

A Forced Continuity? Tracing Indonesian Strategic Culture in Yudhoyono's Foreign Policy (2004-2014)

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Abstract

This article explores the discourse and practices of Indonesian foreign policy under President Yudhoyono (2004-2014) by using the lens of strategic culture. Based on Ole Waever's idea of discursive structure, and by combining these with Neumann and Heikka's idea on strategic culture as the interplay between discourse and practices, this article seeks to comprehend the effort to reconstruct Indonesia identity that was articulated during Yudhoyono regime. Therefore, the conduct of foreign policy during Yudhoyono, especially the doctrine of navigating the turbulent ocean, was used as a tool to further examine the actual discourse

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and practice of Indonesian strategic culture at the time. Using the Hansenian methods of poststructuralist discourse analysis, we gathered the speeches made by Yudhoyono and his officials during the timeline of the research. We then charted the emerging patterns of Yudhoyono's policies, compared the actual policies with the discursive rhetoric and narratives from the official sources, before finally assessed the appropriateness of the discursive patterns by looking at the initial and historical ideas (and practices) of Indonesian strategic culture. Based on our findings, we argue that the initial discursive structures of Indonesian strategic culture, formulated during the history of the nation (as argued by Sulaiman in 2016), limited the choices for foreign policies during Yudhoyono's regime. This limitation forced Yudhoyono to cling into more inward-looking foreign policy rather than his initial aim for outward-looking options.

Keywords: Strategic culture, Indonesia, Yudhoyono's foreign policy, identity construction, the discursive structure of identity

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Introduction

During the reign of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004-2014), Indonesia has been trying to redefine its international identity that has long been undermined by the domestic transition, economic problems, and ethnic conflict during the early Reformation era (1998-2004). In his first National Address in front of the parliament on 15 August 2005, Yudhoyono outlined his view on Indonesia foreign policy. He believed that Indonesia's foreign policy must be centred around diplomacy and multilateralism that would not only fulfil vital national interest such as national unity and stability but also cover a broader ambition through global and regional peace advancement.¹ Yudhoyono also stated his goals to make Indonesia as a great modern state standing on three pillars – a strong and just economy, a stable and modern democracy, and a thriving civilisation.² Scholars have agreed that Indonesia under Yudhoyono's presidency has developed a “more activist”, “globalist” approach to foreign policy which focused on the projection of Indonesia's democratic-Islamic identity and the promotion of its prominent role in international institutions.³

¹ Susilo B. Yudhoyono, “Pidato Kenegaraan Presiden Republik Indonesia” [Republic of Indonesia's Annual Presidential State Address], Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, accessed October 21, 2019, https://kepuustakaan-presiden.perpusnas.go.id/speech/?box=detail&id=55&from_box=list_1XX_245&hlm=1&search_7XX=Susilo%20Bambang%20Yudhoyono&presiden_id=6&presiden=sby.

² Susilo B. Yudhoyono, “Indonesia In 2045: A centennial journey of progress,” *Strategic Review* 1, no. 1 (August 2011), 47.

³ Vibhanshu Shekhar, *Indonesia's Foreign Policy and Grand Strategy in the 21st*

However, despite the continuous scholarly assessment that Yudhoyono's foreign policy was more activist and globalist than the previous period, there was an ongoing narrative that Indonesia's foreign policy has always been "punching below its weight."⁴ It has been argued that even though Indonesia has been assertive under Sukarno (1945-1965) or during the later years of Suharto (1991-1998), Yudhoyono's globalist vision and rhetoric have not yet been translated into creating Indonesia as a global power during his tenure.⁵ Most scholars argued that this discrepancy between Yudhoyono's vision and his actual policies were caused by domestic challenges: either due to domestic weaknesses or the lack of resources.⁶

Century: Rise of an Indo-Pacific Power (London : Routledge, 2018); Evi Fitriani, "Yudhoyono's foreign policy: is Indonesia a rising power?" in *The Yudhoyono Presidency: Indonesia's Decade of Stability and Stagnation*, eds. Edward Aspinall, Marcus Mietzner, and Dirk Tomsa (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2015), 74; Avery Poole, "The Foreign Policy Nexus: National Interests, Political Values and Identity," in *Indonesia's Ascent: Power, Leadership, and the Regional Order*, eds. Christopher B. Roberts, Ahmad D. Habir, and Leonard C. Sebastian (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 156.

⁴ Rizal Sukma, "A Post-ASEAN Foreign Policy for a Post-G8 World," *The Jakarta Post*, October 5, 2009; Jusuf Wanandi, "Some Thoughts on Asia's Future Game-Changers," *The Jakarta Post*, September 18, 2014.

⁵ Fitriani, "Yudhoyono's foreign policy", 88; Mohamad Rosyidin, "Foreign policy in changing global politics: Indonesia's foreign policy and the quest for major power status in the Asian Century," *South East Asia Research* 25, no. 2 (2017): 176.

⁶ Rizal Sukma, "Domestic politics and international posture: Constraints and possibilities," in *Indonesia Rising: The Repositioning of Asia's Third Giant*, ed. Anthony Reid (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2012), 90; Dave McRae, "More talk than walk: Indonesia as a foreign policy actor," Lowy Institute for International Policy, 2014, 7.

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This article contributes to this discussion about the discrepancy between rhetorical vision and the actual foreign policy practices by looking at a different aspect. Instead of focusing on the domestic challenges and limited resources, we argue that Yudhoyono's limited globalist approach was conditioned by the historical patterns of Indonesian strategic culture. Yudhoyono's outward-looking and ambitious desire to project Indonesia's international status faced the identity structure that Indonesian strategic culture emphasises defensive and inward-looking foreign policy orientation.⁷

By starting from the notion that Indonesian national identity informs its foreign policy choices, we trace the historical formation of Indonesian strategic culture. Using poststructuralist understanding about discursive structure of identity and how it limits the possible choices of foreign policy, we use the narrative of Indonesian strategic culture (discussed as its tendency to reject any military alliance with other countries; to focus on the defensive aspects of military and foreign policy; and to restrict interference by foreign countries)⁸ to argue that even though Yudhoyono's vision, on the one hand, was globalist, he had to moderate his view

⁷ Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "Indonesia's Strategic Culture: Ketahanan Nasional, Wawasan Nusantara dan Hankamrata," *Australia-Asia Papers*, no. 75 (1996); Yohanes Sulaiman, "Indonesia's Strategic Culture: The Legacy of Independence," in *Strategic Asia 2016-2017: Understanding Strategic Cultures in the Asia Pacific*, eds. Ashley Tellis et al. (Washington D.C.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2016).

⁸ Sulaiman, *Indonesia's Strategic Culture*, 186.

to follow the historical pattern of Indonesia's strategic culture. Thus, his globalist rhetoric sometimes was eschewed in favour of a more inward-looking strategic behaviour.

In summary, the contribution of this article lies in the ability to deepen the understanding of the relations between identity and foreign policy. On a theoretical level, this article enhances the position of poststructuralist approach in foreign policy analysis by combining the poststructuralist discourse analysis and the concept of strategic culture. In doing so, we propose a modified approach in analysing foreign policy. On the empirical aspect, this article contributes to a new body of scholarships in Indonesian studies, especially related to foreign policy and strategic culture. Policy-wise, this research also contributes to a better understanding of Indonesian history, its strategic tradition, and therefore enriches the decision-makers options. By reading the findings of this research, policymakers will have a better comprehension of how to formulate Indonesian military and foreign policy, while adhering to the limitations and the traditions put by Indonesian strategic culture.

This article is organised as follows. The first section discusses the concept of strategic culture, its scholarly evolution, the parallel with theoretical discussion in International Relations (IR), and how we use the concept in this research. The second section traces the historical development of Indonesian foreign policy and how the discourse of strategic culture was formulated and constructed

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during the preceding years before Yudhoyono's tenure. The third section examines Yudhoyono's vision of Indonesia's foreign policy, how it contradicts the discursive structure of strategic culture, and how the actual practices of foreign policy under Yudhoyono was a forced continuity rather than a drastic change from the previous presidents.

Strategic Culture as a Discursive Structure of National Identity

Strategic culture, as a concept, has been established in 1977 when Jack Snyder initially argued that the Soviet Union acted differently from the United States (US) because they had a distinctive pattern of strategy due to their different organisational, historical, and political context⁹. Snyder proposed the notion against any single and universal explanation; instead, he proposed the need to understand the states' own logic of rationality. He defined strategic culture as "the sum total of ideas, conditioned emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behaviour that members of a national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other."¹⁰

Since Snyder coined the term in 1977, the concept of strategic culture has evolved into a three-generation of scholarly debates, which were discussed in detail by Alastair Johnston and was

⁹ Jack L. Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, September 1977), v.

¹⁰ Snyder, "The Soviet Strategic Culture," 8.

debated between Johnston and Colin Gray.¹¹ In this paper, instead of delving deeper into the differences between those generations, we discussed the main points of the debate between Johnston and Gray before offering our understanding of strategic culture and its relationship with national identity and foreign policy.

The main point of the intergenerational debate between strategic culture scholars was the conceptual distinction between culture and behaviour. In other words, it is a debate between culturalist such as Gray and positivist such as Johnston. First-generation scholars like Gray mainly argued that culture encompasses everything and, using Gray's words, "we are encultured."¹² Meanwhile, Johnston criticised this cultural determinist tendency and stressed the need to differentiate between culture as independent/intervening variable and behaviour as the dependent variable.¹³

It is interesting to note that first-generation scholars argued that it is impossible to distinguish culture (as ideas) from behaviour. Gray offered an analogy that trying to separate the two was similar to a doctor trying to separate a human's mind and body.¹⁴ Snyder

¹¹ Alastair I. Johnston, "Thinking about Strategic Culture," *International Security* 19, no. 4 (Spring 1995): 36-43; Colin S. Gray, "Strategic culture as context: the first generation of theory strikes back," *Review of International Studies* 25, no. 1 (1999): 49-69.

¹² Colin S. Gray, "Out of the Wilderness: Prime Time for Strategic Culture," *Comparative Strategy* 26, no. 1 (2007): 5.

¹³ Johnston, "Thinking," 41.

¹⁴ Gray, "Strategic culture as context," 53.

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argued that his use of the term “culture” should be understood in terms of the continuity and persistence of a distinctive approach to strategy, underlining the notion of conflation between ideas and behaviour.¹⁵ Another principle argument of the first generation is the need to describe and understand the cultural contexts of strategic behaviour. It is important because understanding the context of the strategic culture would make sure that policymakers and scholars can avoid the trap of ethnocentrism and universal logic of rationality.¹⁶

On the other hand, the third-generation authors such as Johnston and Elizabeth Kier – who emerged during the 1990s – criticised this conflation, argued that this understanding is tautological, tried to overcome the pitfalls of the definitional problem by narrowing the conceptualisation of strategic culture as an independent variable and some strategic decisions as dependent variables.¹⁷ They also emphasised the importance of theory-testing in opposition to the first-generation's tendency to describe the contexts and to understand the cultural situation.

These differences between generations of strategic culture

¹⁵ Jack L Snyder, “The Concept of Strategic Culture: Caveat Emptor,” in *Strategic Power: USA USSR*, ed. Carl G. Jacobsen (London: Macmillan Press, 1990), 4.

¹⁶ Ken Booth, *Strategy and ethnocentrism* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1979); Ken Booth, “The Concept of Strategic Culture Affirmed,” in *Strategic Power: USA/USSR*, ed. Carl G. Jacobsen (London: Macmillan Press, 1990), 125; Snyder. “The Concept,” 3.

¹⁷ Johnston, “Thinking,” 41.

scholars mirrored the broader discussion in International Relations (IR) on the issue of identity and foreign policy. Constructivist and poststructuralist scholars have argued that culture is essential, and that understanding culture and ideas is necessary to further our understanding of the state's foreign policy.¹⁸ However, IR scholars disagreed on a similar notion with the strategic culture scholars: whether identity (culture) and foreign policy (behaviour) are distinct variables.

On the one hand, similar to the third generation position, some conventional constructivists argued that culture is important and that it is possible to distinguish culture as separate variables from the policies. Conventional constructivists might differ in many aspects, but they do agree on one thing: that ideational factor is more important than material factor and that identity is the sources of national interests or foreign policies.¹⁹ As Hopf has argued, once the national identity discourses have been uncovered, constructivist would expect that the discourse “would persist over

¹⁸ John S. Duffield et al., “Isms and Schisms: Culturalism versus Realism in Security Studies,” *International Security* 24, no. 1 (1999): 156-180.

¹⁹ Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 391-425; Peter J. Katzenstein, “Introduction: Alternative Perspectives on National Security,” in *the Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); Martha Finnemore, *National Interests in International Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996); Ted Hopf, *Social construction of international politics: Identities and foreign policies, Moscow, 1955 & 1999* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002).

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time and explain a broad range of outcomes.”²⁰

On the other hand, in a similar argument to the first generation, poststructuralist scholars understood that foreign policy “constantly reproduces national identity.”²¹ The poststructuralist alternative is to consider identity and foreign policy as mutually constitutive. National identity is not something that was given before the construction of the foreign policy; both concepts need to be understood as discourses. According to Hansen, “identity is simultaneously a product of and the justification for foreign policy.”²² In that sense, it will be impossible to analyse identity and foreign policy as a distinct and separate concept. It mirrors what Gray has argued about strategic culture: it is the modes of thought and action, which is both ideas and behaviour at the same time; it is both input and output.²³

In this article, we follow the first generation and the poststructuralist argument about the impossibility of separating culture and strategic behaviour/policies. Instead of positioning strategic culture and foreign policy practices as a separate concept,

²⁰ Ted Hopf, “Constructivism, Identity, and IR Theory”, in *Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database*, eds. Ted Hopf and Bentley Allan (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2016), 11.

²¹ Jean-Frédéric Morin and Jonathan Paquin, *Foreign Policy Analysis: A Toolbox* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 267.

²² Lene Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War*, (New York: Routledge, 2006), 26.

²³ Colin S. Gray, “National style in strategy: The American example,” *International Security* 6, no. 2 (1981): 22; Gray, “Out Of the Wilderness,” 6.

we argue that it is more helpful to use the poststructuralist notion of discursive structure, as proposed by Ole Waever.²⁴ Waever postulated that policy “must hold a definite relationship to discursive structure because it is always necessary for the policymakers...to argue where to takes us.”²⁵ The main theoretical argument is that structure put a sufficient pressure so that the policies stay within a specific, limited margin.²⁶ In other words, the discursive structure put some limitations on what the policies could do. On the other hand, these structures are socially constructed and reconstructed through the social process, which refers to Onuf’s argument that “rules create agents, agents create rules.”²⁷ Bringing this principle into the context of foreign policy, it resembles what Campbell had said, that the structure (consist of the process of “othering”) informed the possible policy choices. The chosen policies (limited by the structures) then reproduce the identity discourse.²⁸

Using Waever’s and Campbell’s argument about how the discursive structure put a limitation to the possible policy choices,

²⁴Ole Waever, “Identity, Communities and Foreign Policy: Discourse Analysis as Foreign Policy Theory,” in *European Integration and National Identity: The Challenge of the Nordic states*, eds. Lene Hansen and Ole Waever (London: Routledge, 2002).

²⁵ Waever, *Identity*, 27.

²⁶ Waever, *Identity*, 28.

²⁷Nicholas G. Onuf, “Constructivism: A User’s Manual,” in *International Relations in a Constructed World*, eds. Vendulka Kubáľková, Nicholas G. Onuf, and Paul Kowert (Armonk, London: M.E. Sharpe, 1998), 64.

²⁸ David Campbell, “Global Inscription: How Foreign Policy Constitutes the United States,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 15, no. 3 (1990): 270.

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we try to elaborate the possibility that Yudhoyono's ideas and globalist vision and his subsequent efforts to modify foreign policy (and its subsequent basis of strategic culture) was not followed by some significant changes. Instead, following Waever's argument, the existing strategic discourses put some restraints to the possibility of closer military alliances, the possibility of strengthening Indo-US relationship, and the possibility of an offensive Indonesian military. These situations reflected the presence of a stable, yet prohibitive, discursive structure of Indonesia identity.

In addition to that, we follow what we would argue as the new approach in understanding the strategic culture, as proposed by Iver Neumann and Henrikki Heikka. Their argument is closer to the first-generation of strategic culture scholars and the poststructuralist understanding of identity/foreign policy nexus. They argued that we could not interpret the meaning of behaviour without the context of culture. In doing so, we borrow their understanding of culture as an interplay between discourse and practice. To be more precise, *strategic* culture is understood as an interplay between the discourse of grand strategy (which could relate to defence/non-defence aspects) and the actual practices and actions of states.²⁹

²⁹ Iver B. Neumann and Henrikki Heikka, "Grand Strategy, Strategic Culture, Practice: The Social Roots of Nordic Defence," *Cooperation and Conflict* 40, no. 1 (March 2005): 11.

Using Waever's and Campbell's argument about how the discursive structure put a limitation to the possible policy choices, we try to elaborate the possibility that Yudhoyono's ideas and globalist vision and his subsequent efforts to modify foreign policy (and its subsequent basis of strategic culture) was not followed by some significant changes. Instead, following Waever's argument, the existing strategic discourses put some restraints to the possibility of closer military alliances, the possibility of strengthening Indo-US relationship, and the possibility of an offensive Indonesian military. These situations reflected the presence of a stable, yet prohibitive, discursive structure of Indonesia identity.

Methodologically, this article follows Hopf in inductively uncovering the dominant discourses.³⁰ Where this research diverges from Hopf is that after uncovering the dominant discourses, this research examines the mechanism of the causal processes. In that sense, this research investigates what kind of discourse(s) that exist, and then tries to relate it to the Indonesian strategic policy towards its neighbouring countries (regarding the absence of military pacts while engaging intensively in the regional organisation), towards the United States (related to the idea of non-interference), and towards the military build-up (related to the defensive tendency of Indonesian military policy).

However, on the contrary to Hopf's work which excludes the

³⁰ Hopf, *Constructivism*, 11.

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policy documents until the latter stages, this research focuses more on the foreign policy documents.³¹ Thereby, concerning the applicable methods, this research uses the methods offered by Hansen's work on discourse analysis. Hansen proposed 3 (three) intertextual research models based on the intertextuality of official discourse, wider debate, cultural representations, and the marginal discourses.³² In order to analyse the Indonesian discourse on strategic culture, this research tries to elaborate on the official discourse by looking at the official documents and by analysing the official speeches. In this article, we focus on Yudhoyono's speeches and statements and also his ministers/officials throughout his tenure. This article uses the timeline from 2004-2014. It allows this article to explore the position of the Indonesian officials during Yudhoyono's era in viewing the absence of military pact in the regional neighbourhood of Southeast Asia (the first point regarding strategic culture), the importance of the US's presence in Southeast Asia (the second point), and the priority of defence (the third point).

Tracing the History of Indonesian Foreign Policies and the Formation of Initial Discursive Structure

In this section, we trace the historical formation of Indonesian strategic culture by investigating the existence of the discourse during the pre-Yudhoyono Indonesian foreign policy. Building

³¹ Hopf, *Social Construction*, 15.

³² Hansen, *Security as Practice*, 57.

from the previous research by Sulaiman, we seek to trace the narratives regarding 1) the unwillingness to join a defence or alliance pact, 2) a defensive orientation, and 3) concerns about foreign intervention.³³ From the mapping process, we argue that there is a consistent pattern of strategic culture in Indonesian foreign policy. Following Snyder's argument on how strategic patterns and habits became a culture, we argue that Indonesia foreign policies in the preceding years have established the discursive structure of strategic culture, which would inform Yudhoyono's foreign policy practices in the later years. The data used in this section are policies related to security issues and related to Indonesia's global roles starting from Sukarno's era to Megawati's.

Under Sukarno, Indonesia foreign policy was divided into at least two significant timelines: the early independence when Indonesia sought support to its newly-gained independence (1945-1955); and the era of guided democracy when Sukarno became more assertive (1956-1965). In the first part, Indonesia foreign policy mostly focuses on seeking recognition from the international community. Despite several attempts to gain international recognition, Indonesia did not necessarily join in any defence block or alliance that existed at the time, even though the world was slowly polarised toward the Cold War. This reluctance to join an alliance was because Indonesia has deep-rooted trauma

³³ Sulaiman, *Indonesia's Strategic Culture*, 186.

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related to subjugation and occupation during the 350 years of the colonial experience. Mohammad Hatta (then the Vice President of Indonesia) even stated that the focus of Indonesia's foreign policy is to encourage unity and to counter the existing subversive acts within the country. This action deemed necessary because they were a threat to the newly united nation.³⁴

Indonesia's foreign policy doctrine at the time was called "free and active" policy. This free and active foreign policy aims to resolve the main domestic issues in three issues: safeguarding Indonesia's sovereignty and security, maintaining internal consolidation and safeguarding and fulfilling economic interests. The fulfilment of these objectives was carried out through various actions, including the sending of senior Indonesian diplomats (such as Sutan Sjahrir, Agus Salim, and even Mohammad Hatta himself) to negotiate the Indonesian independence from the Netherlands and seeking support for the de facto recognition of Indonesia to several countries.³⁵ However, the need for recognition did not make Indonesia choose to side with one of the two great powers that existed at the time: neither to the US-led Western Bloc or the

³⁴ Mohammad Hatta, "Mendayung Antara Dua Karang: Keterangan Pemerintah tentang Politiknya kepada Badan Pekerja K.N.P 2, 2 September 1948" [Paddling Between Two Reefs: Indonesia Government Statement to Central Indonesia Committee September 2, 1948], in *Sejarah Asal Mula Rumusan Politik Luar Negeri Bebas Aktif* [The Origin of Free and Active Foreign Policy], (1948): 12-65; Mohammad Hatta, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 31, no. 3 (April 1953): 441-452.

³⁵ Michael Leifer, *Indonesia's Foreign Policy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1983).

USSR-led Eastern Bloc. Hatta firmly stressed that Indonesia would actively and independently avoid foreign intervention from either side.³⁶ The policy in Sukarno's first era laid the foundation to one of the main principles of Indonesian strategic culture that focused on inward-looking policy with the context of solving post-independence problems such as de-facto recognition and economic sustainability. At the same time, foreign policy in this era has also developed to become the central doctrine in Indonesian foreign policy that is "free and active": free to choose sides according to its national interests; and participating actively at the international level. This doctrine is the result of the existing external strategic contexts and the complicated domestic constraints that happen at the time.

In the second era of Sukarno (called the guided democracy era), Indonesian foreign policy focused on the efforts to actively engage in the international order through the spirit of anti-neocolonialism and the formation of the Third Bloc in the world.³⁷ Sukarno still upheld the doctrine of free and active policy but, as in the first era, Sukarno had been adjusting his foreign policy to solve the domestic challenges. In this context, Sukarno encouraged the establishment of a sovereign Indonesia; thus, he focused his foreign policy to liberate the West Papua and

³⁶ Hatta, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy," 445.

³⁷ Herbert Feith, *Dynamic of Guided Democracy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963); Leifer, *Indonesia's Foreign Policy*.

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encourage confrontation with Malaysia.³⁸ This policy led to a general opinion that Indonesia was increasingly shifting from free and active doctrine into a more assertive foreign policy because Sukarno saw that the West Papua problem was related to the practice of colonialism. Similarly, the Malaysian confrontation was born from Sukarno's assumption of Malaysia as a puppet of new forms of colonialism. Unlike the first period when the spirit of anti-colonialism was used for economic development and the quest for *de facto* recognition, Sukarno became much more nationalist and tended to ignore the principles of free and active policy. This change is demonstrated through the making of NEFO (Newly Emerging Forces) and the Asian-African Conference, which, although placing Indonesia on the third axis, has gained negative sentiment from the Western countries.³⁹ In general, the foreign policy during the guided democracy era still incorporates strategic culture value, in the context of fear about foreign intervention. The liberation of West Papua and the maligned doctrine of confrontation with Malaysia can also be understood as a defensive defence orientation effort in the context of domestic consolidation and the realisation of national unity.

During Suharto's presidency, Indonesia has shifted the focus of foreign policy toward economic development. Suharto also reverted the later-years of Sukarno's foreign policy that was more

³⁸ Rizal Sukma, "The Evolution of Indonesia's Foreign Policy: An Indonesian View," *Asian Survey* 35, no. 3 (March 1995): 310.

³⁹ Leifer, *Indonesia's Foreign Policy*.

nationalistic and assertive in action. Suharto promoted his style of foreign policy based on the ideology and the constitution. This reversal of the nationalistic principle was done to encourage internal consolidation after the 1965 revolution and domestic chaos. This effort then was translated into national development policy.⁴⁰ This policy focuses on the efforts to improve Indonesia's economy based on the mandate of constitution and Pancasila. In the context of foreign policy, national development policies were the guidelines that put Indonesia closer with the Western and other developed countries due to the much-needed economic incentives.⁴¹ This close relationship does not mean Indonesia was part of the Western Bloc. It is only part of the Suharto's pragmatism that heavily influenced Indonesia foreign policy during his reign. Again, it shows the continuing patterns of inward-looking and domestic orientation of foreign policy.

A pragmatic and economic-oriented foreign policy has resulted in Indonesia's increasing international confidence in the later years of Suharto's era (after 1982). It is the second feature of Suharto's foreign policy, namely the increasing role of Indonesia in the international community. This role is shown in at least three occasions. The first was shown in 1985 when Indonesia held the

⁴⁰ Hong Lan Oei, "Implications of Indonesia's New Foreign Policy for Economic Development," *Indonesia*, no. 7 (April 1969), 38; Sukma, "Evolution," 309.

⁴¹ Justus M. van der Kroef, "Indonesian Foreign Policy Since Sukarno", *Il Politico* 35, no. 2 (1970): 341.

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30th anniversary of Asian-African Conference in Bandung.⁴² This event signified the intention of Indonesia to become increasingly active in the international arena. Second, Suharto showed confidence through the normalisation of relations with China in 1990.⁴³ The normalisation became important because Indonesia-China relations had worsened due to the 1965 alleged communist coup. This normalisation pushed Indonesia to build relationships with the former Eastern Blocs and ex-communist countries while at the same time remained an excellent ally of the West. The third and most important opportunity is the increasing role of Indonesia in the Southeast Asian region. Indonesia during Suharto's era played an active role in Southeast Asia: by becoming the founder of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967 and then became an influential country in the region. Not only ASEAN, but Suharto also exemplified Indonesian involvement in the broader region of Asia-Pacific through Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forums.⁴⁴ It is the culmination of Indonesia's return to international politics.

It may have seemed that in the context of Suharto's foreign policy, Indonesian strategic culture was profoundly changed and influenced by his pragmatism. However, Suharto's seemingly

⁴² Sukma, "Evolution," 310.

⁴³ Sukma, "Evolution," 312.

⁴⁴ Michael R.J. Vatikiotis, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy in the 1990s," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 14, no. 4 (1993): 365; Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "Indonesia's foreign policy after the Cold War," *Southeast Asian Affairs* (1994): 158.

outward-looking and active-independent foreign policy was based on economic growth and did not contradict the basis of Hatta's doctrine. The three values of Indonesian strategic culture, which are the reluctance of making military alliances, defensive orientation, and fears of intervention, were still reflected in Suharto's policies. Situations such as the absence of any military alliances in the Southeast Asian region even during the height of the Cold War as exemplified by the signing of the Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) declaration in 1971; the promotion of the non-intervention norms in the formation of ASEAN in 1967; and the reluctance to use military action and the justification of domestic stability and sovereignty when military forces were used in East Timor showed the enduring aspects of strategic culture.

The Sukarno and Suharto's years also showed similar trends: Indonesian presidents tended to follow the patterns of strategic culture strictly during their early years. After securing the domestic situation (either due to the early independence or economic and political crisis), both Sukarno and Suharto embarked on a more assertive and outward-looking foreign policy. These similarities (which was also happened during the later years Yudhoyono's era) might have prompted scholars to argue that domestic weaknesses and political situation have constrained the policy options. In this view, Indonesia's tendency to punch below its weight, even when it had the resources to do more, was caused by its domestic problems. However, by showing that even during the later years of both

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Sukarno and Suharto, Indonesian foreign policy inclined to underwhelm, we argue that it was the enduring narrative of strategic culture which put the break into the initial eagerness of assertive foreign policy.

The days of Habibie as Suharto's successor did not have an explicit doctrine of foreign policy as he only served for less than three months before being succeeded by Abdurrahman Wahid. The main feature of Habibie's foreign policy was the effort to reclaim international trust, mainly from the financial institution such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. This effort was vital to help Indonesia rebuild and stabilise after the financial crisis and 1998 reform.⁴⁵ Habibie's efforts to revive the international faith were accomplished through the reform of the human rights sector. This action received a good reception from the international community.⁴⁶ Despite the triumphant return of international attention, the failure to prevent East Timor's independence became a testament to Habibie's foreign policy failure. In the context of strategic culture, Habibie foreign policy is one of the most distorted because of various obstacles and challenges that must be solved internally in such a short term.

⁴⁵ Kai He, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy after Soeharto: International Pressure, Democratization, and Policy Change," *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 8, no. 1 (January 2008), 49; Dhurorudin Mashad, "Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia Era Reformasi" [Indonesia Reformation era Foreign Policy] in *Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia di Tengah Pusaran Politik Domestik* [Indonesia Foreign Policy and the Domestic Politics Vortex], ed. Ganewati Wuryandari (Jakarta: P2P LIPI dan Pustaka Pelajar, 2008).

⁴⁶ Mashad, *Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia*, 180.

These obstacles and challenges were mainly related to the 1998 reform and the collapse of Indonesia's economy. Habibie's foreign policy, therefore, does not necessarily reflect the strategic culture due to its *ad hoc* situation. Although, considering the heavy criticisms towards Habibie to the problem with East Timor suggested that the discursive structure of Indonesian strategic culture which also emphasises the importance of sovereignty and domestic orientation was still firm.

After Habibie, Indonesia was led by Abdurrahman Wahid. The foreign policy of Wahid's era tended to be close to Sukarno's nationalistic and active ideas. It is named by the then Foreign Minister Alwi Shihab as an ecumenical foreign policy.⁴⁷ This foreign policy considers that all countries in the world have equal importance for Indonesia in a way that the national interests of Indonesia can only be achieved when relations with all these countries are maintained.⁴⁸ Through this doctrine, Wahid had the most overseas visits in presidential history by visiting more than eighty countries in less than two years.⁴⁹ Those visits also included some controversial acts such as opening ties with Israel and a visit to Cuba after a trip to Washington DC. However, Wahid stated that

⁴⁷ Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "Megawati's search for an effective foreign policy," in *Governance in Indonesia: Challenges Facing the Megawati Presidency*, eds. Hadi Soesatro, Anthony L. Smith, and Han Mui Ling (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002), 78.

⁴⁸ Anthony L. Smith, "Indonesia's Foreign Policy under Abdurrahman Wahid: Radical or Status Quo State?," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 22, no. 3 (December 2000): 499.

⁴⁹ Mashad, *Politik Luar Negeri Indonesia*, 181.

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these visits were aimed at encouraging the normalisation of the Indonesian economy after the 1998 reform and the financial crisis.⁵⁰ In addition to the ecumenical doctrine, Wahid had a more significant concern regarding the issue of national integration. This concern then translated into policy by his enthusiasm to the formation of the West Pacific Forum, which consists of Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, PNG and Timor Leste.⁵¹ This move has been criticised by ASEAN members, which was mainly Singapore because it will threaten the existence of ASEAN. This step can be understood as one of the efforts to increase attention to the separatist movement in Maluku and Papua.

Wahid's ecumenical foreign policies closely reflected the recurring values of strategic culture due to its goals in safeguarding Indonesia from the economic crisis. Wahid also represented the inward-looking strategic culture through his attention to issues of disintegration by dealing with separatist movements such as the Free Aceh Movement, the Organisation of Independent Papua, and the South Moluccan Republic in his conduct of foreign policy. Avoiding the "Balkanisation" of Indonesia and maintaining domestic sovereignty were Wahid's justification for his strange and unorthodox, but very active foreign policy. One fundamental note: we argue, by looking at the continuous pattern of the seemingly-active foreign policy of Sukarno, Suharto, and Wahid, all of the policies were justified by referencing the domestic needs.

⁵⁰ Smith, "Abdurrahman Wahid," 500.

⁵¹ Smith, "Abdurrahman Wahid," 501.

It was, therefore, still consistent with the inward-looking and domestic-oriented strategic culture.

In Megawati's era, Indonesia's foreign policy was focused on the efforts to restore national stability and maintain Indonesia's role in the international world. One of the typical features of the Megawati era is the projection of Indonesia's image as a country that remains actively contributing to the world despite having its domestic problems. Megawati revived the concept of Suharto's era so-called "the concentric circle" by highlighting the importance of ASEAN as the priority of Indonesian foreign policy. ASEAN was considered necessary in maintaining the stability of security and economy in the region in order to solve the domestic problems faced by Megawati. Megawati also pushed Indonesia's relations with the Pacific countries as Wahid had done through the West Pacific Forum. The last priority in the new concentric circle is the East Asian countries.⁵² Relations with these countries were essential, and Megawati actively engaged with the East Asian countries due to the much-needed economic incentives.

In addition to using the concentric model, Megawati strongly encouraged bilateral relations with many countries such as Japan, China, European countries, and the US. One of the most remarkable ties under Megawati's foreign policy is the special relationship between Indonesia and the US in the context of post

⁵² Anwar, *Megawati's Search*, 83.

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9/11 world.⁵³ As the largest Muslim country, Indonesia played a significant role in George Bush's counter-terrorism efforts. This role is also in line with Indonesia's efforts to combat domestic terrorism. This relations with the US often became the source of criticism for Megawati's foreign policy which is considered American-centric. Megawati's reign also highlighted as being too liberal in the context of protecting domestic strategic assets. In her tenure, Megawati also sold many essential State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) to foreign countries with the justification of economic stability.

In the context of continuing patterns of strategic culture, Megawati's foreign policy mainly followed the inward-looking principle by encouraging the normalisation of economy and the stabilisation of domestic security. Criticisms towards her stance and relationship with the US were a sign that the discursive structure of strategic culture (which advocated the principle of non-interference and the absence of military pact/alliance) has limited Megawati's choice. She had to justify her choice of a closer relationship with the US (which seemed like a deviation from the anti-alliance/defence pact principle) to the need of combating domestic terrorism after the Bali Bombing in 2002. The importance of inward-looking and domestic-oriented policies was also exemplified by the economic justification of a more liberal policy such as the selling of the SOEs. Militarily, like Wahid,

⁵³ Anwar, *Megawati's Search*, 84 .

Megawati had to focus more on internal threats such as the condition in Aceh and Papua, which again highlighted the notion of defensive and inward-looking strategic behaviour.

From the above historical tracing, we conclude that Indonesia's foreign policy is mainly consistent with its strategic culture. The early years of Sukarno and Suharto were crucial in the construction of the discursive structure of Indonesian strategic culture: the anti-military alliance; the defensive focus; and the non-interference policies. The years of ecumenical policies during Wahid and the domestic-focused policies under Megawati showed the limitation of the possible choices of actions, such as Wahid's political overture with Israel and Megawati's closer relationship with the US, which were considered as a divergence from identity structure.

Yudhoyono's Policy and The Discursive Limitation of Strategic Culture

In this section, we investigate the discourse and practices of Yudhoyono's foreign policy by looking at speeches and statements by himself and his officials during his two terms. Building from the discursive structure of strategic culture from the previous section, we trace Yudhoyono's (and his chosen officials) narratives regarding the anti-military alliance, the defensive and inward-looking focus of the military, and the non-interference principles. Following Waever's argument on how the discursive

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structure of identity limits the possible choices of foreign policy, we argued that even though Yudhoyono has always promoted the globalist approach of his administration (especially in the early years of both his first and second term), the actual policies fell short of the initial expectations.

From the beginning, Yudhoyono has started with grand ambitions and the idea of an outward-looking Indonesian foreign policy. Even before he was elected, during his speech in Singapore on 26 May 2004, then-presidential candidate Yudhoyono mentioned his vision of an outward-looking Indonesia with a strong voice in the international community.⁵⁴ Yudhoyono reiterated this stance several times in his first term. During his opening speech of the Asia-Africa Summit in Jakarta, 22 April 2005, Yudhoyono reiterated that *“we should never be inward-looking. We should be non-exclusive and be willing to cooperate with all stakeholders.”*⁵⁵ Furthermore, during his visit to the US on 25 May 2005, while giving a keynote speech at the gala dinner organised by The US-Indo Society (USINDO) in Washington DC, he said that *“we are now an outward-looking country, eager to shape regional and international order and intent*

⁵⁴ Susilo B. Yudhoyono, *Indonesia 2004-2009: Vision for Change* (Jakarta: Brighten Press, 2004), 26.

⁵⁵ Susilo B. Yudhoyono, “Let Us Build A New Strategic Partnership between Asia and Africa”, in *Transforming Indonesia: Selected International Speeches with Essays by International Observers*, eds. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Dino Patti Djalal (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2005), 326.

on having our voice heard.”⁵⁶ All three statements, before and after his election, showed his persistent vision of an active and outward-looking Indonesia.

Nevertheless, those who would argue that those speeches showed the real global perspective of Yudhoyono must also consider that during the foreign policy breakfast commemorating the sixtieth-anniversary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 19 August 2005, he proposed a different view. Speaking in front of a gathering of the foreign minister, legislators, business people, the media, students, social and religious organizations and academics, Yudhoyono that Indonesia’s goal to be a leader in international relations, as Sukarno and other former presidents have shown, could only be achieved if “*we are doing well at home.*”⁵⁷ It showed that, following the principle of inward-looking and domestic orientation, Yudhoyono must appeal to the domestic audiences to justify his foreign policies. It seemed that Yudhoyono followed the idea that “foreign policy starts at home” or “foreign policy is simply the continuation of domestic politics by other means.”⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Susilo B. Yudhoyono, “Indonesia and America in a Changing World”, in *Transforming Indonesia: Selected International Speeches with Essays by International Observers*, eds. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Dino Patti Djalal (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2005), 419.

⁵⁷ Paige Johnson Tan, “Navigating a Turbulent Ocean: Indonesia’s Worldview and Foreign Policy”, *Asian Perspective* 31, no. 3 (2007): 180.

⁵⁸ Richard Haas, *Foreign Policy Begins at Home: The Case for Putting America’s House in Order* (New York: Basic Books, 2013); Valerie M. Hudson, *Foreign Policy Analysis: Classic and Contemporary Theory*, 2nd Ed (Plymouth: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 141.

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Nonetheless, even though it was clear that even at the beginning of his term Yudhoyono was constrained and limited by the underlying assumption that Indonesian presidents must focus on domestic issues, he maintained the rhetoric of an active and independent foreign policy. In this sense, Yudhoyono still endorsed Hatta's "free and active foreign policy" as his basic foreign policy principle. He asserted this stance in his first inaugural address on 20 October 2004. In his 2004 address, Yudhoyono mentioned that under his government, Indonesia would adhere to the principle of free and active foreign policy, while becoming the vocal voice advocating peace, prosperity, and justice in the international arena.⁵⁹ He further repeated his position when, on 19 May 2005, during a keynote speech at the event organised by the Indonesian Council on World Affairs (ICWA), he said that "*over the years, governments have come and go, Indonesia has had six presidents, and our political system has undergone major changes, but 'independent and active' remains the primary policy principle for Indonesia.*"⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Susilo B. Yudhoyono, "Pidato Kenegaraan Presiden Republik Indonesia Di Istana Negara" [Presidential Speech delivered in the National Palace], Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, October 20, 2004, https://kepuustakaan-presiden.perpusnas.go.id/speech/?box=detail&id=70&from_box=list_245&hlm=1&search_tag=&search_keyword=&activation_status=&presiden_id=6&presiden=sby.

⁶⁰ Susilo B. Yudhoyono, "An Independent and Active Foreign Policy for the 21st Century," in *Transforming Indonesia: Selected International Speeches with Essays by International Observers*, eds. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Dino Patti Djalal, (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2005b), 285.

Yudhoyono's way of addressing the contemporary challenges to Indonesian foreign policy is to come up with the principle of "navigating the turbulent ocean." It was developed from Hatta's "rowing between two reefs" policy which addresses the problem of choosing sides between the Soviet Union and the US. Yudhoyono described that the complex problems of the contemporary world required a newly developed concept.⁶¹ This idea of navigating a turbulent ocean, as former Minister of Foreign Affairs Marty Natalegawa has written, is a capacity for independent decision-making in a complex and ever-changing world.⁶² Indonesia's approach toward the world is described as constructive activism that "*denotes an ability to turn an adversary into friend, and to turn friend into partner. It means having the diplomatic, intellectual, and emotional capacity to respond to complex foreign policy issues. It also means putting to rest a siege mentality, wild conspiracy theories, excessive suspicion, an overly defensive attitude, or the fear that the world is out to get us.*"⁶³ Yudhoyono and his Minister Natalegawa have responded to the changing global environment, stressed the need to overcome the usual narrative of threat against Indonesia (as the defensive-oriented strategic culture would promote), and proposed the need to be flexible and outward-looking. In this sense, Yudhoyono's ideas and

⁶¹ Yudhoyono, *Independent and Active*, 385.

⁶² Marty Natalegawa, "Indonesian Foreign Policy: Waging Peace, Stability, and Prosperity", in *Aspirations with Limitations: Indonesia's Foreign Affairs under Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono*, eds. Ulla Fionna, Siwage Dhrma Negara, and Deasy Simandjuntak (Singapore: ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute, 2018), 14.

⁶³ Yudhoyono, *Independent and Active*, 387.

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rhetoric were more expansive, compared to the assertiveness of the later years of Sukarno, the strong-man policy under Suharto, the wild ecumenical policy under Wahid, and the limited regional engagement under Megawati.

Unfortunately, we argue that Yudhoyono's outward-looking rhetoric stopped in front of the crucial aspects: defence and military policies. Two main issues limit the outward-looking discourse of Yudhoyono's foreign policy. The first one is the anti-military alliance notion. The second one is the principle of non-interference and the fear of foreign intervention in Indonesia's domestic issues. In the remaining discussion, we explain how each issue contradicts the official rhetoric and discourse, and how the practices that followed were moderated to abide by the patterns of strategic culture instead of the initial rhetoric.

As the discourse of Indonesian strategic culture suggested, Indonesia would be hesitant to enter a military or defence alliance with other countries. Sulaiman would argue that this was connected to the idea of free and active policy.⁶⁴ The ideals of being independent put Indonesia in a difficult situation, unable to join any kind of military alliance and unwilling to formulate a strong position. As Yudhoyono stated in his speech to ICWA in 2005, Indonesia "*will not enter into any military alliances... We will continue our policy of not allowing any foreign military bases*

⁶⁴ Sulaiman, *Indonesia's Strategic Culture*, 185.

on Indonesian territory.”⁶⁵

The diverging situation in 2007 related to the ongoing discussion about the Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA) between Indonesia and Singapore highlighted the issue⁶⁶. The agreement was signed by President Yudhoyono and Singaporean Prime Minister (PM) Lee Hsien Loong on April 2007. This defence deal has consisted of cooperation on the extradition treaty and Indonesia’s willingness to provide land, sea, and airspace within its jurisdiction for Singapore’s armed forces training exercise.⁶⁷

However, after the refusal of the House to ratify it due to the concern over Indonesian sovereignty, both the then-Minister for Foreign Affairs Hassan Wirajuda and then-Minister for Defence Juwono Sudarsono stopped the negotiation with their Singaporean counterpart.⁶⁸ Indonesian lawmakers criticised the latest version of the defence agreement, mainly because of the lack of benefits to be gained by Indonesia and that Indonesia would be selling its sovereignty to Singapore, referring to one of the clauses in the pact which would permit Singapore to invite “third parties to conduct and take part in future joint military exercises”. Previously,

⁶⁵ Yudhoyono, *Independent and Active*, 387.

⁶⁶“Singapore and Indonesia Squabble Over Defense Pact,” *Asia Sentinel*, June 27, 2007, <https://www.asiasentinel.com/politics/singapore-and-indonesia-squabble-over-defense-pact/>.

⁶⁷ Asian Sentinel, “Squabble Over Defense Pact.”

⁶⁸ Azhar Ghani, “Indonesia shelves defence agreement with S'pore,” *The Straits Times*, October 10, 2007.

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Indonesia also complained to Singapore that they threatened Indonesia's sovereignty by frequently involving the US and Australian forces and then Indonesia unilaterally stopped the use of training areas.⁶⁹

Even after several years, as then-Speaker of the House of Representatives, Marzuki Ali, had mentioned in 2013, the parliament refused to ratify the DCA due to the understanding that the agreement would allow Singapore to build a defence base in Sumatra, in exchange for allowing the extradition of corrupt Indonesian nationals in Singapore.⁷⁰ This episode showed that even when Yudhoyono's ministers have made an effort to be consistent with Yudhoyono's rhetoric of flexibility and to avoid the narrative of threat, the actual policies that he could take is constrained by the vanguard of strategic cultures such as the parliament, the public, and the military themselves.

What is more apparent during Yudhoyono's term was the notion of non-interference. Even though Yudhoyono has mentioned the need to end the siege mentality and the suspicion of threat from the outside world, he failed to translate those visions into actual policies. Consider, for example, Yudhoyono's idea of a more outward-looking policy (at least in rhetoric, compared to his

⁶⁹ Asian Sentinel, "Squabble Over Defense Pact,"

⁷⁰ Apriadi Gunawan, "RI highlights S'pore extradition treaty at int'l meeting,"

The Jakarta Post, October 23, 2013,

<https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2013/10/23/ri-highlights-s-pore-extradition-treaty-int-l-meeting.html>.

predecessors) called the “thousand friends, zero enemies” principle. During his 2009 inaugural address, he put forward his vision to “Indonesia is facing a strategic environment where no country perceives Indonesia as an enemy and there is no country which Indonesia considers an enemy. Thus, Indonesia can exercise its foreign policy freely in all directions, having a million friends and zero enemies.”⁷¹ Yudhoyono’s concept of “thousand (or million) friends, zero enemies” presupposed the notion that Indonesia’s defence posture is not to easily feel threatened and not to quickly adopt a defensive attitude.

In terms of actual practices, however, this overly defensive attitude and the fear “that the world is out to get us” was displayed after the declared agreement between US President Barack Obama and Australia's PM Julia Gillard in 2011 regarding the stationing of 2,500 US Marines to Darwin that was planned to be conducted by 2017.⁷² Then-foreign minister, Marty Natalegawa, stated that he wanted to ensure that the US and Australia will not pull anything funny. He said, “...*what I would hate to is if such developments were to provoke a reaction and counter-reaction precisely to create that vicious circle of tensions and mistrust or distrust.*”⁷³

⁷¹ “SBY’s Inaugural Speech: The Text,” *Jakarta Globe*, October 20, 2009, <http://jakartaglobe.id/archive/sbys-inaugural-speech-the-text/>.

⁷² Stephen McDonnell and Helen Brown, “China, Indonesia, Wary of U.S. Troops in Darwin,” *ABC News*, April 26, 2013, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-11-17/china-indonesia-wary-of-us-troops-in-darwin/3675866>.

⁷³ McDonnell and Brown, “Wary of U.S. Troops”.

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Natalegawa proposed, at that time, to conduct a meeting between Indonesia and Australia to avoid any suspicion and mistrust.

Anwar noted that there are suspicions regarding the US Marines positioning in Darwin among Indonesian politicians, NGO, and academics. They felt that it was not aimed to counterweight Chinese influence but to enhance American interest toward Indonesia and Papua. This overly defensive attitude is aimed at defending Indonesia's territorial integrity as Indonesian still believe that the outsider's (in the previous case, the Dutch) involvement in West Papua is partially attributable to both countries.⁷⁴ It underlined the notion of, again, defensive attitude and fear that foreign interference would try to disturb the unity of the Indonesian nation. This condition follows perfectly the patterns of Indonesian strategic culture.

Furthermore, Darwin is located at about 600 miles from Indonesian shores, and while some perceived the US troops deployment as an effort to project power and deter threats to peace, Indonesian officials have directly linked it to regional disputes over the oil-and-gas-rich South China Sea.⁷⁵ Indonesian Military

⁷⁴ Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "Mixed Messages in Indonesia-Australia Relationship," *East Asia Forum*, September 24, 2012, <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2012/09/24/mixed-messages-in-the-indonesia-australia-relationship/>.

⁷⁵ Freya Petersen, "Indonesia Calls US Troop Buildup in Darwin 'Too Close for Comfort'," *PRI*, November 19, 2011, <https://www.pri.org/stories/2011-11-19/indonesia-calls-us-troop-buildup-darwin-too-close-comfort>.

Commander Admiral Agus Suhartono feared that the decision would put Indonesia in armed conflict and said *“Their military fleets would very likely go back and forth through our waters, given the analysis that the planned base will have to conduct [military exercises] due to rising tension in the South China Sea. We haven’t learnt clearly but we have been studying the plan and analyzing any potential impacts on Indonesia. We have been consulting all sources.”*⁷⁶

These actual policies and practices showed another event where the initial rhetoric of the Yudhoyono’s foreign policy (of being flexible and more trustful to the outside world) fell flat on the continuing structure of strategic culture. We could even see when Yudhoyono’s most trusted officials on foreign policy (Foreign Minister Natalegawa) had to moderate his views and had to appeal to the public to change its usual way of seeing the foreign actors as potential threats. However, this time, Natalegawa had to confront the other members of Yudhoyono’s cabinet, such as the Military Commander Suhartono.

Another perfect example of how the rhetoric could not be translated into policies due to the existing discourse of fear could be seen in the relationship between Indonesia and China. Yudhoyono’s era was marked by the growing cordiality between

⁷⁶ Bagus B.T. Saragih, “RI ‘vigilant’ on Darwin plan,” *The Jakarta Post*, November 18, 2011, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/11/18/ri-vigilant-darwin-plan.html>.

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Indonesia and China. In the realm of humanitarian aid, during the Aceh tsunami disaster in December 2004, China provided medical team and donation worth US\$ 63 million. Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao attended the Tsunami Aid summit in Jakarta in 2005 to coordinate the assistance program.⁷⁷ In 2005, Yudhoyono signed the Indo-China Strategic Partnership Joint Declaration which covered many realms of cooperation, including economy, politics, culture, defence, and security.⁷⁸ Economic relationships, trade and investment between Indonesia and China continued to grow, and there were significant joint projects, such as the Surabaya-Madura Bridge (Suramadu), between China's SOEs and Indonesian SOEs.⁷⁹ It demonstrated the effort by Yudhoyono to fulfil his promise of expanding Indonesia's role and relationship outside of the usual region such as ASEAN.

However, these cordial relationships only occurred and limited to the realms of economic and trade. In the realm of military and security, Indonesia was worried about China's increasing presence in its nearest territory: Natuna Island and Malacca Straits. China has made a territorial claim over the waters surrounding the Natuna Islands since 1993. In 2011, there were fifty Chinese maps which include an area north of Natuna Islands

⁷⁷ Leo Suryadinata, "The Growing "Strategic Partnership" between Indonesia and China Faces Difficult Challenge," *Trends in Southeast Asia*, no. 15, (Singapore: ISEAS - Yusof Ishak Institute, 2017), 2.

⁷⁸ Suryadinata, "Growing Strategic Partnership," 3.

⁷⁹ Suryadinata, "Growing Strategic Partnership," 4.

that falls within Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).⁸⁰ Indonesia has always downplayed it during the later years of Suharto's era because they were afraid that the act of retaliation would instead legitimise China's claims in the region.

Regrettably, in 2009, there were incidents of China's infringement into Indonesian territory during which Indonesia detained 75 Chinese fishers operating in the Natuna Islands. It escalated in 2010 and 2013 when Chinese gunboats forced Indonesian fisheries protection vessels to release Chinese poachers caught fishing in Natuna waters.⁸¹ Natuna Islands is seen as strategically and economically crucial for Indonesia, which provides geographical gateway to the Malacca Strait – which is another crucial territory for Indonesia.⁸²

After the 2009 and 2013 escalation of tensions in the Natuna Islands, there were two diverging discourses in Yudhoyono's government regarding their position on the issue. The first narrative was held by the military which treats this problem as a problem of territorial sovereignty. As stated by Commodore Fahu Zaini, then-Assistant Deputy to the Chief Security Minister for Defence Strategic Doctrine, "*China has claimed Natuna waters as*

⁸⁰ Jessica Brown, "Jakarta's Juggling Act: Balancing China and America in the Asia-Pacific," *The Center for Independent Studies*, no. 5 (2011), 8.

⁸¹ John McBeth, "Indonesia, China, and the Natuna Islands: A Test for Jokowi's Maritime Doctrine," *Australian Strategic Policy Institute*, March 22, 2016, <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/indonesia-china-and-the-natuna-islands-a-test-for-jokowis-maritime-doctrine/>.

⁸² Brown, "Jakarta's Juggling Act," 8.

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their territorial waters...this arbitrary claim...will have a large impact on the security of Natuna waters."⁸³ Then-Commander of the Indonesian Chief of Staff, General Moeldoko, also mentioned that *"there are significant changes in the stable and calm conditions that existed in the region a decade ago. So everyone has an opinion that China is a threat to the neighbourhood."*⁸⁴ These points of view produces military's eagerness to increase the defence capability in Indonesia's surrounding waters.⁸⁵ The military, in this case, acted as the vanguard of defensive-oriented strategic culture, arguing that the threat came from outside and endangering the unity and sovereignty of Indonesia, thereby advocating the historical pattern of inward-looking policies.

The other narrative, which is more dominant at that time, was held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which the then Foreign Minister Natalegawa stated, in response to the military apparatuses' statements, that "there is no territorial dispute between Indonesia and China," that he emphasised the ongoing maritime cooperation between China and Indonesia, and pointed out that one of that cooperation involved foreign investment in Natuna for fish

⁸³ Leo Suryadinata, "South China Sea: Is Jakarta No Longer Neutral?," *The Straits Times*, April 24, 2014, <https://www.straitstimes.com/opinion/south-china-sea-is-jakarta-no-longer-neutral>.

⁸⁴ Gabriel Dominguez, "Indonesia's 'in a Bind' Over Beijing's Assertiveness in South China Sea," *DW*, April 21, 2015, <https://www.dw.com/en/indonesia-in-a-bind-over-beijings-assertiveness-in-south-china-sea/a-18396195>.

⁸⁵ Suryadinata, "South China Sea."

processing and canning.⁸⁶ However, the diplomatic apparatus questioned and rejected China's "nine-dash line" claims and sent a diplomatic letter to the United Nations' Commission on the Limits of Continental Shelf and expressed concern over China's overlapping claim through Indonesia's EEZ in Natuna Islands.⁸⁷ However, Indonesia's position remained cautious and that it did not treat the Chinese presence in the Natuna Islands as a territorial threat to sovereignty.⁸⁸

The third example of the persistent values of strategic culture (the fear of outside interference) could be seen in its fear regarding external powers' domination and their action in the Malacca Straits. Indonesia was responsible for ensuring the safe passage of more than half of the world's commercial maritime traffic in Malacca. To ensure this responsibility, Indonesia needed the help of foreign powers, in which then Indonesian Defence Minister Sudarsono asked Japan, China, and South Korea for technical assistance in 2007. Ironically, at the same time, Indonesia rebuffed the offers by the US, India, Australia, Japan, and China to help secure the waterway for the reason that Indonesia did not want to convey a sense of Indonesia's inability to secure the waterway by its own efforts.⁸⁹ Indonesia feared that technical assistance could lead to greater cooperation in the region, which could lead to domination

⁸⁶ Suryadinata, "South China Sea."

⁸⁷ Dominguez, "Indonesia's in a Bind"; Suryadinata, "South China Sea."

⁸⁸ Suryadinata, "South China Sea."

⁸⁹ Brown, "Jakarta's Juggling Act," 9.

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by external powers.

These cases have shown that Indonesia's outward-looking foreign policy rhetoric and discourse during Yudhoyono's era could not be translated into actual military and defence policies. In the issues of immediate urgency such as Indonesia's national sovereignty and territory (which deals more with the notion of fear from outside interference, for example), Yudhoyono's (and his Foreign Minister's) rhetoric had to face resistance from the public (represented by the parliament) or the military. Granted, within the administration, the dominant discourse is the outward-looking and flexible-pragmatic practices. However, these seemingly unequivocal dominant discourse withered when faced with the fears of foreign powers involvement in Indonesia's sovereignty and matters pertaining to military and defence. We have shown that in every case when faced with this resistance, Yudhoyono's actual practices either being moderated into a middle ground or suddenly switched from being an outward-looking to an inward-looking one.

Conclusions

Several things could be concluded in this article. Firstly, previous investigations on Indonesian foreign policy have neglected the importance of strategic culture as one possible explanans of foreign policy decisions. Of those few who focused their research on Indonesian strategic culture, they mostly traced

the origins of Indonesian strategic culture.⁹⁰ They spent their time to trace the origins of the strategic culture before focusing only on one aspect of military policy. On the contrary, we begin this article by tracing the discourse of foreign policy (not strategic culture) and trace the similarities of the discourse. We took the previous literature's argument about what Indonesian strategic culture is and used it to reflect back to the actual practices of foreign policy. As we have shown, Indonesian foreign policy since Sukarno tends to adhere to the limits set by the discursive structure of the strategic culture. Even during the more outward-looking period of Suharto's later years, the more pragmatic parts of the policies were contained to the more economic aspects. By tracing and comparing the discourse of strategic culture and foreign policy, we bring a more nuanced perspective in understanding Indonesian foreign policy. Instead of only looking at domestic considerations such as the democratic transition, ethnic conflict, economic problems, and party politics as the source of Indonesia's "punching below its weight," we offer a different notion: that Indonesia under Yudhoyono punched below its weight due to its own history and understanding of identity.

Secondly, in this paper, we reconstruct the Indonesian strategic culture from the actual discourse and the range of foreign policy practices during Yudhoyono's regime. By following the

⁹⁰ Anwar, "Indonesia Foreign Policy"; Sulaiman, *Indonesia's Strategic Culture*, 186; Muhammad Arif and Yandry Kurniawan, "Strategic Culture and Maritime Security," *Asia and The Pacific Policy Studies* 5, no. 1 (2017): 77-89.

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theoretical argument of Waever (regarding the discursive structure of identity and how it limits foreign policy choices) and combining it with Neumann and Heikka's argument (about strategic culture as an interplay between discourse and practices), we have shown that the initial outward-looking rhetoric of Yudhoyono and his Foreign Minister was constrained and limited by the existing discursive structure of strategic culture. Consequently, we have also shown that when faced with such constraints and limitations, foreign policy practices would adhere to the boundaries set by the discursive structure. Therefore, it was not possible to Yudhoyono's regime to change its policy drastically (whether to create a stronger military pact in the region, to strengthen Indo-US relationship, or to change Indonesian inward-looking policy and defensive orientation of the military).

Thirdly, it is essential to note that what we offer is an alternative way to understand Indonesian foreign policy. We are not suggesting that other factors such as economic problems and internal political crisis were not crucial in explaining Indonesia's foreign policy choices. Instead, we recommend that future analysts of Indonesian foreign policy take into account how the leaders and the foreign policy elites perceive the material conditions and how they construct (and reconstruct) their understanding of the material situation by leaning to their history, habits, and traditions. In doing so, we may further our understanding of the foreign policy decision, of the reason the leaders take that decision, and of the cultural and identity-based justification and perception that they have used

during the formulation of the ideas, rhetoric, and actual practices.

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