

# Indonesian Nationalism and Postcolonial Colonialism: Enduring Legacies for Papua

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## Indonesian Nationalism and Postcolonial Colonialism: Enduring Legacies for Papua

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### Introduction

The aim of this dissertation is to provide a critique of non-European colonial practice in historical terms until the present. This article will explore the historic influences on the growth of Indonesian nationalism, crucially underpinning Indonesia's imperialistic ambitions and policy objectives in Papua furthered by successive leaderships. Further, it will explain the process of Indonesianization in Papua following Dutch rule, and the motivation and rewards of Indonesia's policy of expansionism, violent and systematic suppression of local culture and human rights, and economic exploitation of immense mineral wealth (gold and copper) expected into the future. Indonesia's stance on Papua is significantly affected and complicated by the interests of other international players, investors and external stake-holders in the Freeport-McMoRan multi-national enterprise with a massive operation located in Papua (Grasberg) to the disproportionate benefit of the Indonesian State and ruling apparatus. Indonesia currently offers Papua the prospect of a restricted form of independence described as Special Autonomy which will be assessed in the light of 'real politics' or what is feasible given what is at stake from an Indonesian and international perspective and the state of regional geopolitics generally.

Given this critical and lamentable situation, from the Papuan perspective at least, the current leadership of Indonesian President Joko Widodo (Jokowi) is also worthy of scrutiny and is perhaps indicative of Papua's future prospects. The aim of this research with its critical analysis and historic overview, in particular, has been to explain the present situation in Papua with a view to predicting the possible future direction of the conflict between Indonesia and Papua over the issue of autonomy and associated socio-economic, cultural and political sovereignty. Only through understanding the historical development of Indonesia's national pride, ambition and the political and economic rewards of its policy in Papua can insight be gained into what is feasible to be negotiated or bargained on the issue of a degree of self-government before independence is attained. Human rights of Papuans and the cultural survival for Papua are drastically at stake.

### Colonialism and Postcolonialism: the dynamics and enduring legacy of Dutch rule in Indonesia and Papua

This research first provides a basic conceptual framework appropriate for the analysis of colonialism and postcolonialism to throw light on why and how Indonesia came to colonise the Melanesians in Papua, a remarkable legacy of Dutch rule in Indonesia and Papua. It defines colonialism and imperialism as mutually transposable theories and concepts of key importance. 'Colonialism' refers to the "policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically" (Oxford Dictionaries: Language matters, 2014). Likewise, according to Abercrombie, Hill & Turner (2006), 'Colonialism' and 'Imperialism' are both an 'interchangeable' process whereby the "settlement of foreign territories, the separation of foreign and indigenous peoples by legal means", and, importantly, "the growth of racialism" had become commonplace (p. 193). Colonialism is also characterised by the attainment of knowledge and power; a product of Europe's Enlightenment and the era of scientific modernism which justified and enabled cultural dominance along racial lines. 'Postcolonialism' is generally accepted to be the study of the West's (predominantly Europe's) colonial legacy over

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the regions of the Middle East, Asia and Africa. According to postcolonialism's preeminent theorist, Edward Said, these colonised regions effectively created an 'Orient' ('place of colonies') and the West's recurring representation of the 'Orient' profoundly undermined local notions of identity, culture, knowledge and power (Amiri, 2015). This definition is especially pertinent when one observes cases of current fragmentation and conflict in neo-colonial spheres, particularly in the continent of Africa, where the absence of cultural identities – or national discourses – continues to compound economic, social and political pressures, often resulting in failing states and ongoing regional instability (Nwaubani, 2015). These definitions clearly focus on the importance of the impact of European colonialism on modern world history and it is revealing to explore the dynamics of the Dutch colonial experience and its postcolonial legacy in analytical terms to throw light on Indonesia's colonisation of Papua.

## The end of colonialism? : Varying colonial experiences and the decline of Dutch influence

The commencement of the Second World War, and the ensuing Japanese military offensive of 1942, changed the dynamics in Asia forever. This wartime experience for Asia resulted in the dismantling of the longstanding myth of 'white man' dominance over the Orient, and importantly, it gave precedence and rise to the prospect of Asia for the Asians. For the Dutch, their colonial aspirations had been dealt a fatalistic blow as early as 1940 following Nazi Germany's invasion of the Netherlands. However, the removal of Dutch colonialists at the hands of the Japanese from the East Indies (in Indonesia) was arguably more telling and symbolised the end of Dutch influence in the region (Van Der Heijden, 2005). After the Allies won the war, the Dutch along with the other European powers, vied to reassert themselves in the region and renew their colonial and imperial ambitions but they did so entering a hostile and fundamentally transformed world. The era of decolonisation had begun. This influential period in world history resulted momentarily in the gradual yet complete expulsion of all European domination over Asia.

## Indonesian Nationalism: Sukarno, 'national identity' and Cold War rivalries

I now examine the crucible of Indonesia's nationalism, the process of independence and the successive influence of strong leadership on Indonesia's colonial ambitions. This article asserts that nationalism continues to be a key attribute of the Indonesian political awareness and the differentiating of humanity into distinctive cultural communities, something utterly and irreconcilably at odds with any hope of Papuan secession (Hutchinson, 1994, p. 1). According to Aspinall & Berger (2001), the birth of Indonesian nationalism can be situated in a "national personality" taking "political forms and procedures [that] has been distilled from the traditional cultural practices", centred on the islands of Sumatra, and particularly, Java (p.1004). Moreover, Indonesian nationalism and identity takes on the focus and force of the cult-of-personality of the past, incumbent or apparent leader (President), with the ruling elite (the Generals) being less obvious but perhaps equally influential in terms of the exercise of political power. This was first apparent with Sukarno's magnetism, charisma, then with Suharto's strength of militarism and expansionism, beyond the subsequent throng of *Reformasi* (reform) Presidents – all belonging to varying degrees – the same Sukarno/Suharto establishment – to the current presidency of Joko Widodo (Jokowi). The power and presence of the leader is especially prevalent in Indonesia's nationalistic perception. Such was the power and magnetism of Sukarno and Suharto that there is still an inextricable association between their personalities and terms of leadership with Indonesia's advent and future as a nation.

What also cannot be underestimated is the continued power of nationalism in influencing and justifying Indonesia's own extremities and outlook of what is perceived as 'its' territory (Clark, 2011, p. 288). The archipelago concept (*Wawasan Nusantara*), enshrined in Indonesian law in 1960, provided Sukarno with the legal justification to extend Indonesia's territorial seas "in an exaggerated fashion and to the great detriment of other members of the international community", whereby "... sovereignty over all waters around, between, and connecting the different islands of the [Indonesian] archipelago" could be reasserted (Brock, 1980, p. 330). Moreover, territorial sovereignty was also central when Indonesia advocated the doctrine of *uti possidetis juris* that stood for "...fixing the territorial heritage of new States at the moment of independence and converting existing lines [postcolonial] into internationally recognized borders", thus adding justification and legitimacy for its own colonial ambitions in Papua (Shaw, 1996, p. 76).

Even before these legal provisions entered the national vernacular, on the 1 June 1945 Sukarno outlined the

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philosophy of *Pancasila* which set out five guiding, inseparable foundation principles that would ultimately shape the modern Indonesian state and notions of territorial sovereignty. These secular principles espoused, in short: the importance of God; humanity; unity; democracy and social justice. The delivery of *Pancasila*, coupled with *Nusantara* and *uti possidetis juris*, stressed to South East Asia that "... the territory of the future Indonesia had not yet been defined" (Lagerberg, 1979, p. 16). British-held Malaya and Borneo were also contended spaces for likely Indonesian expansionism looking ahead into the future, resulting in confrontation with neighbouring nations (Lagerberg, 1979, p. 16). It was in the context of the revolutionary period during Indonesia's war of independence when this speech was delivered, therefore, it is that Sukarno was searching for provocative themes, slogans and nationalistic fervour to seize initiative and inspire the imagination of the Indonesian people. Moreover, despite violent upheaval and retribution perpetrated by and against Dutch rule, it was by no means certain that Sukarno, in 1945, would gain full independence, autonomy or sovereignty when *Pancasila* was outlined.

Sukarno, like most leaders in times of revolution, made grandiose claims with minimal rationalization since the stakes were already highly consequent upon revolutionary success or failure. It is likely that Sukarno at this stage was a provocative and risky gambler as he remained throughout his Presidency. Sukarno's revolutionary campaign was ultimately successful. Independence was achieved for Indonesia with the removal of the Dutch – coming in large part due to diplomatic pressure from the United States, who was motivated by broader Communism geopolitics at play. Thus Sukarno had the ascendancy and was able to capitalise on his claims in an attempt to unite all the states from 'Sabang to Merauke' (as per the nationalist's revolutionary song). The legacy of Sukarno, encapsulated in *Nusantara*, *uti possidetis juris* and *Pancasila* continues today to reverberate, upheld by its political elite and oligarchy to suit its own ends. Consequently, ideally and practically that legacy persists to deny any opportunity or hope for a secessionist movement in Papua (Lagerberg, 1979. P. 16-18).

For the retreating Dutch, control over Papua was orientated around a few administrative centres with little influence beyond the townships into the interior. The Dutch occupation was largely passive with minimal protestation from the Papuan people, however, there were Papuan calls for the Dutch to commit to a mandate for their independence. Insofar, that the Dutch did offer assistance in trying to build, train and equip industry and the local people the best they could for independence and statecraft by the 1970 time-frame. The subsequent framework for independence, set out by the Dutch for the Papuan people, was completely at odds with Indonesian ambitions surrounding its desired expansion of its sovereign borders. Indonesia asserted that any continued Dutch presence in Papuan (regardless of whether a date for withdrawal and Papuan independence had been set) was tantamount to the continuation of colonialism. Sukarno's *Trikora* Speech made clear in unequivocal terms his agenda for the 'integration' of Papua (known to Indonesians as West Irian) into Indonesia – forced or otherwise. He states:

*[W]hat is it that is called Indonesia? What is called Indonesia is the entire archipelago between Sabang and Merauke. What is called Indonesia is what was formerly referred to as the Dutch East Indies. What is meant by Indonesia is what the Dutch called Nederlands Indië, that entire archipelago between Sabang and Merauke which is composed of thousands of islands. That is what is called Indonesia ... And now, at this moment, because the Dutch are still intent upon continuing their colonialism in our native land, West Irian, by partitioning the people and native land of Indonesia, we order the people of Indonesia, including those in the region of West Irian, to execute the following tri-command:*

- 1. Defeat the formation of the puppet state of Papua of Dutch colonial make.*
- 2. Unfurl the Honoured Red and White Flag in West Irian, Indonesian native land.*
- 3. Be ready for general mobilisation to defend the independence and unity of Country and Nation*

(Sukarno, 1961).

The invasion of Papua in 1961-1962 by Indonesia is a striking example of power politics where there was a marked imbalance between the victim state, Papua, which had neither the strength nor ability to marshal defence resources to protect itself against a far stronger neighbour, Indonesia (He, 2008, p. 51). The Papuan framework for action was

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determined by its naivety and dependence on waning Dutch power and influence in the region. Moreover, the international ambiguity concerning who actually had the right of legitimacy over Papua (created by Indonesia) added impetus and urgency to Indonesia's strident claims over the Papuan province (Burchill & Linklater, 2005, p. 13-17). This first took the form of military conquest in 1962 as a means of warding off any Papuan transfer of independence before legitimacy could be obtained. The centrality of leadership in creating Indonesian foreign policy's stance on Papua in this period is also marked by its self-help measures, the achievement of economic and territorial gains and effective Cold War manoeuvring by Sukarno in purchasing arms from the Soviet Union to the consternation of the US (Easter, 2015, p. 203-205). Unfortunately for Papua the absence of powerful allies and forceful avenues for diplomatic persuasion, compounded by Indonesia's own weight of military power and pressure on regional and Cold War politics, meant that annexation was a *fait accompli* of realist power politics in a regional and global context.

The mid-1960s was a period of *Konfrontasi* (confrontation) and the first salvos of Indonesia's brinkmanship in the region resulted in its invasion of Papua (Smith, 2000, p. 11). The Dutch came under pressure in Papua on two fronts: *Operation Mandala* (1961-1962), on the ground led by General Suharto's invasion force armed with Soviet weaponry; and importantly, from the US-led United Nations, with concerned regional nations and elite external stakeholders with economic and/or investment motives in Papua in mind (Osbourne, 1985, p. 26). From the outset the Papuans recognised the ruinous implications of Indonesia's invasion on their aspirations for independence. The ensuing conflict came to an end through diplomatic channels with a peace settlement effected in August 1962 following (brokered largely by the US) negotiations between the Indonesians and Dutch.

It is arguable that *Operation Mandala* was a deliberate act in a larger Sukarno strategy to increase Cold War tensions in the region, insofar as ensuing peace talks of *Operation Mandala* functioned to benefit Indonesia's stake in Papua. In achieving this the Indonesian political elite realised that the US would not allow an isolated conflict to escalate into something of broader regional and/or global significance, especially with Indonesian-Soviet relations continuing to deepen through the trade of military arms (Easter, 2015, p. 203). By 1962 the Kennedy Administration increased its covert presence in Vietnam where it too was preoccupied with the threat of communism's spread. It is clear that the Kennedy Administration wanted to consolidate its influence in the region by strategically acquiescing with Indonesia over the Papua issue, also with self-interest, trade and investment opportunity motivating foreign policy outcomes. The US stood to gain investment opportunities through increased engagement with Sukarno/Indonesia. Consequently, it had recently become clear exactly how lucrative the Papuan hinterland was with the discovery of massive gold and copper deposits in 1960 by Dutch prospectors (Freeport-McMoRan, n.d.). For Sukarno the invasion of Papua alleviated domestic challenges to his own authority within the Indonesian military, who were becoming increasingly hesitant to his autocratic rule (Aspinall & Berger, 2001, p. 1007). So Sukarno achieved domestic and international political success through the invasion of Papua, facilitated by the US.

Once aggressive power politics had been employed by Indonesia, Papuan independence never became a viable option for the Kennedy Administrations in 1962-1963. Behind the scenes the US was steadfast in appeasing Sukarno's ambitions that they pressured the Dutch into departing from Papua at the behest of Indonesian demands; forcing the Dutch to abandon previous allegiances, promises made to Papuans regarding independence and the possibility of autonomy (Monbiot, 2005). This pressure resulted in the New York Agreement of 1962 therein the United Nations Transitional Authority (UNTEA) would effect a changeover from Dutch to Indonesian governorship. In addition, this agreement was made under the proviso that Indonesia must offer, facilitate and supervise a plebiscite whereby autonomy of the Papuan people could be decided through democratic free choice (Andrews, 2015). Rather than raise the prospect for Papuan independence the New York Agreement actually encouraged Indonesian imperialism characterised by widespread, recurring human rights violations and economic exploitation in Papua (Martinkus, 2002, p. 20). Despite the Indonesian-led UNTEA mission stipulating that Papuan self-determination and free choice were central to its objectives, in real terms, the future of Papua had already been decided in the political backrooms of Washington and Jakarta. UNTEA was a thinly veiled and deliberate apparatus, legitimised by the UN, serving higher Cold War objectives in gifting Papua to Indonesia with US adherence (Andrews, 2015). For the Dutch the forced abandonment of Papua as its last provincial vestige of colonialism in the region was a degrading but not an unexpected denouement. For the Papuans the betrayal would not be as easily forgotten as they had just been "sold against their will as chattels to the Indonesians" by the international community, especially the US, in the face of Sukarno-styled power politics (Penders, 2002, p. 385). Strong Indonesian political leadership and associated

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domestic nationalism proved overwhelming for Papua in the absence of international opposition.

Not unsurprisingly and keeping with other Kennedy directives concerning foreign policy in South East Asia, particularly with the worsening US entanglement in Vietnam in mind, the Kennedy Administration was complicit in the humanitarian implications of appeasing Sukarno over Papua. The US also played a shadowy role in unsettling controlling forces in Indonesian politics, namely: Sukarno, the Indonesian Communist Party, the military and strong Indonesian-Soviet relations (Monbiot, 2005). In 1965-1966 Sukarno fell from political prominence when he was deposed in a military *coup d'état*. In the ensuing blood-letting the military expunged the Indonesian Communist Party, its members and sympathisers from political prominence, aided by the US. Indonesia's second president, General Suharto, was an ardent anti-communist – something that dully won him leverage with the US for the remainder of his presidential incumbency (Vatikiotis, 1998, p. 2-7). As the commanding officer of *Operation Mandala* with pre-existing Papuan experience, Suharto recognised that he had to strengthen Jakarta's military, administrative and bureaucratic hold on the province in preparation for the eventual 1969 plebiscite, thus ensuring the result would be an inevitable conclusion (Scott & Tebay, 2005, p. p. 601).

The accession of Papua by Indonesia signified the continuation of an imperial occupation for the Papuan people, but rather with harsher severity than the ousted Dutch committed. It has been suggested, despite the fact that verification is near impossible due to the nature of Indonesia's suppression of freedom of the press in Papua, that some 30 000 Papuans were killed in the period from *Operation Mandala* (1961-1962) through to the staging in 1969 of the Act of Free Choice (Scott & Tebay, 2005, p. 601). According to the Australian diplomatic cables monitoring the situation at that time: "Papuans had inadequate information about the act [of Free Choice]" and the "rights of free speech and freedom of movement were not fully implemented amid tight political control" (Lloyd-George, 2011, p. 29-30). This climate of fear underpinned by the pervasiveness of Indonesia's military intimidation and manipulation of Papuans, coupled with the shambolic voting method employed of *musyawarah* (reaching a consensus rather than majority), resulted in a sample of 1025 Papuans voting in the Act of Free Choice (Scott & Tebay, 2005, p. 601). We turn now to examine the mechanism of control and sustained exploitation of Papua with particular attention to nationalism and its political and economic relationships in Indonesia.

## Systematic exploitation: Suharto, Freeport McMoRan and Transmigrasi

For Suharto the annexation of Papua, enabled by the Act of Free Choice in 1969, was received in Indonesia with nationalistic pride and vindication. Having achieved legitimacy through the UN-sponsored plebiscite, Indonesia enacted on earlier calls by Sukarno for post-colonial expansion espoused ten years prior in *Trikora*. For Suharto, like his predecessor, the association of firm leadership with notions of sovereignty, expansionism and national prestige all culminated in tangible domestic and international political authority. Despite their differences in personalities, the two Indonesian leaders endeavoured to preserve national uniformity through the centralisation of political, economic and military control in Jakarta over the outer provinces, such as Papua (Barrett, 2011, p. 77-78). The 'integration' of Papua also dutifully served two timely domestic political objectives for Suharto: the stabilising of Indonesia and nullifying would-be challengers to his authority in the fallout from the 1965-1966 coups. On the international stage, Sukarno and Suharto had outmanoeuvred the UN in deploying power politics in annexing Papua without chastisement or rebuke. Sukarno and Suharto realised that they could manipulate Indonesian power in the South East Asia sphere to achieve its own ends, knowing that the US, compromised in Vietnam, would be willing to do little (Wirz, 2013). Therefore, Papua was the making of Suharto in consolidating his powerbase whilst strengthening his credentials as the only contender to fill the seismic Sukarno void. This power dynamic of strident Indonesian domestic and international nationalism with firm leadership remains influential today.

Although political power in Indonesia is reliant on strident nationalism and firm political leadership, underpinned by military backing, the ability to manipulate these elements with the capability to directly inveigle Indonesian business practice remains all important and should not be underestimated. In the Suharto era, *Pembangunam* (economic development) encompassed "political legitimacy based on economic achievements", whereby political legitimacy was ascertained through corrupt self-gain and the distribution of power, privileges to family, local oligarchs and foreign investors (*Soeharto: The End*, 1998). To fund economic development Suharto needed external stakeholders who could invest in Indonesia. For the US-listed Freeport-McMoRan Company, as an exceptional case in point in

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regard to its longevity and association with both Suharto and Indonesia's political elite, this foreign Company holds a contentious position in both Indonesia's political past and future. Tracing its remarkable and questionable rise with its establishment in Papua during the tumultuous period of late 1967 (before the Act of Free Choice 1969), it has maintained and grown its wealth through the acquiring of Indonesia's exclusive *pro forma* Contracts of Work (CoW) (extension in 1991), and has subsequently survived Indonesia's [Asia] economic collapse of 1997 and the political downfall of once-benefactor Suharto in 1998 (Sharp, 2014, p. 231; Rifai-Hasan, 2009, p. 132). For Indonesia as a resource-wealthy nation with an enduring legacy of corruption one might imagine that business practice for any prospective foreign company would be haphazard to say the least. However, Freeport McMoRan through the "adroit use of their economic power and bargaining leverage" have "managed to control calls for regulation [until recently]" through its close alliance with Indonesia's political elite, especially with Suharto (Prakash-Sethi, Lowry, Veral, Shaprio & Emelianova, 2011, p. 1). Despite ethical and moral implications for 'doing business' with a dictator in a heavily disputed territory with concerns around human rights abuses, Freeport's Grasberg copper and gold holdings are estimated to possess reserves amounting to 50.9 billion pounds of copper and 63.7 million pounds of gold, making Grasberg the largest gold mine in the world (1973 – present) (Rifai-Hasan, 2009, p. 129). It is hereby crucial to highlight that Freeport McMoRan was directly supported and funded-in-part by the US Government before autonomy went to plebiscite in 1969. It would arguably have been high-risk business venture for Freeport McMoRan, and the US Government for that matter, to have outlaid such a serious capital commitment, prior to any decision having being made on autonomy in Papua. Therefore, assurances must have been made between Washington and Jakarta, perhaps through Freeport, before going ahead with such an enterprise and on such a scale.

The controversy revolving around Freeport's relationship with the Suharto regime, achieved through US Government mediation, does not cease with the appropriation of its CoW in Indonesia (Papua) from 1967. From the outset, Freeport's operations were and still remain of a semi-covert nature in Papua whereby Indonesia crucially continues to provide the Grasberg mine with security in return for royalties and taxes (Rifai-Hasan, 2009, p. 132). Becoming increasingly aware of its international image as complicit in the exploitation of Papuans, Freeport McMoRan has since tried to distance itself from the legacy of its business exploitation, particularly in regard to environmental degradation and human rights abuses perpetrated by its Indonesian security apparatus, that still persists today (Coca, 2015). The 1991 re-negotiation and extension of its CoW, resulted in the 'spin off' of the Freeport Indonesia subsidiary, away from the parent company based in the US (Rifai-Hasan, 2009, p. 132). It was not until 2001 in the post-Suharto era that Freeport Indonesia finally made concessions by offering Papuans compensation benefit schemes, such as community spending programs and employment initiatives (Prakash-Sethi *et al.*, 2011, p. 5). In real terms, however, the 1991 re-negotiation did not deviate seriously from Freeport's broader business practice of exploitation and complicity in Papua. In fact, the 1991 re-negotiations between Freeport and Jakarta's political elite (Suharto) resulted in closer ties and an updating of terms of business between both parties, and importantly, the continued siphoning of undisclosed Freeport's profits to Suharto-fronted companies and business interests. Suharto's wealth was estimated to be \$6 billion USD in 1998 at the time of his downfall from power (Rifai-Hasan, 2009, p. 137; Jackson, 1998). The re-negotiation also went some way in both expanding Grasberg's operations and improving Freeport's lobbying capacity in Jakarta – something that would eventually bode well following Suharto's fall from power (Coca, 2015). The creation of Freeport Indonesia as a subsidiary and the re-negotiation of its CoW in 1991 also went some way in the Indonesianization of Freeport in Papua. By taking on an Indonesian influence in the management model of its Grasberg operations, Freeport McMoRan could distance itself from the difficulties of being a Western company in Papua by integrating an Indonesian styled management without sacrificing productivity or profits. Thus, this marriage facilitated greater control over the suppression of outward operational information concerning Grasberg, and the tough resolution of indigenous conflict in a manner required for ongoing business in troublesome locations.

Suharto's new direction for Indonesia, his 'New Order', was firmly based upon Indonesian economic development with expansionary objectives. This was epitomised by Freeport McMoRan's exploitation of, and Indonesia's expansionary territorial gains, in Papua (likewise in East Timor) (King, 2004, p. 28). Despite pretences of there actually being a 'New Order', Indonesia's colonial consolidation in Papua has in large part been, and continues to be, influenced by Dutch colonialism. Initially a policy implemented by the Dutch in managing Indonesia's overpopulation and apparent skilled worker shortages in Sumatra during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the *transmigrasi* (transmigration) program was responsible for moving hundreds of thousands of Javanese settlers to Sumatra (Marr, 1990). The

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transplantation of culturally different people from one location to another *en masse*, as seen in other colonial theatres such as with the partitioning of India and Pakistan after the Second World War, has left enduring problems for current international affairs and world peace. Papua is a remarkable example of Indonesia's unique neo-colonial, Indonesianization with transmigration being one of its central strategies. Although transmigration unofficially begun under Sukarno after the signing of the 1962 New York Agreement, it was Suharto who made transmigration and colonial settlement in Papua official Indonesian Government policy in the 1970s-1980s, along with escalating the systematic exploitation of Papua's vast resources and mineral wealth in partnership with Freeport. Given that Papuan resources and subsequent royalties have and continue to be disproportionately diverted away from Papua and then making their way to formal and informal stakeholders, investors and oligarchs in Jakarta (Gietzelt, 1989, p. 204).

## **'Business as usual': Special Autonomy, Jokowi and Papua's future prospects**

The collapse of the 'New Order' with Suharto's autocratic rule ending in 1998 propelled Indonesia on its current national re-prioritisation towards democratic choice for Indonesians along with the fear of balkanisation or breaking-up of the Indonesian state. The legacy of Suharto's dictatorship and his once unassailable position of authority had suppressed secessionist provinces within Indonesia, including Aceh, East Timor and Papua. After Suharto an opening presented itself for the provinces, including Papua, to pursue and petition autonomy without the same fear of retribution due to the debilitated condition of the Indonesian state from 1998-2001. Fearing that balkanisation was a real possibility, the *Reformasi* presidents of B.J. Habibie, Abdurrahman Walid and Megawati Sukarnoputri all attempted to remedy this situation through subtle, 'soft' power tactics and limited concessions of autonomy rule, principally for Papua. Moreover, within Indonesia the weakening of military control corresponded significantly with advocacy of rule of law and human rights standards within Indonesia. This forced the political elite to cater to its contingency in an unprecedented and accountable manner in making the "democratic transcendence from pragmatic ideas and moral discourses to formal legality" (Hadiprayitno, 2010, p. 375). In the case of the drafting of the Special Autonomy law (Bill 21/2001) for Papua, despite its politicised pretences for boosting the distinctiveness and identity of Papuans, accelerating development, and enabling political reconciliation, the implementations of these laws, however, only served to raise more questions about Indonesia's true intentions for Papua looking ahead into the future (Somba, 2013). Indigenous Papuans and international observers, particularly human rights advocates, are generally critical of the bill, especially on the following articles. Article 34 – the unfair distribution of wealth (Freeport Indonesia to Jakarta). Article 41 – human rights violations and the Papuan Government's responsibility in upholding and protecting Papuans (political assassinations and torturing still continuing at the hands of Indonesia's police and military). Article 45 – the dividing of Papua into three new provinces ('divide and conquer'). Article 55 – the continuation of transmigration as a vehicle for imperial occupation and legitimacy (Mote, *n.d.*; King, 2004, p. 81). In these articles enshrined in Special Autonomy, one may argue that Special Autonomy escalated the Indonesianization of Papua in a more sophisticated and effective manner, far more subtle – perhaps insidious – in its approach than seen during the Suharto era.

Within Indonesia, however, despite the fanfare of pro-integration and lauding of improved human rights standards for both Indonesians and Papuans alike in 2001, ultimately it was the same corrupt political elite at work in the Sukarno/Suharto era that drafted and pushed hardest for Special Autonomy's implementation on its own terms. During the Megawati Sukarnoputri presidency of 2001-2004, Indonesia made an economic resurgence that has since carried healthy economic growth (excepting the Global Financial Crisis of 2008) through to the current setting (Adriani, Hofman, Ishihara, Nehru, Pomeroy & Pradhan, 2001, p. 1). Under the direct influence of Megawati, significantly, Indonesia reverted back to harsher methods of controlling political representation in Papua, thus moving away from the more progressive Special Autonomy measures of appeasement of local sensibilities and reallocation of revenues back into Papua which had been outlined by her predecessor, Wahid ('Loose ends: Aceh and Papua', 2003). With profits from Freeport Indonesia's operations still disproportionately filling the State's coffers as the country's largest tax payer, and with strengthening economic growth once again in mind, it is understandable that Megawati saw little need to favour the 'carrot over the stick' when it came to exerting stricter measures on Papuans. After all, she belongs to the same Indonesian political elite, created by her father, which shows little interest in upholding humane human rights standards for the Papuan people. Her presidential decree, set out in Special Autonomy's Article 45 ordering the division of the province into three, was arguably the tipping point whereby Special Autonomy moved from being potentially a reform measure to one no longer seen as a beneficial option for many

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Papuans activists and international observers.

Moreover, under Megawati, human rights abuses escalated once again to levels reminiscent of those in the Suharto era. The assassination of Chief Theys Eluay, the chairman of the Papuan Presidium (Papuan customary council) in 2001 by *Kopassus* forces (Indonesian special forces), illustrated to dramatic effect the lengths Jakarta would go to in suppressing Papuan political representation (Moore, 2003). It is important to remember that local political representation remains an important feature to Special Autonomy, and in the case of Aceh, also affected by the bill, the concession of local political representation has proved somewhat successful in reducing violence (Padden, 2011). During Megawati's presidency there was a distinctive shift in position on Papua's Special Autonomy, ensuring that any dialogue and negotiation would be distinctly one-sided to favour Indonesian economic and security interests over human rights standards and political representation for Papuans. Megawati's presidency is almost predictive of the current Widodo's in terms of the politicising of nationalism and policy priorities, and particularly the protection of Indonesia's economic priorities in Papua at all costs.

To chart the populist rise of Indonesia's current president, Joko Widodo, one must first examine the personal interests, and perhaps political liabilities, that have directly facilitated and enabled his election victory on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2014 (Tepperman, 2014, p. 56). For the man from outside the Indonesian political elite, Jokowi's appointment as president signified a new beginning, an era of Obama-styled 'hope' for Indonesia, rather than the resurrection of 'new order' authoritarianism encompassed by his opponent, Prabowo Subianto (Pamuntjak, 2015). Amid the fanfare of his election victory, Jokowi vowed to battle against cronyism (appointment of friends and associates to positions of authority) and the ever-presence of corruption throughout the higher echelons of Indonesian society. However, Jokowi would not have to look far in addressing the sort of corruption that had firmly situated Indonesia high on the International Corruption Perception Index in 2014 (Transparency International, 2014). The centrality of Megawati's influence on Jokowi's election campaign and subsequent leadership does bring into question whether the current president is answerable to the same political elite. As Gore Vidal (1992) remarked on presidential power in the US context: "[a]ny individual who is able to raise [enough money] to be considered presidential is not going to be much use to the people at large. He will represent ... whatever moneyed entities [who] are paying for him" (p. 65). This assertion is especially pertinent when applied to the economic and moral cost of fundraising and building a coalition in the modern Indonesian political context, especially so when taking into account Jokowi's relatively own modest background compared to his political opponents and presidential predecessors. Conceivably, Jokowi made concessions in order to occupy the position of president, albeit in a largely symbolic (puppet styled) capacity. Therefore, this 'marriage of convenience' between popular Jokowi and the powerful Megawati is weighted to benefit the latter rather than the former in political leverage and real power.

The legacy of Megawati's leadership (2001-2004) with its poor human rights record and propensity for cronyism is unfortunately likely to persist with Jokowi's leadership for the foreseeable future. One example that epitomises this problematic relationship relates to the 2004 murder of Indonesian human rights activist, Munir Thalib. The assassination of Indonesia's leading dissenting voice – suspected to be committed by the Government's intelligence service (BIN) – by arsenic poisoning on a commercial flight, was highly controversial. The suspected perpetrator responsible for planning and sanctioning the murder of Thalib, AM Hendropriyono, remains a close friend of Megawati and has since taken up a position as adviser to Jokowi in his 'transition team' (Wahyuingroem, 2014). This appointment, coupled with other equally controversial appointments (including Budi Gunawan as Indonesia's Chief of Police), suggests that Jokowi's presidency should be judged on face value on matters concerning reform on cronyism and corruption, especially whilst powerful elite figures continue to influence his presidency behind the scenes ('A damnable scourge', 2015; Tepperman, 2014). Hopes for reform in this area are not encouraging, nor in the area of Papua.

For the Papuans who may have thought that Jokowi's presidency would bring reform long overdue for the troubled province, the prognosis remains bleak. Continued human rights violations perpetrated by Indonesian police and military forces against Papuans remains for Jokowi and the nation as an ongoing source of embarrassment on the world stage. This condemnation is especially applicable when considering that in 2006 Indonesia acceded to both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). In so doing, these two legally binding covenants culminated in the expectation that



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peaceful campaigning for self-determination must be protected (Human Rights Watch, 2007, p. 6). Domestic reform for Papua (and Indonesia), particularly during President Yudhoyono's tenure (2004-2014), attempted to address the situation – symbolically at least – by setting in place transparent and accountable judicial avenues, authorities and courts. The creation of the Constitutional Court, Judiciary Commission, Ombudsman Commission and Special Court for Corruption promised much, although ultimately, made accountability ever-more convoluted and harder to distinguish (Human Rights Watch, 2007, p. 18). Currently for Jokowi there is little sign that human rights atrocities and violations in Papua will diminish without increased international condemnation, nor is there much to suggest that Jokowi will or can make real impact in the province. Concurrently, innumerable news sources, almost daily, publish articles claiming Indonesian mass arrests, killings and accounts of torture against Papuans (Davidson, 2015; 'Fresh unrest rocks Indonesia's Papua province', 2014). Conceivably, the issue of Papuan human rights has been transplanted into Jokowi's 'too hard basket' along with other domestic problems including a hostile parliament, corruption and hard-line Islamist groups. As someone running low on political capital *vis-a-vis* meeting his pre-electoral hype, Jokowi is now primarily concerned with the Indonesian economy, particularly with national infrastructure projects and foreign investment in mind (Talk to Al Jazeera – Joko Widodo: 'A strong message to drug smugglers', 2015). It is, therefore, unlikely that Jokowi will meaningfully address human rights violations in Papua whilst economic (foreign) investment in the province, and the obligation to provide security for such business interests, persists. Moreover, the continuation of a low-level insurgency (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka* OPM) in the province has and continues to provoke retributive force by Indonesia's military and police against the Papuan people, especially in retaliation for OPM-led assaults on Freeport's operations and their personnel (Elmslie, 2002, p. xiii). Freeport potentially is the key to the Papuan problem but also possibly the solution.

The ongoing presence of Freeport Indonesia has until now been the foremost inhibitor for any hopes of Papua's secession. Having embedded itself into the historical narrative of Indonesia and Papua; its political establishment and wealthy oligarchy, Freeport's often understated venture in Papua continues to grow as the proceeds of its wealth drive further exploration into Papua's interior (Rusmana & Listiyorini, 2015). However, there are current and future complications for the Freeport-Indonesia dynamic. The politics of Indonesian nationalism has made a renaissance in its current form as being economic based (resource) nationalism. Notions of territorial ownership and concepts of sovereignty over Indonesia's mineral wealth are having a negative impact on foreign investment, whereby the "[Indonesian] government efforts to extract greater value from, and assert more power over, its natural resource sector" and the foreign companies that extract the mineral wealth (Warburton, 2014). This domestic concern over foreign ownership is driving protectionist and mercantilist-styled investment restrictions, foreign ownership laws and regulatory changes that are detrimentally hurting investor confidence in Indonesia (Gai, 2012).

Successive Indonesian Governments have responded to domestic politics by exerting more pressure on mineral companies, such as Freeport. This development has resulted in concurrent re-negotiation of CoWs and an increased emphasis for foreign companies to process ore in Indonesia. The further nationalising and politicising of Freeport Indonesia is ultimately lending to some degree of friction between the Jakarta and Freeport McMoRan, with growing calls for greater transparency and accountability over the company's operations in Papua. There is a possibility, albeit slight, that such a cultural and political shift in business practice, between Jakarta and Freeport McMoRan, could potentially translate into inadvertent benefits for Papuans, such as the acknowledgment of traditional lands, an improvement in human rights standards and employment opportunities and social development (Prakash-Sethi *et al.*, 2011, p. 8-11). Although the outcome of economic (resource) nationalism could still be haphazard for Papuans also, there is a possibility that by making Freeport more answerable to Jakarta, the fall-out of such a fracture may result in better conditions for Papuans, or at least scope to lessening the repression by either and/or both parties. What also is important to take into consideration is the importance that multinational corporations, such as Freeport McMoRan, now place on both public relations and the public perception of business practices. By becoming increasingly aware of 'bad press' surrounding business practices, large corporations, such as Freeport McMoRan, when pressured can and do effect cultural reform, in so doing, alleviating legacies of exploitation. Thus, through Indonesian economic (resource) nationalism and the pressuring of 'big business' in Papua, any fallout in the Indonesian-Freeport dynamic could inadvertently lift the living standards for Papuans through increased scrutiny and global attention on Freeport's questionable business practice and culture of exploitation.

The internationalisation of the Papuan issue has been advanced also with greater exposure in recent years being

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paid to it through new forms of mass media and social media. Together these have fostered a proliferation of online Papuan secession and independence movements and parties. Facilitated by technological advancement and developments in all forms of communication, the popularity and easy accessibility afforded by social media has positioned the Papuan conflict squarely in the mainstream. It is arguably due to the forces of globalisation through such communication possibilities that the Papuan message has presented Indonesia with its greatest and most serious challenge. In the past, by keeping Papua a 'low priority' fixture in international affairs, Indonesia and invested stakeholders have maintained control and legitimacy over Papua with a minimum of outside scrutiny. Moreover, until recently the prevention of any groundswell of sympathy and public support for independence and self-determination in Papua was achieved with Indonesian authorities having ruthlessly repressed foreign journalism and all attempts by Papuans to smuggle news out. Nonetheless the dynamics have now changed. Currently, one merely has to click 'like' or 'follow' on any of the Papuan social media pages (such as Facebook's 'Free West Papua Campaign' and Twitter's '@Free West Papua') to become informed by or engaged with its frequently partisan position consistently opposed to Indonesia's protracted domination in the region ('Arrests at Sorong demo demanding oil palm justice from PT Permata Putera Mandiri', 2015). Regardless whether the stories purported through such online organisations can be substantiated or not, people who would normally not be familiar with the Papua issue are now increasingly becoming sympathetic, insofar that they are sharing accounts of stories or purported atrocities on their social media page's newsfeed, thus burgeoning Papuan autonomous support exponentially ('Social media reacts to O'Neill's Papua comments', 2015). The Indonesian ruling elite is aware of the potential for the increasing exposure of their occupation in and exploitation of Papua but, as it currently stands, are powerless to combat the cascading and snowballing effect of social media on the Papuan issue. We only have to remember the governmental change brought about by social media during the Arab Spring of 2011 to realise the potential influence that social media may have when bringing about political revolution (Ryan, 2015). It is important to note, however, that there are fundamental differences between the democratic uprisings seen in the Middle East, when contrasted with the entrenched isolation and technological backwardness of Papua, as it is unlikely that Papuans would ever be able to stage such an uprising against Indonesian authoritarianism. Notwithstanding this, and with every day that passes, social media is stressing the illegality and unfairness of Indonesia's imperial presence in Papuan to a truly global audience, perhaps with the potential for making Papua a 'high priority' fixture in international affairs looking ahead into the future.

## Conclusion

Melanesian Papua has been colonised by an ex-colonised non-European, Indonesia. This presents a highly unusual case of non-European colonialism/imperialism in the postcolonial area and the experience of Dutch rule in Indonesia and Papua have been contrasted through to the virtual end of European colonialism in Asia. The crucible for the birth of Indonesian nationalism was a struggle for independence which gave rise to a tradition of strong political leadership, first with Sukarno and then Suharto, with domestic and economic benefits flowing from a policy of Indonesianization, cultural, economic and territorial expansionism in Papua and confrontation with the broader South East Asia region during the Cold War era. Remarkably Indonesia's political elite has managed this internationally without serious condemnation. There is an integral relationship between the ruling elite in Indonesia and the multinational Freeport McMoRan, which may be the key to the problem but also the solution for the problem for Papuans, as international investment in Papua in the vast gold and copper mining operations continues to be influenced by its stakeholders in terms of security arrangements and welfare considerations for the Papuans. Undoubtedly economics (whether times are good or less so) is fundamental to the approach of successive Presidents/ruling elites and their domestic constituencies. Accordingly, they are strongly indicative of the relative weight for or against Special Autonomy proposals for Papuans. Currently, a combination of political and economic factors, along with limited international attention and action concerning human rights violations in Papua do not portend well. Without any form of fair autonomy or political representation on the world stage, and under the current leadership of Jokowi, the situation remains bleak in Papua as Indonesia's heavy-handed authoritarian rule stills dominates over mediatory approaches with Papuan religious and community leaders. It would be impossible for Papua to achieve autonomy on its own terms, nor do the proposed Special Autonomy measures currently offered by Indonesia offer tangible amelioration or improvement in their situation. One encouraging development has been the 'spreading of the message' afforded by the tools of social media to overcome the total exclusion of the traditional media in Papua. The dissemination of such imagery leaving Papua, exponentially through social media such as Facebook and Twitter, is increasing internationally and may lead to greater political pressure, scrutiny and greater

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Indonesian accountability. A re-negotiated Special Autonomy may also be the best option for Papuans in the immediate-to-short term; facilitating needed development in areas of health, education, ecological and environmental standards. At the very least it would allow the possibility of increased international scrutiny and awareness in forcing Indonesia to address its injudiciousness and human rights abuses.

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