliament's Product that Ignores the People".* It stated:

> *The decision of the collective meeting (sidang paripurna) of DPR which has passed the election of local heads by DPRD has generated wide protest from the people. This enactment has also been seen as a bad legacy for Indonesian democracy at the twilight of SBY's regime. This decision could not be separated from the proposal by the government under Yudhoyono' Presidency as well as the Democratic Party's position in the parliament, which was also led by Yudhoyono as its General Chairman. The Democratic Party walked out from the meeting where the voting was taking place. "SBY isn't leaving a legacy which makes him deserving to be remembered as a defender of democracy. The election by DPRD is simply destroying democracy," said the Chairman of Committee for the Monitoring of the Local Autonomy's Implementation, Robert Andi Jaweng." (Kompas, September 27, 2014)*

This paragraph was the lead of the article on the front page, and is indeed very critical, claiming that the passing of the law has left a bad legacy for SBY. There was a rumor inside the newsroom that SBY, on reading this headline, was

terribly upset. In a daily meeting in the newsroom, one of the editors said that Daniel Sparingga, Special Staff of the President for Political Communication, was sent to *Kompas* to discuss this. The *Kompas* editor was informed by Daniel that SBY had been made very nervous on reading the headline: "SBY *mencret-mencret* (had diarrhea) on reading the article." (*Kompas'* Editorial Meeting, September 29, 2014) and, all day long, was distracted, going frequently to the restroom, trying to think of a solution.

On the very next day, the media reported that SBY planned to make a regulation in lieu of law (*peraturan pemerintah penggangi undang-udang*) in order to annul the law. This is covered in an article dated September 28, entitled: *"Pilkada Law: SBY Promises to Struggle for Changing the Law on Local Election."* This headline about the president's promise to change the law was seen as a good sign, and that the newspaper's campaign was starting to get results. *Kompas* monitored the president closely, ensuring that he would fulfill the promise, as reflected in another article the next day, on September 29, entitled*: "SBY's Promise Is Being Asked, Citizens Collecting Identity Cards to Protest Law on Local Election".*

Kompas' ruthless campaign finally brought results when on September 30, 2014, SBY issued a *Perppu* on the bill of the election of local heads. In *Perppu* number 1, 2014 about the Election of Governor, Regent and City Mayors, a key point was outlined by *Kompas* as follows: "The governor, regent and city mayor would be elected directly by the people…and to declare that Law number 22/2014 about the Election for Governor, Regent and City Mayor which regulates election for local heads by DPRD is annulled." (*Kompas.com,* October 2, 2014). The president's decision was then appreciated by *Kompas* in the writing of an editorial supporting the decision as follows:

> *President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono finally took a decision to issue Perppu to secure direct elections of local heads with 10 improvements. This constitutional move of President Yudhoyono was taken also in*

> *response to public anger towards those 124 democratic party members who walked out of the parliament during the vote. This decision was appreciated by PDIP party, who shares the same idea as the president. (Kompas, October 2, 2014)*

The enactment of the *Perppu,* which was praised by *Kompas* through the editorial above, marked the end of the years of drama on this issue.

As is clear, the persistent coverage of *Kompas* was responded to accordingly by the government, resulting in a change in policy. But the question then is: did the president really take such a decision and change the agenda because of *Kompas'* influence? Furthermore, given the fact that *Kompas* was not the only media who protested against the bill, to what extent was it *Kompas* that influenced the decision? To be more specific, did the assertion among *Kompas* journalists that SBY had paid attention to their coverage on the legislative process have any empirical grounds? This question can only be answered by the president himself, or by someone who know exactly the president's mind. The next part of this chapter will be dedicated to answering these questions.

The President's Mind

Edi Peni looked proud. He was sitting on the balcony of his house in Depok City. It was with great enthusiasm that he was telling me about his relationship with President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY). The relationship had begun in 2002. Susilo was a Minister of the Politic and Security Coordinator in the cabinet of Megawati Soekarnoputri. He had established a think tank, namely Bogor's Brighton Institute, and asked Edi to join it. The main mission of the think tank was to produce a policy review for President Megawati. Indeed, the former military general was the right-hand man of the president. It was General SBY who provided a detailed policy brief for the cabinets. It was for this reason that he needed an academic like Edi, a professor in Sociology at a distinguished university in Indonesia, to support him with the research for the policies.

The rumor was that Megawati wanted to run for President in the upcoming 2004 presidential election, and that she wanted to have SBY as her vice president. However, something happened along the way that prevented this from happening. SBY's popularity was increasing significantly prior to the election. His eloquent speeches combined with his handsome looks made him a media darling. After three periods of being led by a civilian president, the country now missed having a military general in power. SBY seemed to be the answer. Aware of his popularity, he decided to run for president himself. For this purpose, Edi was again needed to support him with ideas for his campaign. Edi explained: "Everything was new back then. It was for the first time that a president was voted directly by the people. So our think tank prepared a "white book" elaborating his vision and mission as a presidential candidate."

As is clear from the course of history, SBY went on to win the election, with a senior politician from Golkar Party; Muhammad Jusuf Kalla, as his vice president. SBY himself was supported by the Democratic Party, which he himself found in 2001. SBY and Jusuf Kalla became the first President and Vice President ever directly elected by the people. This also marked the beginning of Edi being assistant to the former general. Whenever the elected president needed a certain policy review, he would ask for Edi's expertise. The climax of the relationship was in 2010, when Edi was officially appointed as Vice Chair of the President's Personal Secretary (Wasespri). SBY had just been elected as president for the second term from 2009-2014, and Edi stayed in this role until the very last days of SBY's presidency.

The President Personal Secretary is a member of the president's staff with the very special function to help with the daily presidential tasks. While in Indonesia, a president is already assisted by the State Secretary (Sekretaris Negara) and Cabinet Secretary (Sekretaris Kabinet), SBY wanted more. He appointed his own Personal Secretary as a trusted person who understands his vision. Edi explained this office as follow:

> *In the old days, information was circulated from State Secretary or Cabinet Secretary to the President. Now all go to the Personal Secretary's office. This office will conduct final checks on all letters, papers, appointment to the President. So he ran the Presidential Office just like that of a Military Commander. This was exactly why the Chief Personal Secretary was always a Military General. I was the only civilian serving in this office. And my position was only the Vice Chief Personal Secretary to the President." (Edi Peni, personal communication, September 11, 2016)*

From the explanation above, it is clear that the president's personal secretary had a very close position to the president himself. They assisted him on a day-to-day to basis, so they knew exactly his daily activities. The personal secretary follows the president wherever he goes whilst performing his duties. They even accompanied the president over the weekends, when SBY spent time with his family in Puri Cikeas. It is for this reason that Edi could describe precisely and affirmatively the president's daily habits in engaging with the mass media.

Having served the president for years, Edi could confirm that SBY paid significant attention to the mass media. The 6th Indonesian president was a very active man, Edi said. SBY would sleep late every night and wake up very early. Before going to bed, SBY would watch news programs on TV. His favorite was news on foreign affairs, as he gave much attention to international issues. Reading newspapers was among the activities he did to start his day. From the newspapers, he focused mainly on home affairs, as he wished to monitor the current social and political issues as presented in the press. For this purpose, he subscribed to almost all national newspapers, with special attention to *Kompas* and *Jurnal Nasional* daily newspapers.

Jurnal Nasional was a daily newspaper founded and initiated by President SBY himself in June 2006. Many have observed how the newspaper was very supportive to every one of the president's policies and actions, and it was

commonly believed that the very reason to establish this newspaper had been to support the regime. Many doubted that the newspaper would survive after SBY was no longer in office, and this prediction was confirmed. *Jurnal Nasional* was closed down on November 1, 2014, around the same time as SBY's time in office was ending. Considering this background, it is unsurprising that SBY paid much attention to this daily newspaper. The reason to pay attention to *Kompas,* however, was much more complicated.

Edi believed that *Kompas* held a special position for SBY, and he viewed the newspaper with great respect. SBY realized that *Kompas* was one of the most influential newspapers in Indonesia, with arguably the biggest network, not only inside Indonesia, but also at the international levels. A lot of international news media rely on *Kompas* when they wanted to know about Indonesian affairs. This had grabbed the interest of the President, who according to Edi, always paid great attention to global issues. In fact, many believed that SBY would play an active role in the international arena after resigning from office. Furthermore, *Kompas'* large network in Indonesia led SBY to believe that *Kompas* reflected the aspirations of the Indonesian public. He knew that *Kompas* was the biggest national newspaper with the highest circulation. As a president who was also a scholar, he was well aware of the power of the media[42]. Last but not less importantly, *Kompas* functioned as a site for the political elite to communicate with each other.

It is for these reasons, Edi explained, that President SBY appointed Afdel Lingua as his Special Staff for political communication. Daniel was not only a prominent intellectual elite in Indonesia, but he was also a Catholic. According to Edi, this factor could help endear SBY to *Kompas.* SBY believed that the fact that Jakob Oetama, the owner, founder as well as General Director of *Kompas,*

[42] In fact, SBY himself also wrote three opinion columns in *Kompas,* after he resigned from office. These articles were entitled: *"Indonesia 2045" (Kompas,* 28 June 2016), *"Strategic Environment and 2017*" (*Kompas,* 2 January 2017), and "*Answering the Challenges of 2017"* (*Kompas,* 9 January 2017).

was also a Catholic himself, would help smooth communication between the newspaper and the president. As I have elaborated more deeply in chapter 3 in the section *People and Values* of *Kompas,* many *Kompas* journalists were Catholics and the editorial board of the newspaper was also dominated by them. Therefore, very often SBY personally invited Jakob Oetama to meet with him, using Daniel as the messenger. This happened, according to Daddi, when the president felt the need to clarify any issues circulating in the media related to his policies. These frequent meetings between Jakob Oetama and SBY left a lasting impression on the founder of *Kompas,* who wrote in one of his articles:

> *On various occasions of meeting, as well as seeing himself as the first person responsible for 200 million people in Indonesia, SBY has declared himself a true scientist. The deepest calling of a scientist is to explain, and to suggest creative solutions to problems… SBY is very clear and detailed when considering every decision, along with examining the background and scope of the problem, as well as the rationale. This is in line with how the media works, which also focuses on the solving of collective problems. " (Jakob, 2014:12-27)*

In this piece which was intended to be a testimony for President SBY, Jakob not only confirmed that he had met with the president regularly, but also expressed his positive impression of him. According to Edi, not many media people are invited to a personal meeting with the president, which shows that SBY treated *Kompas* differently from other newspapers. The president wanted to build a good relationship with the newspaper in order to help disseminate his policy.

Therefore, it was understandable that the smile on Edi's face slipped when he was asked to describe the relationship between the president and *Kompas* at the end of his presidency. He said:

> *This is how Pak SBY treated Kompas. So when Kompas criticized us too much, usually he sent Pak Daniel. Pak Daniel was a special staff on*

> *political communication, right? And Pak Daniel was Catholic, right? So we can say that Pak Daniel could communicate well with Pak Jakob and with Kompas. So when, for him, Kompas was much too critical, Pak SBY invited Pak Jakob for a dialog. He tried his best to explain to Pak Jakob what was actually going on. However…very often Kompas still attacked him. But then the fact was revealed that…many editors at Kompas were in favor of PDIP party. The media darling now turns out to be Jokowi. Right? ... But yes, Pak SBY quite often invited Pak Jakob, who mostly came together with senior editors. The meetings were not held in the State Palace (Istana Negara) but in the State House (Wisma Negara). Because it was more personal." (Edi Peni, personal communication, September 11, 2016)*

The interview above clearly describes the relationship between President SBY and *Kompas.* As a person who was the personal assistance of SBY for more than a decade, he could explain in great detail the relationship between the two. Edi believes that the relationship was good at the beginning; however, it slowly worsened, especially in the last period of SBY's presidency. However, apart from the declining relationship, one thing is clear: that the president considered *Kompas* not only as a messenger to the people, but also as a political actor who could grant support to different politicians, which in this case was the upcoming President Jokowi.

Considering this, in relation to the polemics on the election bill, it is unsurprising that SBY's policy fell into line with *Kompas'* coverage. As clearly elaborated in the previous part, *Kompas'* position on the legislative process was very often followed by a change in the decision of the president. This is believed by *Kompas* editors to be proof of *Kompas'* influence on the palace. This is especially evident from the story about Afdel Lingua, in the article entitled: *"Bad Legacy of SBY's Regime".* When confronted with this fact, Edi agreed by saying:

> *I can say for sure that Pak SBY pays a great attention to Kompas. Of course, it is not only Kompas that he reads, right? But Kompas is one of the most important….. Mr. Afdel was right when saying that the President was very upset. However, I guess he doesn't have the authority to say that Pak SBY mencret-mencret (diarrhea). He was not the one in charge to be around the President, right? I was more close to the President. Very often Mr. Afdel asked me whether Pak SBY was around, when he wanted to meet him." (Edi Peni, personal communication, September 11, 2016)*

From the part of the interview above, it is clear that *Kompas* played one of the most important roles in influencing SBY's decision to annul the law on *Pilkada.*

I argue that the reasons as to why the newspaper had such influence are threefold: first of all, the media had the authority to claim that they spoke on behalf of the public, and furthermore, they articulated the voices of the people in their coverage. As seen in the earlier part of this thesis, *Kompas* gave a platform for the protest from civil society activists, academics, as well as from experts towards the proposal to eliminate direct elections. On the other hand, *Kompas* also had the power to claim to reflect public aspiration by conducting their own survey which demonstrated that most of the public wanted to stay in the direct election.

The second reason for the newspaper's influence in this case was that *Kompas* was also the site where political elites communicated with each other. By reading *Kompas,* SBY could see the position of other political elites. As clearly covered in the newspaper, *Kompas* conveyed a message that the next power holders, Jokowi and PIDP Party, wanted to stay with direct elections. As a politician, he could calculate the danger his party would be in if he turned his back on the people, while other parties would gain benefits by standing with the people. It is important to note that starting from October, the new legislators would start working in office, and the new president, Joko Widodo,

would also hold office. There were rumors that if SBY's regime stubbornly went forward with the new law, President Jokowi would just annul it anyway. Therefore, as a smart politician who was well-known for his expertise in the strategies to win wars, SBY preferred to take the opportunity to annul the law himself, thus securing his own political advantage.

Finally, as reflected by years of connection with *Kompas,* SBY saw the newspaper as a political actor in itself. As a political actor, the paper could either play a role as his ally, or stand on the side of the coalition, with his competitors. During those days, he understood that the paper's position towards the bill was in support of the upcoming regimes. Based on his experience, he believed that *Kompas* could play a significant role in making or breaking a politician's career. In the long term, the coalition between the new regimes and *Kompas* could bring an alliance that would be able to bring the law on direct election back in. Therefore, he understood that not only would he gain less benefit by opposing the paper, but more importantly, he would not be able to stop them. This explained why in one of his last meetings with Jokowi, SBY was believed to say this: "*Mas* Jokowi, you don't need to worry. You are powerful. Because *Kompas* is supporting you." (Edi Peni, personal communication, September 11, 2016)

From the words of the president above, it is clear that SBY saw *Kompas* as a political actor with considerable clout, and whose support would be very important for any power holder. Furthermore, it can also be implied from the frequent meetings between SBY and Jakob, that they had established a close relationship. This close relationship was built, perhaps, over the decade of SBY's presidency, and therefore, when the dispute over the bill occurred, SBY listened to *Kompas* more than to any other media. Knowing this, *Kompas* journalists used it as a strategy to exert influence. In words that reflect the opinion of many of its journalists:

> *We want to be a friend of the power holders. We rarely attack them. We always try to be kind to our friends, so we can earn their trust. Therefore, in a critical situation, when we attack them, they listen to us more. They will think: "Hey, this is my friend. Unlike other media who always attack me, they are always kind to me. But why are they now critical of me? Perhaps I have gone too far, indeed." (Asep, Editor of political desk, personal interview, February 7, 2014)*

Asep was not the only one who believed this. It is common belief among *Kompas* journalists, and I often heard similar views expressed in the newsroom. The course of history had taught *Kompas* journalists that applying this tactic was successful influencing power holders, both in the Reformation era under Yudhoyono, as well as in earlier authoritarian era under Suharto.

7.3 Explaining the Critical Stance of Kompas

The two case above clearly demonstrate that *Kompas* can take a critical stance on power holders, and take action to support democracy. In this regard, a question can be raised about the identity of the newspaper: so what is *Kompas* then? Is *Kompas* a fearful and cautious newspaper as demonstrated in the earlier chapters? Or is *Kompas* a bold, brave newspaper as demonstrated in the case of Suharto's resignation and the annulment of the law on indirect local election? Which one is *Kompas?*

I argue that *Kompas* is both. *Kompas* is fearful in the issues related to Islam and cautious towards corruption; however, the daily can be firm on other issues which relate more to the policy of certain power holders, though it never seeks to attack the power holders as individual suspects in cases of corruption. I have demonstrated clearly the fear towards Islamic groups which muzzles the newspaper somewhat in chapter 2 (especially in the example of the *Monitor Weekly* case), and in chapter 4 on *rasa* (especially in the case of FPI's attack). In both cases, *Kompas* decided to admit that it was in the wrong and to apologize, even though the paper believed that it had been journalistically correct. It also

agreed to stop covering the issues being protested against by the Islamic groups, and based on my observations, the newspaper also advised its journalists to be more cautious in the future reporting of such issues. In addition, I have shown *Kompas'* cautiousness on the issue of corruption in chapter 4, when *Kompas* stopped covering Boediono in the case of Century Bank after complaints from the Vice President. I also have demonstrated the newspaper's cautiousness in chapter 5, in which my content analysis of 50 years of the newspaper's coverage has shown that the news sources in corruption stories are mostly official sources, and the articles are framed in a mostly legal and official context, rather than that of a whistleblower or investigative one. This suggests that the newspaper is not committed to the notion of watchdog journalism, which strives to expose the misconduct of power holders.

On the other hand, this chapter has demonstrated that the newspaper can take a critical stance towards certain policies of the government. However, it is usually conducted in certain conditions: when journalists are certain that the risk of adopting such a critical stance are close to minimal, and when the paper can resort to claiming that it is reflecting the aspirations of the wider public and, more specifically, its loyal readers. Therefore, in this way, the paper employs the general mood of the public and thus avoids adopting a position that could isolate a sizable group of its readers. In the case of Suharto, *Kompas'* position went in accordance with the widespread aspiration of the Indonesian public demanding him to resign from power. In fact, Suharto was indeed impeached by people power, which for some observers, is considered a political revolution. Meanwhile, in the case of Yudhoyono, maintaining the direct election of the local head was the main demand of the Indonesian public. To stay in the direct election system was seen as being faithful to the democratization process Indonesia had committed itself to following. Furthermore, any risks are considered minimal when the person being criticized is losing power, or even no longer in power. The newspaper's critical stance towards Suharto as well as to Yudhoyono were adopted when both were already nearing the end of their

presidency. The only difference was that while Suharto was forced to resign through people power, Yudhyono was already at the end of the second period of his presidency.

Similarly, *Kompas* was very critical of Sukarno when Suharto was rising to power, despite –as explained in chapter 2– its initial support of Sukarno when the first Indonesian president came to power. Indeed, the name of the newspaper, *Kompas,* was the idea of Sukarno himself, and in its editorial dated June 28, 1965, on the first day of its publication, *Kompas* wrote as follows:

> *Our Kompas is Pancasila, Manipol and God's blessing. We are the messenger of the people's conscience, as Manipol teach us that revolution also means the conscience of the human beings…This is where the struggle is. Kompas gives its hands to all progressive and revolutionary power without assumption and phobia. (Kompas Editorial, June 28, 1965)*

However, after Suharto was made president and Sukarno was longer in power, the paper took a very critical stance towards Sukarno, as follows:

> *Gestapu/PKI was the result of the implementation of Pantjasila within a wrong political policy, which is the policy of nasakom (an acronym which stands from Nasionalisme/nationalism, Agama/religion, and Komunisme/communism). This is because with the strategy of Nasakom, PKI got legitimate permission from the power holders to prepare the battle for power through G 30 S (30 September movement). The basis of the strategy of Nasakom was Manipol (acronym which stands from Manifesto Politik/ Political Manifesto) for which provided the guidance for the state. So, if this is correct that Nasakom has stimulated the G 30 S, this would also be true that the foundation of the PKI was the political turmoil of G 30 S." (Kompas, September 28, 1966)*

From the editorial above, we can see that *Kompas* blamed Sukarno for giving the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) the opportunity to grow in Indonesia. This occurred under the guise of the political thinking of the president, who believed that nationalism, communism, and religion *(Nasakom)* could be reconciled to live in harmony in Indonesia. Furthermore, this political idea of Sukarno was declared in a political speech in August 17, 1959, which then became famous as the political manifesto of the president (*Manifesto Politik/Manipol).* In a nutshell, unlike their first editorial which declared that: "Our *Kompas* is Manipol", therefore aligning the newspaper with the goals and vision of the president*, Kompas* here states that *Manipol* was wrong because it allowed the PKI to attempt a coup d'état, which it strongly opposed.

In addition*,* when being critical, the paper ensures that the criticism did not focus on the activities of the power holder themselves, such as exposing practices of corruption. Both in the cases of Suharto and Yudhoyono, none of the criticism addressed the corrupt practices of these two presidents. Moreover, in both cases, *Kompas* did not attempt any investigative reporting to expose the misconduct of these two presidents, despite both having been rumored to be deeply involved in the practice of corruption: Suharto was alleged to practice widespread corruption (McLeod, 2000), whilst Yudhoyono was rumored to be responsible in the case of the scandal of Century Bank (Andres, 2016). Yet none of those cases were thoroughly investigated by *Kompas.*

Finally, but not less importantly, when taking a critical stance, the daily always strives to convey its message in a polite and indirect way, so as not to anger or cause offence to those in power. Thus, the critical stance will not create a personal conflict with the elites. In the case of Suharto, the illustration above clearly demonstrates that *Kompas* did not explicitly demand him to resign, rather, it only politely wrote as follows: *"If the people don't want him anymore, Suharto is ready to resign"* (*Kompas,* May 14, 1998). Here, the paper never stated that it wanted him to resign, but rather this message was conveyed

implicitly. This is because the sentence could also mean that Suharto would resign if he lost in the democratic elections. This politeness was further reinforced by the coverage in the following two days, suggesting that the president had clarified the statement: on May 16, 1998, the daily wrote: *"President Declared that He Never Said Ready to Resign."* This shows the willingness of the newspaper to represent the president's view, and maintain cordial relations with the power holder.

The same act of indirectness as well as politeness was taken when criticizing Yudhoyono on the bill on local elections, which would enforce indirect elections of the local heads. This politeness, or at least indirectness, can be seen from the fact that out of a total of 80 articles reporting on the issue (see table 3), only five of them appeared as editorials. This meant that most of *Kompas'* position was conveyed through citing experts who opposed the bill. Furthermore, as also explained above, *Kompas* "hid" its critical position behind the results of the poll, showing that most Indonesians demanded the election of the local head to remain through direct elections. It took the daily more than two years of advocating on this issue, from June 7, 2012 to October 2, 2014, before it finally wrote an article with the bold headline: *"Bad Legacy of Yudhyono's Regime: Bill on Election is Parliament's Product that Ignores the People".* However, despite the headline of the article, the content of the coverage actually cited another source, Robert Endi Jaweng to voice its stance:

> *SBY does not leave a legacy that makes him worth remembering as a defender of democracy. Pilkada by DPRD is the same as suppressing democracy", said the Chairman of the Committee on Monitoring the Implementation of Regional Autonomy, Robert Endi Jaweng, on Friday (26/9)." (Kompas, September 27, 2014).*

In the article above, *Kompas* "borrows the mouth" of Robert Endi Jaweng, the Chairman of the Committee on Monitoring the Implementation of Regional Autonomy, to covey its position. In fact, in its own editorial, the daily wrote a

more polite article entitled: *"Political Steps of Yudhoyono"* (22 September 22, 2014). In this editorial, the paper even positively expressed its optimism that the president would support the annulment of the bill: "The public is still waiting for the realization of the political steps of the Democrat Party Chairman in the House of Representatives". Therefore, it is clear that despite its critical stance, the daily is consistent in its indirectness and politeness in conveying its message, so as not to offend Yudhoyono.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter aims to investigate the influences of *Kompas* newspaper on Indonesian politics. It began with a survey of *Kompas* readers, which to some extent, reflects the influence of the paper. It was found that in terms of readership, *Kompas* is the largest newspaper in Indonesia, and whose readers are highly educated and economically well established. Furthermore, *Kompas* is the most read newspaper by Indonesian power holders, many of whom have been reading the paper since the New Order period. Therefore, it can be said that *Kompas* has been the newspaper of the Indonesian elites and is the most influential newspaper on the power holders. This has been described in the first part of the chapter.

In the second part, I demonstrate two cases in which *Kompas* demonstrably did have direct influence on issues of great importance occurring at crucial historical junctures, and in particular influenced two Indonesian president: President Suharto during the New Order period and Yudhoyono during the Reformation era. In the first case, *Kompas* helped convince president Suharto to step down from his presidency, which was a hugely important political event in Indonesia's political history, marking the beginning of the new democratic era. Meanwhile, in the Yudhoyono's period, the newspaper played a central role in convincing the president, at the end of his period of tenure, to annul the law passed by the parliament about the election of regional heads by local legislative councils.

In this regard, it is clear that despite its cautiousness, the newspaper can take a critical stance on certain policies of the government. However, the two examples above are unique and highly unusual, and therefore, it does not necessarily mean that the daily has functioned fully as an effective force in supporting democracy. This is because the critical stance was only taken under specific conditions: firstly, when journalists could claim that the criticism of the policy was based on the aspirations of the wider public and its readers, and secondly, when the newspaper was sure that the risks of taking such a position were minimal. Usually, this was when the power holder under scrutiny was losing power, as both Suharto as well as Yudhoyono were. In order to minimize the risks, the paper ensured that any criticism was never focused on the power holder as a person, such as exposing his practice of corruption. Furthermore, the paper always couched its message in polite and indirect language.

In addition, this chapter has shown that none of the critical stances were directed towards Islamic issues which, as explained in chapter 4, are the most sensitive issues for the daily. The fear the newspaper feels in covering such topics is because when it has done so, it has often been targeted by Islamic hardliners, who invoke the paper's Catholic roots to undermine it. Therefore, this chapter concludes that *Kompas* has not fully functioned as an effective force in supporting democracy. This last point will be elaborated further in the next and final chapter of my research.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

In order to shed light on what happens to the media when a political regime changes from an authoritarian one to a democracy, this book has investigated the biography, and journalistic values and practices of *Kompas* daily newspaper: the largest and oldest national newspaper in Indonesia, with special emphasis on the newspaper's relationship with the power holders across different political administrations. Three main questions are central to this book: *How were the journalistic values and practices of* Kompas *developed during the authoritarian era? To what extent did those journalistic values and practices change or continue after the fall of the authoritarian regime?* And, *what were the forces, inside and outside the newspaper, that influenced the changes and continuities of the journalistic values and practices after regime change?*

This book has argued that *Kompas* has developed a polite, indirect and cautious style of journalism that has changed very little after the fall of Indonesia's authoritarian regime, limiting the newspaper's capacity to function as a critical watchdog of the power holders, and preventing it from becoming a mobilizing force in the development of Indonesian democracy. This particular style of journalism developed during the authoritarian period as a result of two different, intertwining factors which shaped the habitus of *Kompas*; these were both cultural and political economy factors. After the regime change, this journalistic style was preserved, because to a considerable degree the same cultural, political and economic forces continued to operate within and upon the newspaper. These general findings will be summarized in this section.

8.1 The Development of the Kompas Way During the Authoritarian Period

Tracing the historical trajectory of the newspaper's history, this study has shown that *Kompas* was founded under an authoritarian political regime during the twilight period of the Old Order (1965-1966), and continued to operate in a similar, if not more, authoritarian political setting under the New Order (1966-1998); these periods were the entire first three decades of the newspaper's life. It forced journalists to be submissive and to strive to build close relationships with the regimes, for the sheer purpose of its survival: in order to obtain licenses to operate, and then to avoid being banned by the regimes. Indeed, press bans were frequently applied by the New Order regime, creating a repressive political environment for the media. One of these bans was enforced on *Kompas* in early 1978, when together with other newspapers, it reported on the student protest demanding the President to step down from power. In order to be allowed to operate again, the newspaper was compelled to sign a contract with the political regime, promising that it would operate with an increased degree of cautiousness, and never criticize the President's policies. This experience created fear and historical trauma in the minds of its founders, PK Ojong and Jakob Oetema, and evidence of this submission was discernible in the more cautious political coverage by the newspaper.

Interestingly, despite its political fear, the newspaper enjoyed significant financial support from the authoritarian New Order regime, which helped transform it into a business giant consisting of many subsidiaries: bookstores, printing companies, a radio station, a TV channel, and several hotels and local newspapers. This made the newspaper, to some extent, financially dependent on the state, which in turn, gave the state another instrument with which to control the newspaper. Furthermore, the fact that the daily was initially found at the initiative of the Catholic Party, and that its two founders were both Catholics themselves, has branded the newspaper as a Catholic publication. In the course of its history, this label triggered a series of backlashes from

conservative and radical Muslim groups in Indonesia, who accused the newspaper of intentionally offending them through their coverage. The Chinese roots of the newspaper, (PK Ojong was of Chinese descent), meant it suffered from being a double minority –not only Catholic, but also Chinese, adding another contentious layer its identity. This has resulted in the fear of being a minority, which one of its journalists labeled as having a "minority complex" syndrome, making them continuously seek political protection from the regime. The combination of these economic and political factors forced the newspaper to develop a polite, cautious, and uncritical journalistic style in order to secure economic gain, avoid being banned, and ensure political protection from the regime.

However, these political economy pressures would not have been transformed into editorial policy without the existence of Jakob Oetama, who possessed the habitus of a Javanese man, as well as a Catholic believer, and who acted as the newspaper's Chief Editor for the first 45 years. As a Javanese, Jakob had been born and raised to embrace Javanese values, such as respect for authority, conflict avoidance and the maintaining of social harmony. These values shaped the journalistic values and practices of Jakob, which in turn very much influenced the newspaper's editorial policy, providing the incentive for the newspaper to be submissive to the regime. Furthermore, the habitus of Jakob was translated into its distinctive journalistic style: the *Kompas Way.* While this journalistic style is strongly influenced by Javanese values, it should not be seen as a mere materialization of these values; to some extent, this style is also influenced by other aspects of Jakob's habitus, such as his adherence to the Catholic faith, and his professional media background. It is the merging of this habitus of Jakob with the aforementioned political economy factors, which has shaped the journalistic style of the newspaper.

The influence of Jakob was so strong in the newsroom due to the various kinds of capital he had accumulated, ranging from cultural capital, manifested in his journalistic skill and earned from years of experience working in the media

before founding *Kompas;* to economic capital, materialized in his ownership of the newspaper together with PK Ojong. However, since the beginning, there was a division of labor between these two founders, in which Jakob would act as Chief Editor while Ojong acted as the General Director. The death of Ojong in 1980, who was to some extent more critical of the regime, meant that the influence of Jakob went unchallenged as he became the sole founder and owner. This gave Jacob complete freedom to shape *Kompas*. As many journalists put it, *"Kompas is Jakob Oetama. Jakob Oetama is Kompas."*

A key element of the *Kompas Way* was the practice of self-censorship by integrating *rasa*. As explained in chapter 4, *Rasa* is a spiritual element in Javanese culture, which literally means 'feeling'. The successful internalization of *rasa* is manifest in the refined behavior of a Javanese person, be it in their body language, or in their oral and written expressions. On the contrary, coarse and impolite behavior or speech reflects one's lack of spiritual strength. With regard to the practice of self-censorship, there is an unwritten rule in the newsroom that journalists must incorporate *rasa* into their journalistic work. This means that it is the journalists themselves who are obliged to report in a polite and refined style in order to avoid offending or angering those they write about, especially those who are in power. This unwritten rule has demanded that journalists always be sensitive and mindful of their *rasa* during the news production process, precisely because there is no explicit articulation or delimitation of this rule. However, one of the easiest ways to know that a story has successfully implemented *rasa* is when there is no protest from the power holders being reported on. If displeased, quite often these agents complained directly to Jakob, who in turn complained to the authors. This compelled *Kompas* journalists to commit to the endless discipline of self-censorship over a long period of time, so much so that it eventually became embodied in them.

8.2 The Preservation of the Kompas Way After Suharto

After the fall of both authoritarian regimes, the *Kompas* style of journalism largely persisted despite the radical change in the political environment, and despite the state no longer being able to ban the press, as stipulated by the Indonesian Press Act 1999. The most obvious continuation can be seen in the way the newspaper deals with attacks from Islamic hardliners in reaction to its coverage. As in the old times, where *Kompas* preferred to be submissive to the pressure from Islamic groups, it has continued to do so in the Reformation era. As explained in chapter 4, *Kompas* has preferred to self-censor itself on any issues which could be sensitive to these Islamic groups. This self-censorship is implemented not only after certain coverage has resulted in complaints from Islamic groups, but also even before complaints can arise, on the basis of *rasa.* This means that they strive to be sensitive to any potential issues that might offend the feelings of Islamic believers, and decide not to cover it, or at the least cover it in a polite, respectful and indirect way.

However, it would be misleading to suggest that there is no change at all in *Kompas'* coverage of political issues. To some extent, the change can be seen in its coverage of corruption. During the Reformation era, many more stories on corruption appeared in the newspaper compared to the preceding Suharto era. If during the authoritarian period, there were only some few hundred stories of corruption each year, in the democratic era this figure multiplied to thousands of corruption stories each year. Furthermore, unlike in previous decades, where no stories of corruption directly related to the President and his palace ever appeared, during the democratic era we can see Vice President Boediono headlining in the story about President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyo's involvement in a corruption scandal. Nevertheless, despite the increasing amount of corruption coverage and despite it not being taboo to report on political actors in a corruption story, the cautious and polite style of *Kompas* remains unchanged. In all cases of corruption, *Kompas* has generally presented the incidents in their legal framework, waiting for the official version determined

by the legal apparatus or government officials, before covering the story. As presented in Chapter 5, this preference for the legal and official angle has remained unchanged despite the regime change, and despite the aspirations of some journalists to conduct more investigative reporting.

Another change evident since the Reformation era is in the appearance of the newspaper; the daily reduced the size of its print publication in 2015. As explained in the *Kompas* editorial on June 28, 2005, this redesign was done in order to improve and update the image of the paper, making it fresher, more eye-catching, and more compatible with the new era of technology. What is significant, though, is that this overall smaller size has impacted the size of the newspaper columns, including the editorial column, forcing journalists to write in a relatively more direct manner. However, as also admitted in this editorial, its core values have endured. As explained in Chapter 6, during the newspaper's coverage of the 2014 election campaign, the journalists remained faithful to the principle of conflict avoidance by demonstrating a cautious style of journalism to avoid offending election candidate Prabowo. This feature, central to *Kompas'* journalistic style, was re-emphasized again by Jakob Oetama, when the paper commemorated its golden anniversary on June 28, 2015. Writing a column which became the headline piece of the day, the *Kompas* founder suggested that operating for half a century has taught the paper to always conduct journalism in *"fear and trembling",* especially when covering issues that he believed to be sensitive.

Both cultural and political economy factors combined underlay the preservation of the *Kompas Way* after Suharto. One factor is the still pervasive influence of Jakob Oetama and his habitus, which has been institutionalized in the hierarchical structure and the pyramidal distribution of power within the *Kompas* newsroom. Despite no longer acting as Chief Editor of the newsroom since 2006, or eight years after the fall of Suharto, his legacy in the form of the *Kompas Way* has been preserved in the newsroom through a process of

socialization among *Kompas* journalists across generations. This socialization occurred through both formal and informal mechanisms.

Formal socialization was conducted through, first of all, the selection of the Chief Editor, members of the editorial board, as well as the heads of every division by Jakob Oetama himself, in consultation with the newsroom's elites, resulting in the institutionalization of a hierarchical and pyramidal distribution of power. These elites wield considerable power in the newsroom; being at the top, they exert a much stronger influence on the newsroom editorial policy than the ordinary reporters. At *Kompas*, the daily editorial meetings where the day's agenda is set, is only attended by members of the editorial board and the heads of every editorial division. No ordinary reporters are allowed to be involved in the discussion of the editorial policy. Secondly, the formal socialization of Jakob's values was achieved through the daily news editing process, where the editors in the higher position exercise power over ordinary reporters. In this process, the stories written by the journalists through reportage in the field were then sent to, and edited by, the head of division. From there, the story was sent to the managing editors for further edits, before finally appearing in print. In this case, the power of those in the higher positions was absolute, with only the members of the editorial board or Jakob Oetama making decisions. In this regard, some journalists have seen this hierarchical structure as comparable to the Catholic Church or the military. A final aspect of formal socialization is seen in the recruitment process of new journalists, which includes a year of probation time and intensive training and supervision before they are officially accept. In this training, they are exposed to, and have to learn, every single aspect of news production and tailor it to the distinctive *Kompas* journalistic style, namely, the *Kompas Way* as laid out by the journalistic practice of Jakob Oetama. Another aspect they need to learn is the hierarchical structure of the newsroom in which their editor's decision is absolute, and in which they have to obey without any complaints.

The informal socialization of Jakob's values was conducted through everyday informal interactions within the newsroom, in which the Javanese culture has became the ruling etiquette. Younger journalists have to address senior journalists as *Mas* (older brother) or *Mbak* (order sister), and never call them directly by name, which is the Javanese way to show respect to elders. Communication in the newsroom is conducted through a combination of the Indonesian national language: Bahasa Indonesia, and the Javanese language. However, when it comes to debates about a serious matter related to certain news decisions, they adopt Javanese, symbolizing the inherent Javanese values at the core of *Kompas*. It is noteworthy that most *Kompas* journalists who are not of Javanese background have learnt the language from the intensive interaction in the newsroom. The manifestation of Javanese culture also appears in non-verbal communication amongst the journalists, such as the way in which they smile (journalists are expected to smile at each other to show respect); the way they sit (both at the formal and informal gatherings, the young journalists are expected to always sit at the back); and even the way they stand (a Javanese is expected to stand politely with his two palms covering the lower side of his body). These examples illustrate the informal socialization of *Kompas* journalists into Jakob's Javanese values.

As well as these cultural factors, the *Kompas Way* which integrates *rasa* in its practice of self -censorship, and which emphasizes politeness, cautiousness and indirectness in delivering its message, has also been influenced by the following political economy factors: firstly, by the increasing number of intolerant Islamic groups in Indonesia who have used the momentum of democratization to accentuate their ideological views. These groups have quite often attacked *Kompas* and its business subsidiaries, disapproving of their Catholic-ness and Chinese-ness. This has forced the newspaper to remain cautious, especially when covering issues related to Islam to prevent any backlash from these groups. A series of attacks on the newspaper has created a sense of being discriminated against and of being a minority amongst the journalists, and in fact has led many of them to believe that being a Catholic minority is

problematic: *"being Catholic in Indonesia was like having original sin."* As admitted by Jakob himself, to some degree, it is easier to criticize the political regime than to write about sensitive issues related to Islam. In order to avoid a backlash from radical Islamic groups and to protect itself, *Kompas* has tried to forge a political alliance with more moderate Indonesian Islamic groups such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), and Muhammadiyah. In doing so, *Kompas* is compelled to avoid reporting on any sensitive issues which might offend these Islamic groups. As revealed in chapter 4, *Kompas* avoided any in-depth coverage of the tribunal of 1965, as they believed the investigation would reveal that NU had been involved in the killings of many alleged communist members. This added a further layer of self-censorship when covering Islam, not only to avoid offending radical groups, but also the more moderate Islamic majority.

Another political economy factor that has influenced *Kompas'* politeness and cautiousness is its desire to serve its economic interest by securing economic and commercial benefits. By providing a stage for the power holders, they could demonstrate to their readers that the paper had symbolic capital, and was the paper of choice for the Indonesian elite: those aspiring to be elite should therefore subscribe to and read this paper. This means that its exclusivity has contributed to its sales. Meanwhile, by not taking sides in the 2014 Presidential election, *Kompas* secured the chance for it to be used as a medium for advertising for both candidates. As demonstrated in chapter 6, both candidates promoted their campaigns in *Kompas,* though to differing degrees: Jokowi advertised much more in the paper. No less importantly, by not presenting a preferred choice of candidate, *Kompas* retained its readership, many of whom were deeply divided and identified as either Jokowi or Prabowo supporters. *Kompas* feared that taking sides would trigger resentment from its own readers, precisely because the rivalries between the two candidates had also triggered fierce political rivalries among its political followers.

Its politeness in playing a watchdog role also secures its economic and commercial interest, having grown into a big conglomerate business made up

of many subsidiaries, under the umbrella of *Kompas Gramedia Group* (KKG). For example, by only covering the cases of corruption under official judicial process, the newspaper prevented being sued by those very elites accused of corruption. As demonstrated in the study of Andres (2016), by avoiding investigating corruption scandals which might involve the President himself, this would safeguard Indonesia from the threat of political instability and economic crisis. Even when the economic crisis did hit, it might have threatened the fate of its overall business groups under KKG if they had not shored up enough political and economic capital. Through its politeness in covering corruption cases, *Kompas* expected that the power holders would remain faithful readers. The politeness in its coverage of Islam also preserved the newspaper from legal subpoenas through the use of libel law, which might have resulted in financial losses, not only in in hefty judicial administrative fees, but also in the case of losing such a case. An example of this can be seen in the repeated cases of conflict with conservative Islamic groups, where the extra court trial solution *(penyelesaian secara kekeluargaan)* demanded the newspaper pay enormous amounts of money to the injured parties. In the case of *Monitor weekly,* conflict with a radical group resulted in one of *Kompas'* subsidiaries being closed down by the government. Since *Kompas'* successful expansion as a business group, making it one of the biggest economic giants in Indonesia and making the owner one of the richest people in the country, any mistake committed by any of its business subsidiaries potentially impacts on *Kompas* too, and vice versa.

Finally, the *Kompas Way* has been shaped by the political interests of the newspaper to stay close to the power holders, both for the pragmatic purpose of securing political protection from radical Islamic groups, as well as the more idealistic aim of influencing the government's policy on issues that the journalists believe are vital in securing Indonesian democracy. Using *rasa* in their polite coverage of power holders has consistently been done by *Kompas,* including when covering corruption. The use of *rasa* in covering the wrongdoings of authority figures has resulted in the practice of *polite*

watchdogging, meaning that they still cover the case of corruption, but in a polite way (chapter 5). In view of the function of watchdog journalism, *Kompas* journalists believe that acting as a watchdog is an obligation, but that its implementation must not trigger conflict with those in power. This notion is expressed in this unwritten rule, popular amongst *Kompas*: "*ngono yo ngono ning ojo ngono",* which literally means *"you are free to behave like that, but please behave like this instead."* In addition, Catholic values have been used to justify the use of *rasa* to some extent, by suggesting that every human should be given the chance to redeem himself, as summarized by one of Jakob's teaching: *"there is no angel in the world."*

One of the ways to cover a story about corruption without offending the suspect is by framing the story of corruption within its legal apparatus, which *Kompas* does by mainly covering corruption cases which are already in the judicial process, meaning that such cases have been made official by the government itself. The main sources of these corruption news stories were usually from within the legal apparatus, such as the judge, attorney, legal prosecutor, and lawyer, as well as government officials such as policemen, ministers, as well as legislative members. This study has revealed that across different political regimes, the legal framework has continuously been employed as the central focus of the newspaper's coverage on corruption. In this regard, *Kompas* journalist have never aspired to engage in investigative journalism, which is seen as the most celebrated form of watchdogging in advanced democratic countries.

The use of *rasa* in covering the political competition among elites in the Presidential election in 2014 resulted in an attempt to establish neutrality, or at least, to not be aligned with either presidential candidate. However, many *Kompas* journalists believed that Jokowi was the better candidate with a better track record, whereas Prabowo was seen as a threat to the future of Indonesian democracy due to his record of human rights violations. In fact, many journalists participated in Jokowi's presidential campaign in several ways: some

elites provided political advice from behind the scenes, while some ordinary reporters even joined the political gatherings during Jokowi's campaign. From doing a content analysis of the newspaper, it was revealed that the tone of *Kompas'* coverage was more favorable towards Jokowi, and in addition, *Kompas* gave much more space to advertising Jokowi's campaign than to Prabowo's.

Yet, *Kompas'* official position was to remain neutral and not take sides. This policy of neutrality was declared during an editorial meeting and was restated in its published editorial. Furthermore, *Kompas* avoided offending Prabowo and his supporters by not investigating Prabowo's alleged involvement in the human rights abuses in the abduction case of 1998. As explained in chapter 6, *Kompas* implemented self-censorship by not publishing reports by a political journalist who had actually been instructed to investigate Prabowo. The resulting gap between what the journalists said, as stated in the official editorial policy, and what they actually did, could be understood as the newspaper's attempt to stay close to whichever candidate was elected as the next President. In the words of a *Kompas* journalist: *"Regardless of who wins, Kompas must win."*

By staying close to the power holders, *Kompas* expected to be able to secure political protection when it needed. It had learnt from the past that being close to Sukarno had helped the newspaper to get a publishing license and protected it from the hostile PKI. The name *Kompas* was even bestowed by the President. They also learnt that being close to Suharto had given them protection from hardline Islamic groups, who were protected under New Order policy. Therefore across the different political regimes, *Kompas* learnt that building allies with those in power was crucial to their survival as a newspaper with a double minority status in Indonesia. In addition, by being close to the power holders, *Kompas* also expected to be able to influence the policy-making process, especially in the crucial aspect of promoting democracy. As demonstrated in Chapter 7,during the twilight of the New Order in May 1998, *Kompas* successfully

helped persuade President Suharto to step down from office by presenting this as the demand of the people. Later, in the Reformation era, *Kompas'* consistent pressure on the then President Yudhoyono convinced him to abort his plan to annul the direct election of the local head, as this would go against the will of the people who desired greater political participation. This success was achieved precisely because of *Kompas'* ability to be seen as an ally by the regime. In the words of *Kompas* Chief Editor, as discussed in chapter 7: *"We are heard because we are always kind to them, and demonstrate that we are their friends. So, when our friends criticize us, or reprimand us, which they rarely do, it might mean that something serious is up."*

Indeed, the *Kompas Way* is not solely about pragmatism, as many of its journalists appear committed to democratic ideals. To some extent, the newspaper has been very supportive of democracy and eager to promote democratic values, such as defending the rights of minorities, as well as respecting cultural and religious diversity. As illustrated in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3, the composition of the journalists working in its newsroom has been a reflection of the diversity of Indonesia both in terms of ethnicity, as well as religion. Indeed, *Kompas* envisages itself as a microcosm of Indonesia (*Indonesia Mini).* Furthermore, it also aims to provide an equal space for dialogue between dominant and minority religious groups, as illustrated in its special edition for its 50-year anniversary. De Jong (1990) argued that the newspaper has indeed become a space where constructive and equal dialogue between religions in Indonesia can take place. Moreover, despite its indirect and polite reporting style, it has consistently covered corruption cases, thereby playing its watchdog role across the different political regimes (Chapter 5). As presented in Chapter 6, some journalists supported Jokowi as they believed that Prabowo has a track record of human rights violations. This was why, despite being neutral in terms of equal coverage space for both electoral candidates, the tone of the coverage was more in support of Jokowi.

In summary, this research has shown that both cultural forces and political economy forces have merged to produce and maintain the journalistic style of *Kompas*, and that this style has endured after each regime change. The evidence has clearly demonstrated that Javanese values, and to a lesser degree, Catholic values, as embodied in the figure of Jakob Oetama as well as *Kompas* journalists, have been used by the newspaper to provide a justification for establishing and preserving their cautious, polite and indirect journalistic style. This was a survival strategy to adapt to political economy pressures, both from within and outside the newsroom, and both from the old authoritarian era and in the recent democratization era. In other words, despite the change of the political regimes, the cultural forces as well as the political economy forces which have shaped the journalistic values and practices of the journalists have remained intact in the newsroom, and this has prevented the newspaper from adopting a more critical watchdog style of journalism, and has constrained its ability to help strengthen Indonesia's democracy.

8.3 Jakob's Habitus, Political Economy Factors and the Kompas Way

This research has highlighted the important role of culture, embodied in the habitus of an influential figure at the newspaper, which has hindered the successful transformation of the role of the newspaper to its new post-authoritarian setting. Jakob Oetama has not only been the owner, but also the Chief Editor of *Kompas* for decades, and he has accumulated significant symbolic and cultural capital. The materialization of this cultural and symbolic capital is the '*Kompas Way*': a specific journalistic style which has been socialized and internalized by the journalists as being the best way to conduct journalistic work. Whilst vulgar interventions from an owner in other media companies might make journalists feel compromised and hesitant, in *Kompas* such interventions tend to be viewed as something good, or even as a virtue. More importantly, as the influence of Jakob is so deeply entrenched at *Kompas,* journalists might not even be aware of it. This can be seen from the self-congratulatory expression frequently heard within the newsroom: *"It is this*

style of journalism which has made us the largest newspaper in the country." With this, the journalists themselves believe that the *Kompas Way* is the best way to conduct journalism.

However, this study has also shown that while culture is an important factor, it only makes up half of the story. The other dimension are the prevalent political economy forces within and outside the media, which have made the newspaper reluctant to undergo significant change. The journalists know that their close relationships with power holders have been one of the main sources of their economic gain, and they might be at risk if they changed their approach towards them. This approach towards the power holders, both the towards the regime as well as the powerful moderate Islamic groups in Indonesia, have secured them political protection from attacks from radical fundamentalists Islamic groups, who have long harbored resentment towards the newspaper. Indeed, the increasing problem of religious intolerance has been one of the characterizing themes of Indonesia's post-authoritarian era, which puts Catholic and Chinese-orientated media, like *Kompas,* in a vulnerable position.

While the existing theories on journalism in post-authoritarian countries have been colored by a theoretical dichotomy which focuses either on political economy factors, or cultural factors, the story of *Kompas* has clearly demonstrated that these two factors are intertwined. In post -authoritarian Southeast Asian countries such as The Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia, for instance, the theoretical dichotomy is framed in abundant literature that focuses on the role of culture in light of values or essentialist-centered definitions, such as the influence of 'Asian' values (Massey & Chang, 2002; Romano, 2005); religious values (Lang, 2016; Pintak and Setiyono, 2001; Tekwani, 2008); or Javanese values in the specific case of Indonesia (Hanitzsch, 2005 & 2006; Romano, 2003). However, they do not adequately illuminate how cultural factors interact and intertwine with political economy factors in shaping journalistic practices. Similarly, there is a vast amount of literature discussing the role of political economy factors in influencing how journalism has operated in these countries, but this does not adequately explain

how such factors might interact with culture (McCargo, 2003; Haryanto, 2011; Heryanto and Hadiz, 2005; Ida, 2011; Lim, 2011 & 2012; Nugroho, Putri and Laksmi, 2012; Tapsell, 2012; Sudibyo and Patria, 2013; Andres, 2016).

In contrast, the literature on South American countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico and Peru has been convincing in explaining the influence of political economy factors in shaping journalism practices in the region, but hardly discusses the role of culture in the values or essentialist-centered definitions such as "Asian Values" in the case of Southeast Asian countries (Benavidez, 2000; Ferreira, 2006; Fromson, 1996; Hughes and Lawson, 2005; Waisbord, 2000). Even when they discuss cultural aspects to journalism, they categorized it as being "authoritarian journalism culture" or "hybrid journalism culture", stressing that it was fundamentally political economy factors that shaped journalism culture. While the "authoritarian journalism" refers to journalism culture in the newsroom which was developed during the authoritarian era, "hybrid journalism" refers to the journalism culture in the newsroom after political liberalization, which despite becoming more free and critical, was still very much influenced by the authoritarian culture, and was still cautious and pragmatic. Indeed, in this regard, they consider culture more in the light of an organizational-centered definition (Hughes, 2006; Marquez-Ramirez, 2012; Pinto, 2009).

The case of *Kompas* conforms to the argument of Bourdieu (1998), suggesting that in order to bring about change, there needs to be either a significant political or economic break from outside the media field, or a significant change from within the newsroom. In the case of the evolution of television in France, Bourdieu found that an internal change in the newsroom, whereby a new generation of journalists with a more technical and pragmatic academic background, initiated a shift from an idealistic outlook to a more pragmatic and commercialized one. Regardless of whether this is an expected or unexpected change, the case of France has provided a theory on the evolution of television. *Kompas*' inability to undergo transformation within its newsroom, as well as

the entrenched political economy forces within and outside the paper, both have contributed to the continuation of the *Kompas Way.*

8.4 The Future of Kompas After Jakob Oetama

Due to the strong, pervasive influence of Jakob, there has been discussion amongst *Kompas* journalists as to what will happen after Jakob dies? Some journalists have even questioned whether the newspaper can survive after his death. Given the fact that the newspaper's founder and owner is now over 86 years old, this discussion is understandable. However, the observation that there is concern that the newspaper will cease to exist once its founder passes away is interesting. On first reflection, it seems surprising and unrealistic to assume that the death of one person could result in the subsequent demise of the entire newspaper. However, this reflects just how important and influential the figure of Jakob is. In this regard, I noticed that the growing concern centered around the newspaper's ability to survive after Jakob was related to two factors: political and economic factors.

Politically, there is a growing concern that in the future, *Kompas* will not be as respected as it is today, whilst Jakob is still alive. This is because Jakob has not prepared a successor to replace him. The fact that he has been in power for such a long time has denied any chance for the cultivation of a figure who could be as equally influential and respected by Indonesian power holders. This is the reason why every politician who pays a visit to *Kompas* always demands to see Jakob for political support, and is not satisfied if they are presented with anyone else. The *Kompas* journalists believe that Indonesian politicians today show such respect and deference towards Jakob because of his longevity: he has witnessed Indonesian presidents come and go from the time of Sukarno, through to Suharto, and now in the Reformation era. Meeting Jakob, who has a deep understanding of Indonesian politics, and gaining his support is considered important for a politician running for president, not only because he will then be able to garner publicity through the newspaper, but more

importantly, he will get *restu* (an Indonesian concept meaning approval, or a combination of permission and support) from a respected figure who wields spiritual power. Indeed, in a country with a strong tradition of mysticism, visiting a respected and influential figure has been a ritual of every politician running for president. It is in this regard that Randu Rahardjo, Chief Editor of *Kompas*, told me one day that the reason Prabowo lost to Jokowi was because he did not meet with Jakob to ask for support. Whether or not this is true is irrelevant; what is significant is that there is no figure in the media as influential and respected as Jakob from the perspective of Indonesian politicians.

The second reason why there is growing concern about the death of Jakob are due to management considerations. Whilst working in the newsroom, I witnessed the technological threat posed by online media, which has brought serious economic consequences to the newspaper. As in other countries where print circulation is reportedly declining, I heard many journalists complaining about the continuously decreasing circulation numbers of *Kompas*. When I first arrived in the newsroom in July 2013, Chief Editor Arif Subangun already shared this concern. Indeed, data shows that while in 2013, *Kompas* still enjoyed a circulation of above 500.000 per day, the number had declined to around 350.000 – 450.000 copies a day by the time I was conducting my research in 2014. More recently, I heard some journalists suggest that the figures are continuing to drop even more sharply. Some were even so pessimistic that they predicted that the newspaper might not survive the next five years. In such critical circumstances, the newspaper needs capable leadership which can win the trust of the journalists and lead *Kompas* through turbulent times. Unfortunately, there is strong doubt about the capabilities of the new Vice Director of the daily, who is also the Chief Executive Officer of *Kompas Gramedia Group*, Lilik Oetama. This is because Lilik, who is the son of Jakob, is believed to have never had any experience as a journalist, nor done any previous work in the media. As explained in Chapter 3, Jakob was a typical Javanese father who never involved his children in his business or work. Both

junior and the seniors journalists alike have never seen Lilik appropriately trained or prepared for the director position.

As this research was taking place, the first sign of the journalists' lack of faith in Lilik was manifested in the ongoing conflict between *Kompas Worker Union* (PKK) and the management of *Kompas Gramedia Group* (KGG) over the cut in housing subsidies for KGG workers, including journalists. As a new CEO, Lilik initiated a policy to annul the newspaper's financial support of giving journalists a zero-interest loan in order to purchase a home. This initiative generated protest from journalists and KKG's workers alike, as it was seen as violating the previous agreement between the workers and management. In this context, people started to see Lilik as a figure who only cares about profit, and began comparing him with Jakob, whom they believed would never have enforced such a policy if he were still in charge. They even speculated that since Lilik only cared about profit and efficiency, it was even possible that he would sell the paper if he thought it would no longer be profitable.

Notwithstanding this concern, there are some journalists who have an optimistic view that *Kompas* will survive after Jakob passes away. However, this optimism is colored by a concern about change, and whether *Kompas* can undergo a cultural transformation from being cautious and polite, to becoming more critical in its coverage. Unfortunately, the more commonly heard view is that the newspaper lacks the ability for such a change. This pessimism is due to the shared understanding among the journalists that the political economy environment surrounding *Kompas* has not changed; nor will it. They have observed that the practice of religious intolerance from Islamic mainstream groups such as MUI, as well as Islamic hardliners such as FPI, has increased significantly during the Reformation era, and is directed at minority groups. Indeed, since the New Order period the newspaper has been repeatedly targeted due to its Catholic-ness. This could encourage journalists to be even more cautious, especially as there will be no Jakob-like figure: someone largely respected by Indonesian politicians and power holders and who could

therefore always protect the newspaper and defend its journalists. Indeed, Jakob is viewed as the "godfather" by *Kompas* journalists.

In light of Bourdieu's theory on habitus, the situation above has confirmed the notion that habitus is internalized by a person throughout his life, and this shapes his disposition and way of life, making it impossible to immediately dismantle. In the case of *Kompas* journalists, the *Kompas Way* has been socialized among, and internalized by, *Kompas* journalists across generations, making it understandable that this style is very likely to persist after Jakob dies. In this regard, if Bourdieu's theory is to be applied consistently, then the journalists' habitus, along with the political economy factors surrounding the newspaper, have interacted and intertwined so thoroughly with each other, resulting in the preservation of the *Kompas Way.*

8.5 Kompas, Journalism and the Future of Indonesian Democracy

What is surprising about this discussion about the future of the newspaper after Jakob is that it mainly addresses the issue of the economic survival of the newspaper, as well as its close relationship with, and influence on, the power holders. There is hardly any serious discussion among the journalists as to how they could conduct a more bold and investigative style of journalism to help accelerate the consolidation of Indonesian democratization. In a country which faces the serious problems of economic disparity, widespread political corruption, and increasing religious intolerance, this question is equally important, if not more so. As a media source that is seen as the flagship of the nation, the newspaper has a responsibility to address these questions, especially at a time when online media, social media and other alternative forms of medias in Indonesia have flooded the stage, resulting in unreliable news, visible seething hatred, and the rise of far right populism. All of these can seriously threaten the nation (George, 2016; Lim, 2017).

For *Kompas,* which is cast as being a Catholic minority group with high economic standing, this question is even more pressing. *Kompas* journalists

have been a constant target of envy from poor Islamic hardliners, resulting quite often in a series of attacks on the newspaper. Many scholars believe that the increasing practice of religious intolerance in Indonesia is linked to the perception of economic inequality. Therefore, these problems might be addressed if *Kompas* could pressure the Indonesian government to seriously focus on bridging the economic gap to bring about more economic equality to its citizens. Furthermore, many studies have suggested that such examples of economic inequality are closely connected to a high degree of political corruption in a country, and this has been very much the case with the current Indonesian system of democracy. Therefore, an increasing role in promoting corruption eradication through adopting a critical watchdog role in the form of investigative journalism is necessary. When an outspoken journalist demanded that the paper conduct more investigative journalism, the newspaper replied coldly by saying: *"Why should we conduct investigative journalism, while we already lead by being what we are?"* (Interview with Pipih Anugerah, November 6, 2017) This elite might have to reconsider his unapologetic and somewhat selfish answer if he wishes to help eradicate the massive problems of corruption and help secure the future of Indonesian democracy.

However, if the newspaper does decide to conduct a more critical style of watchdog journalism, there will be a price to pay. It may lose its close relationship with the power holders or other powerful groups in Indonesia, whom so far have provided the newspaper with comfort and protection from the thing it fears most: the attacks from Islamic hardliners, due to its perceived Catholic-ness. Indeed, *Kompas* journalists have to make an extremely difficult decision between fear and power. So far, with Jakob still in charge, the newspaper has decided to listen more to its fear. In this regard, the hierarchical organizational structure in the newsroom, in which a top-down model of decision-making has been an integral part of its operation, has prevented the newspaper from undergoing significant change in terms of its editorial policy.

As has been apparent in the *Kompas* newsroom, however, there are generations of younger journalists who had been more eager to embrace a "progressive" journalistic vision. Some are more courageous to implement investigative journalism practices, regardless of the political risks it might bring, and many were enthusiastic supporters of the principle, before being restrained and subdued by the elites. They were also more courageous to risk attacks from Islamic hardliners by refusing to give in to the demands of these intolerant groups. In the last case of an attack by the FPI for instance, instead of apologizing and agreeing to drop the controversial story which had been the subject of the FPI's complaint, many young journalists actually suggested fighting back and bringing the problem to a court. In their view, the threat from the FPI was a threat to the freedom of the press generally, a right which is protected under the freedom of expression as stipulated in the Indonesian Constitution. However, while these young journalists may be brave in challenging the FPI, they remain powerless when confronted with the newspaper elites, supported by Jakob Oetama. If the newspaper wishes to undergo a significant change, transforming the culture within the newsroom by giving more space to the younger journalists to participate in the making of newspaper editorial policy is necessary.

Contemplating these conditions, will this mean that *Kompas* after Jakob will undergo a change towards a more bold and critical journalistic style? Will the absence of Jakob lead to the cultural transformation of the newsroom, in which young journalists have more of a role to play? To investigate how the newspaper adapts after Jakob will be the challenge of future research. Another potential avenue of research is illuminated when considering a current limitation of this research: the limited scope of my case study, which informed the main approach. Even though *Kompas* is the oldest and largest newspaper in Indonesia and has served as a reference for most other media outlets in the country, this study never claimed that it represented *all* Indonesian journalism. Therefore, a further study

comparing *Kompas* with other newspapers in Indonesia, or other countries, would be worth undertaking to deepen our understanding of journalism in post-authoritarian settings.

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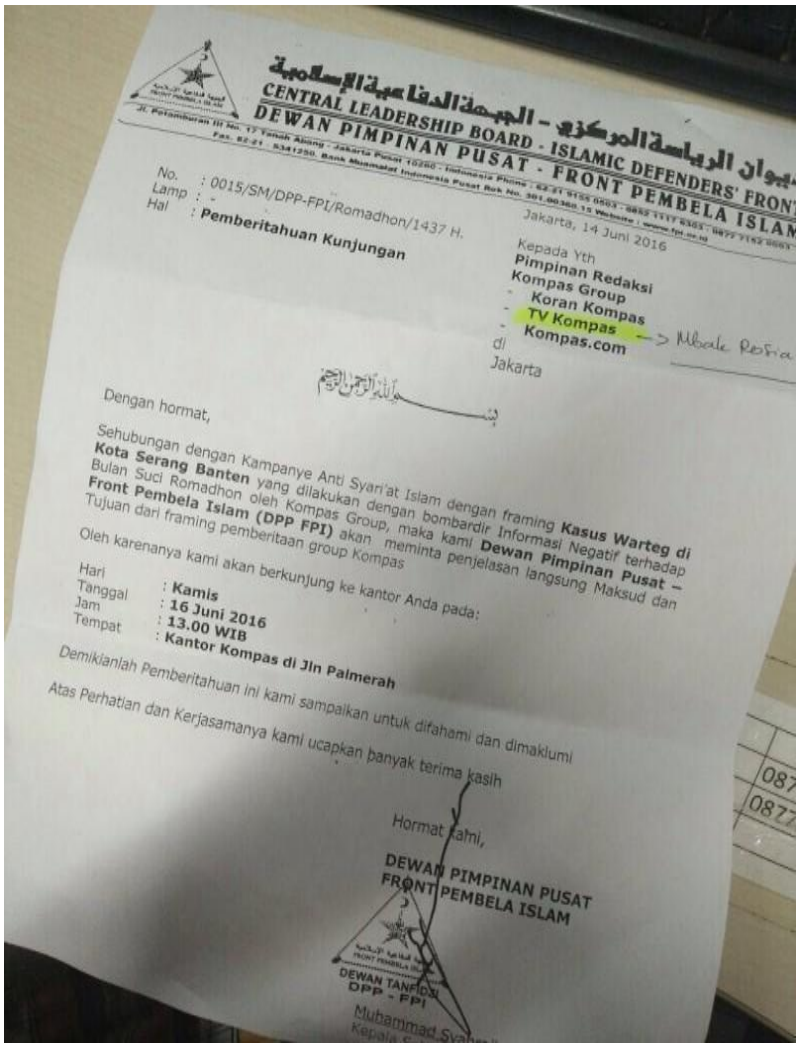
List of studied newspaper articles available on request.

Appendices

Appendix 1
The FPI's Letter to *Kompas*



CENTRAL LEADERSHIP BOARD - ISLAMIC DEFENDERS' FRONT
DEWAN PIMPINAN PUSAT - FRONT PEMBELA ISLAM

No. : 0015/SM/DPP-FPI/Romadhon/1437 H.
Lamp : -
Hal : **Pemberitahuan Kunjungan**

Jakarta, 14 Juni 2016

Kepada Yth
Pimpinan Redaksi
Kompas Group
- **Koran Kompas**
- **TV Kompas**
- **Kompas.com**

di
Jakarta

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Dengan hormat,

Sehubungan dengan Kampanye Anti Syari'at Islam dengan framing **Kasus Warteg di Kota Serang Banten** yang dilakukan dengan bombardir Informasi Negatif terhadap Bulan Suci Romadhon oleh Kompas Group, maka kami **Dewan Pimpinan Pusat – Front Pembela Islam (DPP FPI)** akan meminta penjelasan langsung Maksud dan Tujuan dari framing pemberitaan group Kompas

Oleh karenanya kami akan berkunjung ke kantor Anda pada:

Hari : **Kamis**
Tanggal : **16 Juni 2016**
Jam : **13.00 WIB**
Tempat : **Kantor Kompas di Jln Palmerah**

Demikianlah Pemberitahuan ini kami sampaikan untuk difahami dan dimaklumi

Atas Perhatian dan Kerjasamanya kami ucapkan banyak terima kasih

Hormat kami,

DEWAN PIMPINAN PUSAT
FRONT PEMBELA ISLAM

DEWAN TANFIDZ
DPP - FPI

Muhammad Syafi...

Appendix 2

Table 1: Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 1965

No.	Date and Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(2)	(3)
1	9 August Bantu Tundjuk Hidung *Para Pentjoleng Ekonomi	1. Wakil Gubernur Djakarta 2. Perwakilan Ormas Pemuda	O[43]
2	5 August Korupsi Minjak Rp. 4,5 djuta	1. Jaksa Penuntut Umum 2. Terdakwa 3. Jaksa Agung	L
3	25 August Tergelintjir Minjak	1. Hakim 2. Jaksa	L
4	23 November MH Lukman Korupsi 250 Djuta Uang Rakjat	Unclear	GM
5	31 August Koruptor Dihukum	1. Jaksa 2. Hakim	L
6	27 October PKI Larikan Rp. 700 Djuta *Sumut Tuntut Pembubaran PKI dan Ormas2 Nja	1. CSO's 2. Observation	CSO
7	31 August Koruptor Dihukum	1. Jaksa 2. Terdakwa	L
8	10 September Usaha Pemberantasan Pentjoleng	Panglima Kotrar	O
9	29 September Hajo, Tundjuk Hidung dengan Bukti-bukti nja	Aparat (pihak berwajib)	O
10	14 September	-	O

[43] Other refers here to articles framed in an anti corruption campaign theme: for instance, stating that corruption can be dangerous for economic development.

No.	Date and Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Pentjolengan Ekonomi		
11	25 September Dituntut Hukuman Mati	Jaksa	L
12	14 October Manipulator Diperiksa	Terdakwa	L

Table 2
Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 1967

No.	Date	News Source	Theme
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**
1	1 July[44] (no title)	-	L
2	13 July (no title)	CSO (Another newspaper) ➔Harian Kami (judul beritanya)	O
3	12 July Djendral Soeharto tak Tjukup Djauh Bertindak?	CSO➔ harian Honkong Standard	O
4	18 November Segera Tindak Koruptor-koruptor	CSO activists	CSO
5	12 July	-	O
6	10 April Wawantjara Pres Djend. Soeharto: Pemerintah Bersedia Kerdjasama Dgn Pers Dalam Bongkar Korupsi	President	O
7	14 March (no title)	-	O
8	20 February Tinggalan Soekarno	-	O
9	25 November Pidato Presiden Suharto Bila Ada Korupsi Laporkan Kepada Jang Berwadjib	Pedjabat presiden	O

[44] An article without a title usually taken the form of short satirable commentary, only 1-2 sentences, usually placed in the opinion section. This rubric is called *Mang Usil.*

No.	Date	News Source	Theme
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**
10	30 November Perlukah Tindakan Spektakuler	Jaksa Agung	O
11	16 October Pembersihan Mendobrak Kematjetan	Ketua MPRS	O
12	7 November Manipulator Uang Beras di Muka Hakim	1. Hakim 2. Terdakwa	L

Table 3
Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 1971

No.	Date / Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(5)	(6)
1	12 October Tidak ada Perkara Korupsi Baru	Jaksa Agung	L
2	22 October Sidang Perkara Korupsi di Sulsel: Menteri Mashuri Setudju Dengan Beleid Terdakwa	1. Hakim 2. Penasehat hukum 3. Menteri 4. Jaksa	L
3	27 October Djaksa Senior Menerima Hukuman 8 Bln	1. Hakim 2. Jaksa 3. Terhukum	L
4	23 January Pegawai Departemen Keuangan Terima Tundjangan Chusus *Kalau Masih Njeleweng, Ditindak Tegas	Menteri	0
5	17 March Koruptor di Direktorat Djendral Urusan Hadji	Jaksa	0
6	15 July Korupsi Ratusan Djuta Rupiah di Dept Keuangan	1. Terdakwa 2. Polisi	L
7	18 February Korupsi di PLN dituntut hukuman bersjarat	Jaksa	L
8	20 March Tidak Akan segan-segan Menindak	Aparat pemerintah	O
9	17 March Koruptor di Direktorat Urusan Jadji digandjar 3 tahun	Hakim	0
10	6 October Perkara Korupsi Rp 10 Djuta Djaksa "S" Mulai Disidang	1. Hakim 2. Jaksa 3. Terdakwa	L
11	20 October Tahun 1971 Ini Korupsi di Djatim Berkurang	Jaksa	L
12	25 November Sembilan perkara Korupsi Besar Digarap di Sulut	Jaksa	L

Table 4
Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 1974

No.	Date / Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(5)	(6)
1	9 January Kunci-kunci Pembangunan *Pembersihan Aparatur	President	O
2	12 January Mahasiswa2 Undip Kecam Pedas Situasi Sekarang	Mahasiswa	O
3	6 March Korupsi di Departemen PUTL ditutut hukuman 7 tahun penjara	Jaksa Terdakwa	L
4	16 February Jaksa Agung Ali Said: Kejaksaan Masih Kecewa Terhadap Penyelesaian Hukum Perkara2 Korupsi	Jaksa	L
5	27 April Korupsi Rp. 56,4 juta di PT-HII	Jaksa Terdakwa	L
6	8 July Korupsi Rp. 6.900.000,- di Knator Kotamadya Surabaya	Jaksa Terdakwa	L
7	30 July Perkara Manipulasi Rp. 320 juta disidangkan lagi	Jaksa Hakim Terdakwa	L
8	30 July Mahmiliti II Periksa Perkara Korupsi Rp.231 juta	Jaksa Terdakwa	L
9	19 July Diharapkan Bantuan Masyarakat	Menteri	O
10	17 July Presiden Instruksikan Para Menteri Untuk Menindak Pegawai2 yang nyeleweng	Presiden Menteri	O
11	25 July Merugikan Negara Rp.200 juta lebih dihukum 5 tahun	Jaksa	L
12	22 November Perkara Korupsi Rp. 320 Juta di Bank Indonesia Selesai diperiksa	Jaksa Terdakwa Saksi	L

Table 5

Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 1978

No.	Date / Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(2)	(3)
1	29 November Sidang "Pluit": Bekas Walikota Jakarta Utara akan didengar untuk ketiga kalinya	Saksi Hakim Pengacara	L
2	1 November Sidang Korupsi di Polri: Semua Saksi selesai diperiksa *tertuduh Swdj cabut permintaan untuk menghadapkan bekas kapolri	Hakim Saksi	L
3	27 October Dari Sidang Korupsi di Polri: Saksi Sungkono bagi keuntungan untuk para tertuduh	Saksi	L
4	26 October Ketua Mahkamah Agung: Tindak-tindak Pidana Korupsi diterapkan tak lepas dari keadaan sekeliling	Ketua MA	L
5	28 October Dari Sidang Korupsi di Polri: Faktur Rp. 200 Juta Tak ada Barangnya	Saksi Hakim	L
6	27 September Tertuduh Minta Bekas Kapolri dihadapkan sebagai saksi	Terdakwa	L
7	14 September Dari Sidang Korupsi 4,8 Milyar: Letjen Swdj Ungkapkan Penggunaan Sisa Anggaran	Terdakwa	L
8	18 May Jaksa Dituntut Hukuman Percobaan	Jaksa Penutut	L
9	25 February Sidang Lanjutan Perkara Minardi Utomo: Dua Pejabat Dolog diberikan kesaksian	Hakim Pengacara Saksi Tertuduh	L
10	11 February Korupsi Rp. 228 Juta di Kobangdiklat Polri: Tertuduh dituntut 8 tahun 10 bulan	Jaksa Pembela	L
11	9 January Opstibda Jabar Tangani Korupsi di Kodim Bandung	Jaksa(Aparat militer)	L
12	9 January Pemborosan di Pemda Kodya Bandung Mulai Diusut	Jaksa (Aparat militer)	L

Table 6
Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 1983

No.	Date / Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(5)	(6)
1	21 March Juru Tulis Korupsi 2 Juta Dihukum 18 Bulan	Hakim Terdakwa Jaksa	L
2	19 March Sidang Perkara Bekas Walikota Jakarta Utara: Majelis Hakim Periksa Rumah dan Mobil di Pluit	Jaksa Hakim Terdakwa	L
3	23 March Manipulasi Rp 584 Juta di BKKBN Sulsel Terbongkar	Polisi Kepala BKKBN	L
4	9 April Mulai Diperiksa, Kasus Korupsi Percetakan Sawah di Jambi	Jaksa Ketua pengadilan Majelis Hakim Terdakwa	L
5	16 April Korupsi Sekitar Rp 500 juta di Agraria Bojonegoro Terbongkar *Seorang Pejabat Akan Diajukan ke Pengadilan	Jaksa Intel (polisi)	L
6	9 September Kasus Manipulasi di Kanwil Depsos Kaltim: Sebagian Pungutan untuk Pejabat Pusat	Saksi Hakim	L
7	10 September Kasus Manipulasi di Kanwil Depsos Kaltim: Pemotongan Uang Proyek Diperintahkan Atasan	Hakim Saksi (4 orang)	L
8	4 November Sidang Terpaksa Ditunda: Bekas Walikota Sabang maju ke Pengadilan Berseragam Jabatan	Hakim Terdakwa Jaksa	L
9	20 December Kasus Korupsi Baru di Sulsel	Jaksa agung Kejati Kepala Dinas	L
10	12 January	Hakim	L

No.	Date / Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(5)	(6)
	Juru Tulis Desa Gelapkan Angsuran Bimas 7 Tahun	Jaksa Tertuduh	
11	20 January Manipulasi Dana Proyek SD Ditangani Kejaksaan Negeri Maros[45]	Orang Dalam (Whistle Blower) Kejaksaan	L
12	14 June Sidang Manipulasi Anggaran PRRPTE	Hakim Jaksa terdakwa	L

Tabel 7
Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 1994

No.	Date/Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**
1	6 January Isu Kebocoran Dana Pembangunan: FPDIP akan Ajukan Pertanyaan Langsung Kepada Pemerintah	Aparat Pemerintah (politisi) Aktivis LSM (YLBHI)	Other (wacana anti korupsi)
2	6 January Jakgung Singgih: Tiga Kualifikasi Tindak Pidana Perlu Perhatian	Jakgung	L
3	7 January DPR Sebaiknya Bentuk Komisi Kebocoran Dana Pembangunan	CSO (peneliti) Politisi	Other (wacana pemberantas an korupsi)
4	8 January Isu "Kebocoran 30%": Tak Perlu Dibentuk Komisi Khusus di DPR	Politisi DPR CSO's (YLBHI) Menteri Peneliti	O
5	4 January Sebaiknya Ada Tanggapan Pemerintah Atas Sinyalemen "Kebocoran 30 Persen"	Aktivis YLBHI Politisi Aktivis LSM Pengamat Ekonomi	O
6	20 May Perkara Presdir GKG. Hakim: Dakwaan Jaksa Tak Menyimpang dari Prosedur	Jaksa Pembela Hakim	L

No.	Date/Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**
7	20 May Berbuntut Panjang, Manipulasi Rp 1 Milyar di Puskud Lampung	CSO activists (Pengurus Koperasi)	CSO
8	26 May DPRD DKI Jakarta: Kebocoran Rp. 1,2 M di PAM Jaya Harus Diusut	Politisi Pengacara	L
9	21 December Kasus Penjualan Tanah Negara ke GKG. Jaksa: terdakwa Merekayasa Penjualan Tanah Negara	Jaksa	L
10	23 September Sidang Terdakwa SI Bapindo Pernah Terima Surat Kaleng Yang Dideskreditkan GKG	Direktur Bapindo (aparat BUMN) Jaksa Saksi	L
11	28 September Sidang Kasus GKG-Bapindo: Diragukan, Kebenaran Rapat 2 Juni	Jaksa Saksi Hakim Pembela Pegawa Bank (aparat pem)	L
12	Kilasan Hukum: ABD Tersandung Uang Rapel Karyawan	Jaksa	L

Table 8
Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 1998

Num	Date/Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(2)	(3)
1	2 January Kadispen Polda Metro Jaya: Polri Juga Menyidik Kasus Korupsi	Polisi Jaksa Agung CSO activists	L
2	22 May Mahasiswa tetap pada tuntutannya	Mahasiswa	CSO
3	3 January Penahanan Tiga Mantan Direktur BI Bukan Keharusan	Polisi Humas Kejaksaan	L
4	29 June Mar'ie Muhammad: Perlu Dibentuk Komnas KKN	Mantan Menteri	O
5	10 July Hilangkan Pejabat KKN	Walikota Jakpus	O
6	15 July Pro dan Kontra tentang Presiden Timbulkan Ketidakstabilan Politik	Jenderal Militer	O
7	7 September Konsistensi Jaksa Agung Usut Korupsi Dipertanyakan	CSO activists	L
8	8 September Sebanyak 27 Proyek Tol Berbau KKN	Sekjend DPU	O
9	23 May Setelah Soeharto Berhenti, Dunia Internasional Bertanya "what's next"?	-	O
10	8 May Membersihkan "Mafia Peradilan": Masih Dibutuhkan Keberanian	Menteri	L
11	4 August Bupati Maros Tersangka Korupsi	Jaksa	L
12	12 December Soeharto Diarahkan Jadi Tersangka * Beddu dan Sanyoto Diperiksa	Jaksa terdakwa	L

Table 9
Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 2000

Num	Date / Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(2)	(3)
1	3 January KKN Dephutbun akan Diserahkan ke Pengadilan Rakyat	Sekjed Dephutbun Menhutbun	O
2	4 January Mabes Polri Janji Tuntaskan Kasus Korupsi BI	Kapolri	L
3	22 February Waspadai KKN di Pemerintahan Baru	Ketua Kadin Pengamat ekonomi Politisi Ketua Gapensi	O
4	23 February Ketua Umum Kadin: KKN Tak Boleh Terjadi Lagi	Ketua Kadin	O
5	24 February Diuji Coba, Simtap untuk Cegah Korupsi	Aparat Pemda	O
6	8 April Pemeriksaan Soeharto Dijadwalkan Senin	Jaksa Direktur Tipikor	L
7	10 April Soal Pemalsuan Vonis di MA: Khawatir Pegawai Kecil Jadi Korban	Ketua PBHI (LSM) Sekjend MA Saksi	L
8	29 June Ada Indikasi Korupsi di BPPN	Anggota Komisi Ombudsman	O
9	19 December Mahasiswa Minta Pansus DPR Ungkap KKN Bulog Orde Baru	Mahasiswa	CSO
10	16 December Kejaksaan Akan Gugat Tommy Soeharto	Jaksa	L
11	3 July Syahril Sabirin Bisa Mengajukan Praperadilan	Praktisi Hukum	L
12	4 April Joko Tjandra akan Disidang Lagi	Jaksa	L

Table 10
Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 2003

Num	Date / Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(2)	(3)
1	20 December Ketua KPK Soal Pemberantasan Korupsi	Ketua KPK Politisi Pakar Hukum	L
2	30 December Indonesia Harus Dibebaskan dari Pemimpin Yang Korup	Aktivis HMI	O
3	10 November Tindak Korupsi di NTT Lebih Vulgar	BPK	L
4	12 October Wapres Hamzah Haz: Indonesia Negeri Korup	Wapres	O
5	11 October Diprotes, Usulan Calon Pimpinan KPK dari Partai	ICW Pansel KPK	O
6	29 August Pemilu Selalu Identik dengan Korupsi	LSM Politisi	O
7	27 August Ketua DPR Cianjur Ditetapkan Jadi Tersangka	Jaksa Pengacara	L
8	17 February Diproses, 194 Kasus Korupsi Para Pejabat	Jaksa	L
9	2 January Pidato Akhir Tahun Presiden Megawati *Perlu Bangun Rasa Saling Percaya untuk Selesaikan soal Aceh-Papua	Presiden	O
10	12 March Kwik Paparkan Gerakan Antikorupsi PDI-P	Elit Partai	O
11	22 May Megawati Dinilai Gagal Menyelesaikan KKN	Akademisi Elit Partai	O
12	17 June Jaksa Agung Tak Serius Tuntaskan KKN Pertamina	Anggota dewan	O

Table 11
Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 2009

Num	Date / Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(2)	(3)
1	2 January Pemberantasan Korupsi: KPK Dinilai Masih Mengejar Popularitas	CSO	Others (Corruption Eradication Campaign)
2	3 January Penertiban Anggaran: Rekening Dephukham Dilaporkan	Inspektorat Jenderal Depkeu Hekinus Manao	L
3	4 January Korupsi di Kalangan Eksekutif Dapat Meluas	CSO	O
4	14 April Korupsi APBD Manado: Kepala Daerah Tak Berhak Kelola Keuangan Daerah	Pengacara	L
5	3 June Oentarto Ditahan KPK *MA Tolak Permohonan PK dari Saleh Djasit	KPK Penga cara	L
6	4 June Kilas Politik dan Hukum: MA Tolak PK Fahanari	Hakim MA	L
7	11 September Dugaan Penyuapan: KPK Penuhi Panggilan Polisi	Polisi	L
8	17 October Tim Advokasi Keberatan *Polisi Akan Sita Dokumen dan Barang dari Gedung KPK	Penga- cara Jaksa	L
9	16 December Pertimbangan KPK *Menkominfo dan KPK Juga Terima Masukan Masyarakat	Menteri	O
10	1 July Korupsi di Jawa Barat: Mantan Gubernur Jabar Dihukum	Hakim Terdakwa	L
11	2 July Kilas Politik & Hukum: DPD Laporkan Kasus Dugaan Korupsi	Anggota DPD	L
12	22 August Korupsi Alat Kesehatan: Mantan Menteri Kesehatan Ditahan	Jubir KPK	L

Table 12

Coding Result of *Kompas'* coverage on corruption 2015

Num	Date / Title	News Source	Theme
	(1)	(2)	(3)
1	12 December Dugaan Korupsi: Polda Sulut Tahan Sekda Bolaang Mongondow Utara	Polisi Aparat pemerintah Politisi	L
2	29 October Pemberantasan Korupsi: KPK Klarifikasi Muhaimim Iskandar	Politisi	L
3	2 January MA: PK Pidana Hanya Satu Kali *Putusan MK Tak Dapat Dikesampingkan	Hakim Agung CSO's activists	L
4	4 January Pemberantasan Korupsi 2015: Di Antara Bayang-bayang Politik	ICW	O
5	6 January Duduk Bersama Bahas PK *MA Diminta Tak Batasi PK Sekali, Tetapi Atur Novum yang Bisa Diajukan	Menkuham MA official MK member	L
6	22 May Sembilan Srikandi Penentu KPK	-	L
7	25 August Serapan Anggaran dan Korupsi	Menteri Penulis buku	O
8	26 August Korupsi Bansos Sumut: Kejagung Periksa Gatot Pujo Nugroho	Jaksa	L
9	27 August Korupsi ESDM: Waryono Kaget Dituntut 9 Tahun Penjara	Jaksa	L
10	23 November Pencatutan Nama Presiden: KPK Telaah Dugaan Permintaan Saham	KPK member Said Didu (government official)	L
11	24 November Laporan Keuangan: BPK Lengkapi Hasil Pemeriksaan	Humas BPK Gubernur	L
12	1 December Dugaan Suap: Rio Capella: Hancur Apa yang Saya Bangun	Hakim Terdakwa	L

Appendix 3

Table 1

Kompas' Coverage on Pairs of Presidential Candidates Running in the Indonesian Presidential Election 2014, 4 June to 9 July 2014 (articles)

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
1	4 June	2	12	JW	Fav to JW
2		3	9	C	N
3		1	24	C	N
4		5	15	JW	Fav to JW
5		5	9	JW	Fav to JW
6		4	14	PS	Fav to PS
7		4	8	PS	Fav to PS
8		1	22	C	N
9		5	9	JW	Fav to JW
10	5 June	2	10	JK	N
11		4	13	JW	Fav to JW
12		4	11	JW	Fav to JW
13		5	12	PS	Fav to PS
14		5	8	PS	Fav to PS

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
15		5	15	PS	Unfav to PS
16		6	7	C	N
17		6	-	C	N
18	6 June	4	17	PS	Fav to PS
19		5	15	JW	Fav to JW
20		5	15	C	N
21		7	13	C	N
22	7 June	1	22	PS	N
23		2	18	C	N
24		4	12	JK	Fav to JK
25		5	9	PS	Fav to PS
26		5	8	JW	Fav to JW
27		5	9	PS	Fav to PS
28		6	8	C	N
29	8 June	1	25	JW	Fav to JW
30		2	15	C	N
31	9 June	2	14	C	N

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
32		2	10	C	N
33		4	17	PS	Fav to PS
34		4	8	PS	N
35		5	15	JW	Fav to JW
36		5	9	JK	Fav to JK
37	10 June	1	28	C	Fav to JW
38		3	12	PS	Fav to PS
39		4	11	C	N
40	11 June	4	11	C	N
41		4	6	PS	N
42		5	17	C	N
43		6	8	C	N
44		6	11	C	N
45	12 June	1	24	C	N
46		3	14	PS	Unfav to PS
47		4	8	PS	Fav to PS
48		4	10	PS	Fav to PS

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
49		5	10	JW	Fav to JW
50		5	9	JK	Fav to JK
51		5	7	PS	Unfav to PS
52		6	13	PS	Unfav to PS
53		6	1	PS	Unfav to PS
54		7	17	C	N
55	13 June	2	19	JW	Fav to JW
56		2	9	C	N
57		4	13	JW	Fav to JW
58		5	14	PS	Fav to PS
59	14 June	2	15	C	N
60		2	23	JW	Fav to JW
61		4	13	PS	Fav to PS
62		5	11	JW	Fav to JW
63		6	20	C	N
64	15 June	2	23	C	N
65	16 June	1	15	C	N

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
66		1	13	JW	Fav to JW
67		2	12	C	N
68		4	8	C	N
69		5	15	C	Fav to JW
70		6	17	JW	Fav to JW
71	17 June	2	15	JW	Fav to JW
72		2	1	C	N
73		2	9	C	N
74		4	10	PS	Fav to PS
75		4	7	PS	N
76		5	10	JW	Fav to JW
77		6	7	C	N
78		7	16	C	N
79	18 June	4	15	JW	Fav to JW
80		5	9	PS	Fav to PS
81		5	8	C	N
82		1	27	PS	Unfav to PS

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
83	19 June	3	11	JW	Fav to JW
84		4	12	PS	Fav to PS
85		5	12	JW	Fav to JW
86		6	1	PS	Unfav to PS
87		7	17	C	N
88	20 June	1	18	PS	Unfav to PS
89		4	10	JW	Fav to JW
90		5	5	PS	Fav to PS
91		6	8	C	N
92		7	19	JW	Fav to JW
93	21 June	1	20	C	Fav JW
94		1	14	PS	Fav to PS
95		2	9	C	N
96		2	9	JW	Fav to JW
97		4	9	JW	Fav to JW
98		4	13	JK	Fav to JK
99		5	9	PS	Fav to PS

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
100		5	12	PS	Unfav to PS
101		6	13	C	Fav to JW
102		6	1	PS	Unfav to PS
103		7	15	C	Fav to JW
104	22 June	2	14	C	Fav to JW
105		2	7	PS	Fav to PS
106		2	9	JW	Fav to JW
107	23 June	1	26	C	Fav to JW
108		2	6	JW	Fav to JW
109		2	14	C	Fav to JW
110		4	21	C	Fav to JW
111		4	11	PS	Fav to PS
112		4	10	JW	Fav to JW
113		5	13	C	N
114		6	22	JW	Fav to JW
115	24 June	2	14	JW	Fav to JW
116		3	11	C	Fav to JW

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
117		4	12	PS	Fav to PS
118		5	12	JW	Fav to JW
119		5	11	JW	Fav to JW
120	25 June	2	21	C	Fav to JW
121		2	14	JK	Fav to JK
122		2	9	C	Fav to JW
123		3	11	JW	Fav to JW
124		4	10	JW	Fav to JW
125		5	9	PS	Fav to PS
126	26 June	1	30	C	Fav to Jw
127		2	22	JW	Fav to JW
128		2	10	C	Unfav to PS
129		3	10	PS	Fav to PS
130		6	19	C	N
131		6	-	C	Fav to JW
132		6	-	C	N
133	27 June	4	10	PS	Fav to PS

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
134		4	14	C	Fav to JW
135		5	10	JW	Fav to JW
136		7	14	C	N
137	28 June	2	24	JW	Fav to JW
138		2	10	PS	Unfav to PS
139		3	12	JW	Fav to JW
140		3	1	PS	Unfav to PS
141		4	12	JW	Fav to JW
142		5	10	PS	Fav to PS
143	30 June	1	19	C	N
144		2	9	PS	Fav to PS
145		3	11	JW	Fav to JW
146		3	11	C	Fav to JW
147		4	15	C	N
148		5	18	C	N
149		5	10	JW	Fav to JW
150	1 July	2	13	C	N

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
151		4	8	PS	Fav to PS
152		4	9	JW	Fav to JW
153		5	11	JW	Fav to JW
154		6	9	C	N
155	2 July	2	13	C	N
156		4	11	C	N
157		4	12	JW	Fav to JW
158		4	8	JK	Fav to JK
159		4	7	PS	Fav to PS
160		5	8	PS	Fav to PS
161	3 July	2	17	JW	Fav to JW
162		4	15	PS	Fav to PS
163		4	9	PS	Fav to PS
164		5	12	JW	Fav to JW
165		6	19	JW	Fav to JW
166	4 July	1	8	C	N
167		4	12	C	Fav to PS

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
168		4	9	JW	Fav to JW
169		5	15	PS	Fav
170		6	23	C	N
171	5 July	2	14	C	N
172		2	9	PS	Fav to PS
173		3	12	JW	Fav to JW
174		3	7	C	N
175		5	9	JW	Fav to JW
176		6	8	C	N
177	6 July	1	20	JW	Fav to JW
178		2	11	C	N
179		2	11	C	N
180		2	3	C	N
181	7 July	4	12	PS	Fav to PS
182		5	21	JW	Fav to JW
183		5	17	C	Fav to JW
184		6	7	C	N

No	Date	Page Number	Number of Paragraphs	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav =unfavorable JK = Jusuf Kalla
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
185	8 July	4	11	JW	Fav to JW
186		5	13	C	N
187		6	18	C	N
188	9 July	2	19	C	Fav to JW
189		2	8	PS	Fav to PS
190		2	13	JW	Fav to JW

Table 2

Kompas' Coverage on Pairs of Presidential Candidates Running in the Indonesian Presidential Election 2014, From 4 June to 9 July 2014

(photos/pictures/diagrams/cartoons)

Number	**Date**	**Page Number**	**Type of news**	**Main Theme** JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	**Orientation** N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav = unfavorable
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
1	4 June	1	Photo	C	N
2	5 June	4	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
3		5	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
4	6 June	4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
5		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
6	7 June	4	Photo	JK	Fav to JK
7	9 June	2	Photo	C	N
8		4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
9		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
10	10 June	1	Photo	C	N
11		1	Diagram	C	N
12		4	Photo	C	N
13	11 June	5	Diagram	C	Fav to JW

Number	Date	Page Number	Type of news	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav = unfavorable
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
14	12 June	4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
15		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
16	13 June	4	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
17		5	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
18	14 June	4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
19		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
20		6	Cartoon	C	N
21	16 June	1	Photo	C	Fav to JW
22	17 June	4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
23		5	Photo	JW	Fv to JW
24	18 June	4	photo	JW	Fav to JW
25		5	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
26		1	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
27	19 June	4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
28		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
29	20 June	1	Photo	PS	Unfav to PS

Number	Date	Page Number	Type of news	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav = unfavorable
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
30		1	Picture	PS	Unfav to PS
31		4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
32		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
33	21 June	1	Photo	C	Fav JW
34		3	Photo	C	N
35		3	Photo	C	N
36		4	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
37		4	Photo	JK	Fav to JW
38		5	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
39		5	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
40		15	Photo	C	N
41	23 June	1	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
42		1	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
43		2	Photo	C	Fav to JW
44		3	Photo	C	Fav to JW
45		4	Photo	C	N

Number	Date	Page Number	Type of news	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav = unfavorable
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
46		4	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
47		4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
48		5	Diagram	C	Fav to JW
49	24 June	2	Photo	C	Fav to PS
50		4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
51		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
52	25 June	3	Photo	PS	N
53		4	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
54		5	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
55	26 June	2	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
56		3	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
57	27 June	4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
58		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
59	28 June	4	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
60		5	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
61	30 June	1	Picture	C	N

Number	Date	Page Number	Type of news	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav = unfavorable
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
62		2	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
63		3	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
64		3	Picture	C	Fav to JW
65		4	Photo	C	N
66		5	Photo	C	N
67	1 July	4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
68		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
69	2 july	4	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
70		5	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
71	3 July	1	Picture	C	N
72		4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
73		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
74	4 July	4	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
75		5	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
76		2	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
77		3	Photo	JW	Fav to JW

Number	Date	Page Number	Type of news	Main Theme JW = Jokowi PS = Prabowo C = covers both candidates	Orientation N = neutral Fav = favorable Unfav = unfavorable
	(1)	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(4)**	**(5)**
78	6 July	1	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
79		2	Photo	C	N
80		2	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
81		2	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
82		2	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
83		2	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
84	7 July	4	Photo	PS	Fav to PS
85		4	Picture	C	N
86		5	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
87	8 July	4	Photo	JW	Fav to JW
88		5	Photo	PS	Fav to PS

Appendix 4

Advertisement of Indonesian Presidential Candidates During Presidential Campaign 4 June – 9 July 2014

in *Kompas'* Daily Newspaper

Date	Prabowo Hatta	Jokowi - JK
9 June, Monday		Page 1 ➔ 7 x 100 mm2 = 399.000.000
11 June, Monday		Page 1 ➔ 7 x 100 mm2 = 399.000.000
12 June, Wednesday		Page 4 ➔ 4 column x 540 mm2 x 120.000 = 259.200.000
15 June, Sunday	Page 10, full page➔ 7 column x 540 mm2 x Rp. 146.500 = Rp. 553.770.000,-	
18 June, Wednesday		Page 4 ➔ 4 column x 540 mm2 x 120.000 = 259.200.000 Page 9 ➔ 4 column x 540 mm2 x 120.000 = 259.200.000

21 June, Saturday		Page 1 ➔ 7 x 100 mm2 = 399.000.000
23 June, Monday		Page 1 ➔ 7 x 100 mm2 = 399.000.000
25 June, Wednesday		Page 16 ➔ 4 column x 540 mm2 x 120.000 = 259.200.000
28 June, Saturday	Page 5 ➔ 4 column x 540 mm2 x 215.000 = 464.000.000	Page 1 ➔ 7 x 100 mm2 = 399.000.000
2 July, Wednesday		Page 1 ➔ 7 x 100 mm2 = 399.000.000
3 July, Thursday		Page 1 ➔ 7 x 100 mm2 = 399.000.000 Page 4 ➔ 4 column x 540 mm2 x 120.000 = 259.200.000
4 July, Friday		Page 1, Friday ➔ 7 x 100 mm2 = 399.000.000 Page 10, Friday, full page➔ 7 column x 540 mm2 x Rp. 146.500 = Rp. 553.770.000,-
5 July, Saturday		Page 1 ➔ 7 x 100 mm2 =

		399.000.000 Page 10, full page➔ 7 column x 540 mm2 x Rp. 215.000 = Rp. 821.700.000
Total in rupiahs	1.017.770.000 IDR	6.253.470.000 IDR

The calculation above is a simulation which is done based on the *Kompas* ***Media Kit*** released in 2014. It aims to give a comparison of the relative amount of advertising spending between the two candidates. So the price above is not the actual price as there might be a special discount price for one or both candidates.

- Price for a banner on page 1 with size 7 x 100 mm2 as stated in the ***Media Kit*** is = 399.000.000
- Price for regular advertising outside page 1, and not in Saturday/Sunday, is 120.000/mm2
- Price for regular advertising outside page 1 at Saturday/Sunday is 215.000/mm2

Samenvatting

Dit boek is een biografie van het dagblad *Kompas,* de grootste en oudste nationale krant van Indonesië. Door middel van een studie naar Kompas's journalistieke waarden en praktijken, onderzoek ik wat er gebeurt met de media wanneer een politiek regime verandert van een autoritair bewind naar een democratie. De drie vragen die hierbij centraal staan, zijn de volgende: hoe ontwikkelden de journalistieke waarden en praktijken zich gedurende het autoritaire bewind? In welke mate veranderden deze journalistieke waarden en praktijken zich na de val van dit autoritaire bewind of bleven zij grotendeels onveranderd? Ten slotte, wat waren de drijvende krachten, zowel binnen als buiten de krant, die de veranderingen en continuïteiten van de journalistieke waarden en praktijken beïnvloedden na de verandering van het regime?

Om deze vragen te beantwoorden, gebruikt deze studie historisch materiaal, interviews, etnografieën van de redactie en inhoudsanalyse om de evolutie van *Kompas* tijdens zijn vijftigjarig bestaan te onderzoeken. Op basis van dit materiaal beargumenteert dit boek dat *Kompas* een kenmerkende stijl ontwikkelde gedurende de Nieuwe Orde. Deze journalistieke stijl was beleefd, indirect en voorzichtig. Merkwaardig genoeg veranderde deze stijl weinig nadat Indonesië veranderde naar een democratie. Tijdens de autoritaire periode werd deze stijl gevormd door een combinatie van persoonlijke en culturele factoren. Het meest belangrijke hiervoor was de doordringende invloed van de oprichter van de krant, Jakob Oetama, een katholieke Javaan. De krant steunde het autoritaire regime over het algemeen uit politieke noodzakelijkheid om conflicten te voorkomen met de machthebbers. Hierdoor was de krant in staat om de economische belangen als een mediabedrijf te behartigen. De zakelijke activiteiten werden intensiever en het geld vloeide binnen dankzij de financiële

steun van de staat. Het vasthouden aan deze voorzichtige journalistieke stijl gedurende het democratische tijdperk was gedeeltelijk het resultaat van Jakobs aanhoudende leiderschap, geholpen door de stuwkracht van een gevestigde en gerespecteerde redactie.

Daarnaast bleef de hechte band die de krant had opgebouwd met de politieke elite van Indonesië bestaan, ondanks de wijziging van het regime. Deze band leverde de krant veel op. Kompas was daarom terughoudend om deze verworvenheid in gevaar te brengen door een kritischer geluid te laten horen en als journalistieke waakhond op te treden. De was en is erg afhankelijk van de elite. De connecties met deze elite bracht een stroom aan informatie op gang die door de krant werd gebruikt. Tevens werd onder de democratie de onderdrukking van het autoritaire regime ingeruild voor een nieuwe dreiging die de vorm aannam van verschillende activistische groepen. De krant moest in het bijzonder oppassen om de rechtse islamitische groeperingen niet te beledigen, waardoor de krant in het ergste geval afhankelijk zou worden van bescherming door de staat. Dankzij de hechte relatie met de machthebbers kon *Kompas* zijn symbolische rol als de meest invloedrijke krant in Indonesië waarborgen, die zijn trouwste lezers had gevonden in de hogere maatschappelijke kringen en de elite. Nog belangrijker waren de financiële middelen die voortkwamen uit advertentieopbrengsten van het regime zelf of van particuliere bedrijven die nauwe banden hadden met het regime. Deze bevindingen worden hieronder kort samengevat.

Na een inleidend hoofdstuk, bespreekt het eerste deel, getiteld *the Kompas way,* de idealen en de waarden van *Kompas*-journalisten besproken en waarom zij deze idealen omarmen en blijven aanhangen. Dit deel bestaat uit twee hoofdstukken, hoofdstuk twee en hoofdstuk drie. Het tweede hoofdstuk verklaart de sociaalhistorische achtergrond die van belang is om de oorsprong van de krant te contextualiseren. Dit hoofdstuk bespreekt hoe angst een belangrijk onderdeel vormde in de geschiedenis van de krant. Aan de ene kant was *Kompas* opgericht tijdens een autoritair regime en leefde het onder een

continue dreiging om verboden te worden. Daardoor is er een zekere angst bij de krant om verboden te worden door de machthebbers. Aan de andere kant is er de angst om aangevallen te worden door militante moslimgroeperingen, vanwege het feit dat de krant is opgericht door een Chinees-katholieke minderheid. In de loop van de geschiedenis heeft *Kompas* zowel met de ervaring moeten leren omgaan om verboden te kunnen worden door het autoritaire regime als met aanvallen door radicale islamitische groeperingen. Beide ervaringen leidden tot historische trauma's bij de journalisten.

Hoofdstuk drie beschrijft het profiel van de journalisten die bij *Kompas* werkzaam zijn. Dit hoofdstuk bespreekt de wijze waarop Kompas'e journalistieke waarden zijn beinvloed door Jakob Oetama, de stichter, eigenaar en de directeur van de krant. Jakobs overweldigende invloed op *Kompas* is niet alleen het resultaat van het vervullen van deze functies, maar tevens omdat hij succesvol was om *Kompas* te laten overleven tijdens de wisselingen van regimes. Bovendien slaagde hij erin om van *Kompas* een van de meest toonaangevende en grootste kranten te maken van Indonesië. Jakobs journalistieke stijl is gekenmerkt door een sterk gevoel voor indirecte, voorzichtige en beleefde verslaggeving. Hierdoor is de krant blijven voorbestaan en is deze niet ten onder gegaan door interventiesvan machthebbers. Het is noemenswaardig dat deze journalistieke stijl sterk beïnvloed is door de achtergrond van Jakob, die geboren en getogen is als een lid van Javaanse adel. Deze stijl is onderdeel geworden van de journalisten van *Kompas* van verschillende generaties. Zowel bij het schrijven van het dagelijkse nieuws als bij het dagelijkse sociale contact op de redactie is deze kenmerkende stijl aanwezig.

Het tweede gedeelte, *ideals and pragmatism in practice*, beschrijft hoe de idealen en de waarden van deze krant in de praktijk worden gebracht door de journalisten. Dit gedeelte bestaat uit drie hoofdstukken. Hoofdstuk vier bespreekt de praktijk van zelfcensuur binnen de krant en legt uit hoe *rasa*, een belangrijk begrip in de Javaanse cultuur, aan de basis ligt van deze gewoonte.

Verder zal ik in dit hoofdstuk demonsteren dat, hoewel *rasa* een cultureel concept is, de implementatie ervan voortgekomen is uit de noodzaak om te overleven in de context van een autoritair het regime. Zelfcensuur op basis van *rasa* was ook effectief voor journalisten om zich te behoeden voor de woede van islamitische groeperingen in Indonesië, die op elk moment kon opwellen. Dit zou kunnen gebeuren omdat de krant over deze groeperingen schreef, maar ook vanwege het feit dat de krant een katholieke basis heeft. Daardoor weerspiegelt dit zelfcensuur in zekere mate de verborgen politieke en economische belangen van *Kompas-journalisten* die onderdeel vormen van een minderheidsgroep in Indonesië.

In verband hiermee demonstreer ik in hoofdstuk vijf hoe de Javaanse waarden tevens van belang zijn voor de krant om op te treden als waakhond. Door middel van het presenteren van de resultaten van een inhoudsanalyse over corruptie voor een periode van 50 jaar laat ik zien dat de verhalen over corruptie vertrouwen op officiële bronnen en berusten op een juridische insteek. Dit betekent dat de krant niet het initiatief neemt om misstanden van de autoriteiten zelf aan te kaarten. De krantschrijft bijna alleen over gevallen van corruptie die al zijn behandeld door de rechtbank. De krant is in dit geval slechts een spreekbuis van rechtbank, maar de krant streeft ernaar om op deze manier de machthebbers rekenschap af te laten leggen en tegelijkertijd de directe confrontatie met hen te vermijden. In dit hoofdstuk bestempel ik deze manier van *Kompas* om als waakhond op te treden als de 'beleefde waakhond' om te onderstrepen dat *Kompas* niet op dezelfde functioneert als waakhond van de democratie of als toezichthouder op de machthebbers volgens westerse opvattingen.

De noodzaak om een goede relatie te hebben met de autoriteiten is ook zichtbaar in de houding van de krant gedurende de presidentsverkiezingen in 2014. Dit is het onderwerp van hoofdstuk zes. Te midden van een hevige politieke strijd tussen twee kandidaten die om het presidentschap streden, was er tevens een sterke politieke polarisatie zichtbaar binnen de Indonesische

maatschappij. Tijdens de geladen en geëmotioneerde campagnes door aanhangers van beide kandidaten was er een spanning zichtbaar die niet alleen politieke partijen omvatte, maar tevens de maatschappij in zijn greep hield.

Deze spanning was weerspiegeld in de Indonesische media, die verdeeld was in twee kampen. Aan de ene kant waren er de aanhangers van Prabowo en aan de andere kant de groep die Jokowi steunde. *Kompas*, besloot echter om neutraal te blijven in deze politieke strijd en koos geen partij voor een van de kandidaten. Zoals ik laat zien in mijn tweede inhoudsanalyse was de keus om neutraal te blijven succesvol gebleken doordat de krant aan beide kandidaten evenveel ruimte besteedde. Echter, *Kompas* was in de praktijk meer geneigd om Jokowi te steunen in plaats van Prabowo. Deze paradoxale mix van neutraliteit en partijdigheid is een reflectie van de botsing tussen de idealen om de democratie te steunen en het pragmatisme om een goede relatie te houden met de kandidaat die de verkiezingen zou winnen.

In het laatste gedeelte van dit boek laat ik zien dat, ondanks *Kompas* behoort tot een minderheidsgroep in Indonesië, deze krant veel invloed heeft gehad op de autoriteiten gedurende verschillende politieke regimes. In hoofdstuk zeven laat ik drie case studies van drie verschillende politieke regimes zien waar *Kompas* erin slaagde om de machthebbers te beïnvloeden op belangrijke punten. Hoewel er een compromis is tussen het idealisme en het pragmatisme in de journalistieke praktijk van de krant zoals hierboven is besproken, slaagde *Kompas* erin om toegewijd de publieke belangen te dienen en democratie te steunen.

Ten slotte brengt hoofdstuk acht de belangrijkste bevindingen van dit onderzoek samen door een antwoord te geven op de onderzoeksvragen die in de introductie werden gesteld. Daarnaast doe ik ook een aantal suggesties, niet alleen over de de relatie tussen de media en de autoriteiten in Indonesië, maar ook over de relatie tussen de media en de machthebbers in post-autoritaire landen in het algemeen. Ik plaats mijn bevindingen daarom in de context van

het hedendaagse onderzoek naar media en de politiek door de studie van *Kompas* te vergelijken met soortgelijke gevallen in andere landen. Ik bespreek ook de beperkingen van dit onderzoek en doe een voorstel geven voor een mogelijk nieuw toekomstig onderzoeksproject.

Biography

Wijayanto was born in Demak, on September 28, 1983. He earned his bachelor's degree from the Department of Politics and Government, Diponegoro University, in 2005. His master's degree was earned from the Graduate School of Political Science, Diponegoro University in 2011. It included a year's sandwich program at the Graduate School of Political Science, University of Wyoming in 2007-2008. Since 2006 he has worked as a lecturer in Media and Democracy at the Department of Politics and Government, Diponegoro University. Since 2012 he has been a PhD researcher at the Leiden Institute for Area Studies, Leiden University. For the last twelve years, Wijayanto has been engaged with issues related to journalism, the media, corruption, social movements and democracy in Indonesia. He has spoken at many academic conventions, including international conferences in Wageningen (2013), The Hague (2015), Singapore (2015), Kyoto (2016), London (2016) and Jakarta (2017). He is the author of the article "Fearing the Majority: Catholic Media in Muslim Indonesia" published by the journal *Media Asia* in 2017.