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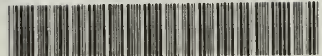
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DISENGAGING FROM TERRITORY: IDENTITY, THE POLITICS OF CONTESTATION AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL STRUCTURES INDIA & BRITAIN (1929-1935), AND INDONESIA & EAST TIMOR (1975-1999)

A Dissertation Presented

by

LENA TAN

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

September 2007

Political Science

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A Dissertation Presented

by

LENA TAN

Approved as to style and content by:

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Peter M. Haas, Chair

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Srirupa Roy, Member

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Agustin Lao-Montes, Member

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John A. Hird, Chair
Department of Political Science

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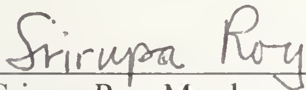

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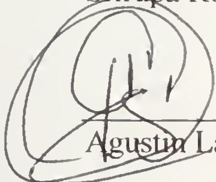

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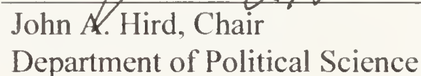

John A. Hird, Chair
Department of Political Science

DEDICATION

For my family

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I would like to thank members of my committee, Peter M. Haas, Srirupa Roy and Agustin Lao-Montes for their advice, comments and guidance through all stages of this project. I am extremely grateful to Peter Haas who did not only take this on but critically, gave me the space and the freedom which I needed in order to find my own way in this project. This, together with the example that he set for rigor and openness from my very first graduate class with him, has left an indelible mark. Srirupa Roy's example as a scholar and a teacher, as well as her insightful comments on my work, which were provided, always at just the right time, made a huge difference to my thinking. I thank her for all this as well as for her encouragement, enthusiasm and support. I am also grateful to Patrick Thaddeus Jackson who provided important comments and insights during the initial stages of this project at the first Relational and Interpretive Methods workshop held at the Northeast International Studies Association Conference in 2005.

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ABSTRACT

DISENGAGING FROM TERRITORY: IDENTITY, THE POLITICS OF CONTESTATION AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL STRUCTURES BRITAIN & INDIA (1929-1935), AND INDONESIA & EAST TIMOR (1975-1999)

SEPTEMBER 2007

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This dissertation project examines the role of identity, the politics of identity contestation and domestic political structures as part of the mechanisms and processes that may be involved in the decisions that states make regarding disengagement from their colonial and territorial possessions. Specifically, it focuses on the following questions: Why do intransigent states back down on previously entrenched territorial policies? And why, even when states decide to disengage from their territories, are some of these processes peaceful while others are scenes of prolonged, bloody and violent struggles? Focusing on Britain and its reaction to Indian calls for independence from 1929-1935, and Indonesia's withdrawal from East Timor in 1999, this project argues that the processes and mechanisms involved in identity construction, maintenance and change can play an important role in how states approach the issue of territorial disengagement. At the same time, it also argues that the structure of a state's domestic political system may also affect the way in which disengagement takes places.

Based on its empirical findings, this dissertation also argues that identities are constructed at both the domestic as well as the international levels, and against an Other, and through narratives. Further, identities do not acquire 'substance' once they have been constructed. Rather they are continually constituted by processes, relations and practices as identities are defined, recognized and validated in an actor's interaction with and in relationship to others. Finally, identity does not only influence human actions through enabling or constraining actions but also through the need to perform who we are or who we say we want to be.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Disputed lands, whether in the form of colonies or territories where self-determination and sovereignty are at stake, have been the source of much inter- and intra-state conflict. France and Holland resisted strong independence movements in Algeria and Indonesia respectively by deploying troops in efforts to retain them after the end of the World War II. The Israelis and the Palestinians have waged a bloody battle over land for more than half a century. China's refusal to countenance any attempts by Taiwan to assert its independence and sovereignty has created tremendous tension and the potential for conflict in East Asia. While peaceful solutions for such conflicts may appear near impossible at times, there have been intractable states that have abandoned previously entrenched positions on colonies and disputed territories.

Why do states abandon previously unshakeable positions on colonies and disputed territories? And why does the process of disengagement itself engender conflict in some cases and not in others? This broad empirical puzzle is important as territorial disengagement continues to be relevant and critical in various parts of the world. Restless provinces remain a challenge for the central Indonesian government which is struggling to keep the archipelago together. Tibet, in addition to Taiwan, is another potential arena for conflict for a China that insists on the rightness of its rule over the country. The question of Quebec persists to this day for Canada. Sudan, Somalia, Zaire and Liberia are also states whose territorial shapes are under pressure for various reasons. Examining the factors involved in territorial disengagement may thus

provide some insight into the processes and mechanisms that influence the way in which some of these cases may unfold.

This dissertation concentrates on these issues but is more narrowly focused on the following questions: Why do intransigent states back down on previously entrenched territorial policies? And why, even when states decide to disengage from their territories, are some of these processes peaceful while others are scenes of prolonged, bloody and violent struggles? The rest of this chapter proceeds in five main parts. Section 1.2 is a short and necessary detour to address this dissertation's focus on processes and decisions made by the colonial or more generally, the disengaging power rather than the equally significant political developments and decisions in the colony or territorial possession. Section 1.3 provides a critical overview and discussion of the literature on decolonization and territorial disengagement. This is followed in sections 1.4 and 1.5 by an analysis of the literature on identity in International Relations and a discussion of the theoretical framework on identity to be used in the rest of this dissertation. Section 1.6 focuses on the role of domestic political structures while the last two sections discuss methodology and chapter outlines.

1.2 Focusing on the Territorial Power

There have been two main and often sharply bifurcated avenues that characterize past studies of territorial disengagement and decolonization. The first focuses on decisions made in the disengaging power while the second concentrates on developments in the territory seeking independence or secession. Explanations of the former variety often study the pivotal impact of changes in international politics and domestic reconsiderations in the disengaging power. Explanations in the latter category

on the other hand, restore agency to these territories and colonies by foregrounding the rise of resistance and nationalism in the elite, the subsequent mobilization of the masses, or the collapse in the social structure of collaboration that had propped up many empires of the past.[1]

Core-centered perspectives often give the problematic impression that the decision-makers there were in complete control of the situation and dictated the fate of their colonies or territories.[2] The problems associated with this perspective in which the decisions are assumed to have developed in an isolated and sealed environment, divorced from external pressures, are also repeated in periphery-centered analyses. In these, it is the agency of an important group of actors but this time, in the colonial or territorial power, that has been excluded. The inadequacies of such explanations solely focused on the periphery can be seen in the fact that developments in the colonies, most notably in the form of independence and nationalist movements, have always evoked extremely uneven reactions from various disengaging powers. Thus, it is quite obvious that neither of these sharply divided approaches can provide a full picture or explanation of the complex processes that affect and influence decolonization and territorial disengagement. Discerning and attributing relative causal significance of one over the other and making generalizable statements across all cases is an impossible task and one which I do not attempt to undertake. Perhaps what is most important to remember is that the disengaging power and the colony or territory interact and do not act in isolation from each other.

---

[1] See Grimal 1978; Low 1982; Hodgkin 1956; Wallerstein 1961; Gallagher and Robinson 1953; Louis 1976; and Robinson 1972.

[2] Low 1982, 6.

This dissertation takes this point seriously and will concentrate much of its attention on the disengaging power and the decisions it makes in reaction to internal and external developments including those in the colony or territorial possessions. Thus, the focus here will be on decision-makers in the metropole who are not acting in isolation but are rather, engaged with, and responding to the demands made by independence and anti-colonial movements in the colonies.

1.3 Theoretical Approaches to Territorial Disengagement and Decolonization

Realist and neo-Realist approaches, reflecting their assumptions that states are rational, unitary actors with fixed and given interests rooted in power and security in an anarchical world, argue that states divest themselves of their colonies and other territorial possessions when they no longer have the will or the ability to retain them.[3] This may be the result of either domestic or international changes or perhaps both. Changes in military technology like the invention of nuclear weapons and qualitative shifts in the sources and engines of economic growth and wealth for example, may lead to the increasing irrelevance of territorial possessions which, due to their geographic locations, markets, raw materials and populations, may have been security and economic assets in the past.[4] Thus, original economic and strategic reasons like gaining and guaranteeing access to scarce resources and markets as well as protecting land and sea routes that were responsible for the scramble for territory and colonies may no longer hold sway.

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[3] Kennedy 1989.

[4] Spruyt 2005, 4.

At the same time, states facing vastly different domestic circumstances from the period in which colonies were first acquired may also find that holding on to their colonies or territorial possessions is no longer politically or economically beneficial for the national interest. For example, European colonial powers had to cope with militaries and economies that had been devastated by the long and protracted fighting of World War II. In addition, they were faced with the declining value of their colonial possessions and the rising costs of maintaining their positions in the face of increasingly vocal and persistent independence movements. With decimated treasuries, it was both prudent and rational for these states to make new political calculations and scale back their ambitions. As such, twentieth century decolonization was just part of an almost timeless narrative regarding the competition between great powers, their rise, expansion and later decline.[5]

Systemic and material factors, however, do not necessarily make their impact when expected nor do they affect all countries to the same degree or at the same time. The immediate years following World War II are an important example of this. Colonial powers then were uniformly faced with adverse domestic conditions and a reshuffled international power structure anchored by the United States and the Soviet Union. However, there were very few indicators that decolonization would sweep across the world within twenty years. In fact, the prospects for Asian and African independence were dim as discussions in postwar planning conferences were still paternalistically centered on eventual "self-government" through guidance and tutelage from the colonial powers rather than the granting of independence and statehood. The

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[5] For example, see Kennedy 1989.

United Nations Charter of 1945, while reaffirming the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, also declared in Article 73 that UN members with foreign territories had to accept as a sacred trust the obligation to promote the well-being of the people in these territories who were not yet capable of self-government. Thus, even in the UN Charter which held so much hope for the rights of people, "self-determination was a right that could be claimed only by peoples who were demonstrably capable of self-government."[6]

In addition, there were colonial powers like Portugal who clung to their colonies despite diminished political and economic power and the growing human and financial costs of maintaining control. France and the Netherlands fought tenacious but ultimately losing battles for their colonies. Clearly, states do not uniformly disengage from their colonial or territorial possessions even when international and domestic changes may ensure that the costs of holding on to them greatly outweigh the benefits. This seems to indicate that other factors that are not part of realist and neo-realist frameworks underpinned by assumptions regarding a unitary state and the fixed nature of national interests defined in terms of security and interests may also be at play.

Other approaches that do present a more complex and nuanced picture of the state grant a larger and more important role to domestic actors in explaining how, why and when territorial disengagement takes place.[7] Key domestic actors with their own narrow interests may influence their government regarding territorial disengagement. There are historically, two groups that have a stake in their country's territorial policy

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[6] R. Jackson 1998, 121.

[7] Kahler 1986; Snyder 1991; and Spruyt 2005.

and more specifically, in the territorial status quo – economic or business interests and settler populations.[8] Business or economic actors with trading and investment interests in the colonies or territories are likely to influence or attempt to influence territorial policy for fears that changes will have adverse effects on them.[9] Settler populations also have important stakes in the status quo due to their sunk investments in the form of properties, plantations and factories as well as their privileged social positions in these colonies and territories. Settler groups in the West Bank and Gaza, the Dutch settler communities in Indonesia and Portuguese farmers in Angola, for example, fiercely opposed disengagement and decolonization and attempted to influence and change policies in their capitals through political and other, often violent means.

Other groups which may influence territorial disengagement are the military and political parties. Militaries have historically played an instrumental role in acquiring, maintaining and defending territories and colonies. As such, their recruitment patterns, promotional incentives, budget allocation, as well as strategic doctrine may be directed towards a "strong corporate interest in maintaining the existing territorial configuration."[10] However, as Hendrik Spruyt notes, the military, unlike settler populations and business interests, is neither always nor even necessarily *for* the territorial status quo as they have interests that are more malleable. For example, their corporate interests may and could be better served through non-imperial policies instead

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[8] Spruyt 2005, 8.

[9] Spruyt 2005, 8; and Kahler 1986, 8.

[10] Spruyt 2005, 28.

of fighting losing and prestige-eroding colonial wars that drain or divert resources. Alternative policies that enable the military to secure large budgets, organizational autonomy, new career opportunities and prestige may be just or more advantageous in the long-run.[11]

A fourth actor that may influence territorial policy are political parties whose ideologies or interests are linked to imperialism or the retention of colonies and annexed lands. In general, political parties can have both direct and indirect roles. Indirectly, they may interpret "changes in the colonial empires and simultaneously increase the sensitivity of metropolitan politics to these changes."[12] A direct role comes from serving as the voice for opponents of change like settlers, the military and business interests who are attempting to influence political outcomes through them.[13]

These parties may themselves have ideological, organizational and electoral stakes that are intimately connected to territorial policy. In Miles Kahler's analysis on the role of political parties on French and British decolonization, the most comprehensive treatment on this subject to date, he discusses domestic actors in a theoretical framework that combines Albert Hirschman's concept of exit, voice and loyalty with an incentive-based theory of political organizations.[14] In particular, he discusses the options that are available to political parties that are organizationally

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[11] Spruyt 2005, 28.

[12] Kahler 1986, 59.

[13] Kahler 1986, 59.

[14] These are material, purposive and identity incentives.

committed to the territorial status quo but faced with the reality of having to impose greater and greater repression on increasingly rebellious territories in order to sustain these relationships. Kahler's analysis concentrates on the strategies that are available to these parties and the way in which the structure of the party system is decisive in shaping the behavior of party members, that is, by exiting the party, voicing their opposition, or through loyalty and towing the party line.

In these accounts which desegregates the state into various domestic competing interests, the explanation is driven by actors acting rationally to protect and defend their narrow and typically material self-interests. While undeniably plausible, these accounts begin with actor identities and interests that are already fixed and given. Moreover, some of these are not able to discount ideational factors - Kahler's discussion regarding political parties for example, acknowledges the importance of ideology but this is put aside to focus on processes involving institutional structures.[15]

Unlike the above approaches that converge around neo-utilitarian premises of self-regarding units in the pursuit of material interests, Neta Crawford, Robert Jackson and Daniel Philpott place ideational factors at the centre of their accounts.[16] At the

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[15] Institutional structures are important as will be discussed later in this chapter. The problematic issue here is that both begin with the assumption that the interests of these actors must be based on neo-utilitarian precepts and premises.

[16] See Spruyt 2000 for a study on the importance of utilitarian norms in the calculation of peripheral elites. However, Spruyt excludes and dismisses too quickly the impact of these norms on colonial powers who were ultimately the ones who made the final decisions to withdraw from their colonies, and grant them independence and statehood. Was there a transmission in these utilitarian norms from strategic and calculating nationalist elites to the colonial powers? How does Spruyt explain the influence of individuals like Frantz Fanon, CLR James, George Padmore, and Nkrumah? What was the relationship between the colonies and the colonial powers?

broadest level, Crawford, Jackson and Philpott share the following – all three argue that norms and ideas like equality, self-determination, nationalism, democracy, human rights, non-intervention and anti-racism were critical for paving the road to disengagement and decolonization.[17]

The cluster of ideas and norms pivotal to Crawford's account – equality, self-determination, human rights, democracy, non-intervention and anti-racism – is traced by her to the sixteenth century when some of the colonial practices of the Spanish in the New World were being debated and questioned by Francisco de Vitoria and Bartolome de las Casas. Crucially, these ideas and norms, she explains, were also present in debates and arguments regarding the international slave trade and the abolition of slavery during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[18] In the twentieth century, they were also part of the arguments used by opponents of colonialism in the colonies and the metropole to successfully challenge beliefs about colonial rule, the legitimacy of colonialism and at a more fundamental level, what it means to be human.

The ideas that are at the heart of Robert Jackson's and Daniel Philpott's arguments, on the other hand, converge on what it means to be a sovereign state. For Jackson, the ideas that dismantled colonialism were equality and self-determination - ideas which were already part of the Western political tradition, which "extols democracy, equality and condemns unrepresentative or discriminatory governance."[19]

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[17] Crawford 2002; R. Jackson 1998; and Philpott 2001.

[18] Crawford 2002, 49-50.

[19] R. Jackson 1998, 134.

Instead of Western-style 'civilization' and other requirements like political capability, national unity, military power, national wealth, and an educated population, statehood, self-determination and independence turned on the belief or idea that "all people have the right to self-determination."[20] Thus, decolonization in the twentieth century was, according to Jackson, tied to principles of juridical statehood based on a rights-based model of international relations and law.

For Philpott, anti-colonial nationalism and racial equality were the ideas that made a difference in challenging colonialism. Decolonization of the twentieth century was in fact a revolution in sovereignty marked by a fundamental shift in the intersubjective understanding, meaning and significance of sovereignty from one that was based on the ability and capability to govern to one based on self-determination and independence.

Besides their shared perspective on the importance of this particular group of ideas, these accounts also highlight a similar group of actors which carried and transmitted them into the heart of these colonial empires where they eventually influenced and changed policies. In the colonies, these actors were intellectuals, radicals, non-governmental organizations, and anti-colonial nationalists. In the heart of empire, the carriers and transmitters were political parties, and non-governmental organizations and movements like the late eighteenth century anti-slavery trade movement as well as anti-colonial organizations and lobbies.[21] In twentieth century

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[20] R. Jackson 1998, 124.

[21] Crawford (2002) has placed particular emphasis on the importance of the arguments made by the anti-slavery trade movement for decolonization. She argues that the

Britain, for example, organizations like the League Against Imperialism and later, the very influential Movement for Colonial Freedom, were formed to fight colonialism.[22] In France, the Socialist and Communist parties were both anti-colonial. Besides the adoption of these ideas and beliefs by these groups, there were changes that were also taking place at the international level. The US and the Soviet Union adopted anti-colonial positions publicly and placed pressure on colonial powers on the issue of self-determination through private diplomatic channels and in the very public forum of the United Nations.[23]

Despite these similarities, there are also subtle differences among the three approaches on how and why these ideas were able to have the impact that they did on the political level. Since ideas and norms are neither singular, scarce nor uncontested ideational commodities, addressing this issue is a critical part of their explanations and more generally, for how we understand decolonization and constructivist International Relations theory.

For Robert Jackson, the power and influence of these ideas lie in his characterization of them as principled beliefs which is defined as those that "specify

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movement and the eventual ending of the slave trade and slavery challenged core beliefs and de-legitimized core practices of colonialism. See especially, Chapter 4.

[22] See Owen (1998). As Owen points out, they were of varying forms and had different degrees of commitment. In the twentieth century, they ranged from the more moderate Fabian Colonial Bureau to the radical Movement for Colonial Freedom.

[23] The label of 'non-colonial' and its relevance for the Soviet Union and the U.S. are of course, debatable.

criteria for distinguishing right from wrong and just from unjust."[24] In other words, these ideas worked because it provided policymakers with the standards to distinguish practices that were right and just. However, this begs the question of how these standards were derived. The answer is to be found in Jackson's connection of the political and moral basis of these ideas to those by which the western powers, France, Britain and the U.S., had *defined* themselves very publicly, whether through the *liberte, egalite, and fraternite* of the French Revolution, the rights of man in the U.S. Declaration of Independence or the ideals laid out in the Atlantic Charter. Moreover, these were also ideas that were increasingly practiced and institutionalized domestically in these countries as past barriers to democratic citizenship like class, gender and race were gradually removed one by one to first include all men, and then women and racial minorities. These ideas worked not because of their sheer rightness but because they challenged the anti-democratic character of empires and colonies and more significantly, the identitarian basis of these colonial powers as liberal democracies.

For Philpott, the power of ideas is generally to be found in their ability to effect "change or convert people to new identities and new political ends."[25] These ideas must also wield social power – power that is rooted in the ability of their carriers and transmitters to convert their commitments into real political costs and benefits in the

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[24] Goldstein and Keohane 1993, 8.
Here, Jackson equates normative ideas with the "principled beliefs" of Goldstein and Keohane's typology of beliefs.

[25] D. Philpott 46.

form of "money, offices, votes, the prospects for violence" for the head of the polity who may have to pursue new policies that these ideas demand to remain in power.[26]

In order to explain the radical changes in policy between 1945 and 1960 when empires were being dismantled, Philpott argues that it was the *reputational* social power of ideas - the interaction between revolutionary ideas and established ideas - that was the key. Couriers of new revolutionary ideas held up the old established ideas to heads of states who were asked to account for their inability to fulfill their initial promises. In doing so, these couriers reconfigured the incentives of these leaders, and imposed costs and benefits by threatening to undermine the reputations of heads of state for not upholding their goals through comparison with the new revolutionary ideas.[27] Rather than a change of identity of these heads of states to anti-colonialists, Philpott is explicit in stating that the driving force was the change in their conviction of "the political and economic benefits of releasing colonies and the similar costs of keeping them."[28]

Therefore, Philpott's explanation is based on two causal mechanisms - the couriers of these ideas who are genuinely influenced by them and the impact of reputational social power on the incentive structure of heads of states and leaders. It is therefore, an explanation which depends critically on the material incentives of decision-makers. At the same time, these are calculations driven by the exigencies of reputational social power which can only come into effect through meanings and shared

[26] D. Philpott 46-49.

[27] D. Philpott 162-3.

[28] D. Philpott 161.

understandings which provides the basis for these leaders and heads of states to first see and understand that there *is* a discernible and potentially disadvantageous difference between the new ideas and the established one and its impact on their reputational social power.

Unlike Jackson and Philpott, Crawford's approach concentrates on political argument, persuasion and practical reason as fundamental processes in 20th century decolonization.[29] Her process-oriented explanation has two driving factors. The first, which she foregrounds, are ethical arguments or arguments about 'what it is right to do in particular contexts."[30] These ethical arguments work by initially denormalizing and delegitimizing dominant beliefs and practices and their ability to offer " the articulation of an alternative that meets normative criteria,"[31] and the adoption by some actors of alternative conceptions of possibility and interest.[32] If these "arguments are persuasive among individuals and groups, then the balance of capabilities between those who favor the dominant normative belief and new normative belief will begin to change" and

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[29] She argues that several kinds of argument exist in world politics: instrumental or practical arguments, identity arguments, scientific argument, and ethical arguments. "Instrumental or practical arguments are about how to do things most effectively in the social world; (b) identity arguments suggest that people of a certain kind, such "we the civilized," ought to act in a particular way; (c) scientific argument use the laws of science, technology or nature to define situations and show how they ought to be addressed, (d) ethical arguments are about what it is to do right in particular contexts (Crawford 5). In some cases, all 4 arguments are present.

[30] Crawford 2002, 5.

[31] Persuasive content also depends on the purpose and intended audience of the argument, connection to larger issues tabled, relative power and identities of the interlocutors; and relevant cultural contexts.

[32] Crawford 2002, 7.

"actors [will] begin to change their social world."[33] This she argues, is what took place vis-à-vis colonialism – colonialism was denormalized and delegitimized in the 20th century because anti-colonial reformers made persuasive ethical arguments[34] which catalyzed alternative means of conceptualizing "what it means to be human and who belongs to the community of humans with full rights."[35]

The second driving factor, which is necessary for these arguments to work, lies in their context and content which are crucially, embedded in beliefs which are in turn, embedded in culture. Like Jackson, these ideas of equality, self-determination, democracy, human rights, and anti-racism gained broader persuasive power when they were first applied from sovereigns to individual humans in the colonial power and gradually expanded to include citizenship for all white males, women and minorities.[36] More fundamentally, "early advocates of colonial reform and later proponents of decolonization called on colonizers to act in ways that were consistent with their (evolving) identities, including their newly discovered empathy with the other, colonial subjects."[37] In other words, these particular arguments worked because they called the identity of western countries into question.

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[33] Crawford 2002, 7.

[34] Crawford 2002, 4.

[35] Crawford 2002, 54.

[36] Crawford 2002, 388.

[37] Crawford 2002, 388. Emphasis mine.

I do not dispute that ideas and norms, as discussed by Crawford, Jackson and Philpott were important in the large wave of decolonization that took place in the middle of the twentieth century. As Crawford argues, decolonization:

> "was in part a consequence of normative changes - if only because the other explanations for the end of colonialism could have and probably did, apply in other epochs, but colonialism was not outlawed in those areas. In other words, the material conditions for the end of empire were present and did not operate in the past. A major new element in the twentieth century was changed normative beliefs."[38]

However, these approaches, like others based on norms, ideas and principles, point to a "logic of appropriateness" as the guide for human action and behavior. This "logic of appropriateness is not equipped to provide a non-tautological account of norm selection."[39] This is because normative frameworks do not provide standards or criteria which can point to the norms that are most important in a social system. There is thus, no independent theory of why a particular norm or set of norms become important or dominant or "what constitutes appropriateness is a given social context."[40]

Moreover, my discussion of Crawford, Philpott and Jackson also show that the logic of appropriateness which gave these ideas, norms and argument their power came from the inconsistencies present between the principles associated with a state's identity and its practices via its colony or territorial possession.[41] In particular, the existence and possession of colonies challenged the colonial power's own understanding of itself

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[38] Crawford 2002, 56.

[39] Hopf 2002, 13.

[40] Hopf 2002, 13.

[41] See in particular, Crawford 2002, and R. Jackson 1998.

as arguments based on principles and norms of self-determination and equality pointed to the contradictions between their stated identity and their actual practices. The ideas and arguments that formed the crux of these approaches were effective only when they were considered and reflected upon in the context of the state's identity. Hence, the efficacy of these ideas and arguments hinge ultimately on identity. In these analyses however, identity, though necessary, is unfortunately, rather underspecified and under-theorized.

In this dissertation, I will focus on the role of identity as a causal mechanism in territorial disengagement and decolonization. Here, it is important to emphasize that I do not intend to develop a theoretical framework where identity is *the* explanatory factor for territorial disengagement and decolonization. More explicitly, this dissertation is not focused on developing an invariant model for territorial disengagement and decolonization to encompass an entire universe of cases across space and time. Such a task is likely to be less than productive since it assumes that our social and political world is one where large-scale structures, processes and sequences are replicated again and again in different locations and times to produce the same outcome.[42] Such a world, as Charles Tilly argues, does not exist.[43]

Rather, the regularities that are present in political life consist instead of recurrent causes that "concatenate into substantially different outcomes depending on initial conditions, subsequent sequences, and adjacent processes."[44] Thus, a far better

[42] Tilly 1995, 1596.

[43] Tilly 1995, 1601.

[44] Tilly 1997, 48.

model for explaining large-scale processes would concentrate on these causes and reconstruct the way in which they may be linked and connected together to produce the outcome in question. In other words, a more fruitful way of understanding territorial disengagement and decolonization would therefore, involve the search for:

> "deep causes operating in variable combinations, circumstances; and sequences with consequently variable outcomes. Most of the work therefore concerns not the identification of similarities over whole structures and processes but the explanation of variability among related structures and processes."[45]

A significant part of this larger research effort would also involve focusing our attention on understanding specific causal mechanisms which may be at work in these overall processes. In this dissertation, I will concentrate on the task of examining and discussing a mechanism that is involved in territorial disengagement and decolonization – the role of identity.

In the next two sections of this chapter, I will focus on outlining and discussing theoretical conceptualizations of identity in International Relations. I begin first with a brief discussion of the fundamental difference between rationalist and constructivist approaches to identity in International Relations. This will then be followed by a discussion and presentation of how identity construction has been understood and discussed in various social constructivist theories in International Relations. Following this will be a discussion of the processes and politics associated with the contestation and emergence of a dominant identity in a social context where multiple identities and an embarrassment of norms, both positive and negative, co-exist.[46] The final step

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[45] Tilly 1995, 1602.

[46] Jeffrey Checkel points out that there is an embarrassment of norms, a condition with consequences for our understanding of a socially constructed world that has been left

involves a discussion of how identity affects human action and more specifically here, the decisions that states make regarding territorial disengagement.[47]

1.4 Identity and International Relations

There is now considerable agreement among scholars who work under the rubric of constructivism that identity, understood as the product of social construction, matters in world politics.[48] For James Fearon and David Laitin, the instrumental constructions of identity by self-interested elites is the cause of ethnic violence and the intra- and inter-state conflict.[49] The nature of the postwar international order, according to John Ruggie, was not only due to the presence of a hegemon but to the fact that it was an *American* hegemony.[50] Mlada Bukovansky has highlighted the importance of a principled conception of American identity in explaining why a weak and divided eighteenth century American state clung to a neutral rights policy stubbornly and consistently despite inadequate national resources and constant challenges from far

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woefully under-theorized by scholars working under the constructivist IR rubric. For more, see Checkel 1998.

[47] Checkel 1998.

[48] While I begin from the perspective that identity is a social construction, there are arguments based on essentialist conceptualizations of identity. Essentialist perspectives view identity as a natural and objective part of social and political life, rooted in ancient cultural, ethnic, linguistic and civilizational ties. This argument that identities have a primordial and unchanging core has been overtaken and rendered obsolete by a burgeoning and cross-disciplinary literature that demonstrate that identities are invented and manufactured, arising out of social, economic and political forces.

[49] Fearon and Laitin 2000.

[50] Ruggie 1996.

stronger powers.[51] Ted Hopf's inductive study of Soviet identity in 1955 and Russian identity in 1999 show how they were the lenses through which its decision-makers understood other states in world affairs.[52] Peter Katzenstein has argued that Japan's definition of itself largely in economic terms shaped a security policy that went far beyond traditional military notions to include political and economic dimensions.[53] Katzenstein, along with other scholars like Robert Herman have also argued that state identity can change and its interests, along with it.[54] More recently, Janice Bially Mattern has boldly and brilliantly argued, contra neo-Realism and other rationalist perspectives, that identity is a fundamental source in shaping and securing international order.[55]

While united by the position that identity is important in giving us a more complete understanding of international relations, these studies, representing varying epistemological and ontological standpoints, are divided by *how* it actually matters. One of the primary divides lie between approaches like Fearon and Laitin's and those of Ruggie, Katzenstein, Bukovansky, Hopf and Mattern.[56] The former is anchored by neo-utilitarianism where identity is exterior to interests. In fact, identity, in rationalistic

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[51] Bukovansky 1997.

[52] Hopf 2002, xiv.

[53] Katzenstein and Okawara 1993, and Katzenstein 1996.

[54] Katzenstein 1996; and Herman (1996).

[55] Mattern 2005.

[56] There are differences even within this second group of scholars.

and neo-utilitarian accounts of world politics, becomes a function of what are pre-given and exogenous interests assumed to be the acquisition of power which can guarantee security and survival. John Mearsheimer for example, discussed the rise of nationalism and national identities in the post-Cold War period purely as a function of the structural conditions of the international system.[57] The logic of such explanations is built on the characterization of world politics as anarchical and therefore, a 'self-help system' where the threat of war are constant features of world politics. In these structural conditions, the national interest should be to ensure "that their countries possess as much power as possible, or at least enough power to guarantee their own security and survival."[58]

There are several problematic issues associated with this understanding of the national interests. First is the problematic claim of some neorealists that state interests is derived from the conditions of anarchy. As argued persuasively by Helen Milner, anarchy is an exceedingly slippery concept which makes the propositions that one can derive from it almost entirely indeterminate. Therefore, interests that have been derived from this understanding of anarchy can only be assumed.[59]

In addition, the phrase 'the national interest' may suggest policies "to promote demands that are ascribed to the nation rather than to individuals, sub-national groups, or mankind as a whole," but it may mean different things to different people.[60] During

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[57] Mearsheimer 1990.

[58] Ringmar 1996, 50.

[59] Ruggie 1998, 862.

[60] Wolfers 1962, 47.

the late 1920s and early 1930s in Britain for example, the 'national interest' vis-à-vis policy toward India was conceived very differently by Winston Churchill and the group he led when compared to the group led by Stanley Baldwin. The concept is extremely ambiguous and as Wolfers states, has "very little meaning."[61]

In a fundamental insight, constructivists argue that interests are not pre-formed or exogenous but rather, inextricably linked with identity. Beneath this consensus regarding the importance of identity to interests and by logical extension, the overall importance of identity, is a variety of theoretical approaches for understanding the various processes involved in identity construction, maintenance and change as well as the relationship between identity and human action. Subsequently, understanding its impact on politics and political behavior also vary according to how the nature of identity and the processes involved in its construction are conceptualized and theorized.

Theoretically, this dissertation is broadly interested in these processes and begins from the standpoint that there may be dominant state and national identities but they do not exist singly or alone, as many studies have demonstrated.[62] Moreover, collective ideas about the state or nation may be 'dominant' at a particular time but they are almost never uniformly and universally accepted by all. Instead, they are typically questioned, challenged and politically contested by individuals or groups offering different ideas about the state's collective distinctiveness and purpose.[63] The dominant Indonesian identity throughout most of the Suharto period for example, was rooted in a

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[61] Wolfers, 1962, 147.

[62] Katzenstein 1996; Hopf 2002; Smith 2003; and Goff and Dunn eds. 2004.

[63] Katzenstein 1996a, 6.

narrative where Indonesia's passage into nationhood and statehood was one of constant threat and danger to the collectivity. This identity however, was challenged and contested by another construction of Indonesian identity, one that promoted more democratic conceptions of itself.

More specifically, this dissertation will focus not only on the construction of identities, but their contestation, the emergence of the identity that mattered, and the interaction of these processes with the domestic political structure of the state in shaping and influencing foreign policy. It asks the following questions: What are the practices, processes, mechanisms, actors and politics involved in the construction and contestation of identities? Why does a particular identity matter at a specific period and not others? And how does one identity emerge as dominant? How do the emergent dominant identity *and* domestic political structures affect the decisions that states make regarding disengagement as well as the way in which disengagement takes place?

The next section of this chapter proceeds in two parts. The first begins by defining identity and presenting a critical discussion of one of the key aspects of Alexander Wendt's systemic constructivism, the most developed theoretical exposition on identity in International Relations. In the second half, I present and discuss various processes and mechanisms that are involved in the construction and contestation of identity, as well as the way in which identity shapes and influences the decisions that states make regarding territorial disengagement.

1.5 Social Constructivist Theories of Identity in International Relations

Definitions of identity, perhaps reflecting a concept that is notoriously difficult to pin down as well as the fact that constructivism is still relatively new in International

Relations, abound. Janice Bially Mattern defines it very generally as "the mutual, cognitive, sociological or emotional ties through which states understand themselves."[64] Jeffrey Legro together with Paul Kowert define it as "prescriptive representations of political actors themselves" as well as "their relationships to each other."[65] Peter Katzenstein gives the preceding definition greater specificity by defining these prescriptive representations as the "shorthand label for varying constructions of nation and statehood"[66] where nationhood refers to "the nationally varying ideologies of collective distinctiveness and purpose" while statehood refers to "state sovereignty, as it is enacted domestically and projected internationally."[67] For Mlada Bukovansky, identity is "not fully determined by geostrategic position, territory or population" but rather, it is "the interplay of material interests and political discourse [which] generates collective identity, articulated in terms of constitutive principles and role conceptions"[68] These principles are in turn, "the evocation of a vision of a set of expectations about how this role was to be enacted."[69]

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[64] Mattern 2005, 43. Her full definition of international identity is: "the mutual, cognitive, sociological or emotional ties through which states understand themselves, especially in relation to others, identity is an embodiment of shared categories of Self-other understanding" (43).

[65] Kowert and Legro 1996, 453.

[66] Katzenstein 1996a, 6.

[67] Katzenstein 1996a, 59.

[68] Bukovansky 1997, 210.

[69] Bukovansky 1997, 218.

In these definitions, there is one important commonality demonstrated in phrases like 'states understanding themselves' and 'prescriptive representations of political actors'. When American political actors, for example, refer to the United States as a democratic country founded on and constituted by freedom and liberty, they are presenting a specific definition and understanding of the nation. Amalgamating these definitions, this dissertation defines identity as a collective idea of how states understand themselves, usually in the form of prescriptive representations of collective distinctiveness and purpose.

How then is identity constructed and maintained? What are the processes involved in contestation and change? How does identity affect or influence politics and human behavior? There are no simple answers to these questions in International Relations and venturing into a theoretical discussion of these issues is to risk stepping into a quagmire of differences. These range from debates over whether analytic attention should be focused on the international level or at the domestic level to those on the processes and mechanisms that are involved in identity formation, maintenance and change.

1.5.1 Wendt's Systemic Constructivism

I begin my overview of how identity has been conceptualized and theorized with Alexander Wendt's *Social Theory of International Politics*, still the most discussed theoretical interjection on identity in International Relations.[70] According to Wendt,

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[70] While there are other notable contributions on identity like Campbell 1992, Doty 1996, Neumann 1999, Mattern 2005 and P.T. Jackson 2006, I focus and begin with Wendt because he has had the most influence on the field, spawning critiques and other scholarly work which draw on his insights.

there are four different kinds of identities: (1) personal or corporate, (2) type, (3) role, and (4) collective.[71] Personal or corporate identities are "constituted by the self-organizing, homeostatic structures that make actors distinct entities."[72] These structures refer to the essential properties and material base of actors – for a person it is the physical body while in the case of states, it is many bodies and territories. Most important in the personal or corporate identity of intentional actors "is a consciousness and memory of Self as a separate locus of thought and activity."[73] For states, their members require "joint narrative[s] of themselves as a corporate actor, and to that extent corporate identity presupposes individuals with a collective identity. The state is a 'group Self' capable of group-level cognition. These ideas of Self have an 'auto-genetic' quality, and as such personal and corporate identities are constitutionally exogenous to Otherness."[74]

Type identity on the other hand, refers to a social category or "label applied to persons who share (or are thought to share) some characteristic or characteristics, in appearance, behavioral traits, attitudes, values, skills (e.g. language), knowledge, opinions, experience, historical commonalities (like region or place of birth) and so on."[75] The characteristics that "underlie type identities are at base intrinsic to actors"

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[71] Wendt 1999, 224.

[72] Wendt 1999, 224.

[73] Wendt 1999, 225.

[74] Wendt 1999: 225.

[75] Wendt 1999, 225.

and are qualities that make the actor exist "whether or not Others are present to recognize them as meaningful."[76] In the states system, "type identities correspond to 'regime types' or 'forms of state,' like capitalist states, fascist states, monarchical states, and so on."[77]

The third category, 'role identity' are those identities that one can have through the occupation of a position in a social structure and adopting behavioral norms towards Others that possess relevant *counter*-identities. In other words, it is not based on intrinsic properties but "exist *only* in relation to Others."[78] The fourth and final category in Wendt's framework, collective identity, "is a distinct combination of role and type identities" which has "the causal power to induce actors to define the welfare of the Others as part of that of the Self, to be alternative."[79] Thus, it is a category of identity where the "Self-Other distinction becomes blurred" and "Self is 'categorized' as Other."[80]

Despite outlining these four types of identity, Wendt has chosen to focus primarily on a state's role identity which he argues is a cognitive schema of shared meanings, determined by a process of interactions with other states. Critically, this is a framework that focuses on the construction of identity at the systemic level. This is in

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[76] Wendt 1999, 226.

[77] Wendt 1999, 226.

[78] Wendt 1999, 227.

[79] Wendt 1999, 229.

[80] Wendt 1999, 229.

turn, built on the ontological assumption that all state identities are fundamentally corporal with certain essential properties, and can therefore, be bracketed and put aside. In doing so, Wendt is in effect excluding domestic processes and politics which he acknowledges to be important in the construction of state identity from his framework. This part of state identity therefore becomes ontologically prior to the states' system, 'exogenously given'."[81]

With this conceptualization of identity, Wendt therefore, "presents us with materially constituted, uncomplicated, preformed state actors ..."[82] They are states who interact with each other at the international level with "some pre-existing idea about who they are even beyond their awareness of their individuality and their ability to act."[83] This conceptualization and theorization of identity, as several critics have already noted, excludes historical, social, cultural, political and economic forces and institutions that have been influential in constituting the identities of states which are, as Sujata Chakrabarti Pasic points out, fundamentally and "in their entirety, social arrangements."[84] States, beyond their corporate and intrinsic properties like the claim to a monopoly on the legitimate use of organized violence, sovereignty, physical resources and territory, are "deeply social and socially contingent."[85] Hence, focusing on identity

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[81] Zehfuss 2001, 321.

[82] Pasic 1996, 89.

[83] Zehfuss 2001, 321; and Hopf 2002, 289.

[84] Pasic 1996, 90. For similar critiques, see Mattern 2005; Doty 2000; Behnke 2001; Zehfuss 2001.

[85] Pasic 1996, 90.

construction solely at the systemic level is problematic as it lacks "concrete conceptualization of identity formation that engages all the social levels of states' sociality."[86]

It is therefore, critical to unpack the blackbox of identity below the systemic level in order to provide a more complete understanding not only of the processes and mechanisms that are involved in identity construction but also, how identity shapes and influences foreign policy and more specifically in this dissertation, the decision to disengage from territorial or colonial possessions. While this is indeed a call to include the domestic level in our understanding of how identities are constructed, I am not eschewing the systemic level for a reductionist argument that a state's identity is only constructed at home. Instead of assuming the importance of either the systemic or the domestic level and therefore, prioritizing one over the other, I begin from the standpoint that this is an empirical question that can and should be examined.

Even as we leave this levels-of-analysis issue in identity construction as an open-ended question to be examined, the matter of *how* identities are constructed still remains. What are the practices, processes and mechanisms, actors and politics that are involved in the social construction of identity? I will turn to this question next by first outlining three mechanisms and processes that have been prominent in many studies of identity and identity construction. Although these three - the construction of identities against an Other, the construction of identities from social relationships with others, and the construction of identities through narratives - do not necessarily function independently of one another, I will discuss them separately here for heuristic purposes.

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[86] Pasic 1996, 89; and Zehfuss 2001, 335.

1.5.2 Constructing Identities: Processes and Mechanisms

1.5.2.1 Self/Other

Across disciplines like social anthropology, psychology, sociology, political science and critical social theory, there is a general consensus that the "lineation of an "in-group" usually entails its demarcation from a number of "out-groups," and that the demarcation is an active and ongoing part of identity formation."[87] Identity is not only relational but also inextricably linked to the notion of difference "since knowing who one is requires recognition of who one is not."[88] For example, a whole body of scholarly work from history, anthropology, English and Comparative literature on European colonialism of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have documented that the European Self was usually constructed against a colonial 'Other,' "usually through the employment of binary oppositions and the demarcating and policing of boundaries of difference."[89] The colonizer was often portrayed as the epitome of civilization and progress while the colonized were constructed as barbaric and backwards, its binary opposite.[90]

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[87] For example, see Barth 1969; Hogg and Abrams 1988; Tajfel and Turner 1985; Jenkins 1996; Connolly 1985; and Said 1978.
For a review of some of the developments regarding the construction of identity, and the production of boundaries in the literature in sociology, see Cerulo 1997 and Lamont and Volnar 2002 respectively.

[88] Phoenix 1998, 859.

[89] Dunn 2003, 27.

[90] Dunn 2003, 27. See also Doty 1996 and Said 1994.

In International Relations, many scholars of identity have also drawn on these insights and argued that identity is defined and constructed against an Other.[91] For example, David Campbell, in his important monograph, *Writing Security* (1992), argued that American identity was defined and constructed against an "Other" either from groups within the nation like women, the working class, East Europeans, Jews, African-Americans, and communists, or other states in the international system.[92] Iver Neumann argued that Russian identity was constructed against a European 'Other'.[93] Critically, the first wave of literature on the construction of identity in International Relations was based on an implicit and a priori assumption that "identity requires difference to be" but more importantly, "converts difference into otherness in order to secure its own self-certainty."[94] While this insight that identity is constructed against an Other is an extremely important component for understanding the overall puzzle of how identities are constructed and maintained, it is important to recognize that identities are sometimes but not always oppositional.[95] Ted Hopf's careful and detailed study of

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[91] See Neumann 1999; Todorov 1984; Campbell 1992; Doty 1996, and Goff and Dunn 237.
Some argue that an 'Other' is a necessary part of identity formation. For example, see Rumelili 2004. While this is outside the scope of this dissertation, it needs further study.

[92] See Campbell 1992 and Smith 1993. Among many others who have noted and documented this, see the work of Anders Stephanson and Emily Rosenberg on American foreign policy.
[93] Neumann 2002.

[94] Connolly 1991, 64. Connolly has been influential on the first group of International Relations scholars who drew inspiration from poststructuralism and were producing work in the 1980s and 1990s.

[95] Hopf 2002, 7.

Soviet identities in 1955 and Russian identities in 1999 has shown that binary oppositions and the resulting conflict and violence that seem to characterize such identity relations do not form the sum of all Self-Other relations.[96]

Following Hopf, I do not begin with the assumption that that identity is always constructed against a binary or oppositional Other.[97] Instead, the Self's treatment of difference with the Other is to be regarded as a critical empirical question.[98] Also to be treated as an empirical question is the issue of what constitutes an Other for any given Self.[99] Generally, the 'Other' is assumed and treated as synonymous with another state in International Relations. Again, this is an assumption that requires further examination.[100] Instead of another state, the Other could be in the form of "real others with whom we are currently involved; imagined others, including characters from our own past as from cultural narratives; historical others; and the generalized other."[101]

1.5.2.2 Symbolic Interactionism

The concepts developed in symbolic interactionism have also been utilized to develop a framework where state identities are constructed through social *interactions*

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[96] Hopf 2002, 264.

[97] Hopf 2002, 7.

[98] Hopf 2002, 7.

[99] Hopf 2002, 10.

[100] Hopf 2002, 263.

[101] Hopf 2002, 9.

with other states in the international systems.[102] Wendt for example, argues that identities "are learned and then reinforced in response to how actors are treated by significant Others."[103] Here, "actors come to see themselves as a reflection of how they think Others see or "appraise" them, in the "mirror" of Others' representations of the Self."[104] More specifically, a state's identity is constituted when it is named, recognized and validated through a process of interactions and social relationships with other states. Thus, identities are a product of social interactions – an individual's capacities, attitudes, ways of behaving, as well as her conception of herself may change based on how others may see or act towards him or her. Identities are also sustained by such interactions.[105]

In Wendt's framework, social interactions are an important part of a process that constructs state identities at the systemic level. These identities however, range narrowly from negative identification to positive identification with co-variation between relations of identity and difference, and co-operation and conflict. For example, when the other is seen as different, inferior and a threat, there is negative identification and relations are conflictual. In contrast, there is co-operation when the Self sees the Other as similar and non-threatening.[106] While Wendt's critics have

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[102] Wendt 1999.

[103] Wendt 1999, 327.

[104] Wendt 1999, 327.

[105] Wendt 1999, 331.

[106] Rumelili 2004, 34.

rightly pointed to the problems associated with this narrowly conceptualized range of identity relations, they should not detract from some of the broader insights present in his framework regarding identity construction. Particularly significant is the incorporation of social interaction and practices in the construction of identities, a process which other scholars have also noted in their work on identity.[107] As Goff and Dunn note, "not only does identity dictate practice; practice determines whether identity shall congeal around certain ideas or evolve."[108]

1.5.2.3 Narratives

Narratives based on certain historical events have also been important in the constitution of the identities of many states.[109] American identity has been constantly constructed and indelibly marked by dominant stories regarding the principles and ideals of its founding through history textbooks, the national monuments that dot Washington, D.C., movies as well as other cultural sites.[110] In the postwar period, Germany's role in World War II and the extermination of six million Jews did not just lead to serious 'soul-searching' but was particularly important in how Germans understood their past and envisioned their future as a political community and as a

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[107] See some of the contributions in the edited volume by Goff and Dunn 2004.

[108] Goff and Dunn 2004, 244.

[109] In International Relations, see the work of Barnett 1999 and Dunn 2004 who both draw on the work of sociologist Margaret Somers. See also Ringmar 1996, Mattern 2005, and Smith 2003 for his discussion of 'stories' of 'peoplehood'.

[110] See Klein 2000 on the 'return' of memory in the social sciences.

people.[111] Recently, observers have noted that stories stressing the humiliation that China experienced in its encounters with the West and Japan during the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries have accompanied the emergence of a more belligerent form of Chinese nationalism.[112] In Israel, the Holocaust has been a central part of how Israel understood itself not only as a victim but as a redeemer of this victimhood.[113]

In all these states, certain events have played an important role in these narratives regarding how these states and their people came into being. It is critical to understand that "events do not have an objective meaning" but rather, have been "made meaningful and intelligible by actors who locate them within an overarching narrative that provide a link between an interpretation of the past and image of the future."[114] In these narratives, a series of events are interpreted and cognitively connected together in causal and associational ways in an overall plot that provide communities with larger significance and meaning through "some understanding of its origins and its life

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[111] See Zehfuss 2002 for the impact of this identity on German foreign policy in the 1990s.

[112] Gries 2004.

[113] For a recent and fascinating application of narratives of the Holocaust in the constitution of Israeli identity, see Zertal 2006. Zertal also argues that this construction did not become part of the everyday until the Eichmann trial in the 1960s when Ben-Gurion's actions harvested these memories into a collective consciousness.

[114] Barnett 1999, 13.

history."[115] The establishment of such a narrative "constitutes one of the most important mechanism by which a nation constructs a collective identity."[116]

What however, are the engines driving these mechanisms and processes in the construction of identities? Identities are not constructed against an Other based on some externally determined truth. Neither are they the passive product of repeated social interactions, or free-floating and already formed narratives.[117] In other words, identities do not simply emerge out of a social and political vacuum. They are articulated, constructed, circulated and contested by actors. Therefore, it is essential to examine and *not* to assume away the role of human agency and the politics that are involved in identity construction, contestation and change.[118]

1.5.3 Agency and Structure in Identity Construction

One approach that does focus on the role of agency and politics in identity construction is that of elite manipulation or strategic choice theories.[119] In these theories where constructivist explanations have merged with rationalist, strategic analyses, identities are constructed either strategically or as a by-product of the efforts

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[115] Barnett 1999, 13.

[116] Barnett 1999, 12.

[117] Mattern 2005, 13.

[118] Katzenstein 1996b and for the importance of investigating where norms come from, see Checkel 1998, 339.

[119] Fearon and Laitin 2000.

of cynical, self-interested political elites to acquire or strengthen their hold on power.[120] Identities are thus really epiphenomenal, used to stir up the masses and justify a particular policy. These theories are however, problematic as they cannot account for why the masses would find these messages based on identity particularly compelling especially when it could lead to civil war and high overall costs. These strategies are therefore not always subjectively rational nor politically successful.[121]

Moreover, political disputes and conflict over identity may very well emerge from political actors who see the construction of a certain sort of life and collective ideas of identity in the form of ideas regarding political ideals of citizenship and states, notions of governance and proposals for specific institutions, such as political constitutions, legal systems, rules of property[122] which "successful political actors incorporate into their political programs, politics, and personal identities and ambitions"[123] as their highest ideal.[124] Thus, these disputes could very well be over identities and competing political perspectives on the nation's true mission as well as the means of achieving them.[125]

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[120] Fearon and Laitin 2000, 853.

[121] Brubaker 1998, 291.

[122] Haas 1993, 508.

[123] Smith 2003, 46.

[124] Smith 2003, 37.

[125] Beissinger 1998, 171; and Smith 2003.

Perhaps more importantly, instrumentalist approaches as well as those that emphasize the importance of language, discourses and culture in the construction of identities tend to create a false dichotomy between structure and agency. On one level, actors do have agency, can be strategic, and may indeed, deliberately construct identities to "convince each other as well as the general public that certain policy proposals constitute plausible and acceptable solutions to pressing problems."[126] They are therefore, not only "bearers of structures" but can "engage in practices that attempt to rewrite the cultural landscape..."[127] However, the focus on strategic calculations made by self-possessed actors advances too radical a "separation of the material and the ideational."[128] Actors may construct identities for strategic reasons but their strategies as well as their interests do not materialize from thin air in a pre-given and already constituted form, as implicitly assumed by instrumentalist and elite manipulation approaches.[129] Actors can and do act but they may also do so from their knowledge and awareness of the normative and social structures which constrain and determine what are considered to be legitimate strategies.[130]

In short, any account of the construction of identities that takes agency into account must recognize that actors can and do act strategically and are "capable of

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[126] Barnett 1999, 8.

[127] Barnett 1999, 7.

[128] Barnett 1999, 7.

[129] Brubaker 1998, 292.

[130] Barnett 1999, 8.

appropriating ... cultural taproots for various ends."[131] At the same time, such an account should not neglect the underlying structure of cultural and social rules that may constitute and constrain their practices.[132] Thus "the attempt to reduce action to either rule-governed action or strategic behavior might be analytically seductive but it forces false choices and fails to recognize what makes social action what it is."[133]

The next section delves further and deeper into the issue of identity contestation by building a framework that examines the question of when and why it take place.

1.5.3.1 Stages of Identity Contestation

This dissertation adopts Peter Haas', Ian Lustick's and J. Legro's theoretical frameworks of contestation of ideas to examine, outline and explain the political processes and mechanisms involved in the contestation of identity.[134] While identity contestation is by no means neatly demarcated, it is conceived here in three stages to aid conception and analysis of the processes. The three stages are as follows:

1. Changing internal or external political, social and economic conditions arise to challenge dominant conceptions of state or national identity.
2. The presence of an appropriate alternative to the dominant state or national identity which provides a different conception of state- or nationhood.

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[131] Barnett 1999, 7.

[132] Barnett 1999, 8.

[133] Barnett 1999, 27.

[134] Haas 1992/1996; Lustick 1993; and Legro 2005. See also Ringmar 1996, 83-5.

3. The presence of dedicated political-ideological entrepreneurs who are able to push the alternative onto the political stage and to persuade others to accept it as the right way to conceive state- or nationhood.

In stage 1, changing internal or external political, social and economic conditions may challenge collective ideas about the state and nation especially when they lead to growing discrepancies between the dominant identity's stated mission and political objectives and its ability to translate them into success. In particular, social expectations that have been derived from collective ideas or principles that guide state behavior may interact with the experienced consequences of the changing conditions or critical events to create a ripe situation where the dominant identity and its attendant ideas and principles of state- and nationhood can be contested.[135] Thus, these collective ideas do not only contain "a notion of appropriate action but also a portrayal of what consequences constitute a success (or are socially desired) and what ones are a failure (as opposed to success)."[136]

Contestation however, will also require the presence of alternative conceptions of state- or nationhood (or stage 2). As Lustick points out, "no politician, confronted with beliefs honored or advanced as hegemonic, is likely to treat them as problematic unless another available schema can articulate those beliefs as an interpretation of reality and the imperatives of national life, rather than as the direct and unavoidable

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[135] Legro 2005, 29.

[136] Legro 2005, 30.

expression of immutable facts and ultimate values."[137] Following Rogers Smith, I argue that alternatives are generally not simply created or invented from scratch. Instead, they are usually "largely generated by, motivated by, and also meaningfully limited by the particular range of stories of possible political identity that they have inherited and long valued."[138] These may be narratives and stories that arise from myths, legends and a country's founding. It must however, be noted that these narratives or stories are complex which provides some degree of malleability, flexibility, and reinterpretation.[139]

Critically, the political impact of these alternatives are dependent on political and ideological entrepreneurs, e.g. leaders, intellectuals as well as their organizations (stage 3). These entrepreneurs are necessary to push the alternatives onto the political stage and to persuade other political actors of the rightness of the identity and its related ideas and principles of state- and nationhood for the country. Since several alternatives may be present, it is also important to note that the conception that will emerge and matter ultimately is the one wielded by entrepreneurs who are most successful in their efforts of transmission and persuasion.

1.5.4 Identity, Interests and Action

In this section, I address the relationship between identity, interests and action. What is the relationship between identity and interests? How does identity work itself

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[137] Lustick 1993, 123.

[138] Smith 2003, 48.

[139] Smith 2003, 48.

into the realm of human action and behavior in international relations? Without eschewing the pursuit of interests as an important reason for action, I argue, following Alexander Wendt, Erik Ringmar and others that "it is only once we know who we are that we can know what we *want*."[140] Identity, because it provides us with ideas of who we are, provide a basis for seeing the world. As Roger Brubaker argues:

> "It furnishes a mode of vision and division of the world, to use Pierre Bourdieu's phrase, a mode of social counting and accounting. Thus it inherently links identity and interest – by *identifying how we are to calculate our interests.*"[141]

It therefore precedes the definition of interests "and the formulation of particular actions in certain situations or interest areas"[142] as identity may "makes some action legitimate and intelligible and others not so."[143]

Specifically, identity may frame issues in a different way and lead to a reconstitution of the country's national interests, paving the way for a new policy to be formulated and implemented. In the case of territorial disengagement and decolonization, new or newly emergent and dominant identities may have altered the way actors understand and constitute their interests. When confronted by the issue of colonial or territorial possessions, old policies may no longer be compelling or logical for political actors with the new conception of state- or nationhood.

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[140] Ringmar 1996, 13; and Wendt 1999, 231.

[141] Brubaker 1998, 291.

[142] Ringmar 1996, 13.

[143] Barnett 1999, 10.

Besides shaping interests, there is another important dimension to identity which links it to action. A wide range of scholars who work from varying epistemological and ontological viewpoints have noted that while identities are indeed constructed, thinking, imagining and inventing them is only part of the process. A second and equally critical dimension involved in the substantiation of identities comes from acting and performing these identities in the process of becoming.[144] States, as Legro notes, "become what they do as much as they do what they are..."[145]

In order to understand this, it is critical to note that identities are intersubjective. By intersubjective, I mean that they are not only understandings of the self but rather, shared understandings and ideas regarding the self and other that can only be produced and sustained from social relationships and interactions with others.[146] As Wendt puts it, "identities and interests are not only learned in interaction .... But sustained by it."[147] This is in contrast to primordialist accounts where identity amounts to something substantive and which can stand on its own. It is, in other words, "an identification process, not an identity condition."[148]

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[144] See Campbell 1992; Laffey 2000; Mattern 2005; and Jackson and Nexon 1999 on the importance of practices and processes for identity construction and maintenance.

[145] Legro 2005, 20.

[146] Mattern 2005, 49.

[147] Mattern 2005, 50.

[148] Mattern 2005, 51.

For an individual or group which is trying to establish a contested and new identity, the intersubjectivity and social nature of identity is particularly important.[149] Following Erik Ringmar, I argue that there are limits to the ability of states to construct their identities. State X cannot construct, declare or imagine an identity into existence all on its own. Due to their social character, identities cannot be decided by individuals alone. Instead, this decision, as Erik Ringmar, following G.W.F. Hegel and sociologists like George Herbert Mead and Alessandro Pizzorno, argues, "is always taken together with others."[150] Part of this sociality involves the need for "*recognition* for the persons we take ourselves to be, and only as *recognized* can we conclusively come to establish an identity."[151] Thus, these constructions and declarations will depend on the reaction and more importantly, the recognition of the audiences, both domestic and international, to whom they are addressed. Recognition of the declared identity is rarely automatic and will involve proving that our interpretations fit us.[152] In order to do so, "we are often forced to *act* - ... to convince people regarding the applicability of our self-descriptions."[153] While there are many others ways to do so, e.g. through discussion or arguments, it is

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[149] Ringmar 1996, 80.

[150] Ringmar 1996, 14.

[151] Ringmar 1996, 14; and Mattern 2005, 51.

[152] Ringmar 1996, 14.

[153] Ringmar 1996, 13-14.

"only through *action* can we provide the kind of final, decisive evidence that *proves* the others wrong. The action will be there for everyone to see and as such it will be an irrefutable manifestation of our character, our action will encroach upon our detractors and force them to reconsider their views."[154]

Thus, identity does not only shape interests and influence action, it is also at the heart of actions to "defend a certain conception of who they are."[155] In other words, "we act, that is, not only because there are things we want to have, but also because there are persons we want to *be*."[156] The need for recognition is especially strong during periods when meanings and categories of self-understandings or identities are contested.[157] During these periods in which multiple interpretations or identities may be available and still circulating in the social and political discourse, the identity that may have emerged as a dominant one needs to be consolidated and it is during these times that states are in particular need of acting or presenting displays and manifestations of "visible signs that we indeed are persons of a particular kind: it is only if other people see us in a certain way that they are able to draw conclusions regarding our character. By facilitating identification, display also makes it possible to draw the boundary between those who belong to a certain group and those who do not."[158]

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[154] Ringmar 1996, 83.

[155] Ringmar 1996, 3.

[156] Ringmar 1996, 3.

[157] Ringmar calls these 'formative moments' in his framework. It is similar to the framework that has been outlined in section 1.5.3 and also as presented by Haas 1992/1996, Lustick 1993 and Legro 2005.

[158] Ringmar 1996, 87.

1.6 Domestic Political Systems and the Manner in Which State Contraction Takes Place

While the emergence of a dominant identity is important for explaining the changes in the way states have approached the issue of disengagement, there are differences in the withdrawal process even after the decision to do so has been made. Why are some of these processes peaceful while others are scenes of prolonged, bloody and violent struggles? This section outlines and discusses the way in domestic political structures may have an impact on way in which identity is involved in territorial disengagement[159] while section 4.2 of Chapter 4 will discuss its theoretical significance in greater detail.

Domestic political systems can vary along two dimensions – the institutionalized structure of the decision-making process and the degree to which the rules and norms governing the outcome of political contestation may or may not be well institutionalized. For the first dimension, they may range from unitary political systems where decision-making is highly centralized to multiparty parliamentary systems or fragmented democratic political systems like the American system where intra- and inter-branch struggle have been built into the structures of government from the start allowing for greater recourse to other branches of government and centers of power should disagreement exist.[160] More specifically, the more fragmented the decision-making process in a political system, the more veto players, defined here as an

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[159] This section draws on insights from Spruyt 2005; Snyder 1991; and Snyder 2000.

[160] Tichenor 2002, 30.

"individual or collective actor whose agreement is necessary for a change of the status quo,"[161] it has.

In systems where there are multiple veto players with the means and institutional opportunity to block or oppose the passage of a policy, it is more difficult to resolve issues of contestation to identity or to implement changes that may have emerged from the rise of a dominant one. On the other hand, in highly centralized political systems with one veto player system, changes are more likely to be implemented once accepted and adopted. Hence, "the number of veto players influences the latitude that governments will have to change policy. If a proposed policy confronts many veto players with variant preferences, the veto of any player can forestall compromise."[162]

The second dimension refers to the degree to which the rules and norms governing the outcome of political contestation may or may not be well institutionalized. In mature democratic systems like Britain's, decision-making is fairly centralized and there are "free, fair and periodic elections in which a substantial proportion of the adult population can vote; the actions of officials are constrained by constitutional provisions and commitments to civil liberties; and government candidates sometimes lose elections and leave office when they do."[163] In such systems, rules, norms and regulations governing the outcome of political contests have been institutionalized. Thus, challenges to identity and the eventual reconstitution of state interests in favor of disengagement take place in circumstances where actors will abide

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[161] Tsebelis 1999, 591.

[162] Spruyt 2005, 7.

[163] Snyder 2000, 26.

by the outcomes of these contests and the decisions that follow. In these circumstances, the withdrawal process is likely to be peaceful.

Highly centralized and unitary political systems like Indonesia's are characterized by an oligarchical distribution of power, weak administrative and representative institutions, and few rules or norms which may constrain political actors. In such systems, the process of identity contestation is only possible when there are openings or ruptures in the system, e.g. when a dictator loses power. The replacement of the main center of power by another may provide the opening for the emergence of a new identity and the implementation of new policies. At the same time however, contestation of identity may be extremely fraught and difficult to resolve as there may be other actors who are still jostling for power during such transitional periods. Since actors in such systems are also *less likely* to abide by institutional rules, norms and regulations governing outcomes of these contests, disengagement may be violent as these actors may turn to other means of over-turning the decision.

1.7 Methodology

In analyzing not only how identity matters but more specifically, how the contestation of identity, mediated through domestic political structures, may affect the decisions states make regarding disengagement from their colonies and other territorial possession as well as the manner in they disengage, two cases of multinational states which backed down from previously entrenched positions on disputed lands were selected. The first concerns Britain and its response to Indian nationalist challenges and demands from 1929 to 1934. This was a critical period for this relationship because the proposed series of constitutional reforms purportedly aimed at the gradual transfer of

power from Britain to India was the site of the most bitter political battle ever fought over a colony in Britain. The decisions that were made then would go on to have significant influence on the course of events that would culminate in India's independence in August 1947. The second case focuses on Indonesia's response to growing calls for self-determination in East Timor and its withdrawal in 1999 after steadfastly refusing to countenance any changes to its policy throughout its twenty-four year occupation.

These cases were selected in order to ensure some degree of similarity across a denominator that is most likely to have an effect on the processes and mechanisms related to identity - the heterogeneity or homogeneity of its population. Requirements in relatively homogeneous countries like Japan and Germany would probably differ from heterogeneous countries in the building of a common identity for their citizens. Here, two heterogeneous countries – multinational Britain which encompassed England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and Indonesia were selected in order to provide a better basis for understanding how some of the processes related to identity construction, contestation and change may unfold under the broadest of these domestic conditions.

At the same time, the selection of these cases which differ along other dimensions and contexts rather than two identical or very similar cases will also provide more confidence for understanding how identity affects territorial disengagement. In other words, examining these cases will provide an opportunity for "showing that a particular model or sets of concepts usefully illuminates these cases."[164]

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[164] Collier 1993, 108.

Since this project is also interested in the domestic processes and mechanisms involved in identity construction, contestation and change as well as the way in which identity shapes and influences policy in international relations, it begins with few theoretical assumptions about identity. Instead, the focus is on extrapolating theoretical insights about identity from the empirical evidence of the two cases which have been gathered through adopting several of the following overlapping steps - establishing the presence of identities in the cases for the periods examined and in the discourses of the relevant political elites, process-tracing, and pattern-matching.

In order to study identity, I concentrated on the place where it is mainly produced – in the arguments, narratives and discourses of political elites. Specifically, I examined the arguments, narratives and discourses of political elites like legitimate decision and policymakers within a state, party elites and other influential members of society in order to understand the chief ideas and principles characterizing a particular vision of nationhood or statehood. This was accomplished mostly through studying political debates, official publications, statements, memos, speeches, memoirs of leading statesmen and newspaper articles related to the issue of the colony or territorial possession. Secondary sources which discussed and analyzed representations of a state's identity at various cultural sites ranging from art and architecture, travel books, novels, monuments, museums, history texts, and movies were also used to complement this research.

In terms of empirical evidence, the type collected and the way it was collected differed across the two cases examined in this dissertation. For Britain and India, archival sources examined included the discussions, debates and decisions of British

party and policy elites surrounding constitutional reform for India between 1929 and 1934. More specifically, these included primary archival sources like Conservative Party documents, British parliamentary debates, and official and conference reports related to the issue of constitutional reforms for India during this period. Besides these primary documents, the general pervasiveness of this identity was also established through a wide and critical reading of secondary material which discussed representations of Britishness in novels, travel books, children's novels, and art and architecture.

In the case of Indonesia and East Timor, I examined a variety of material. For the Suharto period, I first examined primary Australian, American as well as British government documents which reported on meetings between their government representatives and those from Indonesia between 1974 and 1975. Since government memos and other primary documents from the Indonesian government are not available, these Australian, American and British documents were the next best option. Moreover, examining documents from these three different governments allowed for comparison of similarities and differences in how Indonesian officials discussed the matter of East Timor and as a result, greater confidence in the reliability of the material consulted. Other primary material examined for the Suharto period included newspaper articles, official publications, statements, speeches, memoirs as well as some memos from the Indonesian military which had emerged into the public sphere regarding East Timor. In order to establish the general pervasiveness of the identity being discussed, I also examined the dominant representations and narratives of Indonesian identity during

the Suharto period through critical secondary sources which analyzed monuments, national museums, history textbooks and movies.

For the Habibie period, interviews were conducted with proponents of change like senior members of the Indonesian government at that time, as well as non-governmental organizations who were in favor of disengaging from East Timor. Also interviewed were individuals from the military who were against disengagement from Indonesia. Information and views from newspaper articles and publications from these organizations were examined in order to supplement the interviews.

Secondary historical studies have also been used to construct the background narrative of the cases involved. Here, I presumed that "narratives consist of a normal distribution of implicit theoretical commitments."[165] In order to avoid selection bias particularly in the case of Britain, there was explicit consideration of the historiographical terrain. More specifically, the background narrative was constructed through quasi-triangulation using the claims of different historians based on different archival sources and/or implicitly theoretic or political angles.[166]

In order to trace the relationship between identity, and a state's decision to disengage from its colony or territorial possession, as well as the relationship between domestic political structures and the manner in which states disengage, this dissertation uses the process-tracing method. In this method, the chain of events or the decision-making process which connects initial case conditions with the outcomes are

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[165] Lustick 1996.

[166] Lustick 1996, 616.

examined.[167] Process-tracing is a particularly suitable method as it allows for the unfolding of the "cause-effect link that connects independent variable to [the] outcome" whereby "the investigator looks for observable evidence of each step."[168] In other words, process-tracing allows for the tracing of the relationship between the dominant identity and the stages involved in the decision-making of the case being examined.[169]

Finally, confidence in the dissertation's account was established using pattern-matching where an empirically-based pattern is compared with a predicted one. More specifically, the empirical evidence from these cases were matched against the theoretical account proposed in this project and those of alternative theoretical approaches. For example, Realism would predict that Britain would maintain its hold on India; and for Indonesia not to have even annexed East Timor since it was of little material benefit to the archipelago. A theory based on the role of positive norms on the other hand, would have predicted the absence of any contemplation on the part of the Indonesians to annex East Timor in 1975. If alternative theories of international politics such as realism and a constructivist approach based on norms are unable to provide a more complete and satisfactory explanation of the outcomes of both cases in comparison to the framework offered here, this should provide some confidence in the validity of my theoretical account.

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[167] George and McKeown 1985.

[168] Van Evera 1997, 64-66.

[169] Bennett and George 1997.

1.8 The Road Ahead: A Brief Chapter Outline

Chapters 2 of this dissertation examines the case of Britain and the reaction of British political elites to calls for constitutional reforms in India between 1929 and 1934. Chapter 3 provides an in-depth discussion of the case of Indonesia and East Timor during the stasis of the Suharto period and discusses the transformations that took place between mid-1998 through 1999 when new Indonesian leadership initiated the processes of disengagement. Chapter 4, the concluding chapter of the dissertation, summarizes the specific empirical findings of both cases and their implications for territorial disengagement. It will also summarize the processes and mechanisms involved in identity construction, contestation, change, the impact of identity on policy in these two cases as well as general theoretical implications on how identity can be understood in International Relations.

CHAPTER 2

THE QUESTION OF INDIA: THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE DIEHARDS AND THE REFORMERS IN BRITAIN, 1929-1935

> "Responsibility at the centre to some people appears to be one of the Ten Commandments that you must always observe, and to others it appears the unforgivable sin that you must never commit."[1]

2.1 Introduction

When India became an independent and sovereign nation in 1947, Britain appeared to have given up the lynchpin of its empire and its "secret to the mastery of the world"[2] without as much as a whimper. In 1947, this may have appeared to be the case but the profound changes leading to the end of this imperial relationship did not only begin during the 1940s. Substantial changes also took place in 1919, and between 1929 and 1935. The latter period, culminating in the 1935 Government of India Act, challenges most perspectives that portray Britain's disengagement from India as one that was uncontested. It was in fact, the period in which the fiercest and most sustained political battle was fought in twentieth century British politics over India or more generally, over any colony of the British empire. This six-year battle and its outcome was a major turning point in British politics regarding the question of India and forms the focus of this chapter.[3]

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[1] Samuel Hoare, House of Commons Debates, 260, c.1210 (2 December 1931).

[2] Quoted in Bridge 1986, 2.

[3] On the critical significance of this period, see Ball 1988, 128-9; and Pugh 1992.

2.2 Interwar Britain And The Question Of India

During World War I, the government of David Lloyd George and self-avowed imperialists in his cabinet like Lord Birkenhead approved the 1917 Montagu Declaration which stated that British policy was the "'increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.'"[4] While this declaration was made in recognition of the need to keep India 'contented and supportive' due to its crucial monetary and manpower contributions to the British war effort, it was in fact followed by changes on the ground when the 1919 Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were implemented. These reforms devolved power from the centre to the provinces through the introduction of a new constitutional structure called dyarchy. In this structure, government functions were divided between the provinces and the center, with Indians controlling policy at the local and provincial level, and the British holding on to foreign affairs, defense and the economy, matters they regarded as the central areas of policy. At the provincial level, power over governmental functions was again divided between the British and the Indians. 'Transferred' subjects like education, health, agriculture, public works and local self-government were placed under the responsibility of Indian ministers who had to answer to the legislature and through it, the electorate. 'Reserved' subjects like law and order, finance, irrigation, land revenue administration and control

[4] Boyce 1999, 89-90.

of newspapers, books and presses on the other hand, were under the control of the British-appointed Governor and his executive council.[5]

During this period in which the 1919 reforms were being implemented, Mahondas K. Gandhi emerged as a pivotal figure in the Indian Congress Party and Indian politics.[6] His strategy of *satyagraha* or peaceful resistance to perceived injustice was a potently symbolic and effective means of challenging British colonial rule. Phases of direct, non-violent opposition to the Raj took place, for example, between 1920 and 1922, and between 1930 and 1934. This method of resisting and contesting colonial rule also alternated with participation in constitutional work of the legislatures. While Congress' appeal in India spread widely during this period, the strength of its challenge to colonial rule was diluted by the problematic issue of its legitimacy as the national voice - "'Liberal' politicians, articulate Untouchables, many Muslims and other religious minorities, and India's princes and many of the substantial landowners with a stake in the established order were deeply suspicious of Congress and resentful of its exclusivist claims to speak for India."[7]

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[5] Brown 1994, 207.

[6] Metcalf and Metcalf argue that the reforms might have been accepted had it not been for the Rowlatt Acts which allowed the British to maintain the powers of detention and trial without jury that had been enforced (2002: 166). These measures evoked intense hostility from Indians who viewed them as a bitter reward for their wartime sacrifices and provoked protest like the effective nationwide work stoppages that were linked to marches in major cities. Second, the failure of the British to wholly repudiate the 1919 Jalllianwalla Bagh massacre of unarmed protestors at Amritsar and the responsible British officer led to a loss of faith in Britain's good intentions. It also became an extremely significant symbol of colonial injustice.

[7] Brown 1998, 434.

In Britain, the issue of constitutional reforms and the promise of self-government for India only exploded onto the political arena in 1929 with the Irwin Declaration despite the 1919 reforms and developments in India. Initiated by Lord Irwin, the Viceroy of India, the declaration stated formally that in the British view "the natural issue of India's constitutional progress … is the attainment of Dominion status."[8] By 1929, a different definition of 'Dominion status' that was more expansive than previously understood which had implied a measure of subordination to the British Parliament, was already in the public domain. More specifically, Dominion status in this new definition meant "autonomous communities within the British empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations."[9]

The Irwin Declaration had two immediate consequences. First, it rendered the ongoing work of the Simon Commission, appointed in 1927 to review the effectiveness of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, moot.[10] Headed by Sir John Simon, the Commission toured India for 18 months and was only able to conclude in 1930, months after Irwin had already issued his Declaration, that major problems like communalism, ineffective provincial councils, and the lack of a true party system still existed. Since

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[8] Irwin was a Liberal Tory and Viceroy of India from 1926-1931. He was nominated to the position by Stanley Baldwin who was also a personal friend.

[9] Moore 1983.

[10] Boyce 1999, 92. It was appointed early because the Tory government wanted to appoint the members in anticipation of a possibly Liberal government coming to power in the next election.

the resolution of these problems were considered essential for further progress in India's path to self-government, the Simon report did not endorse further reforms at that time.

Second, the Irwin Declaration quickly became the source of debate and protest in British politics. The declaration had been possible in large part due to happenstance – a series of misunderstandings between the Simon Commission, the then Labour Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, and Stanley Baldwin, the leader of the Conservative Party, allowed it to slip through without much notice.[11] By the time these misunderstandings came to light in the week preceding the announcement, copies of the Declaration had already been released to Indian leaders. Postponing or reversing it was therefore impossible despite the protests of Conservative and Liberal party experts on India and most members of the Simon Commission.

In Britain, the battle lines over the right approach to the question of India were drawn in late November that year. MacDonald supported and upheld Irwin's initiative but he had to refer it to the leaders of the Liberal and Conservative parties as he lacked a parliamentary majority. Moreover, the genesis of the 1919 Act in a coalition of the political parties in Britain and the all-party make-up of the Simon Commission dictated that MacDonald and Labour would not be able to make any unilateral decisions.[12] Important figures of both the Liberal and Conservative parties strongly contested the

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[11] MacDonald had sent notice of Irwin's initiative to Baldwin who received it when he was at Bourges, en route to Aix-les-Bains, France. Assuming the agreement of the Statutory Commission and without consulting his colleagues, Baldwin approved the plan. The Commission on the other hand, had not seen the draft statement but MacDonald's government assumed its acquiescence as its chairman, Sir John Simon, knew of it. Similarly, Simon assumed that the initiative had Baldwin's approval when the Government proceeded with it.

[12] Moore 1983, 11.

Irwin Declaration and in particular, its seeming promise that Dominion status implied greater autonomy and independence, a stage that was far in advance of responsible self-government.[13] Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India (1924 – 1928) and a member of the Tories, described the declaration as making 'an indication never made before.' Reading of the Liberal Party, "objected to the declaration chiefly because Indians would view it as an advance in policy and demand early implementation."[14] Stanley Baldwin was however the pivotal exception in these ranks. He supported Irwin's initiative despite being charged "with jettisoning the empire"[15] and more importantly, the challenge to his leadership mounted by a Conservative-Liberal coalition.

While the Irwin initiative was upheld in 1929, there was continued and steadily increasing domestic opposition in Britain to any changes in the country's India policy over the next several years. This political battle over the question of India reached a peak in Britain in 1934-35.[16] During this two-year period, the White Paper for what eventually became the Government of India Act of 1935 was scrutinized and bitterly contested by both its proponents and opponents.[17] The latter were all members of the Conservative Party and led by Winston Churchill. This group of diehards was uncompromising in their opposition to these reforms, arguing that they were an

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[13] Moore 1983, 11.

[14] Moore 1983, 12.

[15] Moore 1983, 11-12.

[16] Ghosh 1972, 117.

[17] Entitled *Proposals for Indian Constitutional Reform* (CMD 4268), the White Paper was hammered out in twenty-one meetings over a marathon six-week period in late 1932 by the British government's Cabinet India Committee.

abdication of Britain's responsibility to India. Proponents of these reforms, also from the Conservative Party and led by Stanley Baldwin, were convinced that the implementation of these constitutional reforms would be the best and most effective means of addressing the growing demands for self-government and independence in India. While both had the same goal of holding India to the empire, these two groups had very different ideas of how it could be achieved.

The bitter battle underlines the extreme controversy of the 1935 Act which eventually passed after being the subject of approximately 2000 parliamentary speeches.[18] Forced through by a coalition National government that was helmed by former Labour leader, Ramsay MacDonald, and underpinned by a Conservative majority in parliament, this Act created a federation encompassing all of India, and gave Indians effective self-government at the provincial level and majority representation in the central government.[19] Responsibility in the areas of foreign affairs and defense was however, retained by the British.[20] The passage of this Act was both a major loss for diehard imperialists and a major political shift on the issue of India in Britain as the diehards did not and could not raise another battle like this again[21] - not in 1947 when

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[18] Rubinstein 2003, 64, and Pugh 1999, 242. It became the most voluminous bill ever passed at that time.

[19] Pugh 1999, 242.

[20] Boyce 1999, 93. The constitutions of Britain's white Dominions, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada formed the model for the Act though it differed from them in several important ways.

[21] Pugh 1992.

Clement Attlee's Labour Government set a timetable for British withdrawal from India nor in the 1950s and 1960s when most of Britain's colonies became independent.

The next section of this chapter first examines several important factors that may have played a role in the passage of the 1935 Act. The final part of the section then focuses on the battle between the diehards and the reformers during the passage of the act and more generally, between 1929 and 1935. Did this battle merely represent superficial differences between two groups whose ultimate aim was the retention of British power and supremacy? Were domestic interest groups with economic stakes in India involved in influencing the positions of the diehards and the reformers? Was the question of India part of a cynical strategy by these two groups in their own fight over political power and the leadership of the Conservative Party? What was the battle about?

2.3 Alternative Explanations

There is no doubt that India was central to the power and material interests of the British for a long period of time. India was a key staging post in imperial communications and the base of a low-cost imperial army. It also held a key position in Britain's overseas trade network and investments which generated sterling remittances. It was also a source of export of unskilled, indentured labour within the empire and a place where Britons could find employment.[22] This importance was reflected in their imperial and diplomatic strategies between the Napoleonic Wars and World War I and acknowledged by men like Lord Curzon who, in a letter to Arthur Balfour in 1901, said:

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[22] Low 1997, 27; Friedberg 1988, 218; and Brown 1998, 426.

"As long as we rule India we are the greatest power in the world. If we lose it, we shall drop straight away to a third rate power."[23]

By the early part of the twentieth century however, the relationship was changing. The system of indentured labor had been terminated in 1917 while opportunities for expatriate employment had decreased as an increasing number of Indians joined the military, police, and civilian services.[24] Britain's fiscal and commercial relationship with India was also undergoing such drastic changes that the latter became the holder of a sizeable sterling balance that was draining Britain's scarce resources. Instead of shoring up Britain's material power, India was turning into a net liability.[25] Despite these changes, there were no decisions made to cut India adrift. There is in fact little concrete evidence to suggest that material factors were primary in British decisions regarding India's political future. Even in the critical period after World War II when Britain was facing a financial Dunkirk, economic issues, and in particular, the massive debt which Britain had incurred from India, were considered by "Treasury and cabinet as a 'technical', short-term aberration and it did not figure in their high political decision-making over India."[26]

A second argument along the realist vein points to these reforms as a means of stemming its quickly eroding position in India and holding it to the empire in the

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[23] Quoted in Friedberg 1988, 220.

[24] Brown 1998, 439.

[25] Holland 1991.

[26] Brasted and Bridge 1994, 110.

ultimate effort to maintain Britain's diminishing power around the globe.[27] Thus, the 1935 Act was an inevitable or inescapable conclusion for British politicians and policymakers and nothing more than a means of satisfying and co-opting the forces of nationalism in order to prolong the British hold on India.[28] While I do not dispute that the relevant politicians in Britain wanted India to remain part of the empire, I argue that realist approaches that point to this are incomplete because they start from the assumption that there was a unitary voice representing the British state and its interests. In reality, there was no pre-formed unitary voice. Instead, there were two main groups, as discussed later in this section, who despite having the same goal of holding India to the empire, had competing positions regarding how these interests could be best achieved.

Domestic-level explanations focused on groups and political parties may provide some insight into these competing positions. In early twentieth century Britain, the area of Lancashire had the most to lose from the implementation of the 1935 Government of India Act. Before 1914, Lancashire's industries produced a quarter of all British exports and employed nearly a million people.[29] India was in turn vital to Lancashire's continued prosperity as it was the largest market of the latter's cotton textile industry, absorbing half of its total exports.[30] During the interwar period

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[27] Brown 1994; and Bridge 1986.

[28] Boyce 1999, 93; and Bridge 1984.

[29] Muldoon 2003, 94.

[30] Ghosh 1972, 11.

however, Lancashire suffered severe economic distress and its cotton textile industry was hit particularly hard due to competition from India, the United States and Japan.[31] By 1931, the unemployment rate in Lancashire was over 40 percent and the region was in a deep recession.[32]

Many in Lancashire connected the region's economic difficulties with the Indian Fiscal Autonomy Convention, granted as part of the 1919 reforms which gave New Delhi the ability to set an independent tariff policy. By 1931, a general duty of 25 percent had been imposed on all British products and a duty of 15 per cent, on the cotton industry.[33] Therefore, proposals for greater Indian autonomy in the first half of the 1930s were met with great apprehension and opposition for those who feared that there would be further imposition of import duties "by a nationalist India for political rather than economic or revenue raising purposes."[34] During this period, Lancashire interests did indeed attempt to influence and shape the British government's India policy through business lobbies. The Manchester Chamber of Commerce (MCC) and

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[31] Muldoon 2003, 94.

[32] Muldoon 2003, 94.

[33] Muldoon 2003, 94.
In practice, 'an independent tariff policy' did not mean the same thing across all British cabinets. It "varied from administration to administration and from Secretary of State to Secretary of State." Montagu, for instance, had used the convention to underline the British Government's powerlessness to come to the aid in Lancashire in 1921, but Peel, in contrast, had made it clear to the government of India that he considered that the British government had the right to make 'representations to in relation to fiscal policy which affected British interests" (Peele 131).

[34] Peele 1975, 132; and Ghosh 1972, 11. British exporters also used the Indian situation to mask the fact that they were losing their share of the market due to tough competition from Japan and the U.S..

the more aggressive Cotton Trade League in particular, mounted an intensive campaign to eliminate or reduce the Indian tariff barrier.[35] Were they however, successful in influencing and shaping the interests or the strategies of the diehards or the reformers?

The reformers, and in particular, Samuel Hoare, the Secretary of State for India (1931 - 35), the India Office as well as the Cabinet did appear to take the concerns and interests of Lancashire MPs seriously. Hoare for example, made a concession to the lobby by including Lord Derby, advocate of Lancashire Conservatism and supporter of the region's business interests in the Joint Select Committee examining the 1935 Government of India Act. However, this concession was mainly symbolic as Derby not only disliked constituency politics but was also a pragmatist who avoided anything that might split the party and drive it from power.[36] Instead of giving in to these interests, Hoare concentrated on waging "a determined and energetic campaign to ensure that the region did not cause his Indian plans to founder in the Commons."[37] Moreover, the Lancashire lobby was hardly a monolithic entity when it came to the Indian question. While there was a faction that had a more narrow and embittered perspective on the region's economic problems and certainly wanted to derail these reforms, there was also

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[35] Muldoon 2003, 95-97; and Ghosh 1972, 11.
The MCC was "an umbrella group whose members came not just from the textile trade, but from all areas of the region's economic life" while the Cotton Trade League was formed in early 1933 by a group that saw the MCC as too moderate and cautious in its approach. However, those involved with the CTL did not renounce their affiliation with the MCC but lobbied "within that body for a more direct and aggressive attack on the government's India policy, arguing that India had already attained too much autonomy, fiscal and otherwise" (Muldoon 97).

[36] Muldoon 2003, 105 and Pugh 2004, 144.

[37] Muldoon 2003, 102.

a moderate camp with powerful and influential figures of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce like Raymond Streat and T.D. Barlow who were not only willing but co-operated with Hoare.[38]

The diehards could have strategically linked Lancashire's economic issues to their campaign against the Government of India bill.[39] This political potential was however, *never* harnessed by the diehards who focused most of their energies on the importance of India to British prestige as well as the political, moral, and strategic aspects of the constitutional reforms. Churchill in particular, was never able to disavow himself of his belief in free trade and therefore, could not conceive the economic potential that was present if the empire was redeveloped into a British-directed economic zone, an idea that was being discussed by intellectual circles of that period.[40] At the end of the day, the Lancashire lobby met with little success and did not in any way dominate or influence the debates over the question of India in the 1930s.[41]

If economic actors were not influential, what about the political parties whose electoral interests and power may be directly linked to the fortunes of the empire? The British Labour Party did not perceive their electoral interests during this period to be served by adopting a stance of fervent anti-imperialism. Generally, the interests of the young party laid in the validation of its claims to be a responsible party of

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[38] Muldoon 2003, 104.

[39] Pugh 2003,144.

[40] Pugh 2003, 45.

[41] Muldoon 2003, 96; and Pugh 2004, 144.

government.[42] At that time, being responsible entailed achieving a bipartisan approach and disproving fears that a Labour Government would lead to the end of empire.[43]

While it is true that some segments of the Labour Party did oppose British colonialism for moral reasons, these reforms were also not part of the party's careful plan with India's self-government and independence as the final and long-standing goal.[44] In fact, the work of historians like J. Gallagher, P.G. Robb, B.R. Tomlinson and Carl Bridge point to "little sign of selfless abdication in British constitutional reforms" in British policy-making between 1917 and 1947.[45]

The Labour Party of the 1920s and early 1930s was led by Ramsay MacDonald who made his party's India policy his own.[46] MacDonald's position on India was formed during the first decade of the twentieth century and it remained unchanged throughout the time he had leadership of his party and country.[47] Unlike left-wing factions within the party who had begun to identify with the Indian nationalist movement, MacDonald and key members of his frontbench rejected and discounted the

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[42] Howe 1993, 46; and Cook 1975, 201.

[43] Howe 1993, 46.

[44] Bridge and Brasted 1994, 94. See Howe 1993 as well.

[45] Brasted and Bridge 1994, 95; Gallagher 1982; Robb 1976; and Tomlinson 1976.

[46] Brasted and Bridge 1989, and Bridge 1976, 397. It was implemented by others like his Secretaries of State for India, Lord Olivier (1924) and W. Wedgwood Benn (1929-1931). Lord Olivier, a colonial administrator, shared MacDonald's diagnosis of nationalism and would do nothing without his direction.

[47] Brasted and Bridge 1989; and Bridge 1976, 397.

nationalism of the Indian Congress Party as "a dead-end in Indian development."[48] MacDonald believed that India was not a national entity but only a geographic expression with acute differences and divisions of caste, race and religion.[49] Thus, a 'unifying and controlling power' was needed to ensure harmony. According to MacDonald, Britain had not only played this role and 'saved' India but would have to continue as "the guardian and the nurse of India" until a remote day in the future when it was ready for self-governance.[50]

Labour's policies during its two terms in office during the 1920s were consistent with this view. In 1924 for example, overtures from India for a Dominion constitution, calls to accelerate the appointment of what eventually became the Simon Commission, and a unanimous call by the Party for a round table conference to prepare a scheme of self-government were either rejected or ignored by MacDonald's government.[51] When Labour took office for the second time (1929-1931), their policy remained focused on remaining in India until it could be "launched, properly, honestly and honourably."[52]

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[48] Brasted and Bridge 1988, 72; and Bridge 1976, 396.
The dichotomy in Labour attitudes began with the differences in the attitudes of J.K. Hardie who headed the party in the first decade of the 20th century and Ramsay MacDonald.

[49] Brasted and Bridge 1988, 76.

[50] Brasted and Bridge 1988, 75.

[51] Brasted and Bridge 1988, 80.

[52] Brasted and Bridge 1988, 86.

This is reflected in their support of the Irwin initiative and the 1935 constitutional reforms for India.[53]

For the Conservative Party, the empire had long held a central place in its ideology as well as its organizational and electoral interests. Generally, Conservative parties had three political alternatives when faced with an unenviable minority position due to the expansion of the electoral base with the advent of universal suffrage in the late nineteenth century - subclass loyalties, religion or nationalism. As Kahler points out, relying on subclass loyalties had distinct limits due to increasing urbanization. Religion was also an ineffective rallying point due to secularization as well as its potential to divide members of a conservative coalition.[54] Only nationalism "was fairly resistant to erosion by internal social change."[55]

Harnessing nationalism and cultivating its status and self-image as a national party was indeed the path adopted by the Conservative Party in Britain. With Benjamin Disraeli's premiership in the late nineteenth century, imperialism was central to their politics of nationhood.[56] Retaining the empire would therefore have appeared to be the logical and rational position for such a party.

However, the Conservatives did not have a unitary voice or position on the issue of India when it arose - the ranks of the party were deeply divided on the matter.

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[53] Brasted and Bridge 1988, 86.

[54] Kahler 1986, 71.

[55] Kahler 1986, 71.

[56] Lynch 1999, 12-13.

Proponents of these constitutional reforms like Stanley Baldwin, Lord Irwin and Sir Samuel Hoare tied them to British and Indian interests. Their policies were little different from those of the Labour Party's. In fact, Baldwin's front-bench and Macdonald's front bench have been described "as ditching their 'dissident factions', and arriving at 'a sort of interpenetration of ideas'" on the question of India.[57] The contentious 1929 Irwin Declaration, for example, had come from Lord Irwin himself, a Conservative who had been appointed by the Conservative Party.

Baldwin's 1924 general election manifesto spells out their attitude well:

> "We favour the progressive grant of constitutional liberties in every part of the Empire where the capacity and loyalty of the people will make such measures a benefit to themselves and a strength to the Empire. But we are no less determined to maintain the authority and the unity of the Empire against factions and misguided agitation wherever it may assert itself'."[58]

Reformers like Samuel Hoare, the main Conservative framer of the 1935 Act, argued that constitutional reforms were the only way to 'hold India to the empire.'"[59] If carried out well and skillfully, reforms would not be putting British dominion over India at risk as the diehards alleged. Instead, they would strengthen British control at the centre even as there was a devolution of power to India's provincial governments.[60] Last but not least, these reforms were also considered an important part of a process

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[57] Brasted and Bridge 1988, 70; Gallagher 1982, 103-6; Kiernan 1974; and Gupta 1975.

[58] Bridge 1986, 14.

[59] Low 1997, 17.

[60] Low 1997.

which would assist India in making "a smooth transition, in the fullness of times, to dominion status."[61]

Neither the party's interests nor Baldwin's own political or personal interests were actually served by this position.[62] Baldwin faced constant challenges to his leadership and also critically, threats that might have been fatal to the Conservative Party in the early 1930s.[63] William Gladstone's decision to contemplate Home Rule for Ireland in the late nineteenth century and its irrevocable damage to the Liberal Party was a parallel that was not far from his mind.[64] Over the course of several years, there were many indicators of a possible party revolt as there were many who disagreed with the position that he had adopted on India. In February 1931 for example, there was growing cause for concern at the Central Conservative Office when growing hostility towards the India proposals from among the party rank and file became more apparent.[65] In February 1933, this widespread unease was conveyed in a constituency resolution received by an MP who was a close friend of Baldwin's which stated the following:

> "The demand for a central self-government comes not from the people of India as a whole, but from a small, noisy minority of townsfolk, whereas 89 percent of the population are not town dwellers and 66 per cent are rural cultivators. What

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[61] Bridge 1986, viii.

[62] Ball 1988, 112; Middlemas and Barnes 1969, 698; and Williamson 1999, 262.

[63] Rubinstein 2003, 64.

[64] Ball 1988; and Middlemas and Barnes 1969, 702.

[65] Gilbert 1976, 391.

the great majority of Indians desire is not self-government, but firm and stable rule.'"[66]

Two months later in April 1933, the Government's White Paper policy was rejected by 161 votes to 17 at the annual meeting of the Horsham and Worthing Conservative Association despite a defense put up by Lord Winterton, their MP for the last 29 years.[67]

In June 1933, the issue was finally put to a vote on a resolution which expressed grave anxiety over the proposed transfer of the central government, the judicial system, and the police to the hands of Indian ministers at a meeting of the Conservative Central Council attended by more than 1200 Conservatives. While Baldwin's win of 838 votes to 356 after three years of constant attack ensured that his position on the India question could not easily be challenged within the party again, it was still the largest party vote so far recorded against his position on the India policy.[68]

Opponents of the reform like Winston Churchill and other diehards argued that they would ultimately harm Indian as well as British interests for several reasons. One, they argued that the Indian Congress Party, considered the primary beneficiary of these reforms, did not represent all of India and was unfit to govern. Second, these reforms or concessions, as they called them, was the beginning of the end of the British Empire as

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[66] Gilbert 1976, 467.

[67] Gilbert 1976, 478.

[68] Gilbert 1976, 483-4.

well Britain's leading place in the world.[69] Finally, approving and implementing these reforms would be nothing but an act of irresponsibility and cowardice.[70]

While some have argued that Churchill was using the India issue to usurp Baldwin's position as Party leader in order to assume it himself, his long-term commitment to his position on India did not lead to any personal political gain for he was isolated from his former colleagues in the Cabinet and rejected by many within the Conservative Party because of this issue.[71] He in fact, spent years in the political wilderness because of his stance on the question of India. There was also no doubt in Churchill's mind, according to the author of a multi-volume biography on him "that his chosen course could only weaken still further his political position, and possibly destroy altogether his chance of future political office."[72] Thus, there was nothing rational or self-interested in these actions which drove Churchill forward and sustained him in this much-derided course.

While it may be tempting to write off these differences between opponents of the reforms and its supporters within the Conservative Party as a normal part of policymaking, there was nothing prosaic about them as the two men representing opposing sides of the divide had everything to lose and nothing at the personal level to

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[69] Low 1997, 7; Bridge 1986, viii; and Pugh 1999, 242.

[70] Low 1997, 32.

[71] On his self-interest, Bridge 1987, 26; and Bridge 1986, 61. For the contrary perspective, see Gilbert 1976, 483-4.

[72] Gilbert 1976, 483-4. See also Peele 1975, 122-3.

gain. In fact, the battle over India had also placed the Conservative Party in danger of being torn apart and its future, at great risk.

I do not argue with many historians of the period who see these constitutional reforms as the actions of a group of desperate politicians and policymakers who were trying to patch up an empire that was in the first stages of decline.[73] For theoretical perspectives that stress the structural determinants of the international system or the importance of power in understanding and explaining the behavior of states, this may appear to be all that matters. However, such conclusions exclude the issue of how and why Baldwin and the reformers chose to embark on this *particular* path. How did they arrive at the conclusion that holding India to the empire laid with constitutional reforms rather than in the rejection of them, the path adopted by the diehards? This difference cannot and should not be easily dismissed for three reasons. First, it was something that was critically important to the two groups who fought a long and bloody political battle over this. Second, the path of India's decolonization was irrevocably set by the events and decisions taken between 1929 and 1935 – they ensured that Britain could not, even as Churchill wished later in 1947, to "arrest or reverse these developments. In that sense Churchill's stricture that there was no logical stopping point for their policy before full independence was true."[74] Third, outcomes in international politics, contra realism and neo-Realism, are not always dependent on the ultimate goal of the decision-

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[73] Low 1973; and Seal 1968.

[74] Ball 1988, 128.

makers but the strategies and the means that they choose in order to arrive at these goals.[75]

Before ending this section, a final note is necessary on the role and position of the Conservative Party in the governing structure of Britain during the first half of the 1930s. Between 1931 and 1935, Ramsay MacDonald headed a National government which had been initially formed as a temporary measure to cope with a very serious national economic crisis. MacDonald and a small group of Labour supporters had broken away from the Labour Party to form National Labour and run as a coalition with the Conservative Party in the 1931 general election. While MacDonald held the premiership, the Conservative Party was the dominant member of this coalition with the means and ability to influence and shape the policy on India. In the election, the Conservative Party won 473 seats, polled 55 per cent of the total vote and formed the core component of the National Government of the 1930s.[76] Thus, the success of any Indian policy depended upon the attitudes of the Conservative Party and the extent to which the Tory leader could contain any rebellion over the issue.[77] Baldwin's victory in this battle is therefore important because it placed Britain's road to disengagement from India on a different route that was not only different but would allow for far more radical changes in the future. Had Baldwin lost the leadership of the Conservative Party

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[75] Kier's 1997 argument that culture and organizational norms were important factors which resulted in the adoption of a defensive rather than an offensive position, and the construction of the seriously flawed Maginot Line in post-World War I French military strategy is an example of this.

[76] Powell 2002, 155.

[77] Veerathappa 1976, 100.

in the early 1930s, a distinct probability then, the path leading to the end of British rule in India could have been extremely different, characterized perhaps, by much greater resistance from London.[78]

In the rest of this chapter, I examine why and how having the same goal of holding India to the empire led to such a chasm between the diehards and the reformers. In other words, how did the same goal of retaining India produce two policies which were not only extremely different but irreconcilable for the two groups? Why, critically, did these differences take the form that they did? Section 2.4 embarks on this task by first outlining the arguments made by each of these two groups regarding India. I focus on arguments as they are one of the main processes by which actors in world politics attempt to communicate and persuade others of their position.[79]

2.4 Contesting Britishness and Constitutional Reforms for India

2.4.1 Churchill, the Diehards and An Unchanging India

Besides Winston Churchill, the most prominent of these diehards in government circles included retired officials like Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lord Syndenham, Sir Alfred Know, Sir Reginald Craddock, Professor Charles Oman and Lord Lloyd, Members of Parliament like Henry Page-Croft, William H. Davison, Victor Raikes, the Duchess of Atholl, Sir Robert Horne, Patrick Donner, Alan Lennox-Boyd, H. Brendan-Bracken and Commander P.G. Agnew and members of the House of Lords like Lord Salisbury,

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[78] Low 1997, 33.

[79] Crawford 2002. On the importance of communicative action and language, see Risse 2000 and Mattern 2005.

Midleton, Burnham, Edward Carson, Hartington, Sumner and FitzAlan.[80] These diehards also formed pressure groups like the *Indian Empire Society* and the *India Defence League* to oppose the proposed reforms.[81] Comprised mainly of retired officials, the former's main activity consisted of publishing its monthly journal, *The Indian Empire Review* and working with the diehards. This group worked closely with the *Indian Defence League* which had been founded by some Conservative MPs to bolster the effectiveness of their position as the Society had a public image as an organization of administrators and officials with a rigid view on India.

In fighting Baldwin and the reformers' proposals to grant responsibility at the centre and the transfer of responsibility for law and order to the control of ministers in the provinces, the diehards made several main arguments regarding India which they would repeat throughout all of the six years that these reforms were being debated. First, the diehards insisted that Britain was bound by duty and a historic mission "to bring peace and good government to India."[82] Besides being a necessary part of India's development, the diehards also made the crucial claim that British rule had been the most important factor in reversing the sub-continent from "ages of barbarism, tyranny, and intestine war."[83] The noble sacrifices and sense of duty of "four or five generations

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[80] Studdert-Kennedy 1998; and Ghosh 1972.

[81] Ghosh 1972, 27.

[82] Middlemas and Barnes 1969, 541.

[83] Churchill 1931, 30; Churchill, *House of Commons Debates*, 247, c.702 (26 January 1931). See also the same arguments made by A. Knox, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1372 (3 December 1931); and Marsden, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1755 (22 February 1933).

of the best British race" had banished war from India, defended her frontiers against invasion from the north, controlled famine and developed a system where a district facing crop failure would be able to draw on surpluses from another, and implemented the rule of law where justice was served impartially regardless of race or caste. Moreover, the British had brought the wonders of medicine and science to a 'helpless' population, improving their health and mortality rates.[84]

However, the diehards insisted that Britain's work was far from over despite all the 'achievements' they had listed in bringing 'civilization' to India. A second and pivotal part of their arguments rested on their insistence that the facts in India were timeless and unchanged.[85] In a speech at the House of Commons, Churchill insisted:

> "What are the facts in India? We are told that the opinion of India has changed. But the facts of India have not changed. They are immemorial."[86]

What then were these timeless and immemorial 'facts' according to the diehards? The most important of these were what they considered the inherent and irreconcilable differences in appearance, customs, habits, language and faith of Punjabis, Gurkhas, Jats, Pathans, and others across the sub-continent. India, they argued, was populated by "great masses of people of utterly divergent views upon religion and with utterly different outlooks upon life and who are utterly contemptuous

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[84] Churchill 1931, 30; and Ghosh 1972, 30-32.

[85] Henry Page Croft, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c.1832 (3 December 1931); Churchill, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c.1382- 3; c.1314-1317 (3 December 1931).

[86] Churchill 1931, 39-40. See also Henry Page Croft, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1382 (3 December 1931).

of the ways and habits of one another."[87] They considered it undeniable that these divisions in India were the cause of its "fierce racial and religious dissensions" and a primitive hate that was 'unimaginable' to the British.

> "We cannot easily conceive what these hatreds are. There are mobs of neighbours, people who have dwelt together in the closest proquinity all their lives, who, when held and dominated by these passions, will tear each other to pieces, men, women and children with their fingers."[88]

Therefore, the diehards had a model of South Asian society where communities dominated by systems of irreconcilable religious beliefs were constantly in conflict.[89] Henry Page-Croft for example, pointed unceasingly to the Moplah massacres, of Hindus by Muslims, and the Cawnpore massacre, of Muslims by Hindus, as incontrovertible proof this.[90]

With these 'facts' regarding deep and ancient divisions based on caste and religion in India, the diehards concluded that there would be "the immediate presumption of medieval wars"[91] without the British there to maintain peace, order and

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[87]Churchill, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c.1382 (3 December 1931); Henry Page Croft, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1380-1 (3 December 1931); R. Craddock, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c.1198 (2 December 1931); Colonel A.W. Goodman, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1354-5 (3 December 1931) and 297, c.1401-12 (7 February 1935); A. Knox, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1370 (3 December 1931) and 297, c. 1190 (6 February 1935); and Wolmer, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c.89 (10 December 1934).
See also Studdert-Kennedy 1990, 344-347; Gilbert 1976, 243.

[88]Churchill, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c.1297-8 (3 December 1931).

[89] Studdert-Kennedy 1998, 347.

[90] Studdert-Kennedy 1998, 347.

[91] Churchill 1931, 35.

stability. India, in other words, still needed rescuing from itself - the proposed constitutional reforms and the subsequent withdrawal of British influence and governance in many areas of Indian life would be the beginning of a slippery slope to the re-emergence of these differences that would rip the country and its inhabitants apart.[92] Based on these 'facts', the diehards argued unwaveringly that India, with its different classes, religions, languages and castes, was not and could never be a nation.[93] The legitimacy of Indian nationalism and their demands for independence was therefore, dismissed and the end of British colonial rule considered far too premature.[94]

A second 'fact' that emerged continually in their speeches and arguments was that calls for British withdrawal came from an insignificant fraction of the Indian population who were either "a few agitators with goat and loin cloth"[95] or those wielding Western ideas that had "no relation whatever to the life and thought of India."[96] Instead of representing all of India, the members of this elite, usually the leaders of Indian Congress Party – merely represented "those Indians who have acquired a veneer of western civilization, and have read all those books about

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[92] Studdert-Kennedy 1990, 344, Gilbert 1976, 243; and Churchill, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c.1297-8 (3 December 1931).

[93] Churchill, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c.1380-1 (3 December 1931). See also Henry Page Croft, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1380-2 (3 December 1931); Croft (1948) and Croft (1932).

[94] Churchill 1931, 40-2; and Minutes of the Annual Conservative Party Conference, 6 and 7 October 1932.

[95] Page-Croft quoted in Ghosh 1972, 27.

[96] Churchill 1931, 40.

democracy which Europe is now beginning to discard."[97] If enacted, the diehards believed that the constitutional reforms would only usher in a "well-organized, narrowly elected, political and religious Brahmin oligarchy and caucus."[98] Hence, what would ensue would not be "India for the Indians" but "India for a very few Indians."[99]

The diehards also insisted without any self-consciousness that the masses in India needed Britain's protection from the elite minority who were clamoring for self-government and independence instead of from them, the colonizers. The sixty million untouchables in the Indian caste system, for example, were invoked. Churchill described them as:

> "a multitude as big as a nation, men, women and children deprived of hope and of the status of humanity. Their plight is worse than that of slaves because they have been taught to consent not only to a physical but to a psychic servitude and prostration."[100]

Should the 1935 Government of India Act be enacted and the impartial protection of the British removed, the diehards argued that the untouchables would be utterly powerless

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[97] Churchill 1931, 96.

[98] Churchill (1931: 35). See also Henry Page Croft, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1382-3 (3 December 1931); R. Craddock, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c.1192 (2 Dec 1931); Wolmer, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c.89 (10 December 1934); and A. Knox, *House of Commons Debates*, 297, c.1197 (6 February 1935).

[99] Churchill 1931, 96.

[100] Gilbert 1976, 399-400.
The invocations of the plight of Afghan women during the US campaign in Afghanistan follows similar lines. While this is not an argument that Afghan women had been subjugated and treated like objects, it should not negate the fact that they had been used in this instance for political purposes as well.

"to control or to make their wishes felt by the their new rulers."[101] The latter's rights "to a bearable existence would be swept away once Indians became responsible for their own affairs"[102] as the Hindus, they argued, "would tyrannize the untouchables, and deny them all human rights."[103] Hence, they insisted again and again that it was morally their duty to remain in India as it was still plagued by severe issues.

The final key component of the arguments was the connection that they made between remaining in India and Britain's greatness as a nation. India was central to the

> "glory and strength of the British empire. The loss of India would mark and consummate the downfall of the British empire. The great organism would pass at a stroke out of life into history. From such a catastrophe there could be no recovery."[104]

Without India, it would "cease forever to exist as a Great Power."[105] The proposed reforms were considered a catastrophic act from which "there could be no recovery,"[106] a 'hideous act of self-mutilation astounding to every nation in the world'[107] and a

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[101] Churchill, *House of Commons Debates*, 247, c. 698-9 (26 Jan 1931). See also comments by Colonel Gretton, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c.1336-7 (3 December 1931).

[102] Gilbert 1976, 356-8.

[103] Gilbert 1976, 356-7.

[104] Churchill 1931, 47.

[105] Churchill, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1296 (3 December 1931); and H. Page Croft, *House of Commons Debates*, 274, c.1753 (22 February 1933).

[106] Middlemas and Barnes 1969, 583.

[107] Middlemas and Barnes 1969, 583.

'scuttle' from Empire that was tantamount to an abdication of Britain's leading place in the world.[108] Leaving India would be cowardly, dishonourable and shameful, an act that would destroy any claims to the country's morality, courage, benevolence, and superiority, all elements of its greatness. It would turn "the British lion, so fierce and valiant in bygone days, so dauntless and unconquerable through all the agony of Armageddon" into something that could now be "chased by rabbits from the fields and forests of his former glory."[109]

In general, the diehards argued that the masses needed the British to provide them with the peace, order and justice that enabled them to continue "their humble and narrowly spent livelihood[s]."[110] The elite minority in India who were demanding for self-government would never bring this about for they were, crucially, depicted and contrasted against the British by the diehards as being narrowly self-interested, untrustworthy, incompetent and uncivilized. These elites were "a comparatively small and utterly unrepresentative political faction" who would place the masses on the altar of "misgovernment, of deterioration in every public service, of religious bigotry of a kind not dreamed of for generations in the West, and finally of civil war."[111] Thus, the diehards argued that Britain had no right to deliver India into the hands of these elites.

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[108] Low 1997, 17. On other diehards, see Studdert-Kennedy 1990.

[109] James 1970, 224. See also Henry Page Croft, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1384 (3 December 1931).

[110] Churchill, *House of Commons Debates*, 247, c.698-9 (26 Jan 1931).

[111] Churchill 1931, 78.

Instead, Britain had the duty, responsibility and obligation to create the conditions that would bring about:

> "peaceful existence and progress to about three hundred and fifty millions of helpless primitive people who are separated by an almost measureless gulf from the ideas and institutions of the western world."[112]

Abrogating this responsibility would also be the beginning of the end of the greatness of Great Britain.

2.4.1.1 The Indian 'Other' and the Construction of British Greatness

What was the basis of these facts and arguments brandished by the diehards? These 'facts' that the diehards insisted again and again about India, the corresponding consequences should the British withdraw and the need to rescue the sub-continent from itself were not based on a complete or accurate understanding of Indian history, society and politics. A key piece in the diehards' representation of India was that it was a place of deep divisions, unimaginable primitive hatreds and characterized by 'barbaric practices'.

India's diversity was undeniable at that time. It was and is an area of great geographic, economic and social diversity with a large population of distinctive regional identities, languages and vernaculars spread across a territory the size of western Europe.[113] However, Indian society was never static, timeless and unchanging as

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[112] Churchill 1931, 95-6. See also A. Knox, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1372 (3 December 1931); Henry Page Croft, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c.1384 (3 December 1931) and 274, c. 1753 (22 February 1933); and William Davison, *House of Commons Debates*, 297, c. 1424-6 (7 February 1935).

[113] Brown 1998, 426-7.

depicted by the diehards as well as other colonial observers and scholars - "what was seen in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as traditional was often not of many generations' standing."[114] Muslims in India, often singled out by the diehards as an example of the inevitability of communal politics, were not calling in the early 1930s for "a nationhood defined by religion: merely distinctive status needing safeguards in a political world where numbers become increasingly important."[115] A simple linear development of an all-Indian Muslim politics, claiming nationhood for Muslims just did not exist.[116]

In fact, the British had played a larger role in constructing the political and social identities of Indians through their own understanding of Indians in terms of religious identification and its subsequent institutionalization through their implementation of various political processes and structures which emphasized them.[117] One of these processes was in the decennial censuses in India where the population was counted and categorized by religion and by caste.[118]

Besides this problematic understanding of Indian society, the diehards were also unable to accept or understand that changes were taking place in Indian politics in the form of political participation and the development and evolution of the Indian National Congress as a political party. The 1919 reforms had begun to slowly change the make-

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[114] Brown 1998, 427.

[115] Brown 1998, 435.

[116] Brown 1998, 434.

[117] Brown 1998, 434.

[118] This practice is sharply different from censuses conducted in Britain.

up of the governing and decision-making structures of the Raj.[119] By 1929, there were 367 Indian men in the Indian Civil Service alongside 894 Europeans. Indians also formed a large part of the military, the police force, the courts as well as the lower echelons of the civil service.[120] Moreover, the enlargement of legislatures in Delhi and the provincial capitals, the acquisition of a majority by elected Indians and a large measure of influence over finance ensured that Indians had experience in government and decision-making, as defined by the British. At the same time, a wide range of people, e.g. educated professionals, landowners, large and petty businessmen and substantial farmers were channeling their political interests into the new political arenas in the provinces "because the power on offer there, though limited, was none the less significant."[121] A more democratic, electorally-oriented culture was evolving and would "profoundly influence styles of successful politics and political organization."[122]

The Indian National Congress was in 1914, "a loose organization and often divided federation of local, educated men, predominantly Hindus, who met annually to make limited political demands."[123] Its attempts in the 1920s to re-organize itself as a political party with widespread appeal and organizational structures from the centre down to the village level were admittedly, unsuccessful. By the late 1930s however,

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[119] Brown 1998, 430.

[120] Brown 1998, 425.

[121] Brown 1998, 430.

[122] Brown 1998, 432.

[123] Brown 1998, 432.

Congress had begun "to resolve these problems related to its status both as a party and as a voice of national demand."[124] It had achieved electoral success by 1937-39, formed the governments in seven provinces, assembled a leadership of all-India figures and perhaps most critically, had "become the natural political environment in which most Hindus interested in politics chose to function, rather than adopting independent or more ideological labels."[125] It was therefore, quite inaccurate to portray them merely as a party of self-interested and elitist Brahmins.

When compared to such far more accurate renderings of Indian society and politics, it is tempting to accuse the diehards of gross distortions and dishonesty in their polemical reviews of the facts about India and "their hysterical insistence on the catastrophic consequences of granting Indian control at the centre."[126] Such a conclusion is too premature as the diehards, their arguments and their beliefs must be placed within a larger context. Their views of India were not unique but embedded within a larger and almost homogeneous British view of India that existed at the start of the twentieth century. This view underlined India's *difference* from the British

> "in religion, morals, society and political identity and capacity. In India, difference and assumed racial superiority were demonstrated in British patterns of residence, apart from their Indian subjects, in 'white town', in the bungalows of civil lines, or supremely in hill stations where they took their holidays in an environment as nearly like home as they could contrive. These assumptions were also evident in the racially self-contained life of the British, whose

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[124] Brown 1998, 432.

[125] Brown 1998, 432.

[126] Studdert-Kennedy 1998, 348; Ghosh 1972, 30-31; Ball 1988, 117; and Bridge 1987, 29.

> standards and hierarchies were policed by the *memsahibs* as guardians of English domesticity and gentility. The reverse of this was a distaste for Indian society, particularly Hindu customs, a distaste which focused on religion, caste and the treatment of Indian women. Indian society was seen as decadent, irrational, and dominated by religion. In political terms, Indians were seen as almost irrevocably divided by religion, caste and language, lacking the civic virtues of Victorian bourgeois England, and incapable of either national sentiment or self-determination."[127]

India and other British colonies served as the site of difference against which a dominant strand of British identity was constituted and constructed.[128] British colonies were often depicted and portrayed in official reports, the media, popular books and academic treatises as backward with economic and political systems that were either non-existent, substantially undeveloped or despotic and tyrannical. Socially and culturally, the inhabitants of these colonies were often classified and fixed in the universal scheme of things as barbaric, irrational and childlike with no means of advancing or progressing without centuries of external tutelage and help. The colonies, in other words, were on the lowest rung of the civilizational ladder due to inherently flawed national characteristics or culture.

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[127] Brown 1998, 425-6.

[128] This was no different from other European states with empires during the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For a general overview, see Cooper and Stoler 1997.
An influential treatment on the subject also argues that British identity, first constructed through shared Protestantism and against the "Other" of Catholic France in a succession of major wars during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was further strengthened through the shared participation of the English, Scots and Welsh (and to a certain degree, the Irish) in the imperial enterprise which marginalized the differences between them (Colley 1992, 311).
The literature on the formation of British identity is vast and covers a broad historical period. For a good review of the different theoretical perspectives in the literature, see Connors 2001.

In contrast, the British highlighted the rationality and growing capacity of their stable and enlightened political system, and system of law. Economically, they contrasted their economic growth, industrialization and high standard of living with the poverty of their colonies. Their advances in science, technology and areas of medicine were also held up as proof of their superiority. Socially, they contrasted their treatment of women against some of the practices in their colonies, and highlighted their moral leadership in banning the slave trade and encouraging the spread of Christianity through the work of missionaries and their civilizing activities.[129] These economic, political, technological, organizational, ideological and cultural differences were considered proof of their inherent superiority and place on the top rungs of civilization.

Through these Self/Other mechanisms in which the less civilized and developed colonies were the Other, the British Self was presented and constructed as the heroic conqueror, humane judge, and civilizing agent - politically, economically, socially and morally exceptional people who had an unquestioned and "leading role as an agent of civilization and progress."[130] Britishness was thus equated with the superiority of British character and ideas and the view that they had a special duty to fulfill in the world because history had thrust a certain destiny upon them.[131] By the middle of the nineteenth century, for example, this vision of Britain as not only having the right but the need to "remake mankind in its own image" was shared by a wide swath of British

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[129] Powell 2002, 96.

[130] Colley 1992, 325. The importance of the empire in the formulation of British identity is widely recognized by historians. See Davis 1999.

[131] Kumar 2003, 196; Powell 2002, 118-19; and Wallace 1991.

society.[132] This was expressed quite succinctly by Lord Palmerston, Foreign Secretary and later Prime Minister who said: "We stand at the head of moral, social and political civilization. Our task is to lead the way and to direct the march of other nations."[133]

Besides this mechanism, there were other cultural and political processes which sustained this construction of British identity. The empire, despite the lack of factual knowledge which ordinary Britons possessed about their overseas possessions, was at the heart of "both popular and high culture in Britain from the eighteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries."[134] Imperial themes were implicitly and explicitly, a vital and intrinsic part of British art, literature and music, the high culture of the nation.[135] Stories, images, sounds, and sentiments of the empire were also present in common, everyday things ranging from tea towels, biscuit tins, soap advertisements, young children's adventure stories to music hall jingles.

Political processes initiated by the Conservative Party under Benjamin Disraeli were also important in maintaining this constitution of British identity.[136] In a famous speech to the National Union of Conservative Associations at the Crystal Palace in June

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[132] Friedberg 1984, 27.

[133] Quoted in Friedberg 1984, 27.

[134] Kumar 2003, 195. See books in the Manchester University Press edited by John MacKenzie.

[135] See Said 1993.

[136] Lynch 1999, 13.

1872, Disraeli stated that the empire was not only one of the party's three great objectives but fundamental to Britain's *raison d'etre.*

> "When you return to your homes, when you return to your counties and your cities, you must tell to all those whom you can influence that the time is at hand, that, at least, it cannot be far distant, when England will have to decide between national and cosmopolitan principles. The issue is not a mean one. It is whether you will be content to be a comfortable England, modelled and moulded upon continental principles and meeting in due course an inevitable fate, or whether you will be a great country, - an imperial country - a country where your sons, when they rise, rise to paramount positions, and obtain not merely the esteem of their countrymen, but command the respect of the world...You have nothing to trust but the sublime instinct of an ancient people. You must act as if everything depended on your individual efforts. The secret of success is constancy of purpose. Go to your homes, and teach there, these truths, which will soon be imprinted the conscience of the land…you will deliver to your posterity, a land of liberty, of prosperity, of power, and of glory."[137]

In the years that followed, they did their best to redeem this pledge with the expansion and defense of the British empire as guides in their foreign and economic policy. During the late Victorian period, the Transvaal in Southern Africa was annexed and war was declared on the Zulus in pursuit of a scheme to create a South African federation. War was threatened against the Russians in 1877 to prevent the latter's expansion in the Balkans. In 1878, war was waged against Afghanistan to forestall the Russian threat to the North-West Frontier.[138] These policies, together with the spectacular proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India in 1876, became outward projections of a British identity and national interests during the late nineteenth century that was synonymous with a "spirited engagement with opportunities and

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[137] T.E. Kebbel (ed.), *Selected Speeches of the Earl of Beaconfield* (London, 1882), Vol. II, pp 529-534.

[138] Powell 2002, 107.

commotions abroad; rugged leonine patriotism; [and a] doctrine of adventure and pluck."[139]

The diehards' arguments about Britain's destiny to extend benevolent and enlightened rule to the 'chaotic' masses of India and to spread civilization and progress throughout the world was part of a process rooted in argument and rhetoric which contributed to maintaining an idea of British greatness that was built and constructed against the difference and 'Otherness' of India. Crucially, a key part of being British, as conceived by the diehards, involved much more than this. In their arguments, the diehards focused explicitly on the consequences of passing these reforms for what it would mean to be British. The following passage is particularly revealing:

> "At present the Government of India is responsible to the British Parliament which is the oldest, the least unwise and the most democratic parliament in the world. To transfer that responsibility to this highly artificial and restricted oligarchy of Indian politicians would be a retrograde act. It would be a shameful act. It would be an act of cowardice, desertion and dishonour. It would bring grave material evils, both upon India and Great Britain; but it would bring upon Great Britain a moral shame which would challenge for ever the reputation of the British Empire as a valiant and benignant force in the history of mankind. The faithful discharge of our duty in India is not only a cause, but a symbol. It is the touchstone of our fortunes in the present difficult time. If we cannot do our duty in India, be sure we shall have shown ourselves unworthy to preserve the vast Empire which still centres upon this island. ... What we require to do now is to stand erect and look the world in the face, and do our duty without fear or favour."[140]

There is no doubt that a country's greatness was certainly something that could be measured in material terms. Churchill for example, did draw a parallel between the much diminished Holland of the twentieth century and a Britain without India:

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[139] Holland 1991.
[140] Churchill 1931, 97.

> "The loss of India, however arising, would be final and fatal to us. It could not fail to be a part of a process which would reduce us to the scale of a minor Power. Holland, once our equal, was outmatched in the world in spite of all her sturdy domestic strength, and became a small continental state."[141]

At the same time, Britain was slowly losing its share of the India market, accounting for only 30.5 percent of the sub-continent's total imports by 1939.[142] Moreover, India no longer had the same role it had in the international pattern of trade settlements. In the past, India's trade surpluses with most of the world was used to meet her deficit with Britain which then enabled the latter to settle her accounts with other trading partners. With the economic changes, India's surpluses with industrial nations like Britain were used for deficits with countries that had become her source of raw materials.[143] Thus, Britain could no longer depend on its current economic relationship with India to settle its deficits with the rest of the world.[144]

Despite these changes, economic issues were rarely brought up in the discussions or arguments of the diehards during this period. Their approach to the severe economic problems in Lancashire is particularly noteworthy for the *lack* of importance that they placed on them. Lancashire, as discussed in section 2.3, had an economic sector which was greatly dependent on trade with India but changes giving Indian autonomy to make decisions regarding tariffs as a result of provisions from the 1919 reforms adversely affected the relationship. Yet, the diehards did not make much

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[141] Churchill 1931, 81-2.

[142] Brown 1994, 262-3.

[143] Brown 1994, 262-3.

[144] Brown 1994, 262-3.

of these issues, an indication here that economic issues or material factors more generally, are sometimes only as important as the political actors make them out to be

For the diehards, Britain's actions in India were instead, significant for they were a 'symbol' and a 'touchstone' of who the British were. Allowing the passage of these constitutional reforms were characterized not as an indicator of Britain's material decline as a world power but rather as the decline of will and character: "It is not that our strength is seriously impaired. We are suffering from a disease of the will. We are the victims of a nervous collapse, of a morbid state of mind."[145] These reforms were in other words, due to the "weak-minded and defeatist tendency of our present politics"[146] and the "lack of self-confidence and moral strength."[147] Thus, what was necessary was a "fundamental change in the intellectual and moral attitude of Great Britain and of the Government of India...."[148] This could only be accomplished by standing firm in the face of demands from India and rejecting any proposals for constitutional reforms proposed by other members of the British government.

Therefore, these reforms were against British interests not only because India needed to be rescued from itself but because *being* British entailed staying there to perform and fulfill its mission and duty to extend benevolent and enlightened British rule to the 'chaotic' masses of its empire. In other words, Britain's identity as a truly

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[145] James 1970, 224.

[146] Churchill 1931, 40-2.

[147] Churchill 1931, 47.

[148] Churchill 1931, 76; and Studdert-Kennedy 1990, 350.

great nation of exceptional people and character could not be separated from its actions vis-à-vis India.

2.4.2 Baldwin, the Refomers and a Changing India

Fighting and leading the other side of the political battle over India were Stanley Baldwin, Lord Irwin, Samuel Hoare, Oliver Stanley, Geoffrey Dawson, Sir John Thompson, Sir Edward Villiers, Sir Alfred Watson, Sir Laurie Hammond, Lord Brabourne, Sir Hugh McPherson, Lord Goschen as well as the *Union of Britain and India*, an organization set up by retired officials with recent experience in India to provide information on the White Paper proposals and counter the propaganda of the diehards.[149]

The actual substance of the reforms that were being advocated reveal that there were certain principles underlying the Indian constitutional settlement. The main dominant principle in the report is the idea that political and social change should be "ordered, gradual and a direct reflection of the nature of the social system to be governed."[150] In the introduction to the 1934 Joint Select Committee Report for the White Paper written by Conservative MP Lord Eustace Percy, this principle is very clear:

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[149] Ghosh 1972, 9. Due to their deliberate restriction of membership to men with experience in India, the UBI sought to create a public image as an organization with a body of experts on Indian affairs. The UBI was very active during the most vital period of the intra-party struggle, i.e., from June 1933 to December 1934, when its speakers addressed on an average almost one meeting a day and published the UBI Weekly Bulletin.

[150] Bridge 1976, 179.

> "If, then, the long collaboration of Englishmen and Indians during recent years is to result in the enactment of a Constitution which will work successfully under Indian conditions, we shall do well to discard theories and analogies and instead, to base our scheme on the government of India as it exists today.... The safest hypothesis on which we can proceed, and the one most in accordance with our constitutional history, is that the future government of India will be successful for an old one, but the natural evolution of an existing government and the natural extension of its past tendencies."[151]

While these evolutionary views of political and constitutional change should mean the absence of criteria for correctness in constitutions, the framers of the report did not conclude that India was completely free to develop her own form of government. Samuel Hoare, during the Round Table Conference and the deliberations of the joint committee, specified the prerequisites necessary for the formation of a unitary cabinet and self-government.[152] The first of these requirements was for a nation to have a sense of national consciousness. Second, this consciousness had to override all sectional concerns which threaten national unity. A third requirement and an indicator of an emergent national identity was the development of political parties divided on broad economic and ideological lines appealing to a relatively homogeneous electorate.

These prerequisites were really based on an idealized understanding of Britain's political development. For the reformers, Britain was able to "build a strong constitution which both assured national identity and guaranteed freedom"[153] due to its

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[151] *Report of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform*, vol. I (Part I). (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1934), p.8.

[152] Bridge 1976, 182.

[153] Bridge 1976, 181.

homogeneous population, small size, and freedom from foreign invasions. In examining the conditions in India, the Conservative constitution-makers concluded that a start toward the development of responsible government had been made but that these conditions had not been reached.[154] Hence, the devolution of power to the provinces which was balanced by a stable conservative coalition in the centre would enable responsibility to be learned and for these prerequisites to be met.[155] The constitutional reforms for the 1935 Government of India Act were designed and engineered to create and support the development of the requirements of this model.

While these reforms were not implemented to bring about the immediate end of British rule in India, the substance of these reforms also indicate that there was more to them than a means of prolonging the British hold on India. Notably, the forty-two meetings conducted by the Cabinet Committee on India were focused on working out constitutional measures and governing institutions which were thought to be most suitable for the economic, social and political conditions in India.[156] Generally, the Act ran counter to the pessimism of the Simon report and was modeled on the constitutions of the Dominions. Moreover, it was parliamentary and reaffirmed the Montagu Declaration of 1917. While it differed from the Dominion status of Australia and Canada in areas like the Governor-General's retention of power over foreign affairs and defense, these reforms, as noted by Sir Thomas Inskip, the Solicitor-General then, were

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[154] Bridge 1976, 184.

[155] Bridge 1976, 183.

[156] CAB 27/520, Cabinet Committee on India (16 March 1932 – 12 February 1935).

"'not inconsistent with the ultimate attainment of the position of a Dominion within the Empire.'"[157]

In public arenas like parliamentary debates and meetings of the Conservative Party, Baldwin, Hoare and other reformers defended these constitutional reforms with arguments that point to different ideas about India. One of the most apparent differences was in their acknowledgment that political developments in India had taken place and were irreversible.[158] In an important speech to the House of Commons defending the proposals after the publication of the White Paper against the increasingly vociferous and unrelenting attacks from the diehard faction of his own party, Baldwin stated:

> "The unchanging East is not unchanging .... There is a yeast at work in the whole of the East, and India cannot be isolated. The yeast is working there. It is not the India of our childhood; it is not the India of our young manhood; it is a new India, and that is the thing with which we have to reckon."[159]

A critical part of this change was the arrival of nationalism. There was, Baldwin declared, "a wind of nationalism and freedom running round the world and running as strongly in Asia ... as in any part of the world."[160] Samuel Hoare, in a parliamentary speech to defend the adoption of some of the government's proposals for India after the second Round Table Conference in 1931, ranked nationalism as one of the most important factors which had to be accepted:

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[157] Boyce 1999, 93.

[158] Ball 1988, 128.

[159] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1135-6 (29 March 1933).

[160] National Union Central Council, 4 December 1934.

> "It is an integral part of that great wave of nationalism which, particularly in recent years, has swept over the world from one end to the other. It is part of the same movement that we have seen in Europe, in such countries as Poland and Czechoslovakia. It is part of the same movement that we have seen in Asia, in Turkey, in Iraq, in Arabia."[161]

Besides nationalism, there were also other social, political, economic and technological transformations taking place in the world. For example, Baldwin spoke of the invention of cars, films, airplanes and the gramophone as revolutionary technological changes that were creating a new world where ideas "flash from pole to pole with the speed of light."[162] In the same speech, Baldwin highlighted Japan's victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5) not only as an example but as a the catalyst for change in the relationship between the West and the East for it was "caus[ing] a new spirit to burn in the whole of Asia."[163] The news of Russia's defeat at the hands of Japan had traveled quickly and inspired many in the East. During this period when ideas of Social Darwinism and racism were still part of political and intellectual circles, Baldwin was acknowledging the contribution of this event to the fast eroding legitimacy of the overtly racial and hierarchical order in world politics. They realized that these changes were altering not only Britain but other countries and Britain's relations with them.

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[161] Samuel Hoare, *House of Commons Debates*, 260, c. 1209 (2 December 1931). See also Samuel Hoare, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 699 (27 March 1933); and Winterton, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1063-1070 (29 March 1933).

[162] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1135-6 (29 March 1933).

[163] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1135-6 (29 March 1933).

A second fact for the reformers was the arrival and importance of the ideals and principles of democracy and self-government in India.[164] Unlike the diehards who argued that they were merely a veneer coating those heading the Indian nationalist movement, Baldwin and the reformers recognized that this was real and had been seeded by the British education of the country's elites. Britain was thus reaping what it had sown a hundred years ago as Indians were "asking us for that responsibility which we have said time and time again is the goal to which they are to look forward."[165]

The most important fact then for Baldwin and the reformers was that India in the 1930s was no longer the India of the late nineteenth century. They argued that it was not the India that Churchill and other diehards remembered from their childhoods – that India had departed permanently nearly twenty years ago.[166] Insisting that India in the 1930s had not changed, as the diehards were doing, was therefore, simply unrealistic and the paternalistic form of governance associated with it, a major mistake. As Lord Irwin noted:

> "The day is past ... when Winston's possessive instinct can be applied to Empires ... That conception of imperialism is finished, and those who try to revive it are those who would fly a balloon that won't hold gas."[167]

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[164] "Chairman Draft Report to be Submitted to the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms." See p. 19 in *Proceedings of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform [Session 1933-34], Volume I, Part II.* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1934). See also *Baldwin, House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1135-6 (29 March 1933); Halifax 1957, 114-115; and Hoare, *House of Commons Debates*, 296, c. 47-48 (10 December 1934).

[165] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1135-6 (29 March 1933).

[166] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1138-9 (29 March 1933); 249, c. 1425-6 (12 March 1931).

[167] Irwin quoted in Low 1997, 32. See also Halifax 1957, 114-5.

For them, it was clear that the political developments meant that "a policy of realism and not a policy of sentiment" was necessary.[168] Prewar forms of imperialist assertiveness or what Baldwin "called 'rather sinister' and militaristic meanings of imperialism"[169] could no longer prevail. It was not and could not be "about jingoism, 'flag-wagging', 'painting the map red', nor about exploitation, selfishness in public policy; and 'riding roughshod over the world'."[170]

Significantly, Baldwin considered these changes natural and part of an evolutionary process where the empire and its components were organisms rather than lifeless and inanimate entities. Instead of resisting them, these changes should be absorbed. Baldwin reminded his own party in February 1935:

> "I think it is particularly essential for us in our party on this side of the House to remember, as some of us perhaps in the country are apt to forget, that the Empire, if it is anything, is a living organism; that the Empire of today is not the Empire of the first Jubilee of Queen Victoria. No man can see today, however far-seeing he may be, what may be the position of the Empire fifty years hence. It is no dead matter. It is an organism and alive, in a constant process of evolution, a process which is being speeded up every day. Few could have foreseen, even a few years ago, to what point that evolution would have brought the relations of the great Dominions with the mother country, and it cannot be supposed that, in this world of evolution, India alone is static."[171]

Instead of the flag-wagging imperialism of old still brandished by Churchill and the diehards, Baldwin and the reformers had by 1935, a new interpretation of the empire

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[168] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c.1135 (29 March 1933); 249, c. 1425-6 (12 March 1931).

[169] Williamson 1999, 264.

[170] Williamson, 1999, 264.

[171] Middlemas and Barnes 1969, 593-4.

as something which would evolve into a commonwealth of nations, of which India would be a member.[172] Thus, British interests were linked to a resolution of the India question in a way that would depend "on good will, sympathy, and understanding between India and Great Britain...."[173]

Like the diehards, references to Britain were also present in these speeches focused on observations about the 'facts' in India. These rather significant sections of their speeches were devoted to drawing parallels with the social and political changes taking place in Britain. Baldwin, for instance, stressed that Britain had undergone 'three generations of political evolution' during World War I in these speeches.[174] Recalling his own cherished childhood when Britain had nothing but horses on country roads and when it was difficult to go beyond a 10-mile radius of one's home, Baldwin, while wishing for it to come back, also knew that it was impossible for this was a Britain that had "passed and gone forever."[175] He acknowledged these rapid changes in Britain in a 1933 speech in support of constitutional reforms for India:

> "Who would have thought when the War began that in 10 years we would have universal suffrage in this country? Who would have thought in 1903, when my honourable and gallant Friend the Member for Bournemouth and I were supporting Joseph Chamberlain that in 1926 we should have an Imperial Conference when the only threads remaining were threads of gossamer?"[176]

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[172] Williamson (1999: 271).

[173] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 249, c. 1425-6 (22 March 1931).

[174] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276 , c.1134 (29 March 1933).

[175] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c.1138-9 (29 March 1933).

[176] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c.1135 (29 March 1933). Baldwin is referring to the Chamberlain's efforts to convince the country that a Tariff Reform League involving closer economic connections with the rest of the empire and the dominions would revive Britain.

These changes in Britain were understood, without question, as inevitable and irreversible.[177]

In addition, Baldwin also linked the future and survival of the Conservative Party to how the India question was resolved. He argued that the rapid changes whirling through Britain had left many Conservatives spinning giddily, and unfortunately, still without the ability to reconcile themselves to the postwar world and clinging to the ideas, beliefs and practices of the pre-war period. Churchill and the diehards were still mired in the "Toryism of the times when he and I were young"[178] and their views on India reflected this. During one of his numerous speeches on India in the House of Commons, Baldwin took the opportunity to expound on what a Conservative is.

> "The Conservative, as I understand him, is no Junker and no Fascist. He is a man who believes in *constitutional progress*, who wants to serve his country, and who wants to see people contented and happy. There can be no better work for our party than to devote themselves to, and see what they can make of this vast problem."[179]

Thus, Baldwin envisioned a Conservative party that would be able to enact rational and progressive reform.[180] In a world that was changing, so too must Conservatism. Baldwin was adamant that the party adapt to the changes and align with the forces that

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[177] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1426-6 (12 March 1931).

[178] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1135 (29 March 1933); 249, c.1418 (12 March 1931); and Baldwin to Davidson, 13 November 1930 in *Davidson Memoirs*, p.355.

[179] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c.1140 (29 March 1933). *Emphasis mine.*

[180] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c.1140 (29 March 1933).

had brought them about as the "party that does not realize it does not stand much chance of being returned to power in this country."[181] Baldwin stated very clearly that his decision to follow the route of constitutional reforms for India "was the only one for a progressive party – and a party must be progressive to live. I believed that the other course led to the destruction of the party."[182]

There was also considerable awareness that the changes in India and what was being labeled by the reformers as the other great political experiment of their time – the promise and fulfillment of self-government for India as embodied in the Montagu Declaration of 1917 - were also taking place in tandem with the arrival of full and complete democracy with universal suffrage in Britain.[183] Though the new-ness of these political developments in Britain may be hard to fathom in the twenty-first century, it was considered a precarious and new political situation, one which had hardly been tested and in which Britain's stability and unity were not guaranteed.[184] Critically, this awareness was accompanied by arguments linking the changes in Britain to how they handled the political developments in India and its demands for self-government and independence. The manner in which they handled these developments in India was crucially, understood as "more than anything else we shall have to face, ...

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[181] Baldwin. *House of Commons Debates*, 276, c. 1134 (29 March 1933).

[182] Baldwin. *House of Commons Debates*. 260, c.1401 (3 December 1931). See also 276, c.1140 (29 March 1933); Jones 1954, 5: and Williamson 1999, 268.

[183] Baldwin, *House of Commons Debates*, 231, c.1308-9 (7 November 1929).

[184] Schwarz 1984, 12.

the supreme test of how fit we are for democratic conditions under which we have to work."[185]

These arguments in support of reforms as a means of holding India to the empire differed from those made by the diehards in two substantial ways. First was in their understanding of the changes in India. The second lies in the vital links that the reformers, and in particular, Stanley Baldwin, made between the way these changes were handled and its consequences for democracy in Britain, the meaning of Conservatism, and ultimately, Britishness. In order to understand how it was even possible for these links to be made, these arguments have to be placed in the wider context of an alternative form of British identity that was being promulgated by Stanley Baldwin during the Interwar period. The next section of this chapter describes and elaborates on the central principles and elements of this alternate form of Britishness by drawing on secondary as well as primary sources. This is also supplemented by a discussion of its pervasiveness in Britain through a general look at important cultural markers in art, architecture, and literature.

2.4.2.1 Constructing Unity: Britishness in Local Places and Democratic Constitutionalism

Stanley Baldwin, leader of the Conservatives for most of the 1920s and 1930s, was one of the central figures of Interwar Britain and the major political proponent of the alternative to the dominant form of British identity rooted in superiority and

[185] Middlemas and Barnes 1969, 536; Williamson 1999, and Ball 1988.

greatness.[186] In Baldwin's vision, ways of being British were conceived in a less explicitly imperial and more inward-looking manner. He imagined, depicted and emphasized Britain as a place that was populated by people who were innately decent, honest, truthful, honorable, moderate and underpinned by the centuries-old traditions and political ideals of the British constitution.

Britishness, according to Baldwin, was embedded in and intrinsic to the domestic landscape.[187] It was a conception based on the belief that there was a deep, timeless and organic relationship between the land and its people. In *The Fairy Land of England* (1924), Christopher Hussey described true England as a beautiful "legendary country", of whose "the 'dust we are made of, and to which we will return'."[188] Thus, this compendium of soil, land and people was not only a landscape but significantly, elements that were inextricably and organically linked together. Britishness in this conception, was a part of places and landscapes, and their traditions and history. In other words, there was "an organic and active relation between past and present .... already an integral, constitutive and permanent feature of English culture."[189]

In one of his most famous and quoted speeches, Baldwin paints this picture of England:

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[186] Baldwin was leader of the Conservatives and Prime Minister in 1923, 1924-29 and 1935-37.

[187] Waters 1997, 211; and Sian 1996, 128.

[188] Potts 1989, 173.

[189] Schwarz 1984, 15; and Sian 1996, 128.

"The sounds of England, the tinkle of the hammer on the anvil in the country smithy, the corncrake on a dewy morning, the sound of the scythe against the whetstone, and the sight of the plough team coming over the brow of a hill, the sight that has been seen in England since England was a land, and may be seen in England long after the Empire has perished and every works in England has ceased to function, for centuries the one eternal sight of England. The wild anemones in the woods in April, the last load at night of hay being drawn down a lane as the twilight comes on, when you can scarcely distinguish the figures of the horses as they take it home to the farm, and above all, most subtle, most penetrating and most moving, the smell of wood smoke coming up in the autumn evening, or the smell of the scotch fires; that wood smoke that our ancestors, tens of thousands of years ago, must have caught on the air when they were coming home with the result of the day's forage, when they were still nomads, and when they were still roaming the forests and plains of the continent of Europe. These things strike down into the very depths of our nature, and touch chords that go back to the beginning of time and the human race, but they are chords that with every year of our life sounds a deeper note in our innermost being."[190]

Rural England, as evoked by Baldwin in that famous passage above, was a critical component in his conception of Britain and Britishness. It was also part of wider, pervasive and well-established cultural trends rooted in the belief that the solution to what was perceived and understood as an industrial, urban and racial crisis was to be found in rural England with its fount of healthy stock.[191] The landscape that eventually came to personify the country as a whole was that of rural England, constructed and idealized very specifically as a place where there were patchwork fields, thatched cottages amidst trees, shrubs and flowers, meadows, village greens and quiet country lanes.[192]

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[190] Baldwin 1939, 66-67.

[191] Howkins 1986, 67.

[192] Potts 1989, 72; and Sian 1996, 130.
Though other parts of rural Britain like the Yorkshire Moors in no way resembled this vision, it had become so emblematic by the early 1940s that a government report on the

Popular books on the countryside, following H.V. Morton's trend-setting *In Search of England* (1927) had photos capturing what were depicted as the 'characteristic' features of the rural landscape like "chequer-board fields, hedgerows, copses and old buildings nestling in comforting hollows..."[193] Other literary contributions from authors like George Sturt and W.H. Hudson were also important in establishing these images and ideals of rural England as the personification of the country and its people.[194]

Travel guides featuring the countryside as a site of holidays and leisure were also another indicator of the growing fascination and presence of the rural in the cultural life of Britain by the end of World War I. Londoners, for example, were no longer satisfied with patches of green like Hampstead Heath in the outskirts of the city - the growing ideal was to "discover rural England as it 'really was', unspoilt and natural."[195] By the outbreak of the Second World War, hundreds of publications like Arthur Mee's *The King's England*, and the *Shell Guides* were being used by an increasing number of people to visit the countryside.[196]

These trends were also reflected in art and architecture. The 'Tudor' style, characterized by diamond-paned or bottle-glass windows, half timbering, gable ends

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revitalization of the rural economy presented it as the objective and true description (Potts 167).

[193] Potts 1989, 166.

[194] Howkins 1986, 75.

[195] Howkins 1986, 83.

[196] Howkins 1986, 83.

and rustic porches became the dominant national style of middle-class private housing.[197] Even well-known children's books like the Beatrix Potter series portrayed home either as a cottage or as mock-Tudor style houses. Generations bred on these books learned to associate such houses as homes as well as with "an earlier and better world of decency and honesty."[198] In art, the paintings of John Constable (1776-1837) supplanted J.M.W. Turner's as paradigmatic representations of the English landscape early in the twentieth century.[199] Turner's work was characterized by dramatic seascapes and mountain views while Constable's most well-known and reproduced paintings like *The Hay Wain* and *Dedham Vale Morning* were of quiet, ordinary, placid scenes of British pastoral life replete with mills, farmhands, cottages, cows and horses.[200]

While Baldwin and his oft-quoted speech, an aural Constable painting of words and sounds, have become the *uber* representation of the construction of Britain as 'Little England' during the interwar period, he was not a Little Englander. Baldwin did consider the idealized landscape and life of rural England as the symbol of all sorts of good things like "stability, continuity, tranquility, harmony, perspective, imagination and honesty" in contrast to the "transience, turbulence, tensions, clamour, pretences,

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[197] Howkins 1986, 73.

[198] Howkins 1986, 73.

[199] Potts 1989, 168.

[200] Constable, it should be noted, was "plucked up from the past, tidied up and tamed, and then reconstituted as the father of an English landscape vision no one previously had thought to conjure into existence" (Potts 168).

divisions, shallowness, and materialism of urban life."[201] He spoke often about the national characteristics that made Britain great as being found in the country where they were in the purest form, "preserved by an honest and traditional way of life."[202] However, he was deeply aware that rural England had either vanished or was fast vanishing, and did not call for its return.[203] It was the "inherited memory, cultural tradition, and continuing ideal" of rural life which he considered important as they could continue to act as the spiritual home for the urban population.[204]

Thus, Baldwin's conception of Britishness and his vision of Britain went far beyond this supposed fixation on the England of old.[205] Rural England had figured quite prominently in his speeches because it was part of "*his* own imaginative sense of identity" and only as "an example of local allegiance for others."[206] Critically, Britishness for him, could be found in *each* locality, county or region of Britain. They were equally important and had their own distinctive virtues, all of which contributed to

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[201] Wiliamson 1999, 248.

[202] Potts 1989, 166.

[203] Wiliamson 1999, 248.

[204] Wiliamson 1999, 248.

[205] Williamson 1999, 243. See Martin Wiener's book which argued that this ruralism was an overall trend in Britain which contributed to Britain's overall decline in competitiveness and ultimately, its place as a hegemon.

[206] Williamson 1999, 126. Emphasis mine.

the rich diversity of their national inheritance and to the 'common stock' making up the character of the British race.[207]

Each local place had its own charm, spell, genius as well as a continuous history linking the landscape and its people all the way back to "the beginning of time and the human race." They thus formed Britons' "natural foundation of national values."[208] While local loyalties and allegiances were rooted in family, home, and locality, they were not separate from each other in Baldwin's view. Instead, they were described as circles which widened and radiated outwardly to connect with larger loyalties of town or county, country and nation, and finally, the empire and mankind.[209] Rather than the modern, divisive calls of class which were the realities facing British politicians early in the twentieth century, Baldwin conceived and tried to persuade others that the most powerful and natural sources of British identity were those rooted in locality and community which were somehow shared by the entire nation.[210]

These different locations in turn produced the 'national character' with these qualities and values: independence, realism, truthfulness, honor, innate decency, a profound sense of duty, justice and fair play, as well as respect for law and order. In various speeches, Baldwin also depicted the British as peaceful people who were not only great and persistent fighters if put to the test but made for times of crises and

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[207] Williamson 1999, 25.

[208] Williamson 1999, 251.

[209] Williamson 1999, 251.

[210] Williamson 1999, 250.

challenges which they faced with serenity, calmness and cheerfulness. Moreover, they were 'the kindest people in the world' who sympathized with the under-dog and exhibited brotherliness across classes. Thus, individuality would always be "tempered by a 'spirit of co-operation' and 'habit of working to common principles'."[211]

The final crucial pillar in this emerging construction of British identity was the principle of democratic constitutionalism and British institutions of governance.[212] This pillar consisted of a distinct emphasis on the idea that democratic constitutionalism was British in origin and development, evolving out of a unique history of the "democracy of the village community and a distinctive Reformation."[213] In the national consciousness, it had "a mysterious, preternatural quality, inviting the belief that it has been coeval with the land itself, born in … 'the rich soil of culture' with which the English have been blessed."[214] In other words, the principles of the British constitution was built into the physical being of all Britons and inseparable from Britishness. Its innermost core "was carried in 'our hearts', parliamentary government was 'flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone', and freedom was the 'air we breathe'."[215]

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[211] Williamson 1999: 253.

[212] Schwarz 1984; and Wellings 2002, 100.

[213] Williamson 1999, 255-6.

[214] Schwarz 1999, 185.

[215] Williamson 1999, 255.

Constitutionalism, as depicted here, was thus an inextricable part of a centuries-long British tradition that was a part of their being.[216]

This conception of Britishness did not emerge from thin air nor was its place and power in the British political and cultural imagination automatic and uncontested. Instead, it developed out of the very specific context of the challenges to the domestic order in Britain and its international role. In the next section, I discuss the social and political developments during this tumultuous period in Britain that led to the destabilization of the dominant form of British identity as well as the politics involved in the emergence of an alternative in ideas of Britishness. Particularly significant was a seismic change in the country's political order - the arrival of full mass democracy which extended voting and political rights to women and the working-class and its impact on Conservatism and Baldwin who feared their adverse consequences for the stability and cohesion of Britain, a theme he visited again and again.

2.4.2.2 A Changing Britain: International and Domestic Challenges

Britain in the 1920s and 1930s was a very different place from the Britain of the 1880s when it was the world's leading economic power and possessed a far-flung empire.[217] Social, economic and political changes were already afoot in the 1870s when American and German competition began to successfully chip away at Britain's share of the world market in manufacturing, and especially in the metal industries and

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[216] Schwarz 1984, 15.

[217] Howkins 1986, 65.

heavy engineering.[218] Britain's share of international commerce, for example, fell from 25 percent to 21 percent between 1880 and 1900.[219] Its growth rate had fallen to 1.6 percent per year between 1870 and 1913 while the United States and Germany were growing at respective rates of 5 percent and 4.7 percent annually during that same period.[220]

There were also other developments which became visible signs of decline to the political elite in late Victorian England. Huge armies on the European continent with the capacity for rapid mobilization had emerged in the post-1870 era and posed a potential threat to Britain's security. This vulnerability was in turn heightened by the naval build-up of France, Russia and Germany.[221] A disastrous start to the Boer War (1899-1902) when the British army was unable to immediately dispense with a ragtag army of Dutch farmers worsened fears regarding the state of Britain's capabilities and military preparedness. The social expectations or notions of success that were derived from the dominant perspective of the British self as an exceptional, superior and great country did not meet the experienced consequences of these changing international economic and political developments.

Suspicions, fears and anxieties that all was not as it should be was reflected in countless public and private discussions and publications regarding the decline of

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[218] Howkins 1986, 64.

[219] Friedberg 1984, 24.

[220] Friedberg 1984, 25.

[221] Pugh 1999, 42.

Britain. Intellectuals as well as the governing political circle, for example, began to reassess Britain's military, financial and imperial capabilities and vulnerabilities vis-à-vis the other great powers, and in particular, Germany.[222] There were commissioned government reports on the physical condition of the British population which concluded that the British 'race' was degenerating and a cause of the growing enfeeblement of their might and position in the world as a great power and a great empire.[223] Drawing on Edward Gibbon's enormously popular *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, many other public intellectuals began to compare Britain with ancient Rome. In his analysis, Gibbon pointed to the decay in Rome as the reason for the decline and collapse of its far-flung empire.[224] When these lessons of ancient Rome were applied to Britain, aristocratic and military circles concluded that London, the heart of Britain and the Empire, was rotten to the core and leading to the decline of the British race, character, and ultimately, the country and its empire.[225]

The social expectations or notions of success associated with the dominant perspective of the British self as an exceptional, superior and great country were also upended by domestic challenges of the Edwardian period when Britain's social and political order was in great turmoil. This was a period which witnessed the advent of universal suffrage and full democracy, an insurgent feminist movement, the rise of

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[222] Rich 1988, 660.

[223] Pugh 1993,106.

[224] Howkins 1986, 65.

[225] Rich 1988, 660; and Howkins 1986, 65.

Labour, a right-wing Tory rebellion against parliamentary government based on the opposition to the pre-war Liberal administration's plan to reform the House of Lords and the issue of Home Rule for Ireland.[226] The campaign of the suffragettes, for some upper-class Edwardian men, "represented one of the most alarming symptoms of the underlying malaise in British society."[227] The growth of trade unions and the assertiveness of the working-class movement invoked fears that parliamentary government was under considerable threat by this new political force.[228] There were also the constitutional problems that arose out of the rejection of the 1909 budget by the House of Lords. The House of Commons, which had passed the budget by a large majority, pronounced the actions of the upper House "a breach of the constitution and a usurpation of the rights of the commons."[229] This was partly resolved by the Parliament Act of 1911 which dealt with "the veto powers of the House of Lords" but "left intact the anomaly of its hereditary membership and its extraordinary political bias."[230] Last but not least was the crisis over Home Rule for Ireland. Beginning its passage through the Commons in April 1912, the third Home Rule Bill had by 1914, "passed three times

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[226] Powell 2002, 121; Pugh 1999; Rubinstein 2003; and Laybourn 1999.

[227] Pugh 1999, 154.

[228] Pugh 1999, 151.

229 Pugh 1999, 157. This was part of a larger problem when peers, many of whom were Conservatives, were rejecting bills passed by a large majority in the Commons regularly since the 1870s. At that time, peers had the right to amend and reject ordinary legislation.

[230] Pugh 1999, 157.

as required by the Parliament Act."[231] It was resisted by the Ulster unionists and by January 1914, a number of gun-running episodes put 350,000 rifles in the hands of private armies against Home Rule, raising the possibility of a civil war with the setting up of the Dublin Parliament.[232]

The combination of suffragettes, strikes, antagonists in the constitutional crisis over the House of Lords, Ulster unionists and Irish Nationalists posed violent challenges to the authority of the British state and its institutions.[233] Critically, it provided the sense that Britain was becoming increasingly ungovernable – a state and society "in the first stages of breakdown."[234] The Edwardian crisis, as David Powell argues, put Britain in a 'crisis of nationalism' as the state "responded to what were perceived as external threats while struggling to preserve its unity in the face of the renewed disruption associated with domestic national discontents."[235]

The end of World War I did not see an abatement of this crisis. Determined efforts after the end of the war to re-establish the core components and pillars of a system that had placed the country at the centre of the world's economy in the pre-1914 era failed due to unrealistic policies that were based on inaccurate and ultimately,

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[231] Pugh 1999, 157.

[232] Pugh 1999, 158.

[233] Pugh 1999, 151.

[234] Pugh 1999.

[235] Powell 2002, 121; Powell 1996; and Brooks 1995.

wishful understanding of the state of the British economy.[236] These, together with a series of other problems like the disruption of its international economic and financial systems, growing nationalist feelings in her colonies, mass enfranchisement of the working-class and the possibility of socialist government only served to continue and confirm the shakiness of its domestic stability and international power.[237] During the same period, there were fears and anxieties about whether mass democracy with an electorate that was largely poorly informed, and overwhelmingly working-class would approve "policies which were difficult to comprehend, which lacked a sensational appeal, or more seriously, which might involve material sacrifice from a large number of voters" and be "dissuaded from succumbing to irresponsible stunts."[238]

As these developments unfolded, it become apparent that Britain would not be able to return to its pre-World War I conditions of prosperity, progress, and imperial power.[239] These dramatic changes and challenges to its domestic and international social and political order created an increasingly visible gap between reality and the heroic and imperial-based British identity that had been so dominant. It became clear to many in the public sphere that previous arrangements, assumptions, and expectations on which ideas of Britain and Britishness were based were incongruent with what they

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[236] For more on these economic issues, see Pugh 1999.

[237] Williamson 1992, 11.

[238] Williamson 1992, 15.

[239] Williamson 1992, 1.

were experiencing.[240] While these doubts converged into the growing realization that fundamental readjustments were necessary, there was no obvious consensus of what they should be.

2.4.2.3 The Politics of Conservatism and the Emergence of Baldwin's New Britain

As discussed earlier, an alternative conception of Britishness which emphasized and constructed a united Britain based on the uniqueness and yet *uber*-normality of places and landscapes throughout the British isles and the principle of democratic constitutionalism dominated public life during the interwar period. While reflecting in part, an already existing nostalgia and heartfelt longing for an idealized and largely unknown rural past,[241] the emergence of this alternative and its eventual pervasiveness cannot be separated from the politics and difficulties experienced by the Conservative party during the Interwar period or from the rhetoric and actions of Stanley Baldwin.

Politically, a series of changes appeared on paper to have dire consequences for the future and survival of the Conservative Party. The first of these transformations was the arrival of universal suffrage with the passage of the Representation of the People's Acts of 1918 and 1928. These acts expanded the electorate more than threefold between 1918 and 1929. Second was the growth and expansion of the Labour Party which was not only offering radical solutions for the nation's ills but beginning to compete successfully against the Conservatives and the Liberals. Third, the Conservatives had experienced election defeats in 1905, 1923 and 1929. Across

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[240] Williamson 1992, 11.

[241] Ball 1988, 9-10.

postwar Europe, there was revolutionary instability in the 1920s and the emergence of totalitarianism in 1930s. Due to these changes and developments, many Conservatives were apprehensive about democracy and believed that universal suffrage would lead to collectivist and socialist governments.[242] In other words, the party was disoriented by the arrival of universal suffrage and full democracy with no ready means of explaining or even rationalizing how it would be able to win elections with a national electoral base that now included the working-class as well as women.[243]

Despite their apprehension and fears regarding the consequences of universal suffrage, the Conservatives managed and enjoyed considerable success as a political party during the Interwar period. For 17 of the 20 years of this period, the Conservatives were in office, either independently or in governments which they dominated.[244] For all these 17 years, they also enjoyed huge parliamentary majorities.[245] Explanations for this success range from the fact that they were fortunate not to be governing when the 1929 depression hit to the argument that voting Conservative was the natural thing. These explanations are lacking.[246] The latter for example, runs against pre-1914 and post-1945 voting patterns when a Conservative vote

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[242] Jarvis 1997, 132.

[243] Jarvis 1997, 131.

[244] McKibbin 1990, 260.

[245] McKibbin 1990, 260.

[246] McKibbin 1990, 262.

was often not the normal vote.[247] Arguments based on the depression cannot ascertain if it would have had the same impact on the fortunes of Labour. All these explanations are based on the assumption that the Conservative Party was the passive recipient of structural changes or some mysterious force that seemed to be guiding the electorate to vote Conservative.

The party was not a passive recipient of the social and political changes brought about by universal suffrage or international developments.[248] Instead, these changes were a significant catalyst in Conservative attempts to re-define their party's goals as well as a new vision for Britain. One of their most concerted and forceful attempts in this struggle was in the form of the Tariff Reform League which emerged out of the fears and anxieties related to British imperial decline.[249] Tariff reform was aimed at turning Britain into a global power by linking it, its colonies and dominions into a single economic and trading bloc. Such a system with its protective duties, it was envisioned, would protect British industry and the working-class from competitors while simultaneously financing social reforms such as old age pensions. An essential part of the program was the imposition of import duties on food and raw materials which was necessary for the overall success of fiscal reform.[250] These proposals however, divided the party between those who found them an anathema and others who considered them

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[247] McKibbin 1990, 264.

[248] Jarvis 1997, 135.

[249] Schwarz 1984, 4.

[250] Ball 1998, 2.

the "only living thing in politics."[251] Ultimately, these proposals were unpopular with the public and the empire-based platform collapsed electorally, ideologically and organizationally.[252]

Under the leadership of Andrew Bonar Law in the early 1920s, there was the beginnings of a shift in the Conservative Party towards an emphasis on tranquility, stability and a return to normality at home and abroad.[253] While Bonar Law realized that the old Conservative Party would "never have a future in the life of this country,"[254] there was again, more consensus on the need for change rather than over the nature of the change in the party. For example, there were top Conservatives like Austen Chamberlain who insisted that "the threat of socialism had rendered the traditional party system defunct and in need of permanent political realignment."[255]

In contrast, Stanley Baldwin responded to the changes by portraying that "same system as a symbol of British democratic values in a world increasingly dominated by extremism and dictatorship."[256] He realized that the party would not be able to win elections and therefore, fulfill its 'national' responsibilities if it were to ignore the

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[251] Ball 1988, 2.

[252] Schwarz 1984, 4.

[253] Rubinstein 2003, 132.

[254] Jarvis 1997, 143.

[255] Jarvis 1997, 143.

[256] Jarvis 1997, 143.

changes that had created new political realities in Interwar Britain.[257] Through all this, Baldwin was conscious of the necessity of transforming Conservatism and the Conservative party to one which could absorb "the democratic and ethical values he tried to exemplify."[258]

Politics aside, this emphasis on equating Conservatism and critically, Britishness, with harmony, unity, tranquility, moderation and democratic constitutionalism was also due to Baldwin's great concern over the issues of social and political cohesion in Britain. The incorporation of democratic constitutionalism as one of the key principles in Baldwin's vision of Britain and his construction of British identity was a central part of this effort to create the necessary conditions to ensure that British politics and political parties did not descend into chaos, paralysis or extremism.

This is significant as Baldwin, when he became leader of the party, raised this principle of democratic constitutionalism - where "the Conservative Party sets out to abide by the constitution, to establish a working concordat with Labour in order to get through the debates and committee business of parliamentary life and to represent – if not the citizen – then at least the voter and public opinion" - to a position of absolute centrality rather than dismantling it.[259] Vastly different from Conservative policies in the past, this position was based on the conviction that democracy "equaled the right to

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[257] Williamson 1999, 219.

[258] Williamson 1999, 219.

[259] Schwarz 1984, 2-3.

vote in regular elections and the possibility that in the rotation of parties, the independent representatives of Labour might take their turn in governing the nation."[260]

Overall, the main components in Baldwin's conception of Britain and Britishness provided the means to portray the nation as one that had been and was both harmonious and united, bound through time on the basis of the same principles and values. The qualities presented in this conception of Britishness provided a divided nation with an understanding of themselves that would "soothe away the sores of class politics and industrial conflict"[261] and support and emphasize "the nation's ability to integrate and tolerate diverse groups within its ranks"[262] in a difficult period.

Thus, the inconsistencies between the social expectations of the British identity based on greatness and the experienced consequences of the domestic and international changes of the turbulent Interwar period provided the space for alternative forms of Britishness to arise. However, Baldwin's alternative also emerged out of the specific conditions arising out of the developments and changes within Conservative Party and British politics. Despite its ascendance and the challenge it posed to the dominant British identity based on notions of greatness, the former was by no means accepted and recognized by all. The question of India was very much a part of this process of identity contestation as well as the battle for its recognition.

As discussed earlier, the diehards constructed their conception of Britishness against the Indian 'Other' and critically, insisted that British greatness could only be

[260] Schwarz 1984, 3.

[261] Williamson 1999, 248; Smith 1986; Wiener 1981; Sian 1996; and Cunningham 1986.

[262] Williamson 1999, 248.

sustained if they remained on the subcontinent to fulfill their 'duties' and 'responsibilities'. The next section places the reformers' approach to the issue of change in India within the larger context of Baldwin's vision of a new Britain.

2.4.2.4 Change, Democratic Constitutionalism and India

The introduction to the Draft Report submitted to the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms began by addressing the issues raised by the diehards directly:

> "We cannot indeed complain if those whom we fail to convince lay stress upon the possible consequences of another policy. It has been, and will be urged that no Dominion has ever been faced within its border at one and the same time with all the problems that India has to deal; with the ever present risk of hostilities on her frontier; with the cleavage between communal interests; with innumerable differences of race and speech; with a financial system largely dependent for its credit on centres outside India; and with a vast population in every stage of civilization."[263]

Critically, the acknowledgement that "all these things are true" did not mean following the path of resistance to Indian demands advocated by Churchill and the diehards:

> "[A]nd yet even the sum of them does not seem to us to conclude the argument. An answer has still to be found to the questions asked a century ago by a great servant of India, in a speech of which it was said that to have heard it might console the younger members of the House for never having heard Edmund Burke: "Do we think that we can give the people of India knowledge without awakening ambition? Or do we mean to awaken ambition and provide it with no legitimate vent?" *The answer has now to be given; and we hold strongly that it is more consonant with the dignity of Parliament and with the traditions of the British people*, if, when the time has come for Parliament to share its power with

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[263] "Chairman Draft Report to be Submitted to the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms." See p. 19 in *Proceedings of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform [Session 1933-34], Volume I, Part II.* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1934).

those whom it has sought to train the arts of government it should do so not ungraciously nor in any grudging spirit."[264]

The report goes on to say:

"There are moments in the affairs of nations when a way is opened for the removal of long-standing differences and misunderstandings for the establishment between people and people of new relations more in harmony with the circumstances of the time than those which they replace. Adjustments of this order, when they involve a transference of political power, must inevitably provide a sharp test of national character;..."[265]

In justifying the reforms that they were advocating in the face of criticism from Churchill and the diehards, the report not only acknowledged that there was a growing nationalist consciousness and movement in India but concluded that the only way to handle it was to share power once responsible self-government was possible because it was the way that was consistent and befitting the dignity of Parliament, and the traditions and of the British people. The manner in which they adjusted to these changes was in itself a fundamental test of the national character. What were these traditions, these dignities of parliament and the test it was providing to the national character? After all, Churchill and the diehards had also made direct links between the importance of rejecting these reforms to the maintenance of what they argued were specifically British characteristics.

In his first major address on India, Baldwin stated that the way in which Britain handled the India question was "the supreme, the acid, and ultimate test of how fit we

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[264] Ibid. *Emphasis mine.*

[265] "Chairman Draft Report to be Submitted to the Joint Select Committee on Indian Constitutional Reforms." See p. 19 in *Proceedings of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform [Session 1933-34], Volume I, Part II.* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1934).

are for … democratic conditions."[266] According to Williamson, Baldwin meant "on the one hand Labour readiness to countenance imperial government, and on the other Conservative recognition of the inevitability and advantages of reform."[267] In other words, how the issue of India was handled was crucial for reconciling the arrival of full parliamentary democracy and Labour as a political party and force on the political scene with the maintenance of imperial administration.[268]

These reforms were therefore not distinct and separate from British politics. In Baldwin's efforts to fashion a new Britain in the face of all the tumultuous changes during the first decades of the twentieth century, the principle of democratic constitutionalism was particularly important. However, Britain's political development and constitutional order hardly unfolded continuously and harmoniously throughout its history. During the modern period, especially in the first three decades of the twentieth century, constitutional politics was in fact, under siege from both the right and left.[269] Democratic constitutionalism and its taken-for-granted association with modern Conservatism, modern British politics and Britishness did not begin to acquire its settled state until the 1920s.[270]

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[266] *House of Common Debates*, 229, c.63 (2 July 1929).

[267] Williamson 1999, 268.

[268] Williamson 1999, 268.

[269] Schwarz 1984, 3.

[270] Schwarz 1984, 2. See also Ball 1988; and Williamson 1993.

While Baldwin may have depicted British parliamentarism as "'the natural outcome, through long centuries, of the common sense and the good nature of the English people, who have always preferred committees to dictators, elections to street-fighting, and talking shops to revolutionary tribunals," he was very aware and terrified that "'street-fighting and revolutionary tribunals were just around the corner."[271] In a widely quoted and revealing 1927 letter to a friend, Baldwin wrote: "'Democracy has arrived at a gallop in England and I feel all the time it is a race for life. Can we educate them [the mass of the electorate] before the crash comes?'"[272]

As he explained to the Cambridge University Conservative Association in 1927:

> "There is no people with a surer political sense: but you must remember that, however innate that sense might be, there are large masses in this country who have not … yet had time to develop a keen political sense themselves. And they are only too prone to be led away by really skilful and clever propaganda … to ends they would be the last to desire if they realized what those ends were."[273]

Baldwin was extremely concerned that these new developments "'had brought our people and other peoples to a political status in advance of their cultural status.'"[274] The advent of mass democracy in Britain was therefore, "a struggle between the innate common sense and political quietism of her people and the lure of the fantasies induced by lack of education and demagogues."[275] This fear and identification of anarchy as the

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[271] Schwarz 1984, 15.

[272] Quoted in Schwarz 1984, 12. See Williamson 1999 and Middlemas and Barnes 1969.

[273] Baldwin, quoted in Jarvis 1991, 486.

[274] Schwarz 1984, 12; and Jarvis 1991, 487.

[275] Jarvis 1991, 487.

other side of the coin of mass democracy was something which featured prominently in his public speaking throughout the course of his career.[276]

Far more crucial were his attempts to counter and reconcile what he considered were the potentially negative consequences of these domestic political developments through influencing and changing Britain's political culture as well as that of the Conservative Party through the promotion of what Philip Williamson has called a 'public doctrine' based on a set of shared principles in national life that would promote both harmony and unity and become the source of the country's and his party's salvation.[277] Baldwin and his narratives of the national character and way of life that were inextricably linked to the landscape, history, traditions and cultural memories of Britain played a dominant role in writing out and erasing the ruptures and conflicts in Britain's political development, and eventually succeeding in rooting and linking Britishness to constitutionalism in an idealized history.[278]

These efforts alone were insufficient to ensure that such a form of British culture and Britishness would take hold. For Baldwin, these principles of democratic constitutionalism had to be demonstrated in actual practices in the very conduct of Conservatism and British politics. Politically, this took the form of building a culture based on moderation and constitutionalism where all the parties, especially "the Conservative Party sets out to abide by the constitution, to establish a working

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[276] His published speeches include "Democracy and Its Task', "Democracy and the Spirit of Service', 'The Authentic Note of Democracy' and "Freedom and Discipline".

[277] Schwarz 1984, 14; and Williamson 1993.

[278] Schwarz 1984, 3; Williamson 1999, 212; Jarvis 1991; and Ball 1988.

concordat with Labour in order to get through the debates and committee business of parliamentary life and to represent – if not the citizen – then at least the voter and public opinion."[279] The norm of moderation and constitutionalism, quintessential elements in Baldwin's vision of Britishness was reflected in his reactions towards the new British electorate and the Labour party. The India question, seen as it was as the test of Britain's democracy, was another situation which would require the parties to be guided by these norms.[280]

It was only in acting this principle of constitutionalism could Baldwin's construction of Britishness be recognized by fellow Britons and sustained. Baldwin's understanding and response to the developments in India were heavily influenced by what was seen as its significance for the fundamental requirements of the British domestic politics and his vision for the character of Britain, British politics and Conservatism. It was also inseparable from Baldwin's attempts to construct not only a new Conservatism but a new British political identity in a period of tremendous flux and turbulence.

This is evident in his approach to other crucial issues he faced as leader of the Conservatives. These included the Conservative Party's break with the coalition they had formed with David Lloyd George's Liberal Party in 1922, Baldwin's position on the issue of the political levy imposed by the trade unions in 1925 in opposition of the

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[279] Schwarz 1984, 3.

[280] Williamson 1999, 267; and Ball 1988.

majority of his party, as well as the abdication crisis of 1936.[281] In all these issues, he "chose to appease, using that word in the sense of reconciliation rather than concession" in the interests of stability, peace and tranquility.[282]

He succeeded by all counts as

> "democracy ceased to be something Conservatives would simply have to accept, and had become a state of affairs they were principally responsible for defending.... it was even becoming synonymous with Englishness and national character."[283]

As Schwarz argues, "the Conservative articulation of people and nation was constitutionalized."[284]

In summary, these domestic political debates, while ostensibly about India, were also, at another level, fundamentally about different visions of Britain and British identity. However, these arguments over the reforms also point to the need to perform certain actions in other to sustain or maintain an identity. The diehards' argument that British exceptionalism and its role as a great power with a world role could only be retained if they stayed in India to continue performing their mission was part of a process to maintain their construction of Britishness. Similarly with the reformers, handling the developments on the basis of democratic constitutionalism was the only way in which they could pass their own test as a full democracy.

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[281] Schwarz 1984, 7.

[282] Ball 1988, 12.

[283] Jarvis 1997, 132.

[284] Schwarz 1984, 6.

Thus, different visions of Britain and identity principles can be invented and constructed through different processes like Self/Other mechanisms or the active narratives of politicians. However, they cannot simply be declared into being. These identities have to be accepted and recognized by others as well. Part of this latter process involves performing actions that are consistent with such an identity. The battle between the reformers and the diehards over their different approaches to the India question was in part, a battle to ensure that their particular idea of Britishness could be enacted into being.

2.5 Parliamentary Institutions and Contested Territorial Policies

In 1934, Samuel Hoare admitted to the then Viceroy of India, Lord Willingdon, that "there were 'no more than thirty' Conservative MPs 'genuinely keen to go on with the Bill, that the great mass is very lukewarm and that a very strong minority is actively hostile.'"[285] While the dissenters did not form a majority in any section of the Party, they did span its entire spectrum from three previous Conservative Secretaries of State for India to retired Indian civil servants and army or police officers who were active figures in their local Conservative associations. Moreover, this cleavage was very real as this formidable combination of diehards and rebels was focused on "capturing these key regions of Conservative support as the means of stampeding the Party."[286]

Contestation on the issue of India, however, did not lead to a quagmire or a bloody and violent end in this particular phase of the struggle in British politics. Why

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[285] Stewart 2001, 177.

[286] Ball 1988, 119-120.

was this the case even though the battle was the longest and most bitter struggle that had ever been fought over a colony in Britain? This section examines the proposition that domestic institutional structures also affect the dynamics through which the processes of contestation are played out. More specifically, democratic governments with few veto players will have greater latitude to change territorial policy.

Generally, the British political system has been classified as one where there is only one veto player.[287] Its unitary government and parliamentarian system where the executive and legislative branches are functionally linked, the supremacy of the laws from parliament, the lack of judicial review and the dominance of the House of Commons over the House of Lords create a system where there are no constitutional veto points. Partisan veto points are also largely limited, usually to one, due to single-member districts and 'first-past-the-post' electoral rules which have generated a largely two-party system for a greater part of the twentieth century. These electoral rules and the two-party system also ensure that parties attempt to be 'catch-all' parties in order to cater to multiple constituencies to gain the relative majority.[288] Hence, parties with agendas and interests that are focused on narrow issue areas are less likely to be politically viable.

Parliamentary systems are also characterized by a great deal of party discipline which minimizes rebellion or deviations from the party line. Besides the party whip and deference, a third crucial factor which contributes to discipline is the possibility of

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[287] Tsebelis 2002, 4; and Spruyt 2005, 132. This description of the British system draws heavily on Spruyt 2005, 132-4.

[288] Spruyt 2005, 132.

new elections and electoral defeat should challenges to the governing party lead to its fall.[289] Since there is a likelihood that the party that comes into power may have policies that are far worse or radical than those at the root of one's defection from one's own party, disagreements within a party may be voiced but they are ultimately muted.[290] Thus, the prime minister and cabinet in the British system are usually able to govern with considerable leverage over their own party and the legislature. This combination of factors creates just one partisan veto player and therefore, one decision point in the British system.

As noted above, there is usually one veto player in the British system. The period examined in this chapter however appears to be an exception to this rule. The 1929 general election gave the Liberals 7 seats, the Conservatives, 260 seats and Labour, 288 seats.[291] As such, a minority Labour government dependent on the Liberal Party was in power between May 1929 and 1931. While there was one veto player in the system, it was vulnerable to no-confidence motions that could have been initiated by the other two parties and therefore, heavily dependent on them.

The 1929 Irwin Declaration, the first controversial measure of the period, was supported by the vulnerable minority Labour government. The Conservative leader, Baldwin supported the Irwin initiative but he faced tremendous misgivings and dissension from significant men within his own party with some experience of India

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[289] Pinto-Dischinky 1972, 13-16.

[290] Spruyt 2005, 133.

[291] Butler 1986, 36-7.

affairs, Lloyd George and others in the Liberal party, some liberal leaders in the House of Lords, Irwin's predecessor as Viceroy, Lord Reading, and from the *Daily Mail*.[292] While Baldwin was extremely persuasive and successful in his speech during the Commons Debate on the Declaration, diehards within his party appeared prepared to join the same hostile lobby as Lloyd George if a division had been called.[293] However, this was avoided because "the Party's hands were largely tied by Baldwin's commitment, even if it had been only personal."[294] Moreover, "Baldwin succeeded in keeping discontent under control by exploiting the loyalty owed to the Party leader … and the instinctive aversion to disunity."[295] The attempt here by the Liberal Party to use the issue to bring down the Labour government by plotting with Conservative diehards, and therefore, to halt any change in Britain's India policy failed because the Liberals were only as strong as their ability to persuade the Conservative leader and frontbench to follow along. However, their failure is "a clear indication of the enormous personal power of the Party leader, for Baldwin's decision gave his followers little room for manoeuvre by making the issue as much one of confidence in himself as leader as of support for Irwin."[296]

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[292] Ball 1988, 111.

[293] Ball 1988, 111.

[294] Ball 1988, 110.

[295] Ball 1988, 111.

[296] Ball 1988, 110.

Even in the early months of 1931, one of lowest points of Baldwin's position over India, he was able to contain the dissenters by drawing on "the prestige and power of his position as Party leader, and the trust and loyalty to which he would appeal."[297] Men like Hailsham, Austen Chamberlain and Lord Salisbury who could have potentially led the revolt but chose not to out of party and personal loyalty.[298] This was repeated in the parliamentary ranks of the party. For example, only five MPs, out of the hundred that were present at a meeting of the parliamentary India committee held after the Commons debate of 12 March, voted against a resolution approving Baldwin's position.[299] The rest, especially the Party centre who may have been hesitant in their support of his India policy were, as Churchill noted "'are all afraid of being labeled disloyal'."[300]

In August 1929, a severe financial and political crisis led to the resignation of the minority Labour government but Ramsay MacDonald was persuaded, with support from the Conservatives and Liberals, to form what was intended to be a temporary National coalition before a general election which would be fought separately by the parties. However, almost the entire Labour party went immediately into opposition while the other parties decided to contest the election as a National government with candidates of each party withdrawing in favor of the sitting MP. This election resulted

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[297] Ball 1988, 125.

[298] Ball 1988, 124.

[299] Ball 1988, 125.

[300] Ball 1988, 125.

in the Conservatives winning 471 seats, the Liberal Nationals, 35 seats, the Liberals, 33 seats and National Labour, 12 seats.[301] Therefore, the National government, while a coalition, was one which was dominated by an overwhelming Conservative majority.[302] In the Cabinet, the Conservatives held eleven out of twenty positions while McDonald's tiny National Labour had four, the Liberal Nationals, two and finally, the Liberals, three. After a year, the Liberals withdrew from the coalition but MacDonald remained Prime Minister until 1935. Despite the number of parties in the National coalition government, there was really only one veto player – the Conservative Party. It was the only one that mattered as all the other parties could have left the coalition without altering the Conservatives' overwhelming majority.

From 1931 to 1935, the diehards turned to the base of the Conservative Party and attempted to influence public opinion when they realized that it was the only means of "breaking the solidarity of the parliamentary consensus over India."[303] First, the diehards tried "to use their support in the Conservative constituency associations to gain control of the organs of the party caucus to which the associations sent representatives."[304] Here, they targeted the Central Council, the governing body of the National Union of Conservative Associations as it was the platform from which a direct

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[301] Butler 1986, 47; and Stevenson and Cook 1994, 119.

[302] Butler 1986, 45-7.

[303] Ball 1988, 114.

[304] Stewart 2001, 168.

power challenge to the party leadership could be launched. Second, the diehards tried using "activity in the constituencies to influence the voting intentions of their MPs."[305]

At the first test of the effectiveness of their campaign amongst party activists, a meeting of the Central Council on 28 June 1933, the diehards failed by a large margin to reject a motion from Baldwin that delegates should not intervene on the issue of Indian reforms until the Joint Select Committee had ended their deliberations.[306] Despite their opposition to the constitutional reforms for India, the delegates, as the Conservative MP, Cuthbert Headlam noted, were not going challenge Baldwin's leadership because it would "run the risk of destroying the National Government."[307] The diehards' attempts to begin to reverse the changes did not end with this failure but continued at the Party conference in October that same year. Once again, they failed as the conference decided "by 737 to 344 (with 121 abstentions) to follow the now familiar line that it was not competent to comment on party policy until after that policy had already been settled."[308] For observers at the conference, the reformers were saved by Neville Chamberlain who argued that the diehards' motion represented a direct challenge to the Government.[309] Similarly, a dissident attempt to overturn the motion that discussions and interventions on the issue of Indian reform should only take place

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[305] Stewart 2001, 168.

[306] Stewart 2001, 170.

[307] Stewart 2001, 170.

[308] Stewart 2001, 171.

[309] Ball 1988; and Stewart 2001.

after the deliberations of the Joint Select Committee at a Central Council meeting in March 1934 failed because of the "impression … that a call for a debate was a direct revolt against the party leadership and thus, the stability of the government itself."[310]

Overall, it was the leaders of the party and the frontbenchers who were responsible for the direction of Indian policy. As commented by Lord Hugh Cecil:

> "The main reality is that the decision about Indian Government will be taken here in England; and that the real sovereignty of India lies here … I suppose if ten persons or thereabouts on Front Benches come to any decision about India, that decision will in fact operate. No doubt public opinion on some questions greatly influences and sometimes overbears Front Benchdom: but at present, at any rate, public opinion is not excited."[311]

With the party leaders standing firm, it was clear that change could only come if they were repudiated. Part of the price of such a challenge would be the fall of the National government and their overwhelming majority. The diehards were never able to summon sufficient support from the top echelons of the party or even from its base to do so.

Therefore, the leverage of party leaders over their own party and the fear of electoral defeat that could arise from challenging one's own party were ultimately deciding factors in ensuring that Baldwin, Irwin, Hoare and the small group of Conservative frontbenchers who were in favor of constitutional reforms for India carried the day while the bitter differences it engendered remained within the party. From 1929 to 1935, the leadership of the Conservative Party was able to lead its members in a direction which many of them may not have wanted to go instead of a

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[310] Stewart 2001, 172.

[311] Ball 1988, 114.

quagmire precisely because of the structural proclivities of a parliamentary system and its consequences for a party's electoral fortunes.

2.6 Conclusion

During the late nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century, Britishness was associated with superiority, exceptionalism, and greatness. It was an imperial-based identity emphasizing that Britons were politically, economically, socially and morally exceptional people who had a special duty to fulfill in the world. During the turbulent interwar years however, international and domestic developments created an increasingly visible gap between the expectations associated with this identity and the reality on the ground, providing the space for alternative conceptualizations of Britishness to emerge. The main alternative to this dominant heroic and imperial-based British identity emphasized Britishness as being rooted in the places and landscapes throughout the British isles and the principle of democratic constitutionalism. While it reflected in part, well established cultural trends and an already existing nostalgia for an idealized and rural past, the emergence of this identity was also inseparable from the turbulent political and social conditions of the time and in particular, its consequences for the politics and difficulties experienced by the Conservative party. The leader of the Conservatives for most of the Interwar period, Stanley Baldwin, was particularly important in the construction of this identity. Baldwin, greatly concerned about the arrival of mass democracy and the problems of social and political cohesion in Britain, provided a conception of Britishness that emphasized harmony, unity, and the timelessness of its principles and values. The

emergence of this alternative did not, however, lead to the automatic marginalization and disappearance of the imperial-based identity from politics or political discourse.

Between 1929 and 1935, these identities were politically contested through the long battle fought by the diehards and the reformers over constitutional reforms for India. Spelling out Britishness was however, only the first half of these arguments. The second half focused on what being British would entail vis-à-vis India. For Churchill and the diehards, the constitutional reforms had to be prevented at all costs as they would lead to the abrogation of British responsibility but more importantly, the end of Britishness that they associated with greatness, superiority and exceptionalism. Being and critically, staying British, entailed remaining in India and performing its benevolent and civilizing mission, a mission that would continue to confirm and sustain this conception of Britishness. For Baldwin and the reformers, the importance of democratic constitutionalism for their conception of Britishness necessitated that the very conduct of British politics should follow and abide by the rules of a parliamentary democracy. This drove their approach to the question of India which was characterized by the determination to follow principles of democratic constitutionalism.

After six years, this battle over India and British identity concluded with the passage of these constitutional reforms. Baldwin's position as the leader of the Conservative Party in a parliamentary system had provided the structural conditions that enabled him to guide and lead his party to a position which the majority did not support. The structural conditions of the British political system constrained the contestation between the two factions, ensuring that opposition to the reforms remained within the

confines of the party. It also ensured that their differences over India did not become bogged down in a quagmire.

CHAPTER 3

FROM INCORPORATION TO DISENGAGEMENT: EAST TIMOR AND MAKING INDONESIA, 1975-1999

3.1 Introduction

For twenty-four years, Indonesia retained a firm and unyielding grip on East Timor as its twenty-seventh province. This intransigent policy which had been primarily focused on protecting Indonesia from the threat of 'communists' and 'security disturbing mobs' gave way in a rather sudden and unexpected way first in June 1998 when an offer of autonomy was made to East Timor, and later, in January 1999 when a more radical step was taken to give the people of East Timor the opportunity to decide their own future in an indirect referendum. Self-determination for East Timor however, came at a great price – the Indonesian military and Indonesian-backed militias left violence and destruction in the wake of Indonesia's withdrawal from the territory. In this chapter, I focus on the following three questions: Why did Indonesia, a country proud of, and constituted by its anti-colonial history, annex East Timor and retain it for twenty-four years even in the face of widespread international condemnation? How and why did the policy change in 1998 and 1999 come about? And why was the withdrawal marked by so much violence especially after a decision to allow the indirect referendum had been made?

Section 3.2 provides a background of this relationship through a chronological description of the events that have played a major part in its development and evolution. Section 3.3 then proceeds to examine various factors that may provide a better understanding of the difference in approaches between Suharto's New Order period and

the transitional government helmed by B.J. Habibie from 1998 to 1999. Section 3.4 focuses on the Indonesia's view and position on East Timor during the Suharto period while section 3.5 examines the shift leading to a resolution of the issue in 1999. The final section of this chapter takes on the task of examining why Indonesia's disengagement from East Timor was so violent even after the decision to allow the referendum had been made.

3.2 From Incorporation To Disengagement

East Timor became a Portuguese colony in the sixteenth century and remained so until the 1974 Carnation Revolution brought down the Caetano regime in Lisbon and ushered in a new government that was committed to the decolonization of Portugal's remaining colonies. Distantly located in the eastern half of the Indonesian archipelago, East Timor responded to these developments by initiating processes that would lead to self-determination. Indonesia's military and intelligence services however, believed that an independent but vulnerable East Timor, together with the presence of the popular but leftist-leaning political party Freitlin (*Frente Revolucionara de Timor Leste Independente*), would turn East Timor into a beach-head for subversive communist activities in the middle of the Indonesian archipelago and threaten its security, stability and unity.[1] In August 1975, the fragile union of Freitlin with the UDT (Timorese Democratic Union) party disintegrated due to the machinations of the Indonesian intelligence services. Subsequently, a civil war between the two parties broke out only

[1] Schwarz 2000, 201; and Taylor 1999.
In contrast, the Indonesian Foreign Ministry declared in a letter to Jose Ramos-Horta, a member of Freitlin that East Timor's sovereignty as an independent nation would be respected by its largest neighbor in the first few months after Portuguese intentions became known.

to end three weeks later with a Freitlin victory and its unilateral declaration of independence on 28 November 1975. Within nine days of this declaration, Indonesia invaded East Timor. A year after the invasion, East Timor was formally incorporated into Indonesia as its twenty-seventh province.

Over the next twenty-four years, the Indonesian military attempted to eradicate the East Timorese resistance in a brutal campaign which left between 120,000 to 200,000 people, a third of its pre-invasion population, dead.[2] Within East Timor, resistance to Indonesian rule continued and intensified during this period. Non-governmental organizations in the U.S., Britain, Ireland and Portugal supported the East Timorese by disseminating information about human rights abuses and lobbying their governments to stop supporting the Suharto regime and its activities.[3] In Indonesia, a small but growing group of radical university students, intellectuals and activists who were also affiliated with the country's pro-democracy movement favored and supported self-determination for East Timor.[4] For them, the democratization of Indonesia was inseparable from the support for East Timorese opposition against Indonesian occupation and its self-determination. Intellectuals like George Aditjondro as well as others from the government research institute LIPI (the Indonesian Institute of Sciences) and ICMI (the Indonesian Association of Muslim Intellectuals) for example, began to evaluate the rationale, cost and consequences of Indonesia's policy in East Timor in their research, publishing some of their conclusions in books and newspaper

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[2] Cotton 2000, 3.

[3] Smith and Muetzelfeldt (2000).

[4] Uhlin 1997, 197-8; Fukuda 2000, 24; and interviews with Rachland Nashidik on 21 July 2004; Munir on 21 July 2004; and Wilson on 27 July 2004.

columns.[5] While they were by no means in full agreement on the issues surrounding Indonesian involvement in East Timor, many began to contemplate the need for major policy changes.

At the very top levels of the Indonesian government however, new departures in policy were vetoed as the half-island was considered an integrated part of Indonesia and an indisputable component of the archipelago's sovereignty.[6] President Suharto refused to contemplate changes, brushing off all requests to review Indonesian policy towards East Timor despite significant international condemnation from states as well as non-governmental organizations during the 1990s.[7] The military, which was involved in the original planning, invasion, and the subsequent task of integrating East Timor, was also similarly against any changes. The original conviction of President Suharto, and the Indonesian military and intelligence services in 1975 that the potential of communism in East Timor threatened Indonesia remained throughout its occupation albeit in a slightly different form.[8] Critically, the Indonesian military was also convinced that the majority of the East Timorese wanted to be Indonesians. They concluded that the East Timorese resistance who fought for independence either with guns or through political and diplomatic means were either communist-inspired diehards or a small group of

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[5] Interview with Dewi Fortuna Anwar, 21 July 2004; Interview with Indria Samego, 19 July 2004. Also, see Crouch 2000, and *Tapol Bulletin*, no.151 (March 1999): 2.

[6] Cotton 2000, 4.

[7] Ali Alatas, Indonesia's Foreign Minister, had brought up the idea of autonomy for East Timor in the early 1990s. See Alatas 2006, 99-104.

[8] Schwarz 2000, 201; and Taylor 1999.

frustrated and uneducated East Timorese susceptible to the former's influence.[9] Hence, continued resistance to integration could only be due to generous but poorly implemented integration and development policies or the actions of a small but vocal and ungrateful minority.[10]

In June 1998, B.J. Habibie, the man who had just succeeded the disgraced Suharto as president of Indonesia, told Reuters and the BBC in an interview that he was ready to consider giving East Timor special status.[11] In mid-June, this offer, which entailed giving East Timor its own semi-autonomous administration and a significant increase in political freedom, was formally confirmed by Ali Alatas, Indonesia's Foreign Minister, at a meeting with the UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan and Portuguese government representatives.[12] During the next six months when ministerial-level talks were held between Indonesia and Portugal on the former's proposal for East Timor's autonomy, the Indonesian government did not consider any suggestions or proposals of a referendum as a viable option.[13] Instead, they maintained that a referendum was unnecessary because the East Timorese had already opted for

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[9] Moore 2001 and McRae 2002.

[10] See official Indonesian publications like East Timor: Building for the Future: Issues and Perspectives, 2nd Edition (Department of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Indonesia, 1996).

[11] Greenlees and Garran 2002, 25.

[12] Portugal and Indonesia had been locked in fruitless diplomatic talks for more than a decade due to disagreements over fundamental parameters for a negotiated settlement. See Alatas 2006.

[13] Kammen 2001, 173; and Marker 2003.

integration in 1976.[14] In addition, Indonesian diplomats and officials also argued that a referendum would result in the emergence of pro- and anti-integration factions, civil war and the possible division of East Timor.

In late January 1999, these previous refusals to contemplate a referendum were put aside. President Habibie made a move that was surprising but critical to East Timor's path to independence. On January 27th, the Habibie government announced a 'second option' where East Timor could choose between autonomy and independence. In March, further diplomatic negotiations led to the agreement that the East Timorese would be 'consulted' through a direct ballot where the rejection of autonomy would mean independence. On August 31 1999, the people of East Timor voted for independence when they rejected the option of autonomy in overwhelming numbers.

What accounts for the wide differences in approaches to East Timor exhibited by Suharto's New Order and the Habibie period? How did the decision to allow the indirect referendum come about? Over the last few years, several accounts, usually focusing on either the efforts of a transnational network of activists or the significantly different economic and political conditions under which Indonesia had to operate after the rupiah and the economy began their freefall in 1997, have contributed to our understanding of various facets of these events. The next section turns to these various factors and evaluates the relative significance of each.

3.3 Alternative Explanations

Great importance has been attributed to the contributions of the transnational network of activists who took up the East Timorese cause after the 1991 massacre of

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[14] The selection was marred by interference from the Indonesians.

unarmed civilians by Indonesian military forces in Dili. During the first fifteen years of the occupation, the East Timorese were unable to garner much attention or support in their fight for self-determination due to Indonesia's successful efforts at keeping it physically isolated from observers. More importantly, Indonesia was able to manage and suppress the issue of East Timor in international forums like the United Nation with the support of countries like the United States and Australia.[15]

This attempt at erasing the East Timor issue was however, reversed in November 1991 when video footage smuggled out of the country showed the indiscriminate massacre of civilians who were gathered at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, the capital, to commemorate the death of a pro-independence supporter.[16] In capturing the brutal nature of Indonesian rule in a way that previous reports trickling out of East Timor never could, this video documentation of the Santa Cruz events galvanized international attention and in particular, that of transnational activists.

In time, these activists were able to produce two crucial changes which some argue were pivotal in "bringing about political change in East Timor."[17] First, they kept the issue of East Timor alive in the international arena by lobbying national governments and regional institutions like the EU.[18] In the U.S., a singularly important arena, transnational activists were particularly effective in persuading members of Congress, who from the mid-1990s, voted to cut off various forms of aid and training

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[15] Ambrosio 2002, 118-9.

[16] Cotton 2000, 3.

[17] Simpson 2005, 453.

[18] Smith and Muetzelfeldt 2000, 272.

for the Indonesian military.[19] In 1993, the U.S. supported a resolution passed by the UN Human Rights Commission censuring Indonesia for its poor human rights record in East Timor.[20] Other countries and international aid agencies signaled their disapproval by either reducing or suspending their aid programs.[21] Second was their success in broadening the narrow public focus on human rights to encompass self-determination through framing it "in the discourse of unfinished European colonialism"[22] and by using persuasive moral arguments.[23]

While the transnational East Timor solidarity network did make these crucial contributions and was an undeniable and critical actor in this story, explanations solely focused on their role must be tempered by an important consideration - the Suharto regime was immune to their efforts while Habibie chose to offer autonomy to East Timor within his first week in office. Suharto for example, responded to growing pressure and signals from a U.S. Congress that had been heavily influenced by activists by rejecting the 'expanded' version of IMET which focuses on human rights and civilian control of the military, and halting a proposed US$250 million purchase of

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[19] Simpson (2005) and Cotton (2000: 4).
However, it was not entirely successful as the Congressional ban on IMET had been sidestepped by allowing Indonesia to purchase the training and the continuation of US-Indonesia exercises. Throughout the Clinton administration, Indonesia was considered strategically and economically more important than East Timor (Nevins 2005, 61). See also footnote 37 for U.S. support of the Indonesian military in 1999.

[20] Schwarz 2000, 233.

[21] Cotton 2000, 4.

[22] Simpson 2005, 467; and Smith and Muetzelfeldt 2000, 277.

[23] Simpson 2005, 472.

American F-16 jet fighters. In his letter to President Clinton, Suharto "stated that he would not accept restrictions on military transfers based on human rights."[24] Hence, the transnational East Timor solidarity network may have partially cleared and paved the path for ending the Indonesian occupation by reframing the issue but these efforts would have remained inadequate in the face of continued resistance from Indonesia. In other words, processes within Indonesia cannot be discounted and are an important part of the equation.

Realist-based approaches which do take Indonesian agency into account argue that it was the drastic change in the country's material circumstances during the Asian financial crisis of 1997 which was pivotal in forcing a recalibration of the country's interest. More specifically, this perspective argues that the currency crisis, which had deteriorated rapidly into a full-blown financial crisis of failing banks, non-performing loans and technically bankrupt conglomerates, quickly eroded Indonesia's resistance because they produced two broad effects. One, Indonesia found that it had limited negotiating power with international donors bent on self-determination for East Timor. Second, the cost of occupying East Timor had magnified in a country where the crisis had left 27.8 million Indonesians unemployed at the end of February 1998, 79.4 million living in poverty and an economy that was expected to shrink by between 10 and 20 per cent of GDP in 1998 alone.[25]

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[24] Scheiner 2000, 122.

[25] This argument is made by Kivimaki 2003. See p.229.
The figures are from Robison and Hadiz 2004, 150, and Schwarz 1999, 4.
It is also interesting to note that Simpson 2005 acknowledges that this change was important.

In the face of such overwhelmingly difficult economic conditions, it is easy to assume and conclude that Indonesia, acting rationally, had little choice but to initiate the changes vis-à-vis East Timor. Before arriving at such a conclusion, the following questions have to be addressed. Was there international pressure exerted by the IMF, the U.S., Japan and the EU on Indonesia to change its East Timor policy?[26] If pressure was exerted, how did Indonesia respond? Finally, did the cost of the occupation become a factor?

In the 1990s, Japan was Indonesia's most important trading partner, largest foreign direct investor, and largest supplier of official development assistance (ODA), disbursing for example, $496.9 million to the latter in 1997 and $828.5 million in 1998.[27] Despite its considerable economic leverage over Indonesia, Japan did not place any pressure on the latter regarding the issue of East Timor.[28] In the period leading up to and after Suharto's fall, Japan did not veer from past priorities which centered on the stability of Indonesia and the region rather than East Timor.[29] For Japan, this translated into getting the Indonesian economy back on track either by emphasizing the necessity

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[26] Australia, though an influential actor in these events, is not included in this list as its influence was non-material and came from its past support of Indonesia on the East Timor issue.

[27] Germany, the next largest donor, disbursed $115.2 million to Indonesia in 1997 and $212.8 million in 1998. The U.S. in contrast, did not disburse any ODA funds to the Indonesia from 1992 to 1997.

[28] See Nevins 2005, 67. Note that this was however, different after the violence and bloodshed that followed the August 1999 ballot.

[29] Gorjao 2002, 757.
In fact, Japan differed from the G-7 countries regarding IMF policies towards the Asian countries embroiled in the financial crisis. See Blustein 2001, and Lee 2006.

of compliance with IMF conditionalities or providing special financial assistance outside the IMF framework.[30]

Like Japan, the EU was also far more concerned about economic issues rather than human rights protection in East Timor. The former was considered central to "the future stability of Indonesia, and by extension, the whole ASEAN region."[31] An indicator of this concern was the crucial economic support which it pledged during the ASEM II (Asia-Europe Meeting) in London on 3-4 April 1998.[32]

The IMF and the United States were the other two key international actors with the political power and economic leverage to influence Indonesian policy on East Timor. The former, initially invited to Indonesia as a means of restoring market confidence, imposed orthodox austerity measures like tight monetary and fiscal policies. Pressure exerted by members of the IMF board representing western industrialized countries also led to the imposition of unorthodox ones which went beyond the Fund's mandate.[33] These measures, aimed at curbing the corruption, cronyism and nepotism (or *korruption, kronyism* and *nepotisme*, KKN) endemic in the Indonesian economy, included amongst other things, the phasing out of import and marketing monopolies

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[30] Gorjao 2002, 759. At the same time, Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, had also promised Indonesia aid during a mid-March visit to Jakarta, thereby providing it with another source of aid.

[31] Ward and Carey 2001, 52.

[32] Ward and Carey 2001, 66. Domestic interests of EU member countries were also at play here – the UK and France for example, continued their arms trade with Jakarta during this period.

[33] Blustein 2001, 101. According to Blustein, the U.S. representative on the board was particularly assertive.

held by BULOG, the state agency responsible for the distribution of many key foodstuffs and raw materials.[34]

When Suharto resisted the IMF's plan in several ways, the latter, citing lack of progress in the implementation of the program, postponed the payment of the second US$3 billion tranche of its bailout package planned for March 15.[35] Subsequently, Suharto was forced to back down and adhere to IMF conditionalities. While this was certainly a clear reflection of the ability and power of the IMF and through it, the U.S., to impose its will, there are no indicators that the U.S. attempted to use these economic problems to press for a change in Indonesia's East Timor policy during the height of the crisis. The State Department, the Pentagon and some members of the National Security Council were against making any moves, including pressing for political reforms, "that smacked of trying to undermine Suharto."[36] Even in February 1999, some key players in the U.S. State Department and positions of influence in Washington, D.C. were still

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[34] Blustein 2001, 106. However, it must also be noted that the Indonesians who were responsible for the negotiations did not balk at the conditions as some of them saw it as a means of tackling long-standing economic problems that had been a source of efficiency, waste and corruption.

[35] Robison and Hadiz 2004, 158. The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank followed suit and withheld US$1 billion and US$1.5 billion respectively.

[36] Blustein 2001, 229-30. See also Nevins 2005, 61 & 115.
The Clinton administration, in fact, continued to back the Suharto regime in the second half of 1997 and early 1998. William Cohen, Secretary of Defense went to Jakarta in January 1998 where he did not call upon the Indonesian military to exercise restraint in responding to street demonstrations.
In 1999, this support continued even when militia activity in East Timor had been racheted up. Senior U.S. military officials like Admiral Dennis Blair and Admiral Clemins, for example, offered Indonesia new military assistance in the form of U.S. training programs. See Allan Nairn's congressional testimony published in "U.S. Support for the Indonesian Military. Congressional Testimony," *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, v. 32, nos. 1 and 2 (2000): 43-47.

looking into alternatives to a referendum in East Timor.[37] Moreover, the pressure that was exerted by the Treasury Department for reforms in order to restore market and investor confidence did not extend to the realm of Indonesian foreign policy.[38]

Now, let us consider the possibility that the issue of East Timor had been addressed in direct conversations between the U.S. and Indonesia through representatives and envoys sent to Jakarta and President Clinton himself. Even if this had been the case, East Timor was never mentioned by Suharto during his last few months in office even as the financial crisis reached a peak in his last months in office – there was no automatic recalibration of Indonesian interests in relation to East Timor, contrary to what realists would expect.

In contrast to Suharto, Habibie floated the possibility of autonomy for East Timor within his first week in power while facing what were essentially the same economic and political problems as his predecessor. Seven months later, this offer of autonomy grew to include the option of independence if the people of East Timor rejected autonomy within the Indonesian republic. Instead of being integral to the security and sovereignty of Indonesia, Habibie and his advisers considered East Timor 'historical baggage', an issue that had to be resolved for the country's political and economic health.

For realists, Habibie, unlike the increasingly out-of-touch Suharto, was merely acting rationally in the interest of Indonesia. More specifically, this argument is based

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[37] These views were apparent during a working dinner hosted by Madeleine Albright for a group of Indonesia scholars. See Nevins 2005, 115.

[38] Blustein 2001, 228; and Rubin 2003, 248-49. For example, Rubin states that they were not pressing for Suharto ouster.

on the assumption that the cost of the occupation, and the dependence on much needed economic aid from western donors led to the rational conclusion by Habibie and his advisers that East Timor could easily be sacrificed for the benefit of an Indonesia that was in the throes of an acute crisis. Such an argument however, is problematic due to a number of reasons. First, it is unable to fully account for the offer of autonomy that was made in June 1998, their persistent refusal to consider any other options during the next six months, and the sudden change that took place in January 1999 when the option of independence was also placed on the table. Since aid from the IMF was being dispensed after July 29 1998 and material circumstances did not undergo any further deterioration during this six-month period, this change in policy is especially puzzling.[39] If state interests are based on calculations of power and material wealth, why was there one policy in June 1998 and another in January 1999? In addition, why were there contrasting responses from Suharto and Habibie since both men were confronted by the same material circumstances?

These questions indicate that the impact of Indonesia's economic crisis understood within a theoretical framework based primarily on a unitary state acting on the basis of cost-benefit calculations and pre-given national interests cannot fully account for how these events unfolded. Here, I am *not* arguing that the dire economic conditions faced by Indonesia were completely irrelevant. Instead, I will suggest that an account that situates these material difficulties in a larger social environment will be able to provide more insight into these differences. More specifically, the impact of these material difficulties can be better understood if they are also embedded in

[39] For a chronology of the crisis, see http://www.usembassyjakarta.org/econ/crisis.html

processes and mechanisms that take the social into account. Section 3.5 will provide a more thorough and in-depth discussion of this point.

The next section begins the task of examining the considerable differences in approaches between Suharto and Habibie by first outlining and examining the arguments made during the New Order regarding the need to invade East Timor, the nature of the East Timorese resistance to integration with Indonesia, and the corresponding conclusion to dismiss them throughout the shelf-life of the regime. Section 3.5 will then turn its focus to the changes initiated by Habibie and some of his advisers between 1998 and 1999.

3.4 Suharto's New Order and East Timor

During the New Order, President Suharto and ABRI, the Indonesian military, had control and power over the country's security policies.[40] This was no different for the case of East Timor, whose annexation and integration had been planned and executed by Major-General Ali Murtopo, General Benny Murdani, Yoga Sugama, Suharto, Harry Tjan, and Liem Bie Kie.[41] While this initial group of men was replaced by other high-ranking military and intelligence officials during the course of the twenty-four year occupation, all of them equated an independent East Timor and the East

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[40] Suryadinata 1996; Anwar 1998; and Dassel 1997 on the importance of the president and the military and their beliefs in the making of foreign policy during the New Order. Dassel though argues that organizational imperatives and interests were the factors underlying the policies of the New Order.

[41] Cablegram to Canberra, 24 Feb 1975, "Portuguese Timor" [NAA: A 10463, 801/13/11/1, x], Doc 95 in Way (ed.); and Letter from Furlonger to Feakes, 3 July 1974. [NAA: A11443, [1]], Doc no. 12 in Way (ed.).

Timorese independence movement not only with communism and 'security disturbing mobs' but more importantly, with the threats that they posed to Indonesia's security.[42]

Between 1974 and 1975, Murtopo, Murdani, Sugama, Suharto, Tjan, and Liem were concerned about the rise of leftist-leaning Freitlin. In particular, the prospect of having to share a common border with a Freitlin-led independent state generated "deep apprehension at a possible threat to the security of the Republic."[43] Second, they also insisted repeatedly in documented conversations with Australian government officials that an independent but economically poor and militarily weak East Timor would be extremely susceptible to external sources of communism.[44] In a meeting with Gough Whitlam, the Prime Minister of Australia and a trusted friend, Suharto laid this out:

> "If Portuguese Timor were to become independent, it would give rise to problems. It was not economically viable. It would have to seek the help of another country but [it] would be of interest only because of its political importance. There was a big danger that communist countries – China or the Soviet Union – might gain the opportunity to intervene."[45]

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[42] On the pervasiveness of communism and 'security disturbing mobs' in Indonesia's discourses on East Timor, see Cabral 2000; and McRae 2000.

[43] Leifer 1983, 155.

[44] Suryadinata 1996, 54; Van Der Kroef 1976, 471; Simpson 2005, 286; Schwarz 2000, 201; Lloyd 2000, 84; and Taylor 1999. See also Dispatch to Willesee, 2 June 1975, "The Portuguese Timor Problem as seen from Jakarta" [NAA: A1838, 3034/10/6/9, i] Doc 137, in Way (ed.); Record of Conversation Between Tjan and Taylor, 10 March 1975. [NAA: A10463, 801/13/11/1, viii], Doc 109 in Way (ed.); Cablegram to Canberra, 24 Feb 1975, "Portuguese Timor" [NAA: A 10463, 801/13/11/1, x], Doc 95 in Way (ed.); and Letter from Furlonger to Feakes, 3 July 1974. [NAA: A11443, [1]], Doc no. 12 in Way (ed.).

[45] Record of Meeting between Whitlam and Soeharto, 6 September 1974. [NAA: A10463, 801/13/11/1, iii], Doc no. 26 in Way (ed.).
East Timor was known as Portuguese Timor while it was still a Portuguese colony.

Yoga Sugama - the head of Indonesia's intelligence services and regular chairman of the Special Committee on Portuguese Timor which brought the men involved in this policy together under one umbrella - also expressed this fear of communism and its consequences for Indonesian security in a conversation with the Australian Ambassador to Indonesia, R.A. Woolcott. Reported at length and almost verbatim by Woolcott in a cablegram to Canberra, Sugama was quoted as saying:

> "there is 'too much at stake for us.' We cannot permit an Angola situation on our doorstep...If the Soviet Union involved itself in the issue Indonesia would also be in a position not unlike that which Kennedy had found himself at the time of the Cuba crisis."[46]

Therefore, the Indonesian military and intelligence services viewed the possibility of an independent East Timor with great alarm during the Suharto period. This alarm was in turn, rooted in the conviction that Freitlin's leftist political leanings would turn East Timor into a beach-head for communism and used as a launch pad for subversive activities in the middle of the Indonesian archipelago.[47]

In the late 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, East Timorese claims for self-determination continued to be associated with the threat of communism. ABRI pronounced all resistance to integration with Indonesia and calls for independence by the East Timorese as the work of the remnants of communist Freitlin or GPK/Freitlin (*Gerombolan Pengacau Keamanan/Freitlin* or 'security disturbing mob/movement').[48] Freitlin,

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[46] Cablegram to Canberra, 14 August 1975, "Portuguese Timor" [NAA: A10463, 801/13/11/1, xi], Doc 166 in Way (ed.).

[47] Schwarz 2000, 201; and Taylor 1999.

[48] McRae 2000, 40-1; and Moore 2001, 12. See also "Menunggu Hasil Komisi Djaelani" *Tempo*, 30 November 1991; and "Suasana Natal Sangat Tepat Untuk Berdialog," *Kompas*, 13 Desember 1991.

while a greatly reduced force, was still considered a dangerous threat to Indonesian security which not only required continued vigilance but justified military action. For example, Indonesian officials, while acknowledging that Indonesian soldiers were responsible for the shooting and deaths of East Timorese demonstrators in the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991, also pointed to Freitlin as the puppet masters behind the demonstration and therefore, ultimately to blame for the tragedy.[49] Instead of questioning their policies in East Timor, their conviction that Freitlin was pulling the strings behind the demonstration led to the conclusion that even greater vigilance and security was needed from ABRI forces stationed there.[50]

What however, did Indonesia have to secure itself against? For Suharto and the military elite, the danger came from the intention of communists to subvert and overthrow governments.[51] Thus, the potential presence of communism in East Timor was considered a serious security threat because it would jeopardize Indonesia's "prolonged and continuing struggle for national unity and stability."[52] More generally, communism was considered a threat to national unity, social order and Pancasila, the philosophical basis of the Indonesian nation.[53]

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[49] "Belangsungkawa di Santa Cruz," *Tempo*, 21, 39 (1991): 24.

[50] "Lupakan masa dulu dan lihat ke masa depan," *Angkatan Bersenjata*, 28 Desember 1991.

[51] Leifer 1983, 155.

[52] Cablegram to Canberra, 14 August 1975, "Portuguese Timor" [NAA: A10463, 801/13/11/1, xi], Doc 166 Way (ed.).

[53] Anwar 1998, 478.

In the 1990s, the Indonesian military also gave a great deal of credence to the ability of Freitlin or GPK/Freitlin to manipulate the larger population whose clamourings for independence had become increasingly visible and apparent. These calls for independence from large sections of East Timorese society were viewed as the result of Freitlin-engineered manipulation of what they considered was a mindless, gullible and apolitical population. In both internal and external forms of communication, the military unfailingly described the East Timorese resistance as consisting of easily influenced and impressionable young people and students who were merely 'naughty children' (*anak nakal*) venting their frustrations or just poorly educated.[54] In an internal military report for example, resistance to integration was depicted as the result of the lack of understanding from these individuals regarding:

> "integration and the meaning of independence, whether as a result of being left out of the integration process or lack of proper explanation, in addition to their youth and high hopes and desire for a better life, they are easily influenced by issues and propaganda so that consciously or unconsciously, they want to stage anti-integration demonstrations."[55]

These arguments were repeated even in the face of many pro-independence and anti-integration demonstrations in the months after Suharto's fall from power. Internal Indonesian military reports attributed the numbers to a small number of misguided youth and gullible people who had either "been manipulated by the pro-independence

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[54] Moore 2001, 30; and McRae 2002, 28 and 45. See also "Pangab Menjawab Roberto Dakrus," *Berita Buana*, 16 Desember 1991, and "LSM Yg Bekerja Untuk Negara Asing, Menjual Negara," *Angkatan Bersenjata*, 16 Desember 1991.

[55] Moore 2001, 12.

clique during an economic and political crisis"[56] or forced "at gunpoint to support the resistance."[57] ABRI's response to these demonstrations even in the last months before the ballot indicate that East Timor's demands for independence were still being viewed as the result of the manipulation of a small group of communists and security disturbing mobs, and therefore, an unreliable and inaccurate reflection of the true wishes of the people of East Timor.

Was there any basis for their arguments regarding the impending infiltration of communism from East Timor into Indonesia in 1975, the presence and threat of communism and 'security disturbing movements' there in the 1980s and 1990s, or the portrayals of the East Timorese desire for independence as the behavior of an ignorant and gullible population?

During the mid-1970s, Freitlin may have been a leftist-leaning party but it was one that was gaining popularity in a small territory whose population was preoccupied with economic and social development. Hardly able to defend East Timor, it was unlikely to pose a danger to Indonesia which was far more powerful. Moreover, it was not sponsored by any major powers - over the course of the twenty-four year occupation, Freitlin in fact, resisted and fought its Indonesian occupiers on its own.[58] Within Indonesia, there were also few signs of a communist revival whether in the 1970s, the 1980s or the 1990s. The Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), one of Indonesia's most effective political organizations, was physically annihilated when

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[56] Moore 2001, 12 and 30.

[57] Moore 2001, 37.

[58] Cotton 2001, 127.

500,000 communists were killed in the months following the 1965 coup.[59] Attempts by remnants of the party to re-group in 1968 were also crushed. By the 1970s, the few remaining members of the PKI had either been killed or imprisoned. During the 1980s and 1990s, its few survivors "did very little to disturb the state and were usually preoccupied with a pitiful struggle for simple survival."[60] There were also few signs that China, believed by Indonesia to be its most dangerous and likely external source of subversion, was supporting a communist revival in the archipelago.[61] Contrary to the constant warnings of Indonesia's military and intelligence services in the 1970s, China no longer had any links with the PKI.[62] It had also decreased its support for regional communist movements significantly by the mid-1970s.[63]

What about questions regarding East Timor's ability to remain viable as an independent state and the nature of its independence and resistance movements? There is no doubt that East Timor was relatively undeveloped when Portugal declared its

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[59] Cribb 2001, 233.
The scholarly literature on this important part of Indonesian history, one of the worst massacres of the twentieth century, is still small as it was a closed subject during the New Order. Cribb notes that the killings have been misconceived by some as reprisals for personal grudges rather than political in function. He also argues that most grudges had a political dimension as "the Communist Party had been so successful in taking sides in social conflicts across the breadth of the archipelago. All the evidence that we have indicates that the killings were precisely directed against the broad category of peoples whom the army identified as enemies, that is, the members and close associates of the Communist Party..." (2001: 234).

[60] Roosa 2003, 315.

[61] Sukma 1999, 138.

[62] Sukma 1999, 200.

[63] Sukma 1999, 200.

intention to begin decolonization processes for the remnants of its empire. However, nationwide development plans in areas like education, health and politics in which indigenous society and culture had central roles were already being formulated and implemented in East Timor.[64] Besides these plans, Freitlin's literacy campaign that promoted Tetum as the lingua franca of East Timor was also helping to forge a nation and build a common identity.[65] Finally, Freitlin's economic strategies and policies, if fully implemented, were also creating "the infrastructure for a successfully planned economy, based on the indigenous needs of the population."[66] Hence, there were clear indications in the mid-1970s that East Timor was a society with newly established institutions, nationalist ideologies and aspirations for independence, as well as the political, economic and social structures in place for its development and survival as a viable sovereign state.[67]

Moreover, the tenacious resistance movement in East Timor, contrary to the depictions of the Indonesian military, did not just consist of a few hold-outs from the mid-1970s and a small number of susceptible and frustrated members of the population. Instead, East Timorese nationalism had grown stronger under Indonesian rule, fueled in part by the brutality of the military, the lack of economic opportunities and the absence

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[64] See Hill 2004 for details on these plans as well as information on the nationalist movement that existed at that time.

[65] Taylor 1999, 65.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

of desirable employment.[68] The resistance, which had begun as a guerrilla movement, had reshaped itself into an urban-based, non-violent movement that eventually encompassed and united all factions under one nationalist umbrella.[69]

In the face of these realities in East Timor, Indonesia and the region, it may be tempting to conclude that these New Order arguments regarding East Timor was part of an elaborate but absurd propaganda front masking and justifying what some argue was really a land grab. However, the regime's convictions that communists and 'security disturbing mobs' in East Timor were a threat to Indonesian security were very real during the twenty-four year occupation. In 1975, R.A. Woolcott, the Australian Ambassador to Indonesia stated that fears of communism:

> "exist[ed] and [were] held by President Soeharto and by other Indonesian leaders, particularly in the powerful military and intelligence communities."[70]

In the 1980s and 1990s, these convictions, as discussed earlier, had not disappeared. While they may appear particularly doubtful after the collapse of communism in 1989, a huge cache of Indonesian military documents found by the human rights organization *Yayasan Hak* in East Timor after the 1999 referendum show that there was little to differentiate the private and internal communications of the military from what it told the outside world regarding East Timor.[71]

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[68] Fukuda 2000, 19.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Dispatch to Willesee, 2 June 1975, "The Portuguese Timor Problem as seen from Jakarta" [NAA: A1838, 3034/10/6/9, i] Doc 137, in Way (ed.). See also Leifer 1983, 155.

[71] See analysis by Moore 2001.

In fact, the New Order's pre-occupation with the general issue of internal security and its obsession with the dangers of communism were neither unique nor specific to its relationship with East Timor.[72] Instead, the New Order was noted and defined by its permanent pre-occupation with domestic threats to its security and especially the threat of communism.[73] Indonesians, even as late as the 1980s and 1990s, were constantly warned by the state regarding the constant and latent danger (*bahaya laten*) of communists who were said to be part of formless organizations (*Organisasi Tanpa Bentuk* or *OTB*) that were constantly lurking about and plotting to sabotage economic development, create political instability and destroy the unity of Indonesia.[74] As the chances of a communist revival let alone a communist revolution were virtually impossible in Indonesia after 1965, how then can we understand these fears of communism as a threat to Indonesia's security?

Critics of the regime argue that the constant invocation of communism as a threat was a tool used to repress political dissent, maintain its legitimacy and remain in power.[75] However, I argue, following Ariel Heryanto that it was not merely a political tool.[76] Such arguments are weakened by the implicit assumption that witch-hunts are a

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[72] See Heryanto 2006; and Roosa 2006.

[73] Anwar 1998; Alagappa 1995a; Sebastian 2006; Schwarz 1999; and Vatikiotis 1998. Heryanto 2006 covers this in great detail.

[74] van Langenberg 1990, 128; and Roosa 2006, 13.

[75] For example, anti-communism reached a peak in 1988 when there were divisions within the ruling elite.

[76] This section draws heavily on Heryanto 2006. See also Bubandt 2005.

means of transforming a weak state into a strong one through the terrorization of a population.[77] Besides requiring immense state strength in order for them to be effective, they do not necessarily benefit the state in long-run and have in fact, been counter-productive.[78] Moreover, its perpetrators also depend on collaborators and therefore, the active participation of victims in their own victimization.[79]

Critically, anti-communism in Indonesia, even if it had begun as an instrumental tool of the elites in some cases, had taken a life of its own. Among Indonesians, even the end of the New Order did not put a death knell on the belief that communism was a security threat.[80] Polls, newspaper headlines and letters to the editor were unremitting regarding the dangers of communism.[81] Perhaps most telling is the extent to which the fear of communism and the nature of its *modus operandi* had become part of the conceptual discourse and language of Indonesia's secondary elites or common people, a language which reveal, as Idith Zertal argues, "the mentality of a given group, its self-image and conceptual discourse."[82] Below are two quotes that illustrate this:

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[77] Heryanto 2006, 168.

[78] Heryanto 2006, 168.

[79] For more, see Heryanto 2006, 168.

[80] McGregor 2002, 409; Zurbuchen 2005, 15; and Van Klinken 2005, 243.

[81] Heryanto 2006, 49.
Communist resurgence for example, was ranked number one for the question: "What is the single most important domestic threat to Indonesia?" in polls conducted in 1984 and 1985 by Tempo, the highly respected Indonesian news magazine

[82] Zertal 2006, 109. See Heryanto 2006 for an in-depth discussion of how anti-communism was part of the conceptual discourse of Indonesians.

"It's not easy to recognize the behaviour of communists. This is especially so when they operate 'underground' [inverted comma in the original]. Under unfavorable circumstances, while they are vulnerable, they can reportedly transform themselves into chameleons, or become wolves in sheep's clothing, or take on two faces... they take all means to achieve their goal. In other words, their ends justify their means. In real operations, it is no longer secret they infiltrate organizations or institutions that they can use to advance their endeavours. This is the so-called 'cell system' that they adopt is in all arenas before they take control of them: political parties, mass organizations, the armed forces, government institutions ... they disappear, disguise themselves, infiltrate and move underground. Then before you know it, they restore their power. After G-30-S/PKI was defeated for instance, they adopted the tactics of GTM (Gerakan Tutup Mulut, 'silent movement') and OTB (*Organisasi Tanpa Bentuk*, 'formless Organizations')."[83]

"because it's not easy to recognize the behavior of communist', so the logic goes, one should neither underestimate the danger, nor be too sure that it is not there right next to us. Because communists are good at "infiltration" one should never assume that the danger of communism is somewhere at a distance. In fact, it is possible that they might turn out to be innocent-looking people around one's home, or work place, or community. We must be ever-vigilant about everything around us, so the message suggests. If necessary, we must take the initiative to watch for, suspect, and perhaps take action against these insidious threats, before it is too late. Finally, because of their strategy of being "silent" and "formless", we must not trust our own intellectual capability or our own perception to recognize their existence. Mercifully, the New Order has anti-communist intelligence to keep us alert, as recently reported in the media, and will do all that is necessary to protect us from the calamity that we have failed to comprehend. As the Minister of Defence and Security, General L Benny Moerdani stated, 'following the elimination of the physical force of the G-30-S/PKI, what next deserves our attention is those movements that continue to be carried out by the residual G-30-S/PKI, namely those movements that attempt to whitewash their traces and to infiltrate'...."[84]

How did communism assume such ability, power and more importantly, danger in the New Order imagination? More generally, why was the New Order characterized and defined by this pre-occupation with domestic threats to its security?

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[83] *Tempo*, 12/11/1988: 28, quoted in Heryanto 2005, 36.
G-30-S/PKI refers to the 1965 coup attempt which will be discussed in greater detail in section 3.4.1.1.

[84] *Suara Pembaruan*, July 19 1988, quoted in Heryanto 2005, 36.

3.4.1 Narratives of Indonesian Nationhood, National Security and East Timor

History, as noted by many scholars of the Indonesian military and Indonesian security policy, had a pivotal role in the New Order's conception of national security. More specifically, they argue that the military's experience with events like the War of Revolution (1945-1949), the Madiun uprising of 1948, and the attempted coup of 1965 shaped their understanding of what constituted the gravest threats to Indonesia.[85] These insightful accounts are however, incomplete as the significant question of *how* these experiences influenced security concerns have been left unaddressed. More specifically, what were the processes and mechanisms linking these events to security concerns?

During the New Order, these specific historical events were interpreted, organized and cohesively connected into a narrative regarding Indonesia's origins, life history and nationhood.[86] More significantly, this narrative provided Indonesians with the means to "locate themselves within a shared or congruent storyline," and imagine themselves "within a constructed historical space, and a space that is distinct from the

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[85] For work focused on national security doctrine in Indonesia, see Anwar 1998; Sebastian 2006. For work on the Indonesian military, see Sundhaussen 1982; Said 1991; and Kingsbury 2003.
For more on the role of the Indonesian military in Indonesia's political structure, see section 3.6 of this chapter.
For a comprehensive treatment of the role of history in Indonesia's efforts at nation-building, see McGregor 2002. See also Reid 1979.

[86] For the most current and comprehensive treatment on this subject, see McGregor 2002. See also Zurbuchen 2005; Van Klinken 2005; Van De Kok et al 1991, Schreiner 2002; Schreiner 1997; and Reid 1997.

storyline that defines other nations and collective communities."[87] In so doing, this narrative was an important part of the process which constructed an identity for Indonesia that was based in turn on interpretations of historical events.[88] Crucially, this narrative of Indonesian identity which bound Indonesia's emergence as a state in the twentieth century with danger, also simultaneously constructed the dangers and threats that enervated the regime's national security concerns.

The next section turns its attention to this narrative, and how it constructed both an identity for Indonesia as well as security threats to the country. This will involve outlining the historical events that were a part of the narrative, the New Order interpretation of these events, and a discussion of the constructed Indonesian identity and security threats that emerged out of these processes. Section 3.4.1.2 follows with a discussion of how the construction of this threat shaped the New Order's understanding of national security, and its approach to East Timor.

3.4.1.1 Narrating Indonesian Nationhood, Constructing Danger

The New Order narrative of Indonesian nationhood was a constant in the everyday life of Indonesians.[89] It was told and retold in dioramas in a network of

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[87] Barnett 1999, 13.

[88] On narratives and stories in the construction of identities, see a body of literature ranging from the work of IR scholars like Barnett 1999 and Dunn 2003, to that of political scientists like Rogers Smith 2003, and sociologists like Tilly 2002 and Somers 1994.

[89] McGregor (2002: 49).
History in the service of nation-building did not start with Suharto. During Sukarno's time in office, he was heavily involved in planning and setting up the *Museum Sejarah Monumen Nasional*, or the National Monument History Museum (*Museum Monas*), the

museums,[90] commemorative exercises held on national holidays, popular history books,[91] street names, films like *The Treason of G30S/PKI*,[92] courses like "History of the National Struggle" in Indonesian elementary and high schools,[93] stories regarding

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first museum in Indonesia to present a progressive and visual narrative of the country's history (McGregor 2002: 49). The history presented at *Museum Monas* which was located at the base of the obelisk-shaped National Monument in Jakarta had a national purpose and was directed at "fulfill[ing] the criteria set by the monument committee that the monument should 'contain Indonesian identity'" (McGregor 2002: 49). A member of the committee responsible for the selection of material for the museum said:

> "we wanted to improve historical awareness for the purpose of nation building, for our unity and integrity. That was it, we chose scenes according to this goal, to give people spirit. Certainly it could be said to be subjective but this was not an academic matter, it was a certain mission, history as an instrument only." [Quoted in McGregor (2002: 58)]

[90] The most prominent are *Museum Monas*, *Museum Monumen Pancasila Sakti* (Sacred Pancasila Monument), *Museum Pengkhianatan PKI* (Museum of PKI Treachery), *Museum Keprajuritan Nasional* (National Soldiership Museum), *Museum Waspada Purbawisesa* (Museum of Constant Vigilance). At the *Museum Monumen Pancasila Sakti* for example, there are there are 37 three-dimensional dioramas which portray scenes of communist cruelty during the 1965 coup as well as a series of earlier events involving them since 1945.

[91] McGregor 2002; and Leigh 1991. *Sedjarah Singkat Perjuangan Bersendjata Bangsa Indonesia* (A Concise History of the Armed Struggle of the Indonesian Nation) was one of these texts.

[92] *The Treason of G30S/PKI*, was not only compulsory viewing for students across Indonesia when it was first released but also screened annually on the state-owned television station, as well as all private stations, on the night of 30 September. For an analysis of this film, see Heryanto 2006. For the role of films in the New Order, see Sen 1988; and Sen and Hill eds. 2000.

[93] Leigh 1991.
Education during the New Order was focused on "Indonesian language and literature, history, religious education and Pancasila education. The subject "history" is focused on Indonesian history and includes material covered in the more specific subject "History of the National Struggle". Each of these subjects places an emphasis on Indonesia as a newly independent nation with a moral imperative to respect the unity of the nation above all else. This imperative operates with regard to history, the co-

certain Indonesian heroes,[94] and even a walking pilgrimage (The *Napak Tilsas Panglima Besar Sudirman*) tracing the journey of one of their greatest heroes, General Sudirman, during his battle against the Dutch in 1948-49.

Anchoring one end of this narrative was the very important four-year War of Revolution (1945-49) when Indonesians fought the Dutch who were determined to re-impose colonial rule on the archipelago after the end of World War II. In this narrative of their life history, Indonesia's success in battling and finally driving out their more powerful Dutch colonizers to emerge as a sovereign state and people was a seminal event. The emphasis that was placed on the success of their struggle against colonial rule was however, also accompanied by the equally significant theme of danger to this sovereignty and independence. Here, two episodes that occurred in 1948 represented this danger. The first was the Madiun uprising of September 1948 when communists proclaimed a rebel government in East Java at a time when the Dutch were preparing to re-conquer the archipelago.[95] The second episode revolved around the Dutch attack on 19 December 1948, their capture of Sukarno, Mohammad Hatta and the rest of the civilian leadership and the decision of the Indonesian army and its commander, General

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ordinating, cohesive event being the Indonesian revolution against the colonial Dutch power" (Leigh (1991, 24).

[94] Schreiner 2002.

[95] Sebastian 2006, 33.
Madiun began when armed clashes, catalyzed by insurmountable policy differences between the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) and the Sukarno-Hatta government, broke out between communist irregulars and regular troops. The PKI argued that their actions were a means of preventing Sukarno and Hatta from signing away full independence in their negotiations with the Dutch.

Sudirman, to engage in a guerrilla struggle instead of surrendering.[96] In both episodes, internal threats – first, by communists in Madiun, and shortly after that, the lack of resolve of civilian leaders during the Dutch attack of 1948 - almost jeopardized their heroic struggle for independence.

This overarching theme of threats to its survival as a sovereign state also dominated the New Order's interpretation of the 'Old Order' (1949-1965), the first fifteen years of Indonesia's independence. During the parliamentary democracy period of 1950 to 1959, Indonesia was characterized by a "kind of permanent round-the clock politics in which mass organizations competed with each other at every conceivable level without there being any real resolution."[97] Governments fell with alarming frequency and there were regional rebellions ranging from the Islamist revolution generally known as *Darul Islam* on the island of Java to others waged by the *Pemerintahan Revolusioner Republik Indonesia* (Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia – PRRI) on West Sumatra, and the *Piagam Perjuangan Semesta Alam* (Universal Struggle Charter – Permesta) in North Sulawesi.[98]

Despite the obvious complexity of these early years of nation- and state-building, this period was summed up in history courses, textbooks and other sites as "The Age of Survival". First, liberal democracy, the system of governance in place at that time, was described by a senior Education Department official during a 1984

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[96] Six months after the attack, the Dutch withdrew their troops and began the negotiations which culminated in Indonesia's formal independence in 1949.

[97] Schwarz 2000, 11.

[98] Aspinall and Berger 2001, 1006.

guidance session for prospective teachers of the compulsory "History of the National Struggle" course as:

> "a system of government which was not in tune with the character of the Indonesian nation which gave rise to instability of government marked by constantly changing cabinets which made development very difficult. Divisions became apparent. Domestic security disturbances occurred."[99]

Besides the failure of liberal democracy, the narrative also focused on the regional rebellions and 'security disturbances' across the archipelago.[100] More importantly, this narrative stressed that Indonesia's existence as a nation was neither safe nor secure during its first decade of independence. Instead, its survival and security continued to be threatened by domestic threats such as separatists, Islamic radicals and liberal democracy, a form of government that was alien to the traditions and national character of Indonesia.[101]

The last six years of the Old Order, Sukarno's Guided Democracy, was similarly plagued by chaos and instability despite the implementation of the 1945 constitutional framework which provided for a strong presidency. In the New Order's narrative, the increasing turmoil and political factionalization of the period and the risk that it posed to Indonesia's unity was attributed not to the political system but to its incorrect

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[99] Quoted in Bourchier 1994, 53.

[100] Bourchier 1994, 54.

[101] Bourchier 1994, 53. While I do not debate that this period in Indonesian history was clearly tumultuous, the examples highlighted and the issues that were marginalized were clearly directed at supporting this theme of danger.

implementation, the "corrupt[ion] by Sukarno's personal ambition and the persistence of ideologically driven party politics."[102]

In the narrative, the Old Order, depicted as a disastrous time in Indonesia's life history climaxes on the night of 30 September 1965, a night considered so important by the New Order that it was committed to the national imagination through a plethora of sites that included such prominent ones as its own national monument and museum complex, the *Monumen Pancasila Sakti* (Sacred Pancasila Museum), an annually screened movie, *The Treason of G30S/PKI*, and an annual commemoration day, *Hari Kesaktian Pancasila* (Sacred Pancasila Day).[103] As it was considered one of the most important events in Indonesia's history by the New Order, I shall discuss it in some detail.

On 30 September 1965 or *G30S/PKI (Gerakan 30 September/PKI)*, the acronym by which it is known in Indonesia, six senior generals and one lieutenant of the Indonesian military were kidnapped by a small group of middle-ranking officers in Jakarta and later killed at a place which became known as *Lubang Buaya* (Crocodile Hole).[104] At some point during the night and for reasons that remain unclear, Aidit, chair of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) and President Sukarno were also present. Calling itself the 30 September Movement and announcing that it was representing the Revolutionary Council during a 7 a.m. government-run radio

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[102] Bourchier 1994, 55.

[103] For more details on the complex and *Hari Kesaktian Pancasila*, see McGregor (2005).

[104] This description of the events of 30 September 1965 draws heavily on Heryanto 2006.

broadcast, this group explained that it had acted in order to pre-empt a *coup d'etat* by a group from within the right-wing and American-backed Council of Generals. Within hours however, this attempted coup collapsed after Suharto, who was little known at that time, took control. In the months that followed, almost 500,000 members of the PKI and its affiliated organizations as well as sympathizers were killed across Indonesia.[105]

Despite the mystery and controversy surrounding the politically and historically significant issue of whom and which organizations were responsible for the events of the night and the pogrom, *G30S/PKI* was portrayed as a coup attempt by communists.[106] In events associated with the commemoration of Sacred Pancasila Day, dioramas and the bas relief at the complex at the Sacred Pancasila Museum, the kidnapped Indonesian generals were depicted as heroic figures who were tortured, sexually debased and mutilated by the PKI and members of the communist-aligned women's group, Gerwani before being killed and their bodies, dumped into a disused

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[105] Heryanto 2006, 8.
The killings, which were especially concentrated in Central and East Java and the islands of Bali and Sumatra, resulted in the obliteration of "one of the three ideological and social streams which had competed for domination of the idea of Indonesia since the early twentieth century" (Cribb 2001, 237). It altered the balance of power in the country's political landscape fundamentally and paved the way for the rise to power of Suharto and the developmentalist army.

[106] Heryanto 2006, 7.
In scholarly research conducted in this area over the last thirty-five years, there has been little consensus on this matter – the chief suspects featured have ranged from the PKI and factions with the military, to Sukarno and even Suharto. See Dake 1973; Anderson and McVey 1971, and Wertheim 1970.
A recent monograph by John Roosa suggests that while Suharto may not have been directly involved in the coup, he and the military took advantage of it. See Roosa (2006).

well.[107] Additionally, the real victims of the massacres, the Indonesian Communist Party and its political allies, were somehow made responsible for the huge scale of these killings in 1965-66 and the chaos and disorder of the period that followed.[108]

There are three major themes or threads present in the New Order's representation of what it had consistently portrayed as one of the most important events in Indonesia's history. First, the torture, unspeakable horrors and death associated with it epitomized the Old Order's instability and danger. Second, it was the "spontaneous, heroic, and interest-free" Suharto-led military counter-attack which "rescue[d] the nation-state not only from a communist take-over, but also from chaos, terror and social disintegration."[109] Third, the perpetrators were the evil and immoral communists who in 'betraying' the nation, seventeen years after Madiun, confirmed their anti-national, power-seeking and traitorous behavior. Hence, communists were not only villains in this tale but more importantly, the threat *extraordinaire* to the unity, security and survival of the fragile and vulnerable collectivity that was Indonesia.[110]

However, the horror and betrayal of this day, one of the worst in the nation's history ends in the narrative with the dawning of 1 October 1965, the day of the coup's defeat in this narrative of Indonesian identity. The most important date in the annual

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[107] Drakeley 2000, 3; and McGregor 2002, 42.
For an analysis of the New Order's untruthful depictions of the sexual perversions performed by the Gerwani women, see Drakeley 2000; and Wieringa 1988.

[108] van Langenberg 1990, 126-7.

[109] Heryanto 2006, 9.

[110] See McGregor 2002, 50; Heryanto 2006; Goodfellow 1995; and van Langenberg 1990.

calendar of state commemorations, 1 October 1965, designated Sacred Pancasila Day, was, according to Suharto in a 1967 speech:

> "a day on which people's certainty in the truth and kesaktian of the Pancasila, as the only life view which can unite the entire nation and Indonesian people, was strengthened and instilled."[111]

In other words, 1 October 1965 was the day that Indonesians rejected communism and confirmed Pancasila, the five principles of Indonesian nationalism first enunciated by Sukarno in 1945, as the basis of their peoplehood and their identity.[112]

The New Order regime (1965-1998), critically, situated itself within this overall narrative, by casting itself as the nation's savior from destruction at the hands of the communists, its restorer of order, truth and national unity, the 'guardian of Pancasila' and the authentic heir of the values and goals of the 1945 Revolution and their battle for independence. More specifically, this translated very concretely into upholding Pancasila as the philosophical basis of the state and nation which Suharto believed, would enable Indonesia to put away the ideological and religious conflict that had torn at its fabric in the past.[113] The New Order also situated its main goal of development (*pembangunan*) as just part of the process involved in fulfilling the original goals of

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[111] McGregor 2002, 44. On its importance in the annual calendar of state rituals, see Bourchier 1994, 54.

[112] The five principles are Indonesian unity, humanitarianism, Indonesian democracy through consultation and consensus, social justice, and belief in God. For a detailed discussion of these five principles, see Ramage 1997.

[113] Bourchier and Hadiz 2001, 14.
In order to ensure this, the Suharto regime pushed through the law on Mass Organizations where "all social organizations and political parties were legally required to make Pancasila their sole principle, or asas tunggal" in the mid-1980s (Vatikiotis 1998, 95).

associated with their battle for independence.[114] Moreover, the New Order also argued that the political system that it had created based on ideas of integralism paralleled indigenous structures of authority and modes of social organization found within traditional Indonesian families and orderly villages where social obligations were far more important than individual rights or constraints on the powers of government.[115] As such, the authoritarian political structure built by the New Order regime was merely returning Indonesia to a system that was Indonesian in scope, content and practice. In other words, the regime was claiming that the New Order way of ordering Indonesia philosophically, politically and socially reflected the Indonesian character and was merely a restoration of the system to how it should be. In doing do, the regime was representing itself as the personification of what it meant to be Indonesian.[116]

Therefore, this was a narrative which consisted primarily of a series of historical events where Indonesia's survival as a state and nation was endangered by internal threats ranging from Islamists, advocates of liberal democracy to the most dangerous of

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[114] Schreiner 1997, 110.
The Suharto Government was also known as the 'Development Order' and its cabinets, 'Development Cabinets'. On a practical level, national development entailed achieving a higher standard of living for all Indonesians and in that process, a just and prosperous society (*masyarakat yang adil dan makmur*) which was also the fulfillment of Pancasila's fifth principle of social justice (*keadilan social*) (Bertrand 2004, 39).

[115] Bourchier 1997, 160; and Bourchier and Hadiz eds. 2001, 8.

[116] van Langenberg 1990, 127.
Singapore and Malaysia are two other states where there is a conflation of regime and identity. See Ganesan 1998 and Nathan 1998. For an interesting theoretical exploration of this which examines the link between security and nation and state-building in developing countries, see Ayoob 1991.

all, evil communists.[117] Explicitly summed up as a "History of National *Struggle*,"[118] this was a narrative of Indonesia's origins and life history which located Indonesians within a constructed and distinct historical space where they were in a continuous battle for survival against a range of dangers and threats. Through this shared storyline, Indonesians were able to imagine themselves as a community, albeit a community with an identity that had been constructed and constituted as a state in constant peril.

Critically, the construction of an identity that was inseparable from danger posed by a range of domestic threats and especially communism across a broad spectrum of sites resulted in a process which *simultaneously* constructed threats to the Indonesian collectivity. Therefore, the New Order's threat assessment and conception of national security did not just arise from the military's experience with specific events like the Madiun uprising of 1948, the regional rebellions of the 1950s and the 1965 coup. Rather, the inclusion of these events in the narrative of Indonesian identity created a process where specific threats to Indonesian security in the form of communists, separatists, and extremist Muslims were constantly constructed and reproduced. As the identity was constructed and produced, so too was the danger to the community which it represented.[119]

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[117] Van De Kok et. al. 1991, 84.

[118] This was the title of a compulsory course on Indonesian history which all students had to take through all grade levels.

[119] Both Bubandt 2005; and Heryanto 2006 allude to this connection but unfortunately, do not explore it.

3.4.1.2 East Timor: Communism and National Security During the New Order

For the entire period of its existence, the New Order regime headed by President Suharto was guided by threat assessments that were underpinned by danger to the collectivity than had been constructed in the form of internal threats like Muslims extremists and communists.[120] Its longstanding security doctrine, *Ketahanan Nasional* or National Resilience, was designed to develop a strong national identity, society, economy and military that would remain resilient against mostly internal threats.[121] Besides these resilience-building measures, the military also undertook more direct means in the form of 'internal operations' which included Intelligence Operations, Combat Operations and Territorial Operations, to contain and eradicate internal threats to the unity of the nation and the territorial integrity of the state.[122]

Communists, through the narrative of Indonesian identity, loomed especially large as an evil, dangerous and insidious threat which required constant vigilance from the Indonesian people. The contours of this threat and the appropriate response was institutionalized in the Indonesian military in various ways. At the beginning of each soldier's career for example, he takes an oath "to uphold principles exemplified by the

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[120] Vatikiotis 1998a, 65.

[121] Anwar 1998, 478.

[122] Sebastian 2006, 70.
Such operations usually begin with intelligence operations that encompass activities and measures ranging from the collection of information and data, the creation of a situation or climate needed for the achievement of the desired objective to taking measures to oppose or frustrate the operational arrangement of enemy intelligence.[122] If effective, they would move on to territorial operations which were geared towards the political and ideological consolidation of the affected area. If they were ineffective, the military undertook combat operations in order to eliminate the threat.

crushing of the treacherous communists at Madiun..."[123] This call was not left unheeded particularly after the 1965 coup when A.H. Nasution, the most influential ABRI theorist during the early decades of Indonesia's independence, "called for the elimination of the PKI 'down to its very roots so that there will be no third Madiun.'"[124]

In the few short months after the coup, approximately 500,000 communists were massacred. During the course of the New Order, hundreds of thousands of other Indonesians who were accused, whether rightly or wrongly, of having ties to communism were either imprisoned or killed.[125] Others lost their jobs, spouses and other personal and professional relationships because they or members of their family were suspected of being influenced by communism or having personal involvement in the PKI.[126] In its external relations, fear of communist subversion resulted in the suspension of diplomatic ties with communist China from 1967 to 1990.[127]

In East Timor, the possible presence of communism and security disturbing mobs, whether in 1975 or in the last months leading up to the 1999 referendum, evoked the same response to contain or eliminate the danger that they posed to Indonesia's security and unity through the use of the New Order's standard 'internal operations'. In 1975, the threat posed by the potential presence of communism to Indonesia's security

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[123] Vatikiotis 1998a, 64.

[124] McGregor 2002, 146.

[125] van Der Kroef 1976, 463; Cribb 2001, 237; and Heryanto 2006, 35.

[126] Goodfellow 1995, 26; and Heryanto 2006: 36.

[127] For an analysis of Indonesia's relations with China, see Sukma 1999.

and its "prolonged and continuing struggle for national unity and stability"[128] were considered so great by Suharto and his key advisers that they were willing to invade East Timor in order to contain it despite the consequences of such an action on Indonesia's own support for the principle of self-determination and its international image.[129]

Communism and Freitlin continued, in the 1990s, to be perceived as threats to Indonesia with the attendant consequences. The Santa Cruz massacre was understood as the inevitable outcome of demonstrations that had been deliberately organized and engineered by Freitlin to incite disturbances and disorder.[130] In its aftermath, the Commander of the Armed Forces, General Try Sutrisno commented:

> "If people who have been led astray continually disturb society, then ABRI has the duty/obligation, all over the homeland, to protect and uphold Indonesian sovereignty. If the area is not safe, it must be pacified. We are aware who are causing disturbances."[131]

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[128] Cablegram to Canberra, 14 August 1975, "Portuguese Timor" [NAA: A10463, 801/13/11/1, xi], Doc 166 in Way (ed.).

[129] See also Cribb 2002, 231; and Anwar 1998, 32 on this fear and the response it engendered. See also Record of Conversation Between Tjan and Taylor, 10 March 1975. [NAA: A10463, 801/13/11/1, viii], Doc 109 in Way (ed.).

[130] Original quote: "Semua pihak menurutnya menyesalkan terjadinya peristiwa tragis itu, kecuali mereka yang telah dengan sengaja merekayasa bagi timbulnya kerusuhan, kekacauan dan keresahan masyrakat) dengan menyulut, menhasut, menjerumuskan dan menipu serta membakar emosi sebagian rakyat, khususnya para pemudanya, sehingga timbul peristiwa yang sama sekali tidak kita inginkan bersama itu." from "Lupakan masa dulu dan lihat ke masa depan," *Angkatan Bersenjata*, 28 Desember 1991. See also Dua Jenderal Diganti Karena Peristiwa Dili," *Editor*, no.16, 4 January 1992.

[131] "Pangab Menjawab Roberto Dakrus," *Berita Buana*, 16 Desember 1991. See also "LSM yg Bekerja untuk Negara Asing, Menjual Negara," *Angkatan Bersenjata*, 16 Desember 1991.

> "In the end, their behavior could not be tolerated. Wherever it takes place, if the security apparatus is attacked, our last measure is to overcome the situation. With whatever it takes despite the consequences. The result has now has been controlled. We are not willing to stand aside when the security and order of the nation is disturbed..."[132]

Perhaps most indicative is the reply of Rudolph Samuel Warouw, Operational Command Officer in East Timor in 1999. When asked about the deaths of the East Timorese at the Santa Cruz in an interview, Warouw replied:

> "But what glasses should we be looking at it through? They [the deceased] were Freitlin. If for example you were marching under a flag apart from the Indonesian one, what would you expect?"[133]

In 1999, the demonstrations for East Timor's independence were viewed as the result of devious manipulation by the GPK/Freitlin. Once again, the military adopted "internal operations" procedures to counter what were considered internal security problems rather than real demands for independence from the East Timorese.[134] These

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Original quote: "Tugas ABRI di seluruh tanah air mepunyai kewajiban melindungi, dan menegakkan kedaulatan Indonesia. Kalau daerah itu tidak aman ia harus diamankan, kita sadarkan pada pihak-pihak yang menganggu."

[132] Interview with Commander of the Armed Forces, General Try Sutrisno, *Tempo*, 23 November 1991: 24-25. Original quote: "Ya, akhirnya tingkah mereka tak bisa ditolerir. Di man pun, kalau aparat keamanan sudah diserang, tindakan terakhir kita harus bisa mengatatsi keadaan. Dengan apa pun risiko yang terjadi. Walhasil, sekarang sudah bisa dikuasai. Kita tak rela kalau keamanan dan jetertiban masyarakat diganggu oleh sekelompak ......"

[133] Interview with Rudolph Samuel Warouw, Operational Command Officer, the top military officer in East Timor at the time. Original quote: "Tapi harus dilihat dari kacamata mana. Mereka itu Freitlin. Kalau misalny anda berjalan di bawah salah satu bendera yang bukan Merah Putih, bagaimana." In Tanggungjawab Saya': Wawancara dengan Warouw." *Tempo*, 21, 42 (1991): 39.

[134] For more on the nature, scale and scope of intelligence activities undertaken by the Indonesian military, see chapter 2 of Sebastian 2006 as well as Tanter 1991).

procedure included the use of counter-intelligence activities like the use of militias to convince the East Timorese that "the army remained firmly in control and that many of their fellow East Timorese were solidly behind the army."[135] Major-General Adam Damiri, the regional commander of the area that included East Timor, for example, wrote in an internal report after the militia show of force in Dili on April 17 1999 "that the majority of East Timorese [had] bec[o]me loyal supporters of Indonesia ... because they could see that the pro-integration side had many supporters."[136]

The unchanging response of the Indonesian military to Freitlin and the independence movement over twenty-four years reflect the difficulty of imagining or understanding them differently in a nation where the processes which constructed Indonesian identity through narratives of internal threats in the form of the especially malignant and dangerous communists also constructed them as dangers to the collectivity. For the regime to change its policy on East Timor, it would have had to see the East Timorese independence and resistance movement with a fundamentally different lens, one that did not arise from processes that were intimately related to the construction of an identity based on a narrative regarding constant threats to its survival. In the next section of this chapter, I focus on the processes and mechanisms that challenged the New Order's narrative of Indonesian nationhood, its influence on the direction undertaken by Indonesia when regime change took place after Suharto's fall from grace in May 1998, and the changes engendered by the Habibie administration on Indonesia's policy towards East Timor.

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[135] Moore 2001, 30.

[136] Moore 2001, 37.

3.5 'A Line of Separation from the New Order': Habibie, East Timor and Re-Making Indonesia

Between 1998 and 1999, a new approach to the East Timor issue was initiated by B.J. Habibie who had become President of Indonesia after Suharto was forced to resign in the midst of a terrible economic crisis and mass mobilizations on the streets of Jakarta and other major cities across Indonesia. In June 1998, Habibie offered East Timor autonomy within the Indonesian republic. This initial proposal, which became the focus of ministerial-level talks held between Indonesia and Portugal under the auspices of the United Nations during the last half of 1998, was supplanted six months later by the even more radical offer of independence should autonomy be rejected by the East Timorese in January 1999. These initiatives were nothing short of unexpected for non-governmental organizations, states like Portugal and Australia as well as top Indonesian diplomats like Ali Alatas and Nugroho Wisnurmurti, all actors who had been deeply involved in shaping the East Timor issue over time in varied ways.

In his important accountability speech to the Indonesian House of Representatives (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat*) on September 21 2000 when he had to explain his decision to allow the 2-ballot option, Habibie began by arguing that it was necessary for Indonesia to do so since "no less than 8 resolutions of the UN General Assembly and 7 resolutions of the UN Security Council on East Timor have been adopted, which demonstrate that the international community has not all recognized East Timor as part of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia."[137] Continuing to

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[137] Singh 2000, 321.

maintain the status quo vis-à-vis East Timor would only lead to Indonesia's isolation by the rest of the world.[138]

Habibie and his advisers also stressed that the world was no longer dominated by the Cold War. Instead, it had been radically transformed to one dominated by increasing attention to issues of human rights and democracy. In such a world, the East Timor question was an unavoidable part of the international agenda. It was also one where "Indonesia's claim that the East Timor issue has already been solved could not hold ground."[139] Implicitly, this was an acknowledgment that Indonesia's handling of the East Timor issue was now very much tied to human rights and democracy. More specifically, they realized that the East Timor issue had resulted in international perceptions of Indonesia as an illiberal and non-democratic country which flouted basic human rights. In order to "*restore Indonesia's image*," Habibie and his advisers were convinced that they had "no other choice but to try and solve the East Timor problem in a manner acceptable to the international community." [140]

Habibie and his advisers wanted to restore Indonesia to its "true intent"[141] which was a nation and state that was oriented towards pursuing "its original course, as mandated by the Preamble to the 1945 Constitution."[142] According to Dewi Fortuna Anwar, a political scientist and an influential member of Habibie's inner circle, who

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[138] Singh 2000, 325.

[139] Singh 2000, 322.

[140] Singh 2000, 322. Emphasis mine.

[141] Interview with Dewi Fortuna Anwar, 21 July 2004.

[142] Singh 2000, 295.

later became the Assistant Minister/State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and spokesperson on foreign affairs, they wanted to renew and restore Indonesia to the conception or original vision of the founding fathers of Indonesia and the 1945 constitution which stressed democracy and justice.[143]

Many skeptics have rightly thrown doubt on Habibie's claims regarding his ambitions for remaking Indonesia into a democracy. First, he had been a faithful member of Suharto's cabinets. Second, his position as President, acquired by sheer virtue of the fact that he had been Vice-President when Suharto resigned, was precarious as forces that had brought down Suharto continued to demonstrate and call for elections, military reform, democratization, and an end to the corruption, collusion and nepotism that had characterized the Suharto period, especially in its later years.[144] As a result, it is feasible to conclude that Habibie was an opportunist and a survivor who merely "cast himself as a reformer who was capable of reading the sign of the times and stronger aspirations for democracy."[145]

It is however, also quite feasible that Habibie could have, quite simply, decided that democracy was the right path for Indonesia to take. After all, Habibie and his team did not form and determine their preferences and actions in a social vacuum but in an environment where democracy and human rights were increasingly the norm. Interactions with other actors and the social environment may very well have provided

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[143] Interview with Dewi Fortuna Anwar, 21 July 2004.

[144] Aspinall and Berger 2001, 1009.

[145] Robison and Hadiz 2004, 173.

them "with models for self-definition and appropriate behavior."[146] As Hans Peter Schmitz points out,

> "What precisely is the source of uncertainty that moves them to choose democratization and not another course of action? Democratization cannot be reduced to a mere exchange of strategic information among elite groups; it also requires parties to make normative choices and expose themselves to shifts in their self-identifications and changes in their fundamental preferences."[147]

Moreover, resolving the East Timor issue was unlikely to score points for Habibie across the political spectrum in Indonesia. It was not high on the agenda of the different opposition groups at the peak of their demonstrations and protests against the Suharto regime. These actors were mostly concerned with political and economic reforms within Indonesia. Moreover, two important actors who stood at opposite ends of the political spectrum - the pro-democracy leader, Megawati Sukarnoputri, and long-time New Order pillar, the Indonesia military - were both utterly convinced that East Timor was an integral part of Indonesia and opposed Habibie's proposals vehemently.[148] Furthermore, most Indonesians who did not have basic and accurate information about Indonesia's involvement in East Timor due to censorship and a news blackout, believed that East Timor's incorporation had been at the latter's own

[146] Schmitz 2004, 418.

[147] Schmitz 2004, 418.

[148] Taylor 1999, xviii.

request.[149] Unlike the rest of the world, they did not see their East Timor policy as an act of colonization.[150]

Here, it is important to note that I am not arguing that Habibie was a democrat at heart *or* that he was acting in his own self-interest. As pointed out above, both scenarios are quite feasible. Rather than speculating endlessly about his motives which are impossible to prove or disprove at this stage, it is far more important to begin with what we do know. First, Habibie's time in office was marked by a flurry of domestic political reforms which set Indonesia on the transition to democracy.[151] Second, democracy also featured strongly in the East Timor issue for Habibie and his advisers. More specifically, they were concerned about the importance of Indonesia's image, the need for both Habibie and Indonesia to be identified with democracy, and the link that had been made between this image and the resolution of the East Timor issue. Where did this image for Indonesia come from? And how did East Timor come to be linked to Indonesia's fate in such a different way?

In order to understand how this developed, it is important to first understand how and why democracy assumed such significance to the identity and politics of Indonesia in 1998. The next three sections of this chapter will take on this task. Section 3.5.1 will outline the alternative vision of Indonesia and Indonesian identity based on democracy that was being voiced in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s and discuss how it emerged to challenge the New Order's construction of Indonesian nationhood

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[149] Anwar 2000, 18.

[150] Anwar 2000, 18.

[151] See Hosen 2003 for a more detailed discussion of these reforms.

and identity over a long gestation period. Section 3.5.2 will then provide a brief examination of the conditions surrounding Suharto's fall from power and Indonesia's transition to a nascent democracy.

3.5.1 An Indonesia Based on Human Rights and Democracy

By the late 1980s and 1990s, there were increasing challenges to the New Order's construction of Indonesian identity which was based on a narrative emphasizing the threats to its existence as a sovereign and independent state, the prioritization of Pancasila as the philosophical basis of the state and nation, and the argument that the regime's authoritarian features were inherently Indonesian. In particular, this Indonesian identity that was becoming increasingly conflated with the regime's characteristics was being contested by an alternative conception based on the ideals of democracy and inclusionary interpretations of Pancasila.

While by no means monolithic, there were certain themes that dominated the discourses on democracy of this alternative conception. First, there were calls for restrictions in the arbitrary nature of the state and the implementation of the rule of law.[152] Second, there were demands for free and fair elections.[153] Third were calls for "a considerable reduction of the military's political power" and these ranged from the views of radical pro-democracy activists who were strongly anti-militaristic to more conservative views who demanded a "limitation of the political role of the armed

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[152] Uhlin 1997,148.

[153] Uhlin 1997,149.

forces."[154] Particularly important to all was the issue of human rights, whether in the realm of individual, political or collective socio-economic rights. They shared the perspective that human rights as well as basic democratic principles and values were universal rather than culture and context-specific. Adnan Buyung Nasution, an influential human rights lawyer and critic of the New Order, stated that "when human rights are 'freed from all cultural, religious, political and ethnic differences [there] rests its core, called basic human rights, for instance, right to life, right to express one's thought in speech or writing.'"[155]

By the mid-1990s, *demokrasi* (democracy), *keterbukaan* (openness) and *hak asasi manusia* (human rights) had emerged not only at the centre of the agenda of these groups but as "key themes in public debate, [that were] discussed and promoted by the media, academics, a wide range of semi-oppositional political groups, and elements from within the government itself."[156] It had also spread out beyond highly populated areas like the island of Java to other parts of the archipelago.

How did this challenge to the dominant construction of Indonesian identity come about? In the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, intellectual developments as well as political and economic changes slowly created widening disjunctures between what was being experienced and the social expectations derived from the New Order's construction of Indonesian-ness based on danger, Pancasila and authoritarianism. These

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[154] Uhlin 1997,148.

[155] Nasution quoted in Uhlin 1997, 145.

[156] Aspinall 1996, 228.

disjunctures created the conditions and opening for a viable alternative of Indonesian identity to emerge.

Significant intellectual challenges came from critical new studies of Indonesian postcolonial history from Indonesian scholars.[157] In his 1989 thesis, *Hegelian Elements in the Integralist View of the State*, Marsillam Simanjuntak examined the constitutional debates of 1945 closely and debunked the New Order's contention that the 1945 constitution, on which the regime was based, was a realization of integralism.[158] In fact, Marsillam pointed out that the inclusion of political rights in the constitution in 1945 negated the validity of such an argument.[159]

Another crucial challenge came from Adnan Buyung Nasution's massive study of the debates of the Constituent Assembly from 1956 to 1959. His study was critical in revealing "the depth of commitment to political rights and freedoms among the elected delegates to the assembly."[160] These debates were instrumental in countering the New Order's claims "that notions of human rights and democratic checks on executive authority d[id] not have a legitimate basis in Indonesian history …"[161]

During this period, prominent human rights lawyer, Mulya Lubis also added to these counter-histories. In his doctoral thesis, Lubya not only argued "that the concept

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[157] Bourchier 1997, 168.

[158] Bourchier 1997, 168.

[159] Bourchier 1997, 168.

[160] Bourchier 1997, 177.

[161] Bourchier 1997, 177.

of universal human tights was widely accepted in the mid to late 1960s" but maintained that "it was the New Order's preoccupation with order and stability, rather than any fundamental incompatibility between human rights and indigenous culture which saw popular rights come under sustained attack at both the ideological and political levels during the tenure of the Suharto government."[162]

In showing that the liberal ideas and system of a mostly independent judiciary, fair and peaceful elections, a free press, politicians committed to democratic values, and a respect of human rights were in place and favored during the 1950s and 1960s, these intellectual developments provided those who were promoting an alternative Indonesia based on democracy and human rights with the basis to argue that these concepts and principles were not alien to the character, history or tradition of Indonesia.[163]

Besides these intellectuals, students and activists also challenged the hegemony of the regime's interpretation of Pancasila and its construction of Indonesia nationalism during this period. Activists like Munir consciously deconstructed the nationalism propounded by Suharto and the New Order in order "to focus or frame nationalism as one that was against colonialism and imperialism and for justice."[164] Instead of the integralist and nativist elements which had taken on increasingly authoritarian features, these activists were consciously expounding a new interpretation of Indonesia life history and origins that differed from the dominant narrative disseminated by the military and state. They presented a vision of and for Indonesia that was "related to

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[162] Bourchier 1997, 178.

[163] Uhlin 1997, 221.

[164] Interview with Munir, 21 July 2004.

justice, humanitarian issues, to Indonesia's principles at independence and Indonesia's history."[165]

Economically, the government's development program had led, by the 1970s, to rising prices, and the displacement of many medium- and small-scale indigenous businesses.[166] It was also characterized by mismanagement, corruption and wasteful extravagance. Later, the patrimonial and oligarchic elements of the regime also became far more pronounced as Suharto's cronies and children began to treat Indonesia as their own private economic fiefdom.[167] For example, they were involved in almost every single infrastructure project that was awarded in the country. Typically, Suharto's children, acting as local agent, would enjoy a 10-15 percent stake in them without paying for them. By the time of the 1997 economic crisis, they had connections with hundreds of companies.[168]

In Indonesia, these economic changes were leading to widening differences between social expectations derived from Pancasila's principles of social justice, and promises of rational, fair and efficient economic development with what was actually taking place. In the late 1970s, many non-governmental organizations initially formed as a means to participate in the modernization of Indonesia were pointing to the economic disparities that had developed out of the regime's development policies as well as the arbitrary actions of its state agencies as a contravention of Pancasila's

[165] Interview with Munir, 21 July 2004.

[166] Aspinall 1996, 219.

[167] Aspinall and Berger 2001, 1008; Robertson-Snape 1999.

[168] Schwarz 2000, 314.

principles of social justice, and consultation and consensus respectively.[169] By the mid-1980s, many of these NGOs were arguing that "political and social problems were a product of deep inequalities which called for more than mere policy adjustment, but rather fundamental reconstruction of government, society, and the economy."[170] By the 1990s, the regime's increasingly pronounced patrimonial and oligarchic elements as well as the worsening of inequalities already present in Indonesia's social structure magnified in vivid ways the disjunctures that existed between the stated principles and ideals of an identity for Indonesia based on an integrated family where everyone, united by Pancasila, worked together towards common goals of social justice and equality and what was actually unfolding.

Changes in the political arena also enlarged these discrepancies. The rise of Sukarno's daughter, Megawati Sukarnoputri in the PDI (Indonesian Democratic Party) in the mid-1990s was one such significant development. For many Indonesians, Megawati was closely associated with her father, now a symbol of opposition to President Suharto and the New Order regime.[171] Unlike Suharto and the increasingly corrupt and nepotistic conditions of his rule, Sukarno and by association, Megawati, were perceived as devoted to and a part of the people who would never use their positions to enrich themselves or their families.[172] Megawati's own repeated attacks on corruption and social and economic injustice made her the representative of the poor.

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[169] Jetschke 1999, 146.

[170] Aspinall 2006, 91.

[171] Eklof 1999, 27.

[172] Eklof 1999, 27.

When there were suggestions that Megawati should be nominated for President of Indonesia, the regime reacted by engineering her overthrow as head of the PDI, a position to which she had been popularly elected. Despite the fact that she posed little credible threat to Suharto who had control of the popular process, the regime's reaction underscored that there would be no tolerance of such political challenges, however minor.[173] Her unjust removal was conceived "as symbolic of a general pattern of injustice in society"[174] by her supporters. Moreover, the regime's efforts to portray itself as one that was based on 'Indonesian-style' democracy and the principles of consensus and consultation was also debunked in a highly visible manner by these events.

Finally, the fall of the Berlin wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the restoration of Indonesia's diplomatic ties with China in the 1990s called into question the claims that communism still posed a real security threat to Indonesia. These momentous changes in the international system challenged the regime's obsession with communists and other 'security disturbing mobs' that had resulted in the massacre of 500,000 Indonesians between 1965 and 1966, the extrajudicial killings of an estimated 3,000 to 5,000 petty criminals between 1983 and 1985, the deaths of 2,000 alleged members of the Acehnese separatist movement between 1989 and 1991, and the deaths of more than 200,000 East Timorese.[175] More importantly, these developments undermined the New Order construction of Indonesian identity that had been

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[173] Schwarz 2000, 323; and Eklof 1999, 34.

[174] Eklof 1999, 49.

[175] Jetschke 1999, 139.

constituted through a narration of nationhood under constant threat, particularly through the specter of communism.

While these new developments posed considerable challenges to the credibility and integrity of the New Order's representation of Indonesian identity, the fusion of the authoritarian regime's characteristics with this identity meant that part of a successful challenge to it would also require a successful challenge to the regime. Despite the impunity of the military and the growing excesses of Suharto, his coterie of family members and close aides, this was by no means automatic or guaranteed for three reasons. First, Suharto had been able to draw strength from the fact that Indonesians had enjoyed steady economic growth and improvements in living standards under his leadership, a sharp contrast to the Sukarno period.[176] Second, the New Order government had restored order and purpose to what had previously been a chaotic and ineffective system. Third, it had also been able to foster a greater sense of nationhood which had strengthened national unity. According to Adam Schwarz, many Indonesians "would say that an extended period of restricted political activity and circumscribed press freedom – in which public expressions of ethnic and religious animosities are not welcome – has helped lower the temperature in sensitive areas."[177] A great many Indonesians had therefore, been willing to pay the price of less political freedom in exchange for economic growth, political stability and order. Hence, these challenges may have remained challenges in a long line of challenges if not for the convergence of a set of conditions that lined the path to the fall of Suharto. The next

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[176] Schwarz (2000: 41).

[177] Schwarz (2000: 41).

section discusses these conditions as they are particularly important for understanding how the alternative conception of Indonesia based on the ideals and principles of democracy and human rights finally emerged as the dominant option.

3.5.2 Regime Change: Exit Suharto; Enter Habibie

During the last months of 1997, Indonesian society began to feel the acute effects of the Asian financial crisis. When the Indonesian rupiah lost 58 percent of its value within a six-month period, poverty levels escalated.[178] In the beginning, the economic crisis did not appear insurmountable as the Indonesian government had taken measures in August and September that were widely praised internationally. This was short-lived as Suharto's unwillingness to take concrete actions against the corruption and nepotism of his regime led to a gradual but continuous erosion of public and market confidence. Despite rising unemployment and poverty rates, Suharto put up fierce resistance against the dismantling of the business empires of his family and cronies.[179]

During the first five months of 1998, Suharto faced growing opposition in the form of many small groups which, although ready to challenge the regime, were hampered by the lack of unity and the absence of leaders with a national profile who could have "become a symbolic rallying point for people who opposed Suharto."[180] Obvious national figures like Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Sukarnoputri never

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[178] Eklof (1999).

[179] Aspinall and Berger 2001.

[180] Aspinall 2005, 214.

adopted that mantle.[181] Hence, organized opposition remained weak despite the increasing opposition to the regime between January and March 1998.

In the end, it was protests in university campuses across Indonesia that broke the impasse.[182] As these protests escalated and students became the voluble and determined center of a broad middle-class coalition, some elite critics of the regime like Amien Rais began to speak openly about mass movements to bring about change while others publicly withdrew their support from Suharto. The climax of these protests came on May 12, 1998 when 4 students of Jakarta's Trisakti Univerity were shot dead by snipers, sparking off what were at that time, two days of the most serious rioting experienced by modern Indonesia.[183] In the week after the riots, very large student mobilizations took place in cities across Indonesia and Suharto was abandoned by almost all of the ruling elites.[184] On May 20, 1998, he resigned and was replaced by B.J. Habibie.

Since the fall of Suharto took place within a year of the worst economic crisis Indonesia had ever experienced, it is tempting to conclude that the economic crisis was a direct cause of Suharto's fall and regime change in Indonesia. While the acute effects

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[181] Aspinall 2005, 215. Wahid for example, remained publicly reconciled with Suharto while Megawati remained preoccupied with invalidating the leadership of the man who had replaced her as party chairman with the machinations of the New Order through legal means.

[182] Aspinall 2005, 229. For more on the role of students in the fall of Suharto, see Aspinall 2005.

[183] Aspinall 2005, 232.

[184] Aspinall 2005, 235.

of the economic crisis in the form of escalating employment and poverty drove a range of social and political forces into action and was important in hastening Suharto's fall, it is unable to explain the way in which Suharto was driven from power. Second and critically for the purposes of this chapter, why was Suharto's fall followed by a democratic transition instead of a reconstituted version of authoritarianism like in Malaysia?[185]

In Indonesia, Suharto was brought down by loss of support from the ruling elite who abandoned him in increasing numbers as the costs associated with having the former in power escalated when the May riots and student mobilizations which brought Indonesia to the very edge of serious violence.[186] When confronted by a stark choice between abandoning Suharto or escalating unrest, the elite chose the former.[187] Without their support, Suharto knew that he was no longer able to hold on to power.

Why however, was Suharto's resignation followed by a democratic transition? The most important factor here was the fact that the alternative discourses on human rights and democratization, themes propagated by opposition groups over the 1990s regarding Indonesia, had "slowly but perceptibly shift[ed] the terrain of legitimacy under the government's feet."[188] During the 1990s, this shift in the official political

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[185] Aspinall 2005, 252 & 209. Burma is another example.

[186] Aspinall 2005, 232.

[187] Aspinall 2005, 235.

[188] Aspinall 2005, 258.

sphere in Indonesia could be discerned at the behavioral, rhetorical and communicative levels.[189]

In 1993, for example, a National Commission on Human Rights was established in Indonesia. As Anja Jetschke points out, this was a highly significant concession on the part of the Indonesian government for it was institutionalizing human rights within the Indonesian state, a clear illustration of its growing receptiveness and acceptance of these norms in its domestic context.[190] At the rhetorical and communicative levels, Indonesia began to openly acknowledge that it had a human rights problem in international foras like the United Nations after years of making culture-specific counter-arguments, invoking the principle of non-interference, and questioning the legitimacy of international jurisdiction. After the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991 for example, members of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and Indonesian delegates arrived at a common description of the human rights situation in Indonesia and developed ways to address it.[191] In 1992, the Indonesian human rights delegate at the UN Human Rights Commission stated that their motivation was "to learn and benefit from such a visit in order to minimize, if not eradicate, the practice of torture in Indonesia."[192] This statement was significant for two reasons. Firstly, it was the Indonesian government's first public acceptance of allegations of torture in the

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[189] Jetschke 1999, 141.

[190] Jetschke 1999, 158.

[191] Jetschke 1999, 159.

[192] Jetschke 1999, 159.

country.[193] Secondly, it was an acknowledgment of the validity of the international norm. Moreover, discussions were later conducted on the basis of the consensual norm of human rights and consequently, on matters of norm compliance and implementation.[194] Rhetorically, regime leaders were also "routinely acknowledg[ing] that *demokratisasi* was unavoidable by the mid-1990s."[195] In short, democracy and human rights were becoming increasingly legitimate norms at all levels of Indonesian society.

Critically, the opposition's broad demands for democracy and human rights could not be avoided by the surviving ruling elite once Suharto's presidency collapsed. Democracy became the only game left in town and substantial democratic reform had to be initiated.[196]

Politically however, the emergence of alternatives based on ideas of democracy and human rights did not result in the immediate emergence of leadership from the opposition ranks. Instead, the dispersed and fragmented state of the opposition created a situation where it was impossible for the opposition to coalesce around a central figure or a single political platform to represent a viable alternative government.[197] As a result of this as well as his "offer to hold free and fair elections as the way to resolve the

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[193] Jetschke 1999, 159.

[194] Jetschke 1999, 160.

[195] Aspinall 2005, 48.

[196] Aspinall 2005, 258; and Berger 1997.

[197] Aspinall 2005, 218 & 228.

political crisis."[198] Habibie was left with the reins over Indonesia for this transitional period.

When he began the process of governing, one of the first matters Habibie chose to tackle was the resolution of the East Timor issue. In the next section, I examine how and why this change took place.

3.5.3 The Habibie Interregnum: East Timor and Re-Making Indonesia

By the time Habibie came into power, he was much more aware of the significance of the East Timor issue. During his time as vice-president of the country, he was placed in charge of global affairs and East Timor was always raised whenever he met foreign leaders.[199] Moreover, his chief advisers while he was vice-president were Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Indria Samego and Umar Juoro, academics and intellectuals he had known from their connections with ICMI and its think-tank, CIDES (Centre for Information and Development Studies).[200]

Anwar and Samego in particular, had already been critical of Indonesia's East Timor policy in their private capacity as academics before Habibie's rise to power. Samego had been personally critical and skeptical of the government's reasons and justification for the integration of East Timor into Indonesia. While many in the New Order saw East Timor as Indonesia's twenty-seventh province, Samego understood East

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[198] Aspinall 2005, 271.

[199] D.F. Anwar, personal interview, 21 July 2004.

[200] Anwar was Assistant to the Vice-President for Global Affairs while Indria Samego was Assistant to the Vice-President in the area of Politics and Security. See Crouch 2001; Greenlees and Garran 2002; and *Tapol Bulletin* who also point to their influence on Habibie.

Timor to be "culturally, historically and from the perspective of international law, not related to Indonesia."[201] In an op-ed, Samego wrote:

> "In order that the decolonization of East Timor is considered suitable for universal standards and Indonesia's intervention can be met well, it will be advisable to weigh East Timor's wish to decide its own fate. Maybe this will be better for us."[202]

Anwar had conducted research on East Timor and other conflict areas in Indonesia while she was with the Center for Regional and Political Studies at LIPI.[203] There, the researchers had concluded that the root causes of the conflict in East Timor arose from the fact that historically, East Timor had never been part of Indonesia but had been incorporated into the republic through what Anwar described as a problematic military intervention that had never been internationally condoned. Moreover, they recognized that the continuing East Timorese resistance only resulted in greater military domination and repression. It had evolved into an increasingly violent, untenable and cyclical situation where resistance led to military repression and human rights abuses which in turn invoked more resistance as well as international criticism and so on.[204] At LIPI, Anwar and her colleagues had already concluded that it was essential to end the cycle of violence. Self-determination had also been discussed. At CIDES, they were also coming to similar conclusions. Various studies conducted on East Timor showed

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[201] Indria Samego, personal interview, 19 July 2004.

[202] *Republika*, 29 November 1996.

[203] D.F. Anwar, personal interview, 21 July 2004.

[204] Ibid.

that the situation was unsustainable and "a solution that would be just to East Timor and just to Indonesia" was needed.[205]

Therefore, Habibie's advisers, coming from the liberal wing of ICMI, which he chaired from its founding until he became president, had already thought of the East Timor issue in ways fundamentally different from the military and Suharto when the New Order collapsed. Dewi Fortuna Anwar who became senior foreign policy adviser and many say, the 'real' Foreign Minister during Habibie's time in office, likened the unresolved East Timor issue to an appendix, mostly useless when dormant but highly dangerous to the rest of the body politic when 'infected'.[206] In fact, it was considered an infected appendix that had to be removed for Indonesia to recover, stay healthy and achieve its national interests which were "the consolidation of democracy, strengthening of national unity, and economic progress."[207] In other words, retaining the status quo vis-à-vis East Timor would block efforts to restore and renew Indonesia. For these policymakers then, Indonesia's national interests were tied to a resolution of the East Timor issue. The question that remains then is this: how exactly did the two become entwined?

Politically, Habibie and his team were faced with the urgent matter of initiating democratic reforms in a domestic climate which would accept nothing less. At the same time, the collapse of the New Order where regime and nation had been conflated also meant that being Indonesian was no longer synonymous with the New Order

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[205] Ibid.

[206] D.F. Anwar, personal interview, 21 July 2004.

[207] D.F. Anwar, personal interview, 21 July 2004.

construction of Indonesian identity.[208] The opposition's promotion of democracy and human rights for Indonesia had not only become the only legitimate way of organizing Indonesia politically but the basis for a new Indonesian identity.

In the time that he was in office, Habibie and his team removed controls on the media, freed dozens of political prisoners, annulled the ban on political parties, called for new parliamentary elections in mid-1999, and the selection of a new president by the end of 1999. In addition, a team of seven political scientists was also put together to work on three laws which would fundamentally reconfigure Indonesia's electoral and political system. These laws - the Law on Political Parties, the Law on General Elections and the Law on the Composition of the MPR, the DPR and DPRD - were significant for building the structural framework that would provide the basis for pulling Indonesia out authoritarianism into a new regime type which would include, at the very least, the elements of an electoral democracy.

Economically, Habibie and his advisers were faced with urgent economic problems. In approaching these problems, they were convinced of three matters. First, the financial crisis had increased Indonesia's dependence "on the outside world, particularly the western world countries."[209] More importantly, they were far more concerned that this was an outside world that had never recognized Indonesia's continuing occupation of East Timor.[210] The East Timor issue had in fact, inflicted

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[208] Aspinall and Berger 2001, 1009.

[209] Anwar 2000, 19.

[210] Anwar 2000, 19.

considerable damage to Indonesia's image and would continue to do so especially in a world where norms of human rights and democratic governance had emerged as the common standard for domestic conduct.[211] In order to reverse the damage and get the help that they needed, they were convinced that they had to restore improve Indonesia's image in the eyes of the world.[212] During the early days of Habibie's time in office, part of the path involved in the restoration of Indonesia's image was the resolution of the East Timor issue in a way that was acceptable to the international community.[213]

At one level Habibie's decision to offer autonomy to East Timor was due to economic reasons – he did so in order to obtain the help that Indonesia required for its economic recovery. However, this was a decision, as their statements show, that was also rooted, in the awareness that Indonesia was operating in a larger international context where democratic and liberal norms for domestic conduct were on the ascendant. In other words, resolving the East Timor issue was a means to signal to the rest of the world that Indonesia had changed and was no longer the Indonesia of the Suharto period. It also provided them with a way to align Indonesia with what Habibie and his advisers understood to be the broader normative structure of international politics.

Thus, this was a decision where strategic thinking on the part of Habibie and his advisers played a part – they chose to initiate a policy that would enable them to perform their self-described identity as a democracy to convince the rest of the world

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[211] Anwar 2000, 19.

[212] D.F. Anwar, personal interview, 21 July 2004.

[213] Singh 2000, 325.

that genuine political changes were afoot in Indonesia, and therefore, to obtain the economic help that they needed. At the same time however, this was also a decision where they utilized their knowledge and awareness of the social context to act in a way that would correlate to the norms of the situation in service of particular ends. More specifically, the broader social structure of international politics where democracy and human rights had become *de rigeur* for domestic conduct provided both the wellspring for their actions as well as the constraints on them. This was therefore, a decision that was *also* profoundly embedded in the social.

For six months after Habibie's initial proposal, Indonesia and Portugal discussed a model of wide-ranging autonomy for East Timor.[214] By December 1998, Indonesia was "prepared to accept some kind of autonomy for East Timor while leaving the door open to the resolution of the final status of the territory."[215] It was however, not ready to discuss self-determination or independence for East Timor. In January 1999, all this changed. A letter from Australia led to a re-evaluation of this offer and to the subsequent announcement that Indonesia was ready to give East Timor the much more radical option of becoming an independent state should they reject autonomy.[216]

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[214] Gorjoa 2002, 153.
Indonesia's plan called for defense, diplomacy, and fiscal and monetary policies to be reserved for the central government in Jakarta. Negotiations between Indonesia and Portugal were to be conducted 'without prejudice to their basic positions on the issue of sovereignty'.

[215] Gorjoa 2001, 106.

[216] By all accounts, the letter from Howard played a role in this change. See Alatas 2006; Anwar 2000; Gorjoa 2001, 107; and Greenlees and Garran 2002.

Australia, the only western state to formally acknowledge Jakarta's claim of sovereignty over East Timor, had retained its position even after Suharto's resignation, repeatedly arguing that East Timor should remain an integral part of the Indonesian republic during this period.[217] In addition, it "affirmed confidence in the unilateral ability of Indonesia's armed forces, ..., to maintain order and security in the province, and actively sought to moderate the vocal international criticism of Jakarta that was gathering at this time."[218] It was not until the last weeks of 1998 that a shift took place in Australia's overall stance on East Timor.

In a letter to Habibie which signaled this change, the premier, John Howard, emphasized that "Australia's support for Indonesia's sovereignty [was] unchanged" and that "it has been a longstanding Australian position that the interests of Australia, Indonesia and East Timor [were] best served by East Timor remaining part of Indonesia."[219] More importantly, he also noted that "there was a decisive element of East Timorese opinion [which was] insisting on an act of self-determination."[220] As such, he suggested that "it might be worth considering, therefore, a means of addressing the East Timorese desire for an act of self-determination in a manner which avoids an early and final decision on the future status of the province."[221] In regard to this,

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[217] Chalk 2001, 2; and Cotton 2001, 135.

[218] Chalk 2001, 2.

[219] See Text of Prime Minister Howard's letter to President Habibie, 19 December 1998 in *East Timor in Transition 1998-2000: An Australian Policy Challenge* (Canberra: Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2001), p. 182. [Herein, "Letter"]

[220] Letter, 19 December 1998.

[221] Letter, 19 December 1998.

Howard referred to France's Matignon Accords with New Caledonia as a model for Indonesia on the issue of East Timor.[222]

For Habibie, the parallel Howard drew in his letter between Indonesia's situation with East Timor and France's colonial relationship with New Caledonia was particularly startling. After receiving more information regarding the Matignon Accords from Foreign Minister Ali Alatas at an initial meeting to discuss the letter, Habibie responded:

> "But New Caledonia is a French colony and that was a colonial arrangement. Why does he compare us with France and East Timor with Caledonia?"[223]

Like many other Indonesians, it appears that Habibie was unaware of the full circumstances surrounding East Timor's incorporation into Indonesia.

At the cabinet meeting convened to discuss the letter in late January 1999, Habibie, reportedly, asked the following rhetorical question: "What are we doing in East Timor, because this is actually violating our own commitment to our constitution to oppose colonialism."[224] Anwar, who was also present at the meeting, described the impact of this comparison in the following way:

> "There was also sadness and irony in the realization that the East Timor issue had badly damaged Indonesia's international image and Indonesia's entry into East Timor violated Indonesia's commitment to oppose all forms of colonialism. It is a sad fact that Indonesia, which prided itself on being a country born our of post-colonialism, as a country that came out of an anti-colonial revolution and

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[222] Howard suggested that if Indonesia adopted and successfully implemented a model based on these accords which gave New Caledonia autonomy with the possibility of a referendum some time down the road, it would "allow time to convince the East Timorese of the benefits of autonomy within the Indonesian Republic." "Letter", p. 182.

[223] Alatas 2006, 149; and Anwar 2000.

[224] Ibid.

> has in fact specifically stated in its preamble to the Constitution that Indonesia opposed all sorts of colonialism, that it was accused of doing exactly the same thing in East Timor. This was never really fully understood and more information came out and Indonesians became much more aware of international perceptions of what Indonesia was doing...."[225]

Hence, Habibie's initial puzzlement and even anger over the parallel drawn between colonial France and Indonesia had given way to the realization that Indonesia, through its actions and policies on East Timor, had come to be perceived as an aggressive and colonial state by the world community. Concurrently, they also realized that the offer of autonomy for East Timor and the important democratic reforms and laws that had already been initiated were insufficient for convincing the rest of the world that the Indonesia under Habibie was becoming democratic and was no longer the Indonesia of the Suharto period. [226]

At the meeting, the suggestions in Howard's letter were taken in a direction that even the Australians had not anticipated - the decision to allow the 2-ballot option where independence would be granted should the East Timorese reject special autonomy within the Republic of Indonesia. [227] Habibie, according to Anwar, believed that "... giving East Timor the two options to decide their own future was a very important move to establish Indonesia's democratic credentials and show that things

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[225] Anwar 2000, 20.

[226] For more on these democratic reforms, see Schwarz 1999, 371; and Hosen 2003, 491. For a different conclusion on the effectiveness of these reforms, see Robison and Hadiz for disagreements.

[227] Interview with Dewi Fortuna Anwar, 21 July 2004; Interview with Umar Juoro interview, 29 July 2004; and Interview with Dr Muladi, July 30 2004.

had really changed."[228] Moreover, letting East Timor go was "a very rational and logical step to take."[229] In fact, it would be "very irrational of Indonesia to do otherwise for it would be against the constitution"[230] and for building an Indonesia that would be democratic and just. Again, East Timor had become a means of convincing other states that Indonesia, as self-described, was indeed democratic. Their realization that Indonesia's identity had remained unchanged in the eyes of the world even after the initial offer of autonomy led them to up the ante.

At the very least, Habibie and his advisers believed, both in June 1998 and January 1999, that Indonesia had to *act* in ways that were consistent with a country that was professing that it was on the way to becoming a *democratic* nation committed to human rights. The actions they had taken vis-à-vis East Timor was part of a social process to perform Indonesia's nascent identity as a democracy which had yet to be recognized and acknowledged by other countries in the international arena. Thus, the resolution of the East Timor issue was initiated by actors who were acting strategically but within and through the confines and limitations of a wider social structure of norms and identities.

If the Habibie government's attempts to perform this new Indonesian identity based on the norms of human rights and democracy was so critical in changing the course of the country's East Timor policy, why was the withdrawal process characterized by a campaign of violence and intimidation rather than respect and

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[228] Anwar 2000, 21.

[229] Interview with Umar Juoro, 29 July 2004.

[230] Interview with Dewi Fortuna Anwar, 21 July 2004.

acceptance of the democratic process underlying the referendum and its outcome? The next section turns its attention to this question and will focus on how the military was able to work against the decision of civilian leaders and policymakers who were running Indonesia.

3.6 Oligarchic Political Systems and Contentious Territorial Policies

Between January 1 and October 25 1999, leaders as well as supporters of the independence movement in East Timor were systematically murdered, tortured and raped.[231] Perpetrated on a wide scale, this violence often descended into indiscriminate killings.[232] Early April 1999 witnessed the massacre of 57 unarmed civilians and the wounding of 35 others by a large pro-autonomy paramilitary force in a church in Liquisa which had been sheltering 2,000 East Timorese displaced by the violence. By early August, the United Nations Assistance Mission for East Timor (UNAMET), and the Catholic Church separately estimated that 60,000 – 80,000 people had been displaced, and 3,000 – 5,000 killed by pro-autonomy militia groups.[233] Violence however, peaked in the period between September 4, when the results of the referendum were announced, and the end of the month when security was finally restored to central and eastern East Timor by INTERFET (International Force for East Timor) forces. Pro-independence supporters were attacked and approximately 70-80 percent of Dili's business district and 50 percent of its homes were torched and destroyed during the

[231] Dunn 2002, 63.

[232] Dunn 2002, 63.

[233] Taylor 2003, 181.

month-long orgy of violence.[234] Hundreds were killed, and more than 500,000 Timorese, or more than 60 percent of the entire population, were displaced and forced to evacuate in what appeared to be a forced event. The consistency and similarities of the evacuation processes across East Timor, the scale of the logistics involved as well as direct witness testimony point to the systematic and planned nature of the operation.[235] By November 1999, East Timor's entire administrative and social order – the basic infrastructure of an entire community and society- had been completely destroyed.[236]

General Wiranto, head of the Indonesian Armed Forces (ABRI) at that time, claimed that the killing and destruction in the post-referendum period were the "spontaneous reactions of disappointed supporters of integration."[237] Documents that have emerged in the past few years however, confirm the existence of formal and informal links between ABRI and the pro-integration militias who were visibly involved in much of the violence in East Timor in the period before and after the ballot.[238] Patterns in the behavior of the militia, the police, and ABRI, as highlighted by many observers, investigators and analysts present during and after that period, are also strong indicators that the Indonesian military or at least parts of it was responsible for the co-ordination and planning of the intimidation, violence and destruction that

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[234] Crouch 2000,167.

[235] Crouch 2000,172-3; and Dunn 2002, 63.

[236] Dunn 2002, 63.

[237] Crouch 2000, 168.

[238] Robinson 2002, 272. It must be noted here that these documents do "not provide the conclusive evidence of high-level official involvement in planning or committing such acts of violence that some analysts have claimed" (Robinson 2002, 272).

occurred.[239] Finally, evidence pieced together from interviews and observations in East Timor render protests of innocence from ABRI suspect for they were involved from as early as October 1998 when high-ranking officers ordered, organized and coordinated militia activity.[240] In December 1998 and January 1999, these activities were stepped up with the formation and arming of more militia groups by the military.[241] The military also launched *Operasi Sapu Jagad* (Operation Clean Sweep) around this time to assert the irreversibility of East Timor's integration with Indonesia through a campaign of violence and intimidation against pro-independence leaders and supporters.[242] Fronted by East Timorese paramilitary death squads created, trained and armed by ABRI, it was hoped that the violence would generally intimidate people into supporting autonomy and "show to the world that the East Timorese rejected the referendum."[243]

Hence, ABRI, clearly against the decision to allow the 2-ballot option to take place, was able to contravene the cabinet-level decision of January 27 1999 to give the East Timorese the opportunity to vote on their own future. In this case, contestation on the issue of East Timor, led to a bloody and violent end for this particular part of the disengagement process. How did the disengagement end in such a bloody fashion?

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[239] Robinson 2002, 272.

[240] Kammen 2001, 181.

[241] Kammen 2001, 183.

[242] *Tapol Bulletin*, No.152 (May 1999): 4. See also *Tapol Bulletin*, no.154/155, (November 1999): 15.

[243] *Tapol Bulletin*, no.154/155 (November 1999): 15; *Tapol Bulletin*, No.152 (May 1999): 4-6. See p.5.

This section examines the proposition that domestic institutional structures also affect the dynamics through which the processes of contestation are played out.

3.6.1 Indonesia's Domestic Political Structure during The New Order

The New Order operated under the auspices of Indonesia's 1945 constitution which guaranteed a strong president with wide-ranging executive power that was balanced by a parliament, the House of Representatives (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* or DPR), and the People's Consultative Assembly (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat* or MPR) which functioned both as an electoral college and to a degree, a 'super-parliament'. Under this system, the president has predominant authority which rested on very broad legislative powers as well as extremely wide-ranging and absolute powers of appointment to independently hire and fire all Cabinet members, senior military commanders, bureaucrats, judges, and senior state enterprise managers.

The five hundred-member DPR had responsibility over legislation and its approval was required for the annual budget submitted by the government.[244] All of the DPR's representatives were automatically members of the thousand-strong People's Consultative Assembly which was the country's highest governing body. The other five hundred members of the Assembly were appointed to represent Indonesia's regions as well as its functional and social groups.[245] Assembling every five years, the MPR elected the president and vice-president and set very broad normative guidelines for

[244] Liddle 1999, 40-1.

[245] Liddle 1999, 40-1.

state policy for the next five years.[246] While the President was not subject to the confidence of parliament, the MPR, with its constitutional power, could remove the former from office.

Under Suharto however, these formal rules governing the relationship between the country's political institutions became mostly irrelevant and insignificant for understanding the distribution and balance of power in Indonesia. In terms of decision-making and constitutional veto points within the New Order's political system, almost all the roads led to the presidency and in particular, the person of President Suharto.

The MPR, theoretically intended as the highest authority and representative of the people's will, was completely controlled by the government. Its 500 non-DPR members, constituting half of the Assembly, were not elected but appointed by the government. Even some of its DPR members had been appointed rather than elected to parliament – 100 or 20 percent of its seats in 1987 and 1992 for example, were reserved for military officers appointed by President Suharto.[247] Moreover, the other 400 or 80 percent of its elected seats came mostly from the state party, Golkar, and a party system and election process that had been systemically weighted in their favor. Hence, the DPR was never a wholly elected body. Despite its role as a legislative body, the DPR did not initiate a single bill or even veto any proposed by Suharto in thirty years. With its legislative and veto powers severely choked and marginalized under the political

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[246] Juoro 1998, 194.

[247] Liddle 1999, 41. See section 3.6.2 for a discussion of military's role in Indonesian politics.

framework developed during Suharto's long rule, the DPR was little more than a rubber-stamping legislature.[248]

During the New Order, elections were contested by only three parties – Golkar, the Development Unity Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, or PPP), and the Indonesian Democratic Party (*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia*, or PDI). The PPP and PDI, the other two political parties allowed to take part in elections, were each formed in 1973 after the New Order forced several preexisting organizations to amalgamate. Four Islamic parties were merged to form the PPP while the PDI was formed from pre-existing nationalist and Christian parties.[249] The forced fusion of these ideologically disparate parties left each of them deeply divided and unable to pose a serious challenge to Golkar. They were also badly disadvantaged by the fact that they were forbidden from having branches below the district level in contrast to Golkar which was represented wherever there was a government office. This translated into a presence in virtually every village in the country.[250] Lacking independent policy agendas and politically hamstrung, the PPP and the PDI were only able to attract a modest share of the vote.[251] Hence, the composition of the DPR was highly skewed in favor of Golkar by formal and informal rules and arrangements and therefore, hardly the result of a truly fair and multi-party political system and election process.

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[248] Macintyre 2003, 48.

[249] Liddle 1999, 41.

[250] For other ways in which the government exerts control over the party system and electoral processes, see MacIntyre 1999.

[251] MacIntyre 1999, 268.

Golkar, created in 1964 by army officers to co-ordinate anti-communist organizations, was able to incorporate functional groups like labour, peasants, women, youth, intellectuals, artists, etc within four years of its founding.[252] Despite these functional groups and the New Order's claims that it represented the nation's interest, Golkar was partisan and really the political face of the state. Public employees, including elected village leaders were not only mobilized for nation-wide elections every five years but prohibited from joining the other parties. These links with the state were further tightened by the fact that local, regional and national Golkar leaders were recruited from the ranks of civil servants and retired military officers.[253] However, Golkar too had little impact on policymaking despite its position as the country's leading party. Besides being an insignificant generator of ideas or policy preferences, it and the corporatist bodies which it encapsulated operated within a state-dominated framework.[254] As Andrew MacIntyre notes, these corporatist bodies operated "primarily as institutional arrangements for political containment rather than as institutions for aggregating sectoral interests and injecting these interests into the policy-making process."[255]

Hence, Indonesia's political parties, in contrast to those operating under democratic conditions, did not play the crucial role of "providing the institutional link

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[252] Juoro 1998, 198.

[253] Liddle 1999, 41.

[254] MacIntyre 1999, 268.

[255] MacIntyre 1999, 268.

between voters and the machinery of government."[256] Despite the presence of political parties and elections in Indonesia, the system of parties and corporatist bodies had been constructed in such a way that they limited rather than met the demands placed on the state by societal groups.[257] Instead of providing contending packages of policy proposals that aggregate and represent public interests in their electoral campaigns, they were unable to exert much influence at any stage of the policy formation process and could not function as partisan veto points on matters that were contested.[258]

Since autonomy of these political institutions and parties was mostly non-existent during the New Order, influence over the policy process was concentrated within the structures of the state, and especially the presidency and the person of Suharto.[259] An important reflection of this is the fact that the main source of executive action in Indonesia came from decrees issued by the president and not from laws ratified by the legislature.[260] In sum, the channels for broader societal demands had been extinguished by the combination of a strong executive provided by its constitution and more importantly, the commandeering of other political institutions to serve the interests of Suharto and the New Order regime. Indonesia's political system under the New Order was therefore, one where power was mainly concentrated in "the person of

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[256] MacIntyre 1999, 267.

[257] MacIntyre 1999, 268.

[258] MacIntyre 1999, 267.

[259] MacIntyre 1999, 268.

[260] MacIntyre 1999, 269.

the president rather than in political institutions."[261] Unlike other presidential systems, the president was the only constitutional veto player in Indonesia.[262]

3.6.2 A Second Veto Player – The Military

There was however, one other significant actor in this authoritarian system - the military. For many years, ABRI was a vital part of the New Order, maintaining the regime's domination over society and supporting its goals. It was however also a powerful political actor in its own right, wielding tremendous power and authority through the implementation of its politically interventionist *dwifungsi* or dual function doctrine which defined the military's role as the maintenance of Indonesia's 'political stability' through "defending the state and helping to administer it."[263] In effect, this doctrine gave the military a socio-political role in Indonesia and expanded its say in national and local politics dramatically.

Developed in the chaotic conditions of Sukarno's rule during the late 1950s and early 1960s by General A.H. Nasution and in seminars at the Staff and Command College, *dwifungsi* was based on the belief that the Indonesian armed forces has "two closely related roles: to defend the country not only from conventional military threats originating abroad, but also from domestic dangers of any kind, military, political, socioeconomic, cultural, or ideological."[264] The chaos of Sukarno's 'Guided

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[261] Juoro 1998, 195.

[262] Macintyre 2003, 48.

[263] Kingsbury 2002, 5.

[264] Liddle 1999, 44.

Democracy' period and the 1965 coup attempt provided the basis for sealing the central role of the military in Indonesian political life with the institutionalization of this doctrine after the arrival of the New Order.

This was enabled through the placement of active and retired military personnel throughout the Indonesian political system. Approximately 20 percent of the DPR, MPR and the regional legislatures were occupied by serving officers who reported directly to their superiors in the chain of military command.[265] In addition to positions in the provincial and district administrations, they were also placed in every state institution ranging from the cabinet to ministries and the diplomatic service.[266] They have also tended to fill pivotal positions in these institutions especially in the areas of political, legal and security affairs.

By the late 1970s, 78 percent of director-generals and 84 percent of ministerial secretaries were ABRI appointees.[267] Military men also formed half the cabinet, over two-thirds of the regional governorships, and 56 per cent of district officers. In the foreign service, military officers had been appointed to half of the country's ambassadorships by 1977.[268] While these numbers tended to decline by the 1980s and 1990s with a rise in the number of educated and experienced civilians, key ministries like the Department of Home Affairs, which was responsible for regional government

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[265] Liddle 1999, 45. Since they are represented in the political process by appointment, serving military personnel were not eligible to vote or run for public office.

[266] Vatikiotis 1998a, 70.

[267] Vatikiotis 1998a, 70.

[268] Vatikiotis 1998a, 71.

and the surveillance of political and social organizations in the provinces and districts, stayed in military hands. In 1996, retired or serving officers still held 25 percent of cabinet appointments and a larger percentage of second-tier ministerial positions. Almost 50 percent of the most important civilian government positions in the regime - provincial governorships and district headships – were held by the military.[269]

The military also played a leading role in Golkar through positions of formal and informal authority. Moreover, it ensured that "civilian officials carried out their Golkar assignments, provided security for Golkar campaign events, and obstructed PPP and PDI meetings and rallies."[270]

One of the most critical features of the way the military was organized was its territorial command structure that shadowed the state's governing structure all the way from the national to the local levels. This structure divided the country into ten command zones - four covered densely populated Java alone while the remaining six encompassed the twenty-two sparsely populated provinces of the outer islands. Each command was in turn divided into several layers of subcommand with the lowest of these matching the government's sub-district, the equivalent of "a township or suburb in the United States."[271] Hence, this command structure enabled the military to be involved in each level of government either directly or through its parallel system. In this way, ABRI had considerable influence over a spectrum of decisions at the local

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[269] Liddle 1999, 45.

[270] Liddle 1999, 47.

[271] Liddle 1999, 46.

level ranging from population issues to the production of food and strategic materials.[272] Its domination of local politics was made possible by the fact that individuals had to obtain its permission in order to travel, organize meetings, deliver sermons or issue any publication.[273] Critically, this territorial command structure, covering as it did the entire archipelago from Jakarta to villages in its outermost islands, enabled the military to monitor social and political developments carefully and keep the population under surveillance.[274]

Hence, the military had tremendous structural power in the Indonesian political system which was derived not only from its monopoly on state coercive power but from the institutionalization of its participation within the country's politics and political processes which stretched all the way down to the village level.[275] This sociopolitical function and its command structure provided it with the basis as well as the means to function as the other veto point in the system.

3.6.3 The Military and Violent Disengagement

In the immediate months after the fall of Suharto, Indonesia's highly centralized political system built during the New Order was coming apart. The disintegration of this authoritarian structure provided the space for identity contestation to take place as its only constitutional veto point – President Suharto – had become increasingly

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[272] Kingsbury 2003, 72.

[273] Jenkins 1984, 43.

[274] Liddle 1999, 45.

[275] Shiraishi 1999, 74-5.

illegitimate and was ultimately removed from the system. However, the removal of the heart of the structure and its substitution with a politically weak Habibie left the system in a state of flux. While it provided the opening for the transition from an authoritarian regime to a different one and the implementation of new policies, the process of contestation was also embedded in an extremely uncertain political context – Habibie was heading what was ultimately a transitional administration albeit one that was in the process of attempting to fundamentally transform the country's entire political architecture from authoritarian rule to a new democracy.[276] While there was general consensus among a portion of the political elite regarding the need to integrate democratic ideals into Indonesia's political culture, identity and institutions most visibly and perhaps most quickly through reducing the power of the executive branch, giving the legislature greater power, and political parties freedom and autonomy, the country's political institutions had not assumed their proper roles and functions. Moreover, some political actors were still operating with the political rules and norms of the New Order as their reference point. In other words, democratic rules and norms had not yet come to govern the outcomes of political contests for all actors in the system. The military, in particular, was reluctant to embrace these changes.

Their involvement in the kidnapping, torture and murder of activists in 1997 and the Trisakti University shootings of 1998 had indeed, begun to turn the tide of public opinion against them. This had the effect of ensuring that they had no choice but to accept the need to rethink their political role and the dual function doctrine.[277] Despite

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[276] Macintyre 2000, 137.

[277] Bourchier and Hadiz eds. 2001, 280.

the push in this direction, discussions and debates held at the Armed Forces Staff and Command College at Bandung in September 1998 showed that the military was still resisting their complete withdrawal from politics. While there were differences on this issue within the organization, its statements stressed what they saw as their continued responsibility for the welfare of the nation and their right to revert to a 'security approach' if the situation warranted it. Throughout 1998 and 1999, "their language reflected their ongoing preoccupation with stability, unity, order and the dangers of communism."[278] Hence, ABRI continued to resist any changes to their position within Indonesian politics despite the fact that its *dwi fungsi* doctrine was being assaulted on different fronts by the *reformasi* movement. As they resisted these calls for reform, they were able to retain the main components constituting its structural power, enabling them to still function autonomously in many ways and remain a veto point.

When Habibie made his decision to allow East Timor to decide its own future, senior military figures who were present at the cabinet meeting did not lodge much of a protest against the decision. However, there was a large group of serving and retired officers who held on to the irreversibility of East Timor's integration into Indonesia. These included a number of local military commanders in East Timor as well as active top-ranking officers like Adam Damiri, commander of the territorial military command which included East Timor, Lt-General Tyasno Sudarso, head of military intelligence, as well as Lt-General Zacky Anwar Makarim, former head of BIA.[279] Finally, retired

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[278] Bourchier and Hadiz eds. 2001, 280. It was only in 2000 that the military was able to declare an end to their socio-political role.

[279] *Tapol Bulletin*, no.152 (May 1999): 5. See also McDonald et al 2002.

officers including Generals Benny Murdani and Tri Sustrisno, as well as the sacked Lt. General Prabowo were also known to be part of this faction.[280]

The military, it appears, allowed the vote to take place for a number of reasons. First, General Tanjung, a very senior military figure in the Habibie cabinet, and members of the Indonesian intelligence were optimistic that the majority of the East Timorese favored autonomy and continued integration with Indonesia rather than independence.[281] Tanjung's assistant had written in a leaked memo of July 1999 that initial military estimates had 75 percent of the East Timorese voting in favor of integration.[282] In military documents discovered by an East Timorese NGO, the explosion of pro-independence demonstrations attended by tens of thousands of people after Suharto's fall were attributed to the 'gullibility' and 'stupidity' of the East Timorese public "who had been manipulated by the pro-independence clique during an economic and political crisis."[283] The students and leaders of these demonstrations were 'naughty children' (*anak nakal*) who were venting their frustrations.[284] Ironically, Indonesia's leaders were viewing the East Timorese, as Benedict Anderson points out, "in the way that the Dutch colonizers used to view Indonesians."[285] Such analyses gave the military reason to brush aside the real concerns and desires of the East Timorese as

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[280] *Tapol Bulletin*, no.152 (May 1999): 5.

[281] Also confirmed by two senior advisers of President Habibie in personal interviews.

[282] Moore 2001, 33.

[283] Moore 2001, 30.

[284] Moore 2001, 30.

[285] Moore 2001, 11.

those of irresponsible and mischievous children who clearly did not know or understand what they were doing. It also provided them with the conviction that the majority of the East Timorese were loyal to Indonesia.[286]

In an analysis that filtered its way up the army hierarchy and became part of a confidential booklet issued by the intelligence office of military headquarters in Jakarta, Major General Adam Damiri stated that the militias' show of force gave the majority of East Timorese the courage to defy the resistance and become loyal supporters of Indonesia despite the latter's intimidation tactics.[287] This campaign of violence and intimidation that began in October 1998 and continued until the end of September 1999 was therefore, focused at ensuring that the East Timorese would ultimately remain part of Indonesia.

The military contravened a decision already undertaken by the civilian head of the country that providing East Timor with the opportunity to decide its own future was in the long-run interests of Indonesia.[288] A retired general who was close to the center of army command described Habibie's policy as a "big blunder"[289] - particularly noteworthy for revealing the contempt with which these decisions were viewed. ABRI was thus able to take a path that was separate from that which had already been decided because of the institutional context of the New Order as well as the chaotic and fluid

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[286] Moore 2001, 35.

[287] Moore 2001, 37. This booklet, "meant as an overview of national political issues, was distributed in military offices throughout Indonesia and thus became the army's 'true report' of the event" (Moore, 37).

[288] No evidence has turned up indicating that Habibie played any role in initiating or encouraging this campaign.

[289] Interview with high-ranking (retired) military officer, July 26, 2004.

conditions of the immediate period after the fall of Suharto. Its position within the Indonesian political system as well as its structural power explains how it had the means to exercise its veto in the violent manner that it did.

3.7 Conclusion

East Timor's fate shifted with the rise and fall of contrasting political projects and identities for Indonesia. During the Suharto period, its narrative of Indonesian identity was an integral part of the process which constructed communists and communism as threats to the nation. As long as such threats continued to be part of the story of Indonesia's peoplehood, the possibility of change in its East Timor policy was extremely slim.

During the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, intellectual developments as well as political and economic changes had gradually widened the gaps between what was being experienced and the social expectations derived from the New Order's narrative of Indonesian identity. These disjunctures created the space available for an alternative conception of Indonesian identity, one based on the ideals of democracy and the inclusionary interpretations of Pancasila, to emerge and challenge the New Order's construction of Indonesian identity. Due to the fusion of the New Order regime's characteristics with Indonesian identity, a successful challenge only took place with the fall of Suharto in 1998. Critically, the increasing legitimacy of human rights and democratization during the last half of the 1990s ensured that political reforms geared towards democracy would follow regime change in Indonesia.

When regime change took place, the fundamental re-organization of Indonesia's political order and identity in 1998 would have an important impact on East Timor. For

Habibie and his advisers, it was the need to show the rest of the world that there was a new and *democratic* Indonesia afoot which ultimately resulted in the offers of autonomy and independence. Their actions in turn, underscore the theoretical insight from Michael Barnett that: "the attempt to reduce action to either rule-governed action or strategic behavior might be analytically seductive but it forces false choices and fails to recognize what makes social action what it is."[290]

Finally, the highly centralized nature of Indonesia's political system created conditions in which there were only two veto points. Suharto's demise and the rise of an unsteady new democracy with the military still present as a significant veto player ensured that the new identity could not matter in all stages of the passage through which the policy had to navigate. It enabled the military to veto and openly defy Habibie's decision on the East Timor issue, producing a disengagement process that was unfortunately, noteworthy for its violent and bloody end.

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[290] Barnett 1999, 26.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION: IDENTITY, TERRITORIAL DISENGAGEMENT AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Rather than engaging in making definitive statements or conclusions regarding invariant cause and effect relations for territorial disengagement that will encompass an entire universe of cases across time and space, this dissertation has been focused on investigating identity mechanisms and processes that may be involved in the processes leading to territorial disengagement. Hence, the discussion in this concluding chapter will be guided by the following questions. How do identity mechanisms and processes play a role in territorial disengagement? What do the findings from the preceding two chapters tell us about the processes involved in territorial disengagement? How do the findings contribute to our understanding of identity in International Relations?

4.2 Identity and Territorial Disengagement

Identity was central to the actions of elite British and Indonesian policymakers who supported the changes that would initiate the way to disengagement from India and East Timor. It was also a critical ingredient to how elite British and Indonesian policymakers who opposed disengagement understood and approached challenges from India and East Timor. In both Britain and Indonesia, change in policy took place when the dominant identity in the colonial or territorial power that had supported the status quo was successfully challenged and contested by an alternative identity. This alternative emerged when changing social, economic and political circumstances

created increasingly visible gaps between what was being experienced on the ground and the expectations associated with the dominant identity.

In both cases, identity mechanisms and processes played an important role in territorial disengagement in three ways. First, identity shaped the form of action and interaction that were considered "possible, feasible, desirable and efficacious" and "hence at least by implication what forms of action and interaction would be impossible, impracticable, undesirable, ineffectual."[1] Secondly, practices that were an intimate part of the construction, establishment, maintenance and validation of an identity also affected policies regarding territories. Thirdly, territorial disengagement was also influenced by the domestic political structures from which a dominant identity emerges.

In Britain and Indonesia, identity, in providing a basis for seeing the world, shaped, influenced and constrained responses to challenges to the territorial status quo by making some actions thinkable and others, unthinkable. The conception of Britishness that was based in part on the principle of democratic constitutionalism shaped the response of Stanley Baldwin and the reformers to the issue of constitutional reforms for India. In particular, it excluded any actions that would contravene and contradict Baldwin's conception of Britishness. Significantly, it meant co-operating with the leadership of the Labor Party who, while not working for the independence of India, were in favor of these reforms. In Habibie's Indonesia, the building of a new Indonesia based on democracy not only made the reconsideration of the country's policy on East Timor possible but legitimate. Specifically, it was Habibie's concern

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[1] Tilly 2002, 9.

with demonstrating that a democratic Indonesia was afoot that led to policies that were consistent with this principle. Previously unthinkable policies had become, as Dewi Fortuna Anwar, Habibie's unofficial Minister of Foreign Affairs, described it, "extremely rational."

Approaches to India and East Timor were also influenced by the very processes and mechanisms that were necessary to the construction, maintenance and consolidation of identities in Britain and Indonesia. First, the very processes and mechanisms involved in the construction of these identities also resulted in the simultaneous construction of India and East Timor with specific characteristics. This concurrent construction in turn, influenced Britain's and Indonesia's policy towards their territorial possessions. Second, acting and performing the dominant British and Indonesian identity also contributed to the initiation of policies that would lead to their disengagement from India and East Timor.

In Britain, the constitution of the diehards' conception of Britishness against an Indian 'Other' resulted in the simultaneous construction of India as a place that was deeply divided by caste, language and religion, and dominated by centuries of 'barbaric' customs, traditions and beliefs. This particular construction of India as 'uncivilized' and inferior ensured that the diehards were unable to recognize Indian calls and desires for self-determination and independence for what they were. At the same time, the diehards' opposition to the proposed constitutional reforms in India was also the result of their fear that such changes would reduce Britain, as Churchill described it, from a titan on the world stage to a mere rabbit. Being British was synonymous with political, economic, social and moral exceptionalism and the passage of constitutional reforms in

India would be not only be an abrogation of Britain's destiny, duty and responsibility to spread civilization and progress throughout the world but a negation of their greatness. Hence, the importance of practices that were needed for the continued construction and maintenance of the diehards' conception of Britishness played a part in their insistence on maintaining the status quo in British policy towards India.

Processes related to acting and performing an identity for recognition and validation were also important to Baldwin's support for Indian constitutional reforms. His support, as discussed earlier, was heavily influenced by the need to demonstrate the principle of democratic constitutionalism, one of the most important components of Baldwin's emerging construction of Britishness during a period of tremendous change and flux for Britain as well as the Conservative Party. The way in which the issue of India was handled was a crucial part of the process not only to act out this principle of constitutionalism but in sustaining and garnering recognition that Baldwin's construction of Britishness was indeed valid.

In Indonesia, processes related to construction, maintenance and consolidation were also influential in Jakarta's approach to East Timor. During Suharto's New Order, the construction of an Indonesian identity through narratives of a state in constant peril also resulted in the simultaneous construction of communists, together with other groups of differing religious and ideological convictions, as threats to the collectivity. This specific construction of communists as the most dangerous threat to the safety and security of all Indonesians resulted in demands for independence from a Freitlin-linked East Timor to be viewed as illegitimate and a danger to Indonesian security, unity and

sovereignty. Rather than negotiations, such demands were therefore, met by security measures and the maintenance of the territorial status quo.

Practices to construct and sustain a particular identity were also a critical component in Habibie's offer of special autonomy for East Timor in June 1998 and later, the offer to allow the East Timorese to decide their own future in an indirect referendum in January 1999. As discussed earlier, Habibie and his advisers believed, both in June 1998 and January 1999, that Indonesia had to act in ways that were consistent with a country that was professing to be on its way to becoming a democratic nation committed to human rights. The actions they had taken vis-à-vis East Timor was part of a process to perform Indonesia's nascent identity as a democracy and to gain recognition from the rest of the world that there was a new and democratic Indonesia afoot.

Here, it is interesting to note that the need not only to demonstrate that a particular identity is real and genuine but for its recognition whether within a domestic or international context led by both Baldwin and Habibie to support the changes that would have far-reaching effects in the path to independence for India and East Timor. This indicates that periods in which a new or at least 'newer' identity has recently emerged and is therefore, still in need of consolidation and recognition may be particularly critical for changes regarding territorial policies.

Finally, these cases also point to the need to take the disengaging power's domestic political system into account in order to fully understand the ways in which identity is involved in territorial disengagement. In Britain, the bitter and prolonged contestation over British identity between the reformers and the diehards through the

question of India was confined only to political avenues that were open to these opposing groups. The eventual winners, Baldwin and the reformers, were able to implement the constitutional reforms that would go on to have profound impact on India's path to independence without any interference from the diehards once the latter had exhausted all formal political channels open to them. The political contestation over identity was confined in Britain because its political system only had one veto player and was parliamentary in nature. The former ensured that disagreements over identity would not be bogged down in a quagmire as a one veto player system provided only one place within the system where policies could be contravened or vetoed. The structural proclivities of the latter gave a parliamentary party tremendous leverage over its members and ensured that battles within the veto player – during this period in Britain, the Conservative Party – would be confined to the structural channels of the party. In the battle of contending identities over the question of India, the British political system eased the way for Baldwin's construction of Britishness and the Indian constitutional reforms which it engendered to carry the day.

In Indonesia however, identity contestation did not remain within normal political channels but spilled out to result in a violent and bloody disengagement from East Timor. While it was a political system that was in transition to a democracy, it was critically, still a system that included the powerful military as one of its two veto players. The latter, which had held on to the New Order's narrative of Indonesian identity and a specific construction of the East Timorese, worked to block, compromise and contravene Habibie's decision through a different set of measures based on intimidation and violence to influence East Timor's ability to decide their own future.

Hence, Habibie's ability to validate and make real his lofty pronouncements that this Indonesia was democratic through performing its main features was hampered by a second veto player in the system. Moreover, the Indonesian military's lack of regard for the civilian political structure ensured that its differences with the latter would not be abandoned even though definitive and final decisions had been made and implemented.

Besides the need to include identity-related mechanism in analyses of the processes related to territorial disengagement and decolonization, the findings from this dissertation also point to the need for caution before making arguments that point to the sole significance of ideas, norms and principles of democracy, human rights and self-determination, and relatedly, the humanization of the non-Western 'Other' in how we understand the great wave of decolonization that took place in the middle of the twentieth century when a world of imperial powers and colonies shifted to one of sovereign states.[2]

In International Relations, recent and well-deserved scholarly attention on these events and their significance, obscured for decades by the exigencies of the Cold War and when they were filed away as a class of phenomenon that had passed firmly not only into the past but irrelevance, had placed them and their relevance in a very different light. Particularly important at both the empirical and theoretical levels is the emerging consensus that it was the diffusion and gradual acceptance of norms and ideas of self-determination and human rights, whether within or across borders, which altered

[2] Crawford 2002; Lustick 1993; R. Jackson 1998; and Philpott 2001.

the way states understood their interests and paved the road leading to the end of five hundred years of colonialism.

Three important observations and theoretical arguments about world politics can and have been derived from this understanding of how and why decolonization took place. First, these changes and their underlying basis represent a radical transformation not only in the geopolitical configurations of world politics but more significantly, in its normative landscape. Second is the implicit and explicit conclusion in these explanations that decolonization, in overturning the legality, morality and racial hierarchy of colonialism, probably represents one of the final stages in a long-term movement towards moral progress and the gradual humanization of the non-West.[3] Regardless of one's position on these conclusions, there can be little doubt that twentieth century decolonization, in overturning the overt hierarchical practices in world politics that were associated with colonialism, is one of the monster periods in International Relations and therefore, deserving of much greater attention and analysis.[4] Third is the theoretical argument that it was ideas and norms, and processes rooted in argument rather than material reasons that were central to one of the most dramatic shifts in the international politics of the twentieth century.

While ideas, norms and ethical arguments regarding human rights, self-determination, racial equality and democracy were indeed a very important and undeniable part of the story, the findings from this dissertation point to other processes

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[3] Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Finnemore 1996; Klotz 1995; Crawford 2002; R. Jackson 1993; and Keck and Sikkink 1998.

[4] I borrow the term, 'monster period' from Der Derian 1997.

and mechanisms that may be at play when states react to challenges from and regarding colonies and other territorial disputes. Indonesia for example, invaded East Timor in 1975 and remained there for twenty-five years in a period when explicit colonial practices were condemned internationally and norms of self-determination de rigueur. Moreover, the tacit support of the U.S., Britain and Australia for Indonesia's annexation of East Timor in 1975 illustrate the highly contingent nature of the international community's support for such principles in the modern era.5 If the normative landscape had indeed changed, why did Indonesia, a country proud of, and constituted by its anti-colonial history, annex East Timor and retain it for twenty-four years even in the face of widespread international condemnation? Why did the U.S., Britain, or Australia support Indonesia's actions?

Second, norms and ideas-based explanations, as already discussed in Chapter 1, are unable to provide a non-tautological account of norm selection and in doing so, risk missing out other significant causal mechanisms and processes. For example, norms of democracy were indeed pertinent and critical in the disengagement process in both Britain and Indonesia but only as it related to what it meant to be British and Indonesian. Thus, the concern was not so much for the Indian or the East Timorese but for the Briton and the Indonesian. Recent case-oriented research on Britain's decolonization of its colonies across Asia and Africa in the 1950s and 1960s also support the importance of maintaining a specific British identity as a factor in explaining the pace, timing and direction of these processes.[6] In Todd Shepard's

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[5] Simpson (2005: 303).

[6] Heinlein 2002.

brilliant and detailed study of France's disengagement from Algeria, another frequently discussed case in decolonization, he has shown that it was French identity that had a critical role.[7] Moreover, Charles De Gaulle and other elite French policymakers were far more concerned that Algeria and Algerian Muslims could never be French rather than with the issue of human rights and self-determination. Ironically, it was the supporters of a French Algeria who based their arguments on equality and France's republican values.

Here, let me reiterate that I do not dispute the significance of ideas and norms principles of democracy, human rights and self-determination in the large wave of decolonization that took place in the middle of the twentieth century nor their increasing importance in the current social structure of international politics. However, I do argue that explanations that are based solely on the suggestion that these norms and ideas were primarily responsible for how the disengaging or colonial power came to understand self-determination, sovereignty or the evils of colonialism may miss certain critical elements in the heart of these colonial empires. In particular, the cases in this dissertation as well as recent research conducted on British and French decolonization suggest these ideas and norms may have been embedded in discursive structures, processes and mechanism of far greater complexity than previously realized and must be examined for a fuller and more complete understanding of processes that are involved.

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[7] Shepard 2006.

4.3 Identity and International Relations

In this section, I discuss issues and questions regarding identity that were foregrounded in Chapter 1 in view of the empirical evidence of this dissertation. Specifically, what are the practices, processes, mechanisms, actors and politics involved in the construction and contestation of identities? Why does a particular identity matter at specific periods and not others? How does identity affect or influence politics and human behavior?

In the matter of where one should focus one's attention when it comes to the issue of identity construction, social constructivist theories of identities have been no different from other approaches in International Relation and more generally, the social sciences, in having to contend with the levels-of-analysis issue. In Chapter 1, I argued for treating this as an empirical question that can and should be examined rather than by starting with a standpoint that prioritizes either the systemic or domestic levels.

Studying the construction of identity in Britain and Indonesia show that neither the "domestic or international will dominate in the construction of state identity."[8] For Britain and Indonesia, identities were constructed both at home and in relation to other states. In Britain, cultural and political processes at the domestic level sustained the diehards' conception of British identity – imperial themes were a vital and intrinsic part of every day life as well as the high culture of the nation from the eighteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries.[9] At the same time, grand imperial adventures provided the place and the means for the exceptionalism and greatness that was such an inherent part of

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[8] Hopf 2002, 289.

[9] See Said 1993.

British identity to be performed and therefore, reconstructed and sustained at the systemic level.

In Indonesia, conceptions of Indonesian identity based on the ideals of democracy, openness, human rights and inclusionary interpretations of Pancasila had been constructed domestically by oppositional groups and academics in the country through their alternative narrations of Indonesian history. Habibie, when he came into office, was unable to ride on these groups' construction of Indonesian identity. His proclamation that Indonesia was on its way to becoming a democratic country as well as the political reforms that were being implemented proved insufficient. For them, recognition from the international community and subsequent social interactions based on this self-understanding was especially important in order for them to begin to validate and establish this identity. East Timor became a means for this new identity to be performed.

In addition, the findings from these two cases also indicate that identity can be constructed in a variety of ways within the same country and even within the same period. In Britain, the diehards' construction of British greatness was constructed against an Indian 'Other' while Baldwin constructed an identity for Britain through organizing and connecting places, people and events into a coherent story regarding the timeless character of Britishness. Indonesian identity was constructed during the Suharto regime from a narrative that drew on past historical events which were pulled together into a story of how Indonesia and Indonesians became a people. Within this narrative, Indonesian identity was also often contrasted and constructed not only against the Communist 'Other' but against its historical past. Habibie and his colleagues built

on new narratives of Indonesian-ness that drew on reinterpretations of 1950s and 1960s Indonesian history and the reprioritization of the anti-colonial component of their founding. Thus, both the narrativization of identity and the construction of the Self against an Other were involved at different times in both cases examined here. These cases support Ted Hopf's findings and arguments that prioritizing one mechanism over another may again "capture only a small part of empirical reality and so should not be treated unproblematically as universally valid a priori assumptions on which to build meaningful theories of identity."[10]

The empirical findings from this dissertation also indicate that human agency and politics are very much involved in the construction of identities. In Britain, Baldwin was particularly significant in promulgating a particular vision of Britishness that was based on harmony, unity, tranquility, moderation and democratic constitutionalism during the Interwar period. Baldwin's actions were however, driven in part by British politics as well as that of the Conservative Party. Fears that the turbulent changes in the political landscape would render the Conservative Party irrelevant and more importantly, divide Britain and destroy its social and political cohesion were the twin forces that kept him focused on constructing a Britain and a British identity based on democratic constitutionalism.

Human agency and politics were no less significant in the construction of a new Indonesian identity after the fall of Suharto. Intellectual developments as well as the conscious efforts of academics, students and other activists had interjected an alternative narrative of Indonesian history and nationhood in the country's political

[10] Hopf 2002, 263.

discourse in the late 1980s and 1990s. When Suharto's regime collapsed and democracy was the only game left in town, Habibie and his advisers did not only initiate a series of domestic political reforms but offered East Timor autonomy and later, the option of independence. These policy changes can be viewed as the conscious efforts of actors who were acting strategically to convince the rest of the world that the Indonesia under Habibie was in fact a new and democratic Indonesia and no longer the Indonesia of old.

Therefore, constructivist theorizing that begin and end with the construction of identities from discourses fail to recognize that actors have agency and can engage in practices that are geared towards the promotion and consolidation of re-inscribed identities. Such an oversocialized view of actors portrays them as marionettes under the control of larger social structures and neglects the possibility that human agency may have a hand in the construction of our cultural landscapes.

While my project highlights the role of human agency, this is however, *not* to say that structures do not play a role in the construction and constitution of identities. Actors who are attempting to construct an identity are also embedded in normative structures and are sometimes circumscribed by them. For example, Habibie's actions to perform and act out an Indonesian identity that was democratic vis-à-vis changes to their East Timor policy, while strategic at one level, must also be situated within what these elite policymakers understood to be an international social structure where norms of democracy and human rights were hegemonic.

Finally, this dissertation points to two main ways in which identity works its way into human action. The first, already demonstrated in many constructivist

analyses, point to the way in which "identity provides a set of parameters within which certain practices and actions are possible, while others are not."[11] The second is rooted in the relationship between the importance of practices and actions in the consolidation and validation of an identity, important parts of a process that will "determine whether identity shall congeal around certain ideas or evolve."[12]

Both the constraining and enabling effects of identity were apparent during the Suharto period when identity narratives based on continuing threats to the unity and security of the nation influenced "the cognitive scripts, categories and rationalities that are indispensable for social action."[13] In particular, the construction of an Indonesia that was perpetually vulnerable to the dangers from communists influenced and severely limited its understanding of the East Timorese independence and resistance, relegating it to the realm of security 'threat' and the corresponding intelligence and military measures to contain, defuse or eliminate it.

The second and perhaps less discussed way in which identity makes its way into human action is through actions or practices that are tied to defending, consolidating or validating an identity. These actions, in defense of "persons we want to *be*,"[14] were an important part of the identity mechanism that formed a critical component in processes that were initiated by Baldwin and the reformers in Britain in regard to constitutional reforms for India, as well as Habibie and his advisers in their re-evaluation of the place

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[11] Goff and Dunn 2004, 244.

[12] Goff and Dunn 2004, 244.

[13] Goff and Dunn 2004, 244.

[14] Ringmar 1996, 3.

of East Timor in the Republic of Indonesia. Besides pointing to the way in which identity mechanisms have a part in action, these examples also underscore that it is not "only words or ideas, but also the actions and practices that enact the idea, make it knowable."[15]

Lastly, these findings also raise a number of issues that should be examined before we can have a better overall understanding of how identity affects international relations. Some of these questions that can form areas for further research in the area of identity include the following: Can we isolate a range of constitutive practices and agents in the construction of identities? Is an 'Other', like some have argued, a necessary part of identity formation, as some have argued? If so, how and where do identity narratives fall within this mechanism? Is the 'Other' always in oppositional form? What alternative forms can it assume and how does it have an impact on human action and behavior? If identities are constructed against an 'Other' and through narratives, what is the relationship between identity formation and security in countries that are in the process of nation- and state-building? How can we better understand the processes involved in the co-constitution of identities?

In summary, this dissertation, while making no claims to definitive conclusions regarding identity since it is an area where there is still much left to grasp, does however, add to, and support a small but growing body of literature on identity and international relations which are ontologically built on several of the following propositions regarding the nature of identity and the mechanisms and processes that are involved in its construction, maintenance and change. First, identities are constructed at

[15] Goff and Dunn 2004, 242.

both the domestic as well as the international levels. Second, identities are constructed against an Other, and through narratives. Third, identities do not acquire 'substance' once they have been constructed. Rather they are continually constituted by processes, relations and practices as identities are defined, recognized and validated in an actor's interaction with and in relationship to others. Identities are thus fundamentally social and relational.[16] This characteristic of identity has in turn, important consequences for how we understand the way in which identity influences human actions. While identity enables or constrains actions since it is in knowing who we are that we can know what we want, it also influences human actions that come from the need to act out or perform who we are or who we say we want to be that are necessary in the process of becoming.

[16] Mattern 2005, 9.

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