

3 Non-state violence and political order in democratized Indonesia

Masaaki Okamoto

Introduction

In October 2019, almost two decades after the end of the 32-year Suharto authoritarian regime and the beginning of democratization, reelected President Joko Widodo addressed the national convention of a nationwide social organization called Pancasila Youth (Pemuda Pancasila). Bearing the name of Pancasila (the national ideology of Indonesia) reflects the organization's nationalist and right-wing identity. As the Suharto regime consolidated power in the mid-1960s, Pancasila Youth was actively involved in the violent dismantling of the Communist Party by the army, effectively laying the groundwork for its subsequent expansion. In the 1980s, it succeeded in expanding its membership and activities nationwide by ensuring the political stability of the regime. The proximity of the organization to state power and its violent nature allowed its members not only to access government projects but also to engage in illegal and illicit business. The organization "participated in politics" in that it received seat allocations in return for supporting the governing party, Golkar, by silencing and weakening opposition groups with violence and threats during elections (Ryter, 1998; Aditjondoro, 2006, p. 20).

Since the collapse of the Suharto regime and the ushering in democratization and decentralization in 1998, various other organizations that use violence as a political resource have emerged at both the local and national levels. In contrast to Suharto's time, many of these were established on the basis of a specific identity, such as religion or ethnicity, while others were simply racketeering organizations. Most of the violent groups that have retained their influence for more than 20 years after democratization retain patronage from the central and local elites. Among them, Pancasila Youth has succeeded in gaining candidacies of several political parties in both central- and local-level elections. In the 2019 elections, 25 elected national MPs as well as the president of the People's Consultative Assembly, the president and vice president of the Regional Representative Assembly, and the minister of Youth and Sports in the second Joko Widodo government were all from Pancasila Youth. Its prominent members also won three out of six gubernatorial elections in 2020. In this sense, the organization has succeeded in participating in politics in an unprecedented way for a group whose

resources are based on violence. As such, this chapter will focus on Pancasila Youth to examine the relationship between violent groups and the state and to consider the political significance of these actors.

Studies are numerous of non-state actors that use violence to gain influence and further their interests. These range from the classic study on bandits by Hobsbawm (1969), studies of the Italian mafia (Blok, 1974; Gambetta, 1993; Lewis, 2003), and studies of violent entrepreneurs in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union (Volkov, 2002; Varese, 2001) to a study of Islamic gangs (Sato et al., 1994), Latin American gangs (Rodgers, 2004, 2006), and the Japanese *yakuza* (Hill, 2003; Siniawer 2008). Global comparative studies on gangs can also be found (see, for example, Hazen and Rodgers, 2014). Research has often said that, from the state's point of view, having links with non-state forces or creating non-state forces, on the one hand, has the merit to trance and control illicit and illegal activities done not only by themselves but also by other underground forces and, on the other hand, is helpful to maintain social order without mobilizing a limited resource of policing personnel. However, if the state becomes overly dependent on such forces, it may not be able to stop them from getting out of control, which could fundamentally shake the social order.

The literature on this topic in Indonesia is also rich.¹ Compared with other countries, Indonesia is characterized by a strong relationship (both formal and informal) between the state and non-state forces, regardless of what political regime is in power. Immediately after Indonesia's democratization, research flourished on the background of the emergence of non-state forces operating at both national and local levels and their rising politico-economic powers. As democracy took hold, however, the focus shifted to non-violent resources, such as money, popularity, and networks that became more politically salient. The focus of research thus shifted to such aspects. A series of works by Ryter, also cited in this chapter, analyzes the politicized members of Pancasila Youth and other groups (Ryter, 1998, 2009, 2012, 2014). Ryter notes how Pancasila Youth and other forces have "become an essential part of Indonesian democracy" (Ryter, 1998, p. 73). Mulyanto (2007, 2013) examines Pancasila Youth in North Sumatra province in detail. While these studies touch on the shrewd organizational adaptation of Pancasila Youth to democratization, they do not examine its national political rise and the meaning of this to the political order in Indonesia. As for the study of non-state forces after the consolidation of democracy, Wilson (2015) does fascinatingly detail these actors' adaptation to democratization and their relationship with politicians and the military and police, but his study is confined to the metropolitan area of Jakarta. If we are to examine the nature of the political order and the role of non-state violence in that order since democratization, it is essential to analyze the violent nationalist forces that have transformed themselves to adapt to democracy and have begun to influence politics even at the national level. Therefore, this chapter will focus on Pancasila Youth as the most successful non-state force participating in national politics. I will first outline the relationship between the state and non-state forces in general before turning

to this relationship in Indonesia and then examining the political rise of Pancasila Youth and its significance.

The relationship between non-state forces and the state

The numerous studies that discuss the modern state and violence often rely on Weber's (2004: loc.2113-2116 of 3589. kindle.) classic definition of the state as their starting point: "the state is the form of human community that (successfully) lays claim to the monopoly of legitimate physical violence within a particular territory." The impact of this definition is so great that, in their volume on violence and social order, North et al. note: "virtually all models of the state assume that the state has a monopoly on violence," even though a little more than two dozen states in modern society actually hold such a monopoly (North et al., 2013, p. 273).

Weber's definition, however, continues: "all other organizations or individuals can assert the right to use physical violence only in so far as the state permits them to do so" (Weber, 2004). In other words, as long as it is within the limits permitted by the state, certain non-state organizations and individuals can use physical violence without state interference. In this chapter, I refer to such organizations and groups as non-state forces.² According to Weber's definition, some of these non-state actors may be groups or individuals who are legally allowed to use physical violence. In reality, however, many organizations and groups are allowed to exist, even if they or their activities are not necessarily legal. Therefore, categorizing organizations and groups based on whether they are legal or illegal can be misleading, as many operate within a gray zone of permissibility.

Figure 3.1 depicts the relationships between state and non-state forces and the gray zone within which this study focuses its attention. The x-axis represents the permissibility of non-state forces and the y-axis represents their legality. In the first quadrant, we find organizations that are both legal and permissible, such

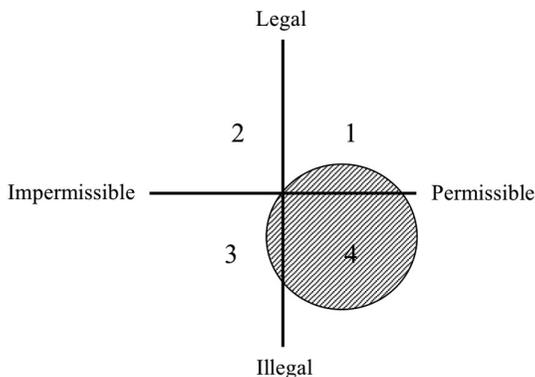


Figure 3.1 Relationship between the state and non-state forces.

as private military companies that carry out missions alongside the military on the battlefield, and security companies that protect their clients' businesses and residences during peacetime. In Japan, the petitioning officer system created by the Meiji state in Hokkaido, which allowed for the existence of police officers financially supported by private citizens, can also be considered an example of the first quadrant (Inose, 2016). It could also be said that, until the mid-1960s, the *yakuza* in Japan fall into this quadrant. As public safety deteriorated in urban areas amid Japan's postwar turmoil, the police did not eliminate the *yakuza* but rather relied on them to ensure security; some politicians also benefited from their links to the *yakuza*. For their part, the *yakuza* used violence and extortion as weapons to expand their businesses. While organizations in the second quadrant (operating legally and not in a permissible way) might be rare, this may apply to the *yakuza* in Japan since the mid-1960s. While their existence is technically legal, according to the Anti-Violence Law, they are categorized as "anti-social forces," and in order to eliminate them, the police do not tolerate their violence-prone activities. The third quadrant includes groups that are both illegal and not permissible, such as terrorist groups that plan to overthrow the state through violence and Italian mafias that became illegal by the national law in 1992, even though there are some spaces for them to engage in the illegal drug business and human trafficking with the connection to local political and judicial actors.

The fourth quadrant (illegal and permissible) is home to organizations and groups whose existence is illegal but who are tolerated by the state, or whose operations and/or businesses are illegal and involve violence and/or extortion but their organizations and business are tolerated by the state. State-sanctioned militia groups in Myanmar, for example, fall into this quadrant. While they are known to be involved in illegal activities such as drug trafficking and extra-judicial killings, the state uses them to maintain security in border areas (Buchanan, 2016).

The *chao pho* or "godfathers" in Thailand also fall into the fourth quadrant. As development benefits spread to the countryside from the 1970s onward, these local businessmen used coercion to make their fortunes not only in legal businesses such as rice milling, construction, and transportation but also in illegal businesses such as logging, drug trafficking, gambling, and prostitution (Tamada, 1987a, 1987b; Viengrat, 2000, 2001; Ockey, 1993, 2000). With the onset of democratization in the mid-1980s, some *chao pho* succeeded in gaining influence in local and even national politics. They were non-state forces, resorting to violence to maintain and expand their spheres of influence. The bureaucrats of the Ministry of Home Affairs dispatched to the provinces or the police stationed in the provinces tacitly approved of the *chao pho*'s illegal businesses and entrusted them with maintaining security in the community while receiving financial rewards (Ockey, 2000).

At this juncture, Malaysia provides a useful example. Considered one of the most successful and secure countries in Southeast Asia, authoritarian rule by coalition parties prevailed until 2018. The Domestic Security Act and the Law on Security Violations and Countermeasures enacted in 2012 allowed police to

easily detain anti-government activists and others; police control over the citizens is tight. Nevertheless, there is room for non-state forces, commonly referred to as gangs in Malaysia, to operate. Indeed, in August 2013, the Ministry of Home Affairs announced that 49 illegal gang organizations (comprising 40,313 people) were operating in the country.³ These gangs also operate within the fourth quadrant because, although they are illegal, the Malaysian police do not aim to eradicate them. Indeed, in 2016, Nur Jazlan, the deputy minister of Home Affairs openly acknowledged that the police and gangs both have one goal, which is to maintain public safety, and they, therefore, maintain a kind of cooperative “arrangement.” According to Nur Jazlan, gangs basically use violence against rival gangs in turf wars, helping to maintain security in their territory. As the police see it, they can eliminate gangs whenever it becomes necessary. If they are not the cause of a serious deterioration in security, the police may find it cheaper and less troublesome to leave local security to them instead of interfering in their illegal activities.⁴

While such explicit acknowledgment of the cooperative arrangement between the state and non-state forces is rare, its existence is not. Non-state forces may engage in collecting racketeering fees, forcible detention, possession of a real estate, and coercive debt collection uninhibited by the state, but they are also often engaged in illegal businesses such as drug trafficking, prostitution, and illegal gambling, which are generally subject to a crackdown by the state. However, allowing these actors to operate also offers benefits for the state. While these actors fight with other violent business actors to expand their territories, they at least try to ensure safety within their own territories. They are also a source of information about serious crimes. Therefore, in Southeast Asia, “cooperative arrangements” involving the exchange of money and other rewards between the state’s violence apparatus and non-state violent business actors are not uncommon, especially at the local level (Trocki, 1998). In some cases, these arrangements are tacitly state-sanctioned with systematic approval, whereas in other cases, they are tacitly approved by the particular military and/or police officers (Okamoto, 2017).

Coexistence and co-prosperity of the state and non-state forces in Indonesia: A brief history

Non-state forces from colonial times to independence

The very idea of the state monopolizing violence has been feeble since the time of the Dutch East Indies, a colonial state that emerged as a modern state. In Java, the island with the highest degree of colonial penetration among the Dutch East Indies, the Dutch began in the early 19th century to exert control at the village level through the development of a bureaucracy. The opium farming business by the Chinese expanded along with the development of the bureaucracy, and both of these were supported from behind the scenes by non-state forces such as *jago* and *jagabaya* (Rush, 1990). These actors operated both inside and

outside of the formal social order and were allowed to and did use violence in total disregard of legal norms of justice. While most of these non-state actors became henchmen of the colonial state for their own survival and benefit, as the colonial state stabilized and increased predatory behavior, a few of them fought anti-colonial struggles alongside Communist Party members (Williams, 1990; Okamoto, 2015).

The Dutch colonial regime ended with the invasion of the Japanese army in 1942, after which Japanese military occupation lasted 3 1/2 years. When Japan surrendered to the Allies in August 1945, the Allies ordered the Japanese military to maintain the status quo of the ex-Dutch colonial state, but it had little legitimacy to govern. In this power vacuum, Indonesian nationalists declared the independence of the Republic of Indonesia from the Netherlands. The Dutch did not recognize the republic and plotted a military invasion to re-colonize it. As a result, fighting broke out between the republic and the Netherlands, and non-state forces such as militia and vigilante groups rapidly proliferated to fight against the Dutch.

Adding to this political chaos, social revolutions also erupted in some of Indonesia's regions (Anderson, 1972; Cribb, 1991; Kahin ed. 1985; Stoler, 1988; Williams, 1990). Rejecting the rule of the Netherlands, Japan, and even the Republic of Indonesia, some local leaders attempted to govern themselves autonomously. Such local leaders included not only Islamic leaders but also non-state forces who used violence as a weapon to create order. When the Republic of Indonesia finally gained independence in 1949 and began state-building, these forces did not disappear but rather became less visible politically.

Non-state forces under authoritarian regimes

Immediately after independence, Indonesia, like other Southeast Asian countries, adopted a parliamentary democracy. This did not last long, and as local rebellions broke out and as the conflict between Islamic and communist forces deepened, political instability increased. Sukarno, the republic's first president, established an authoritarian regime in 1957. At the same time, the army deepened its relationship with Islamic forces and intensified its confrontation with communist forces. In this context, newly established non-state forces linked to the army began to emerge. These included nationalistic right-wing organizations, such as Pancasila Youth, as well as the anti-communist Indonesian Student Action League (KAMI) and the Indonesian Youth Student Action League (KAPPI). The largest Islamic social organization in Indonesia, Nahdlatul Ulama, created youth units such as Ansor and Bansel, which brought society's "roughnecks"—delinquents, thugs, and hoodlums—into their ranks (Ryter, 1998).

When the conflict spun out of control and the Communist Party staged a coup d'état in September 1965, the army, led by Suharto, actively utilized non-state forces to dismantle the Communist Party and its allies. These actors staged anti-communist demonstrations, killed party members, collected money for their "struggle" from ethnic Chinese, and were involved in the confiscation of

party-related assets. Later, as Suharto's regime consolidated power and entrenched itself, the state once weakened the relationship with these actors.

In Jakarta and other cities in the early 1970s, gangs led by children of military officers who had too much free time on their hands emerged. They fought, assaulted, murdered, raped, robbed, used illegal drugs, stole, and behaved in other inappropriate ways, becoming a source of insecurity. In response, the Suharto regime forced neighborhood associations and neighbor groups to carry out night patrols under the supervision of the military and police and turned hoodlums into neighborhood-level security guards (Barker, 1999). In addition, the national military systematically brought together non-state forces at the local and national levels to enforce their version of peace and order (*rust en orde*) and control underground forces and their activities (Wilson, 2015, pp. 15–18). At the national level, these actors included the Panca Marga Youth (PPM), led by children of the veterans of the independence war, the Communication Forum for the Children of Military and Police Officers (FKPPI), Baladi Karya, the Youth League for Indonesia Renewal (AMPI) under Golkar, and Pancasila Youth. At the local level, locally stationed military commanders facilitated the formation of the Siliwangi Youth League (AMS) in West Java, the Indonesian Association of Bantenese Martial Arts and Culture (PPSBBI) in Banten, the Diponegoro Youth League in Central Java, the Security Core Command (Kotikam) in Yogyakarta Special Province, and the Industrial Youth Solidarity (IPK) in North Sumatra (Ryter, 1998; Okamoto and Rozaki, 2006; Beittinger-Lee, 2009). The rise and fall of these non-state forces reflected the power struggles within the regime and the military. In this context, Pancasila Youth came under the protection of President Suharto and grew rapidly as a national organization in the 1980s, as explained in detail later.

In order for the Suharto authoritarian regime to hold elections every 5 years in a way that ensures victory for the ruling government party, Golkar, the state relied on non-state forces to undermine opposition parties, activists, and other opposition forces through violence and the threat of violence. In return for this support, these groups gained parliamentary posts. As Indonesia's economic growth accelerated, the cadres of these groups secured government projects and were tacitly allowed to expand legal and illegal businesses, such as construction, gambling, prostitution, and smuggling. These businesses provided jobs for the groups' ordinary members, such as collecting parking fees in markets and other places; providing security in bars, nightclubs, and brothels; collecting rent and debt from stores and street vendors; enforcing evictions of residents, and forcefully providing security and construction materials for development sites. These kinds of businesses continue to this day and are not only a source of funding for the organizations but are also an important source of income for ordinary members.⁵

Democratization and restructuring of non-state forces

When the Asian currency crisis struck in 1997 and the Suharto regime began to collapse, Suharto's political order buckled and insecurity became pervasive,

especially in urban areas. The final collapse of the regime and the appointment of Suharto's right-hand man Habibie as president in May 1998 further worsened the security situation. To defend President Habibie, the national army mobilized not only nationalist non-state forces such as Pancasila Youth, PPM, FKPP, and AMPI, with whom it had coexisted for a long time, but also the Islamic non-state forces, with whom it had only developed relations since the latter half of the Suharto regime. The Habibie government surprisingly proposed a series of drastic democratization and decentralization plans, including the free and fair election of 1999. Despite this, the government was confronted with student groups staging demonstrations critical of the Habibie administration as a continuation of the Suharto regime. In Jakarta, the anti-Suharto elite chose not to dislodge Habibie from the presidency by orchestrating anti-Habibie demonstrations but instead joined the electoral politics scheduled in 1999. On the other hand, at the local level, there was a backlash against the coercive military and police during the Suharto regime, and non-state and anti-state forces based on religion and ethnicity emerged for vigilante purposes (Okamoto and Rozaki, 2006; Wilson, 2015). Similar to what happened during the war of independence, violent actors wanting to make quick money also emerged (Okamoto, 2015). These new actors acquired the same business interests as those of the old non-state violence actors, such as collecting rents and playing the role of a bouncer. Conflicts among multiple actors who wish to expand their sphere of influence frequently occurred.

Democratization and decentralization also brought about a significant change in the participation of a variety of non-state forces in formal politics. Although the route of political participation through Golkar existed even during the Suharto era, since democratization, non-state forces have gained access to the political process through multiple political parties. Since direct local head elections commenced in 2005, not only these actors have joined campaign teams but cadres and members also began to directly run as candidates. When elected, they are able to use local government budgets as well as various permits and concessions to expand their patronage.

By the time Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the first directly elected president of Indonesia, took office in the mid-2000s, religious and ethnic conflicts had subsided. In contrast to Thailand during the 1980s–1990s and the Philippines by the early 2000s, where political killing was rampant in the democratization process (Anderson, 1990; Sidel, 1999), Indonesian democracy experienced fewer political killings and intraregional conflicts have not led to as much violence as many Indonesians expected. The reason for this is that, as democracy began to take hold in the 2000s and as the police began to exert their authority over internal security, the influence of non-state forces that did not have networks with the official violent apparatus weakened, clear turfs among these actors became more or less established, and large-scale conflicts subsided (*Tirto* March 5, 2019).⁶ In addition, in the democratization era, violent actors have gained plenty of non-violent political resources and are now subject to a political backlash in response to any apparent use of violence. This is especially true at the national political level, where such actors are more vulnerable to criticism by civil society forces.

Contemporary dynamics of the relationship between the state and non-state forces

Today, if Indonesia is destabilized in a way that involves non-state forces, it most often involves Islamic radicals. Terrorist attacks by Islamic radicals occur periodically, including the Bali suicide bombings, which killed 202 people in 2002 and 23 people in 2005. This was followed by attacks targeting churches around the country in 2000 (18 dead), suicide bombings in Jakarta in 2003 (12 dead), in 2004 (9 dead), in 2009 (9 dead), and 2016 (8 dead), and in Surabaya in 2018 (28 dead). The most significant political action involving Islamic non-state forces was the anti-governor's demonstration staged in Jakarta on December 12, 2017, by Islamic radicals and conservatives. Attracting 750,000 people, the demonstration was the largest in Indonesia's history and had a significant political impact. Jakarta's governor, Basuki Purnama (a.k.a. Ahok), is a Protestant Chinese who had gained popularity by implementing administrative reforms and improving public services. Islamic conservatives, however, were unhappy to have a non-Muslim at the head of the capital. In addition, when Jokowi, as Jakarta's previous governor, had distanced the city's violence apparatus from non-state forces based on Islam and the Betawi ethnicity, thus reducing economic opportunities for them (Wilson, 2015, p. 150), Ahok began using the military and police in maintaining security in Jakarta. Ahok had also banned certain mass Muslim activities from taking place in the streets and the ritual slaughter of animals on the Muslim feast of sacrifice (Idul Adha) (IPCA, 2018, p. 16). These policies led to grumblings and widespread protests when he ran for governor in 2017. During the race, Islamic conservatives fiercely criticized Ahok's remarks quoting the Qur'an as insulting to Islam and succeeded in mobilizing a large number of people who followed the "conservative turn" (van Bruinessen, 2013) of Islam in Indonesia after democratization and a strict and conservative interpretation of the Qur'an. Ahok was defeated in the gubernatorial race and jailed after being found guilty of blasphemy (IPAC, 2018).

In Indonesia, where multiple social cleavages permeate religions, religious sects, ethnicities, and classes, the cleavage between devout Islam and non-Muslims was the most politicized and had the potential to divide Indonesian society not only in the capital but also nationally, thereby having a tremendous impact on the 2019 presidential election. Therefore, incumbent President Jokowi, who was seeking reelection, began to do two things. First, he tried to appease Islamic conservatives by choosing as his vice-presidential candidate a conservative Islamic leader who was among those who spearheaded the anti-Ahok movement. This led to Jokowi's reelection and prevented instability caused by the radicalization of social divisions. Jokowi also began to strengthen nationalism, with an emphasis on the Pancasila ideology, and to act in authoritarian ways (Power, 2018). As part of this strategy, Jokowi actively approached Pancasila Youth, a nationalist, non-state force. The organization welcomed Jokowi's overtures and was well-positioned to deliver on the state's needs, as we will see below.

Pancasila Youth

Entrenchment during the Suharto authoritarian regime

Pancasila Youth was founded in 1959 by former national army officers. It was strong in northern Sumatra as an anti-communist youth wing of the Indonesian Independence Support League (IPKI), which was established by former army chief of staff disaffected with identity-based party politics. As the army and the Communist Party struggled for power during Sukarno's rule, Pancasila Youth repeatedly fought against Communist Party-affiliated youth units and, after the Party's failed coup attempt in 1965, Pancasila Youth members actively hunted and killed party members under the tutelage of the army, especially in North Sumatra and Aceh, as vividly described in the much-talked-about documentaries *The Act of Killing* and *The Look of Silence*.

Efendi Nasution, who became the president of Pancasila Youth in 1968 under the newly born Suharto regime, recalled that "all the members [of Pancasila Youth] were hoodlums, delinquents, thieves, robbers, and killers." Efendi said that he recruited branch heads when he was the North Sumatra provincial branch head based on the "street cred" of a candidate, such as the number of people he had stabbed, the number of people he had killed, and the number of followers under him (Muryanto, 2013, pp. 63–65).

When the Suharto regime was established, several non-state forces emerged under the patronage of the regime. In the 1980s, Suharto himself entrusted Pancasila Youth to organize the "rough and toughs" nationally. At the time, Suharto began to fear that his right-hand man, Ali Murtopo, had become too powerful and might become a threat.⁷ As head of the intelligence apparatus, Murtopo had a deep network of violent actors and was instrumental in delivering victory to the governing party, Golkar, in the 1971 and 1977 elections. Murtopo wanted to turn Golkar's youth wing, the AMPI (launched in 1980), into a nucleus of non-state forces. Suharto, however, feeling threatened by the formal and informal rise of Murtopo, had other plans. In the mid-1980s, thousands of thugs and hoodlums were killed on the streets in what came to be known as the Petrus or "mysterious" killings (Bourchier, 1990). The Petrus killings eliminated thugs close to Murtopo, such as AMS members in West Java. In his autobiography, Suharto later described the murders as "shock therapy" to restore order, but they were also clearly aimed at weakening Murtopo's power.

Meanwhile, Suharto had turned his attention to Yapto Suryosumarno. Yapto's father was related to Suharto's wife Tien and was close to Suharto himself (Adijondro, 2006, p. 20; Janssen, 2015, p. 270); he was born in 1949 to a Dutch Jewish mother and a military father who later became a major general. As a young man, Yapto was the head of the 234SC, a notorious Jakarta delinquent group whose members were children of military officers. In the 1960s, when the Sukarno regime was turning toward communism, Yapto was already a right-wing activist as a high school student, participating in daily anti-communist demonstrations. According to his mother, Yapto wanted to follow in his father's footsteps

and become a soldier, but he was unable to do so because of his short stature (Janssen, 2016, pp. 189–194), which is thought to be the reason he developed ties with Pancasila Youth, of which he was elected president in 1981. In 1984, he graduated from the Faculty of Law at the Indonesian Christian University and today has his own legal office.

After Petrus, Pancasila Youth led by Yapto quickly rose to be the most influential of the non-state forces. Under Yapto, Pancasila Youth developed its organization and established branches in different provinces. It instilled the Pancasila ideology among its cadres, who supported Golkar with violence and threats during the five-yearly elections in a *quid pro quo* exchange for business opportunities. While the cadres engaged in businesses, such as security and construction companies, and secured both local and national government projects, the unemployed, casual workers, ex-prisoners, and delinquents were attracted to join the organization by the offer of jobs (collecting parking fees from cars and motorcycles parked on the street; collecting rent from stores and street vendors; providing security at factories, stores, and nightclubs; collecting debts; occupying land with ambiguous legal status for the sake of developers; and extorting and evicting residents at the request of developers), from which cadres received portions of the daily wages (Mulyanto, 2013).

As Pancasila Youth's influence expanded, politicians, bureaucrats, and entrepreneurs also became members and the number of ordinary members continued to grow, exceeding one million by the mid-1980s. As for Yapto, in addition to resolving disputes as a lawyer, he profited from the real estate business and succeeded in creating an extensive network in the political and business world, especially among the Suharto family (Janssen, 2016, pp. 272–277).

Political adaptation and further rise of Pancasila Youth after democratization and decentralization

The fall of Suharto and the commencement of democratization and decentralization in 1998 at first weakened Pancasila Youth, but the new regime needed Pancasila Youth, and the organization shrewdly adapted to the new political landscape. Contrary to popular expectations, when Vice President Habibie assumed the presidency, he immediately promoted democratization and decentralization, but, as mentioned above, students criticized him as a continuation of the Suharto regime and staged demonstrations. The national army mobilized Islamic and non-state forces to confront the student demonstrations. In addition to the right-wing PPM and FKPPi, Pancasila Youth was also mobilized, but they managed to avoid a head-on collision with the students and retreated to avoid any deterioration of their image and thus adapt to democratization. Although Pancasila Youth members already had established networks in military, police, political, and business circles, the political and social instability in the immediate aftermath of democratization and decentralization led to a proliferation of non-state forces, and the struggle for supremacy became fierce. An increasing number of members left Pancasila Youth to join groups that were based on religion and ethnicity in

attempts to expand their influence. Although exact data is not available, according to Yorrys Raweyai, a senior member of Pancasila Youth of Chinese and Papuan descent, at one point, membership had been reduced by half.⁸

Faced with drastic changes in the rules of the political game, Pancasila Youth decided at a special general meeting that its members could freely participate in politics in the first general elections after democratization in 1999. In other words, members could support any political party, not just Golkar, and run as candidates for any political party (Nina, 2008, p. 10; Syahrul et al., 2017, p. 100; Ryter, 2009, p. 187). This decision turned out to be politically successful. For example, in the 1997 elections (the last of the Suharto regime), Pancasila Youth in West Java was allocated 24 parliamentary seats by Golkar. In the 1999 elections, however, they succeeded in getting a total of 58 parliamentarians elected, both at the national and local levels, including 12 from the Golkar Party and 18 from the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDIP).⁹

Yapto himself became more ambitious and launched a new political party, the Pancasila Patriot Party in 2001, because it became clear that support for the Golkar Party would result in no jobs, no projects, and no donations after the fall of Suharto (Janssen, 2016, p. 294). At the time, Yapto boasted that Pancasila Youth had 6 million members, of which 4.5 million had membership cards, so a new party could be expected to get a large percentage of the votes.¹⁰ However, in the 2004 general elections, the Pancasila Patriot Party received only about 1 million votes (1 percent of the total). In 2008, Yapto launched the Yapto Center with great fanfare. At the inauguration that the author was invited to attend, he expressed his desire to run for president if he was requested to do so. When Pancasila Youth campaigned as the Patriot Party in the 2009 general elections, however, it received only about 550,000 votes, making his ambitions impossible to realize.

Participation in politics through formal channels, such as establishing a political party or planning to have Yapto run for the presidency, made Pancasila Youth politically visible, but it was difficult to achieve formal political success as Pancasila Youth itself. First of all, the group did not oblige its members to support its own party, the Pancasila Patriot Party and later the Patriot Party. Many cadres were already members of other parties, mainly Golkar. For example, the aforementioned Yorrys opposed the launch of the new party, remaining a Golkar Party member,¹¹ while Ruhut Sitompul, another experienced cadre, moved from Golkar to the Democrat Party of Yudhoyono.

Being a non-state force, Pancasila Youth also did not have widespread support among the voters. Some voters had personally experienced violence and threats, while others often read articles about casualties in turf wars between Pancasila Youth and other similar organizations. In addition, many voters have heard rumors about Pancasila Youth's underground activities such as gambling and prostitution. As a consequence, it has not been able to get rid of its image as an organization of thugs even until now.

However, as the case of West Java illustrates, Pancasila Youth has been quite successful in participating in politics individually by running for office as

candidates of various political parties and indirectly by supporting candidates. This is due in no small part to the access of senior members of Pancasila Youth to political, bureaucratic, and business circles; their familiarity with political maneuvering from experience in organizing its recalcitrant members; and the organization's experience in crushing demonstrations and mobilizing ordinary members when it comes to elections (Ryter, 2009). Mobilization here means not only providing member support to election campaigns but also intimidating rival candidates' campaigners to disrupt campaigns and intimidate voters to influence the election outcome, particularly in places that are not easily accessible to election monitoring committees (Mulyanto, 2013). Therefore, it appears that some candidates provide campaign funds to Pancasila Youth not because they expect the organization to actively support their campaign but rather in an effort to reduce the possibility that such violence and extortion is perpetrated against themselves and their supporters.

In the 2004 general elections, 12 Pancasila Youth members became national MPs, about 115 became provincial MPs, and more than 400 became a district and municipal MPs from Golkar and other parties (Ryter, 2009, p. 188). In the 2009 general elections, 535 members were elected as MPs at the national and local levels. According to Pancasila Youth cadre Yorrys Raweyai, more than 30 former cadres were serving in the national parliament alone after the 2009 general elections.¹² According to a biography of Yapto, from 1999 to 2014, Pancasila Youth produced four ministers, three full and deputy provincial governors, and seven district heads and mayors and vice district heads and mayors (Didik, 2011, pp. 73–77). This is only part of the story, however. For example, in Pancasila Youth's stronghold of North Sumatra Province, organizational members were elected as seven local heads and five vice local heads out of the 35 districts and cities in 2008.

In the 2019 general election, at least 25 of the 575 elected parliamentarians and 12 of the 106 provincial assembly members in the capital city of Jakarta were from Pancasila Youth. Although many of them belong to the Golkar Party, members of other parties also stand out, too, suggesting that Pancasila Youth has maintained networks across party lines. Importantly, Pancasila Youth also has members in the bureaucracy and business sectors, some as executives of state-owned enterprises related to SME financing, steel manufacturing, and livestock. They also maintain links with the national army and police. These positions and networks enable the organization to secure government projects and provide jobs for its members. For example, in 2015, Pancasila Youth signed a memorandum of understanding with the state-owned enterprise, the Indonesian Logistics Bureau (BULOG) to distribute daily necessities to the poor through cooperatives created by Pancasila Youth (*Antara Jatim* December 19, 2015; BULOG, 2016). It also signed an agreement with the Ministry of Defense to support the national defense program initiated by the ministry. These diverse networks are the sources of money for the cadres and of jobs for ordinary members and attract not only ordinary people but also businessmen, politicians, and bureaucrats to join Pancasila Youth.¹³

Local branches of Pancasila Youth cultivate local-level political, business, and bureaucratic networks, and some local cadres are able to put major local media under their influence, as in the case of North Sumatra Province, making it impossible for local leaders to ignore Pancasila Youth. Even in areas where Pancasila Youth does not have such a strong influence, it is not uncommon for local leaders to allocate local government budgets to Pancasila Youth in the name of “supporting social organizations” or to grant the organization licensing rights because Pancasila Youth can be indispensable in providing countermeasures against protests and it would be troublesome for local leaders to cut off relations with them and its militancy was quite useful for the candidates for local heads during election campaigns (Mulyanto, 2013; Iqbal, 2017; Fariz, 2017). In the case of Jakarta Province, the provincial government even provides land rent-free to Pancasila Youth for its branch office.

Pancasila Youth and presidential elections

Table 3.1 lists the presidential candidates endorsed by Pancasila Youth and the candidates who won in the 2004–2019 elections. Although some of the endorsed candidates were defeated, the defeat has not directly led to the outlawing or weakening of Pancasila Youth. The organization has maintained its deep networks with every administration since democratization. One example of this is Vice President Yusuf Kalla. Without endorsing him in either the 2004 or 2014 elections, Pancasila Youth invited him in 2008 to its national convention and made him an honorary member and a cadre of Pancasila Youth, Ruhut Sitompul, joined the president’s party, Democrat party, demonstrating the organization’s ability to flexibly adapt in order to maintain power and influence.

In the 2019 presidential election, Pancasila Youth supported Jokowi and Ma’aruf Amin, who had the upper hand as the incumbent ticket. Although Yapto himself had been closely associated with another presidential candidate, Prabowo, since the days of the Suharto regime, it can be said that he was more concerned with riding a winning horse and wanted to curb the growing power of Islamic conservatives who supported Prabowo. From Jokowi’s point of view, as symbolized by the aforementioned unsuccessful election and imprisonment of Ahok, the Jakarta governor who Jokowi trusted, if the Islamic conservatives and radicals gain momentum, it would be difficult for him to manage the

Table 3.1 Elected candidates and candidates endorsed by Pancasila Youth in the presidential elections (2004–2019)

	<i>Endorsed candidates</i>	<i>Elected candidates</i>
2004	Wiranto-Solahuddin Wahid	Yudhoyono-Yusuf Kalla
2009	Yudhoyono-Budiono.	Yudhoyono-Budiono
2014	Prabowo Subianto-Hatta Rajasa	Joko Widodo-Yusuf Kalla
2019	Joko Widodo-Maaruf Amin	Joko Widodo-Maaruf Amin

government even if he were reelected. Jokowi, therefore, needed a less Islamic and more nationalist militant vanguard organization such as Pancasila Youth to secure his reelection and future government. One month before the election, Jokowi attended a meeting where Pancasila Youth pledged to support Jokowi. At the meeting, Jokowi paid tribute to Yapto's achievements as president of Pancasila Youth for 39 years. Tellingly, as he praised the organization, he noted, "whoever dares to change Pancasila will be confronted by Pancasila Youth."¹⁴

In forming his cabinet, Jokowi narrowed down the list of candidates from 300 to 34 and gave Pancasila Youth the post of Minister of Sports. Significantly, Pancasila Youth leaders also gained the posts of chairman of the People's Consultative Assembly, which has the constitutional authority to dismiss the president and vice president, and chairman and vice chairman of the Regional Representative Assembly, whose role it is to convey local demands to the central government. Even before the second Jokowi cabinet, Pancasila Youth cadres obtained the positions of a minister and top positions of parliament and assembly; they have never had these important executive and legislative positions in the same administration. In that sense, for Pancasila Youth, the second term of the Jokowi administration is its most successful in history in terms of political participation.

In October 2019, after the conclusion of the presidential election, not only did President Jokowi attend the opening ceremony of Pancasila Youth's national convention and Vice President Ma'aruf Amin attend the closing ceremony but both men also became special members of the organization. During the opening ceremony, Jokowi thanked Pancasila Youth leaders across the country for the successful implementation of the elections and expressed his hope that Pancasila Youth would continue to protect the state ideology of Pancasila. Meanwhile, at the same convention, Bambang Soesastyo, vice president of Pancasila Youth and chairman of the People's Consultative Assembly said as follows, and his message suggests that Pancasila Youth is reformulating to wipe out the negative and violent image of the organization and to show itself as a more legal and formal one:

Pancasila Youth is no longer an ordinary *preman*¹⁵ organization. We no longer use brute force, mountain swords, wear tattoos, or have thick mustaches. We use more brains, thoughts, knowledge, and intelligence to control our territory.

...

If anyone violates the sovereignty of the people, the Republic of Indonesia, and the Pancasila, we will go back to the *preman* and be rough with whoever it is. ... The same goes for anyone who interferes with President Jokowi, who is the head of state and the head of government. Pancasila Youth will not tolerate any attempt to overthrow the regime because the people will suffer.¹⁶

Distancing of Pancasila Youth from non-state preman forces

The statement that Pancasila Youth is no longer an ordinary *preman* organization and statements to the effect that Pancasila Youth is now a more “refined” youth organization have often been made by leaders such as Yapto and Yorrys since the New Order. Indeed, since democratization, Pancasila Youth has been able to participate in politics through various political parties and has succeeded in building a wide network among political, business, and government circles not only at the local level but also at the national level. Importantly, it has even succeeded in securing key posts in both the executive and legislative bodies of government. At the same time, Pancasila Youth has transformed itself from a group of roughnecks with no clear organizational structure to a highly organized nationwide organization whose leadership is courted by the country’s president. At the central level, the organization includes a president (1), vice presidents (4), a secretary-general (1), 19 divisions, a finance director (1), vice finance directors (4), and 9 committees, including those in charge of legal aid, business, and culture, the consultative committee, and the honorary member committee. Two derivative organizations focus on students and women. During the 2020 local elections (for 9 provincial governors, 224 district heads, and 37 mayors), it set up local head election desks similar to those of the Ministry of Interior, aiming to support the cadres of Pancasila Youth to join and win the direct local head elections. Of the six gubernatorial elections that year, three Pancasila Youth cadres were elected as new governors.

To further consolidate its structure and tighten membership loyalty, in 2005, the central executive committee decided to ban membership in social organizations other than the FKPPi and PPM, with which it has had close ties since its inception. In the mid-2010s, the headquarters began a full-fledged data-gathering operation on its membership, linking a member’s Pancasila Youth membership card number to that person’s resident registration card number, effectively obtaining relevant personal information on members such as age, address, and occupation. Membership drives have also been activated in each region to increase overall membership and territorial reach, which is linked to the goal of demonstrating the political power of Pancasila Youth in numbers. The organization is extending its membership to diverse groups. In Jakarta, the provincial branch has made serious efforts to register the members and the registered members reached 21,991 in October 2020 (Badan Rekapitulasi KTP MPW PP DKI Jakarta, 2020). Membership in the organization is also diversifying; of Jakarta’s 22,000 members, 20 percent are professionals, 30 percent are intellectuals, and 50 percent comprise the masses.¹⁷ Despite these consolidation efforts, it is doubtful that Pancasila Youth will weaken its informal nature entirely or transform itself into too formal a social organization. The fundamental strength of Pancasila Youth remains its ability to incorporate informal actors, such as the unemployed, informal workers, delinquents, and those who have been imprisoned, to provide security in bars, night clubs, brothels; collect parking fees in markets and other places; collect rent and debt from stores and street vendors; sometimes mobilize

them as a mass; and, in some cases, deploy them in acts of violence and extortion. It is within this locally based power that some of the cadres have risen to become powerful figures locally and then nationally.

At the local level, many other non-state forces are active, and they may even control local politics (Okamoto and Hamid, 2008; Mulyanto, 2013; Hadiz, 2010; Abdur, 2016). For these groups, their strength lies in being based on a specific religion and/or ethnicity and being active in a specific locality, so it is difficult for them to expand nationwide in the highly diverse country of Indonesia. One non-state force that has gained exceptionally broad nationwide support is the Islamic Defenders' Front (FPI). It had a cordial relationship with the police, as exposed by a WikiLeaks document of comments made by former national Chief of Police Sutanto (2005–2008), who divulged that the FPI was perennially useful as an “attack dog” when needed. A State Intelligence Service (BIN) official characterized FPI as a useful tool that could spare the security forces from criticism for human rights violations, and funding FPI was a “tradition” of the police and BIN.¹⁸ However, the current Jokowi administration, which is concerned about the rise of radical Islamism, considers the FPI an impermissible enemy and the government declared the disbandment of the organization at the end of 2020. So the case of FPI shows that the movement along the axes in Figure 3.1 from permissible and illegal (in some of their activities) to impermissible and illegal (of the organization itself) is rather fluid, depending on the network with the government and the state coercive apparatus.

In contrast, the strength of Pancasila Youth is its ideology of nationalism and its adherence to the national principles of Pancasila and the 45-year-old constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, which is extremely convenient for the state actors.¹⁹ Moreover, from the perspective of state actors such as the presidential office, the military, and the police, Pancasila Youth has influence in the informal sector, which is useful in keeping troublesome actors such as those who engage in violence and extortion under control for the time being, thus minimizing political instability. The mutual accommodation between Pancasila Youth and the state extends also to the connection between the data server of Pancasila Youth and the population data of the Ministry of Home Affairs, which allows both sides to obtain detailed information on the Pancasila Youth's membership. This “accommodation” has taken place even in the field of public health. The Jakarta branch of Pancasila Youth now collaborates with the National Health Insurance Program (BPJS) so that BPJS can send text messages to Pancasila Youth members when their monthly fees are coming due.

Conclusion

After describing the range of relationships between states and non-state forces, this chapter provides a history of their coexistence in Indonesia before introducing Pancasila Youth as a case study. In Indonesia, numerous non-state forces, including Pancasila Youth, have utilized violence and the threat of violence as an important political resource. Although the very purpose of their being is to exist

in the gray zone between legality and illegality, and they do perpetrate violence, the state has historically tolerated these actors. During the Suharto authoritarian regime, they played a role in maintaining the regimes' desired order by promoting nationalism. The biggest with the most extensive networks among these was Pancasila Youth. With the onset of democratization, a rise in non-state forces based on religion and ethnicity was noticeable in many places, weakening the influence of nationalistic actors. However, as democracy took root and domestic security maintenance by the police and other organs of the state's violence apparatus began to function, it became difficult for non-state forces to survive without a relationship with the official violence apparatus. In this context, Pancasila Youth, which had been building networks with various state actors since the time of the authoritarian regime, established a broad network not only in party politics but also in the bureaucracy and business circles at the central as well as at the local level. At the same time, it actively continued to recruit the jobless poor and the "rough and toughs," the so-called *preman*, as members. With its deep well of political resources, foremost of which is the ability to mobilize a violent mass, it has succeeded in gaining elected legislative and local head positions through multiple political parties.

Moreover, as socially conservative Islam has gained influence after democratization, the Jokowi administration, which took office in 2014, has begun to emphasize the national principle of Pancasila and has even become authoritarian. Pancasila Youth, with its robust image as the militant guardian of nationalism, has succeeded in using its ideological resonance with the current government as a weapon to achieve the most remarkable political participation in the history of the organization. From the perspective of the relationship between the state and non-state forces, this demonstrates that the state intends to maintain security in a way that incorporates illegitimate actors in a very active manner.

And this incorporation has been the case in Indonesia since the Dutch colonial period. It is no wonder, then, that the state conception of governance includes reliance on non-state forces in addition to official violent apparatuses such as the police and military to guarantee the minimum level of security for its citizens. Given this reality, the strategy of Pancasila Youth to maintain its informal and violent nature while emphasizing militant nationalism and realizing political influence through different parties may be considered a viable strategy for any civil actor wishing to expand its power socially, economically, and politically, and this mutual accommodation between the state and the non-state forces is, one way or another, contributing to achieve a certain democratic consolidation in a distorted way.

Notes

- 1 For the Dutch colonial period, see, for example, OngHok Ham (1984); Rush (1990); Schulte Nordholt (1991); for the War of Independence period, see, for example, Anderson (1971); Cribb (1991); Stoler (1988); Williams (1990); for the Suharto regime period, see, for example, Barker (1999; 2001); Ryter (1998);

- Wilson (2002); Okamoto (2015: 73-99); for the post-Suharto regime to democratization period, see, for example, Andri Rosadi (2008); Beittinger-Lee (2009); Brown and Wilson (2007); Okamoto and Abdur Rozaki (2006); Facal (2020); Hadiz (2003); Hadiz (2010); Jacobsen (2002); Kirstiansen (2003); MacDougall (2007); Ryter (2014); Sidel (2006); Suryawan (2005); Suryawan (2006); Syarif Hidayat (2007); Syarif Hidayat (2009); Okamoto and Hamid (2008); Togi (2000); Wilson (2006); Wilson (2015).
- 2 Other chapters in this volume use the word “irregular forces,” but this chapter uses the word “non-state forces” to explain the non-state actors that use violence and threat of violence as social, political, and economic resources in the Indonesian context. Most of these actors in Indonesia are not irregular in the sense that they are officially sanctioned by the state.
 - 3 “Names of 49 Illegal Gangs Revealed”, *The Sun* daily, August 29, 2013. Available at <https://www.thesundaily.my/news/815692>. According to Lemièrè (2019), the numbers alleging a very small number of Malays (1,923 out of 40,313 people) was manipulated to strengthen the pro-Malay discourse propagated by the Malay ruling party of UMNO. She described the existence of pro-Malay gangsterized groups called Pekida (Lemièrè, 2014 and 2019).
 - 4 From an interview with Nur Jazlan, deputy minister of Interior, conducted on October 26, 2016.
 - 5 “Pemuda Pancasila: Kami Itu Free Man, Bukan Preman”, *Kumparan.com* [online], December 6, 2019. Available at <https://kumparan.com/kumparan-news/pemuda-pancasila-kami-itu-free-man-bukan-preman-1sONfmbfNnW>
 - 6 “Sejarah Lobi Elite Pemuda Pancasila dari Era Sukarno ke Jokowi”, *Tirto.id* [online], March 5, 2019. Available at <https://tirto.id/sejarah-lobi-elite-pemuda-pancasila-dari-era-sukarno-ke-jokowi-diug>
 - 7 Not much is known about Ali Murtopo, but books about him are beginning to appear in Indonesian (see, for example, CSIS, 2004 and Aref, 2011).
 - 8 Interview with Yorrays Raweyai, Pancasila Youth executive, November 6, 2020.
 - 9 Interview with the head of the West Java branch of Pancasila Youth, December 2, 1999.
 - 10 “Kecewa pada Golkar, Pemuda Pancasila Bikin Partai”, *Tempo.co* [online], August 9, 2003. Available at <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/9203/kecewa-pada-golkar-pemuda-pancasila-bikin-partai>
 - 11 Interview with Yorrays Raweyai, Pancasila Youth executive, 6 Nov 2020.
 - 12 “Alumni Pemuda Pancasila Jadi Menteri dan Politikus”, *Tempo.co* [online], 17 March 2013. Available at <https://metro.tempo.co/read/467526/alumni-pemuda-pancasila-jadi-menteri-dan-politikus/full&view=ok>
 - 13 Interview with Arif Rahman, Executive Director, Pancasila Youth, October 16, 2020.
 - 14 “Jokowi: Yang Berani Ganti Pancasila, Berhadapan dengan PP”, *Tirto.id* [online], 9 March 2019. Available at <https://tirto.id/jokowi-yang-berani-ganti-pancasila-berhadapan-dengan-pp-dihf>
 - 15 *Preman* means gangsters and thugs in the Indonesian language. The original meaning of *preman* originated from the Dutch word for “free man,” *vrijmen*. The current usage of *preman* still carries this connotation and Pancasila Youth members are proud of their existence as “freemen.”
 - 16 “Pemuda Pancasila Akan Buas Jika Ada yang Ganggu Jokowi”, *Tempo.co* [online], October 27, 2019. Available at <https://nasional.tempo.co/read/1264918/bamsoet-pemuda-pancasila-akan-buas-jika-ada-yang-ganggu-jokowi/full&view=ok>
 - 17 Interview with Tariq Mahmud, Jakarta provincial branch head, Pancasila Youth, Embay Supriyantoro, Jakarta provincial secretary-general, Pancasila Youth, December 10, 2020.

- 18 “WikiLeaks: National Police funded FPI hard-liners”, *The Jakarta Post*, 5 Sep 2011. Available at <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/09/05/wikileaks-national-police-funded-fpi-hard-liners.html>.
- 19 While the PPM and the FKPPi are ideologically similar organizations, they have not been able to expand to include as diverse a constituency as Pancasila Youth because only the children of military personnel and veterans can be members.

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