

Episode 25: 20 years after Suharto, do human rights matter yet in Indonesia?

Title: 20 years after Suharto, do human rights matter yet in Indonesia?

Description: Two decades after the fall of the authoritarian Suharto regime, is Indonesia finally taking its human rights record seriously? Historian Dr Kate McGregor and socio-legal researcher Dr Ken Setiawan gauge how well Indonesia has come to terms with its violent past, and whether commitments to reform and justice made after the strongman's exit are being met with real action. Presented by Peter Clarke. An Asia Institute podcast, produced by Profactual.com.

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Peter Clarke: Hello. I'm Peter Clarke. This is Ear to Asia.

Zak Yakoob: This report calls upon the Indonesian Government urgently and without qualification to apologize to all victims, survivors and their families for the commission by the state of all the crimes against humanity and other crimes committed in Indonesia in relation to the 1965 events.

Kate McGregor: 20 years ago, at the inception of the new era after the fall of Suharto there was a whole lot of hope that there would be change and there would be legal redress, but up until today we have not had any official acknowledgement of past human rights abuses. There's been a watering down of this concept of human rights, of truth and reconciliation. We're not really talking about what actually happened during the violence. Who did what?

Peter Clarke: On this episode of Ear to Asia we look to the human rights landscape in Indonesia two decades after the end of authoritarian rule.

Ear to Asia is the podcast from Asia Institute, the Asia research specialists at the University of Melbourne. In Ear to Asia we talk with Asia researchers about the issues behind the news headlines in a region that's rapidly changing the world.

It's now 20 years since the fall of Indonesia's strongman Suharto in 1998 against the background of the Asian financial crisis and nationwide political demonstrations.

Since those tumultuous events, how far has the world's fourth most populous country come in protecting, or at least not violating, the human rights of its own citizens? Suharto's New Order Regime, which emerged out of the civil atrocities

of the mid-1960s lasted over three decades. During that time, it did little to acknowledge the pain of countless numbers of Indonesians who suffered abuses in the name of the state, let alone bring them some measure of justice.

With the end of the authoritarian Suharto regime in 1998, a period of wide-ranging reform known as Reformasi began, and with promises to bring greater scrutiny to Indonesia's history of systematic human rights violations, to address the legacy of large scale civil crimes, and to establish a justice framework in line with international standards.

Now, with two decades of hindsight, what human rights report cards do successive democratically elected post New Order national government in Indonesia actually deserve? What often conflicting forces have been at work to influence official responses to past violations, to get to the truth and to provide redress for victims? How is Indonesia insuring the human rights and safety of all its citizens right now in this post Reformasi era?

Two acute observers of the human rights landscape, past and present, in Indonesia are with us today on the Ear to Asia. University of Melbourne historian and Associate Professor Kate McGregor, and Asia Institute McKenzie post doctoral fellow, socio-legal studies researcher Dr. Ken Setiawan.

Kate, Ken, welcome to Ear to Asia.

Kate McGregor: Thanks very much Peter.

Ken Setiawan: Thanks Peter.

Peter Clarke: Give us a snapshot. Where are we today in Indonesia with the state of human rights?

Kate McGregor: I think that we're talking about cases of dealing with past human rights abuse, which say very little progress has been achieved in terms of dealing with past human rights abuses, by which we mean things like acknowledgement of past human rights abuses, any form of legal or other redress, so we're mostly focusing on past human rights abuse cases, and some more contemporary perhaps.

Peter Clarke: What about you Ken? Implicit in what Kate just said is that the past is really important in terms of today's human rights.

Ken Setiawan: Absolutely. I think acknowledgement for past human rights violations is key for Indonesia's human rights record. After a period of authoritarian rule there must be some reckoning for violations that happened during that time. So from that perspective, the acknowledgment of past human rights abuses serves as a practical as well as a symbolic break with the past. It's giving a signal that a country is going into a different direction, and I think that from that perspective it's really important to have justice for cases of past violations.

Peter Clarke: Kate, what's your take on what we actually mean by human rights?

Kate McGregor: Peter, again I'm thinking about cases of past human rights abuses, mass crimes. In those cases what kinds of human rights are we talking about? I guess we're talking about the right to life, the right to justice, the right to a fair trial, but also the right to protection from the state and right for non-discrimination and the right to freedom. All of these kinds of rights more specifically come into play when we're talking about cases of past human rights violations.

Peter Clarke: Yes, and straight into my mind comes things like what happened with the mayor of Jakarta, what happened with some of the Chinese communities, et cetera.

With all that hanging in the air, let's transport ourselves back to 1965 and the atrocities that I alluded to in the opening comments. Take us back there Kate. What specifically happened that's still resonating and echoing down the decades that affects or discussion today?

Kate McGregor: Okay. The 1965 case is so important because of the scale of violence and the fact that this violence was also representing the inception of the New Order Regime under Suharto. It's been the most intractable case of past human rights abuses, the most difficult to solve in part because of the scale.

So to give some brief context to what happened in 1965, the beginning of the violence or the most important sort of starting point was an armed movement to kidnap and kill the leadership of the Indonesia military, which then resulted in an effort to blame this on the Indonesia Communist Party and a mass reprisal against the Indonesia Communist Party and most organizations affiliated with or associated with this organization, the Indonesia Communist Party,

We estimate that between 500,000 to 1,000,000 people died in this period, especially between 1965 and 1968, but hundreds of thousands of people were also imprisoned without trial, and it's become increasingly clear as historians have studied this past that the role of the military was very important in carrying out and directing this violence across the whole archipelago.

We understand the military's role was fundamental. There was also complicity with civilian vigilantes, but this case had so many lasting effects on society, it was ongoing stigmatization of people classified as communists, and this elimination of the left had ongoing consequences for opposition to the regime that even for today we've seen in terms of opposition or a strong sort of human rights consciousness.

The result of this violence also led to an increasing emphasis on particular values in Indonesia society such as nationalism and so-called Pancasila values, the values of the Indonesian national philosophy and religiosity.

It's very important to also understand the international context of that violence, which also continues to reverberate today in terms of the cold war and the fact that most western regimes also supported or stood by and did nothing as the violence unfolded, and therefore they have no interest in again opening up this chapter of history.

Peter Clarke: And that includes Australia?

Kate McGregor: It includes Australia. Yes. The US, the UK, et cetera.

Peter Clarke: Kate, what is fascinating to me, since you brought it up so quickly, is the role and privilege of the military within the Indonesia party. How did that come about?

Kate McGregor: Okay, if we go back to the Indonesia independence struggle against the Dutch in 1945 to 1949, that when the Indonesian military formed. They have always represented themselves as being the most important force in that struggle. From the basis of that claim, they've always made a claim to playing a political role in Indonesian politics.

When this really came to fruition for the military was after 1965, when they moved to crush the Indonesian Communist Party. They then also moved to make part of law the *dwi fungsi*, the dual role of the military in politics and also defense. So it's really that historical background that's led to the military claim to always play a part in politics.

Technically, after the fall of the Suharto regime the military on paper was supposed to be receding from politics, but as we see today many former generals still play very important roles in politics and they continue to influence events behind the scenes today.

Peter Clarke: And during that terrible time in 1965 an awful lot of people, as Kate has alluded to, died during that period. Is that still a great knot within the Indonesian culture in a way Ken?

Ken Setiawan: I think it definitely is. One person once told me that there is no family in Indonesia that is not affected in some way by these events. If you talk to Indonesians, many of them will say at some point oh, I know of someone, whether it's a parent or a grandparent or an uncle or an aunty, but I think many families have been affected by this.

As Kate just said, it was just not the people that were killed, but it's also all those people that were detained. And not only them, but their families were stigmatized and they have had a lot of trouble accessing, for instance, education and to hold jobs in certain professions. So it is, I think, a very large social issue that is not addressed publicly.

Peter Clarke: It's probably worth remembering that Suharto himself was very closely involved in what happened in 1965. He was a major general, I remember, and was very directly involved in that putdown.

Kate McGregor: One of his claims to prestige is being involved in crushing the communists, so he's very tightly ingrained in that legacy. Yes.

Ken Setiawan: And it's probably not just his personal prestige, but the legitimacy of the New Order state was really based on the crushing of the communist party, and more generally the Indonesian left, as well a favorable strong economy.

Peter Clarke: Once the Sukarno regime unraveled and fell apart during those terrible times we moved from a form of guided democracy in the Sukarno approach to the new order of Suharto. What were the key differences Kate?

Kate McGregor: Interestingly, there are some continuities in terms of the style of authoritarian government, but even the term new order is a reversal of everything from the past. Sukarno was out, the communist party was out, so Suharto tried to construct an image of this regime as something very new.

One noticeable shift was also the policy towards the economy that focused on development, opening the gate to western aid and western development, which is a gate that Sukarno had shut, and far less interventionist into international politics. Sukarno was kind of the champion of playing off the super powers and was increasingly becoming closer to China, whereas Suharto turned to the west, became, as Time magazine reported, the west's best news for years, because he

did open up Indonesia, because Indonesia is also very lucrative in terms of its resources, so we can't forget the economics behind this as well.

So the New Order Regime characterized itself as something very new. The military was certainly now one of the most dominant forces in politics, so that's something different. That was still there in the guided democracy period, but they were now of increasing importance, but Suharto became so important as the kind of central figure of that regime.

They would be some of the most dramatic differences, but also in this regime the military was used to repress dissent in many different instances, just beginning with 1965.

Peter Clarke: Did those general atmospherics against the communist party and the left generally flow over into suppression or distaste for any sort of dissent?

Ken Setiawan: Absolutely. The patterns of that violence were replicated across Indonesia during the New Order. For instance, in Timor-Leste, or East Timor, in regions with separatist tendencies, such as Papua and Aceh, and the general repression of criticism on the regime, Indonesian human rights activists or Indonesian activists, if they would step out of line they would quickly be brandished with this label you are a communist. Therefore, if someone is a communist, then it basically removes of them certain basic rights or protections.

Interestingly, in recent years we've seen that label of communist being used again for human rights activists or people who have been critical of the current political climate.

Peter Clarke: Kate, were there specific outstanding events that happened during the Suharto period that really triggered and acted as a catalyst for the ousting of Suharto and the emergence of the Reformasi period?

Kate McGregor: I guess everybody understands that the student movement was an important part of protest against President Suharto, but one point that Ken and I also want to make is that the focus of that kind of reform movement that led to the ousting of the regime and the issues that they focused on also had consequences for how far the reform agenda went later on.

The students were part of the push, the financial crisis, because Suharto had claimed so much legitimacy, being the father of development and the economic strongman, and when the Indonesian economy fell apart a central part of his

legitimacy was weakened, so people were more bold and feeling able to perhaps protest.

Also there was a very recent election just before the fall of Suharto in which many of his cronies were reappointed to positions, and this just outraged people, that this had happened again, and especially in the context of a weak economy. So I think it was several factors. It was a movement from students in particular against the regime, but also the economic circumstances and Suharto's claim to legitimacy, all of these things were very important.

Peter Clarke: So Ken, Suharto goes home, the Reformasi period emerges, and one of the hallmarks of that period was a greater scrutiny on human rights and a lot of promises were made. Could you just adumbrate on those for us? What sort of scrutinies came about and what sort of promises were made then?

Ken Setiawan: If we are going to talk about how important human rights were for the Reformasi movement, I think we need to be very critical whether that was actually the case. The Indonesian Reformasi movement may have resulted in Suharto stepping down, but it was also very fragmented.

It was a very eclectic group, if you will, that in general was just bonded together by one thing, and that was for Suharto to step down. There was no real strategic plan of where Indonesia should go after that, so in that sense there was no clear human rights agenda.

Peter Clarke: What made them adopt some sort of window dressing and say these things then? What were the pressures on them within the political context to make those promises?

Ken Setiawan: There was that element of that the military should be held more accountable, that the security forces-

Peter Clarke: Where was that coming from?

Ken Setiawan: That came out of Indonesia, but also from outside of Indonesia. We should remember of course that Indonesia found itself in a severe economic crisis. It was very much dependent on foreign funding. The other thing that we haven't mentioned yet in that context of political change was of course the end of the cold war.

During the cold war Indonesia escaped a lot of criticism on its human rights record because it was so strongly anti-communist. With the end of the cold war

there's increasing focus, if you will, on Indonesia's human rights record. It couldn't get away with everything anymore, and that was most evident in the behavior of the military in Indonesia occupied East Timor.

With Indonesia's dependence on foreign aid to overcome its economic crisis, there was also pressure being put on Indonesia to recognize certain human rights. There was also a feeling that because human rights were so limitedly guaranteed in the New Order, both in its laws as well as in practice, the military had at many occasions interfered with judicial independence, for example, so the judiciary was known as corrupt.

So there was a push both from Indonesia and outside for Indonesia to lift its human rights record, and in first instance you would do that on paper. You would go to law reform.

Peter Clarke: And some practical, tangible steps did emerge at that time. Could you just summarize those for us?

Ken Setiawan: I think what can be taken as a benchmark is that Indonesia has since 1998 passed actually an impressive number of legal reforms in which it has acknowledged basic human rights that are firmly based in international principles. For instance, its amendments to the constitution in 2000 saw the inclusion of the specific human rights chapter, and this was directly modeled on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

I think on paper it's actually looking quite good, and observers of Indonesian law have for instance on several occasions said that the guarantees in Indonesia's constitution are actually at par or even better than the guarantees in other more established democracies.

There has been, for instance, a specific human rights law in 1999. There's been the establishment of a Directorate General of Human Rights under the Ministry of Law and Human Rights, so human rights really enters the public discourse, the government discourse, which I think is very important.

There was a strengthening of existing human rights institutions. So one of the institutions that was strengthened was the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission, which actually was established in 1993, so under the New Order, and which had been surprisingly independent, even though it couldn't guarantee real changes.

And then the establishment of a number of other specialized institutions, for instance the Women's Rights Commission, a Children's Rights Commission, Indonesia starts making human rights action plans, a human rights courts law of course in the year 2000, so establishing a judicial mechanism. There was also some attempt to establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2004, and of course that constitutional amendment that I earlier spoke about.

Peter Clarke: So, Kate, what went wrong really and what forces were at work to make it go so wrong? Of course we have other countries to refer to, don't we, like South Africa and that model of transitional justice. It didn't really come off very well in Indonesia. What went wrong?

Kate McGregor: I guess part of the answer to that question is historical in a sense. The weakness of the human rights movement coming into the regime, it wasn't incredibly strong and the focus was on other kinds of critiques of the regime, so that is one factor. But also victims groups, groups that have been persecuted during the New Order Regime are not that organized, because it was very hard for them speak out at all. They did start to lobby more. We saw more public protests by them in front of Komnas HAM, the National Commission of Human Rights, asking for redress for past cases, so they're starting to mobilize.

I think it's important to remember 20 years ago at the inception of the new era there was a whole lot of hope that there would be change and there would be legal redress and forms of acknowledgement, but the public reaction to any steps taken to forms of redress was very telling. For example, up until today, 20 years after the beginning of the fall of Suharto, we have not had any official acknowledgement of past human rights abuses, and the reaction to even rumors of that, a potential apology, is very telling.

For example, President Wahid made a personal apology because of his links to one organization that was involved in the violence in 1965, towards victims of the violence in 2001, but that sparked outrage and mass protests on the streets.

Peter Clarke: What was at the base of those protests? What caused such outrage?

Kate McGregor: The base of the protest was the belief that nobody had done anything wrong in 1965. There was no crime committed. The communists needed to be crushed. You still see this view repeatedly articulated in Indonesia from military men, but also from members of past vigilante organizations like Pemuda Pancasila and Nahdlatul Ulama who were involved in the violence, so there's a continuing belief that that violence was justified and they saved the nation by saving them from communists.

So it's just kind of a repetition, "We've got nothing to apologize for". In fact, it's often said that the communists should apologize to the other forces in society.

Peter Clarke: You're listening to Ear to Asia, a podcast from the Asia Institute of the University of Melbourne. I'm Peter Clarke with Indonesian historian, associate professor Kate McGregor, and Asia Institute socio-legal studies researcher Dr. Ken Setiawan. We're discussing the status of human rights, past and present, in post-Reformasi Indonesia. I guess, Kate, that's where we are right now. What have been the key events and shifts, if you like, in the orientation to human rights in Indonesia in this post-Reformasi period?

Kate McGregor: I think to begin with there was so much optimism and under President Wahid, again, I think that optimism continued, but we probably already started to see a turn under President Megawati, and through the SBY presidency, and still under Jokowi we've still not seen much progress. Often there have been promises made, but then nothing eventuates. So many different initiatives have been proposed, but many have come to nothing.

Peter Clarke: I'd like to hear from both of you on the case of Ahok, the Chinese mayor of Jakarta who is in prison as we speak I believe. I don't think he's out yet, is he? Supposedly for blasphemy. Try and disentangle all that for us in terms of what we've been talking about with human rights, the expression of freedom, religious freedom, ethnic freedom, et cetera. How does that operate Kate in the case ... very recent case. We're talking about right now, aren't we really?

Kate McGregor: That's right. I guess the Ahok case has ... A lot of attention is being paid to this case because it's tied into perhaps the next presidential race as well, so-

Peter Clarke: Which is coming next year?

Kate McGregor: That's right, because, of course, Ahok is very close to Jokowi and there was an intense campaign against him, as people probably know, as an ethnic Chinese Christian candidate, and he was accused of blasphemy. So I see a shift towards also using religious ideas to sort of replace the old emphasis on just Pancasila, that you're not a Pancasila person now. It's maybe that you're not dealing to Islam in a certain way.

But I would stress the manipulation of religion here rather than saying this is anything religion per se. In Indonesian politics there is often a history of a lot of manipulation of different terms, and I think there's definitely manipulation at work here, but it is worrying to see the increasing use of kind of blasphemy charges against people to discredit them.

Peter Clarke: Ken?

Ken Setiawan: I think that in the lead up to this election we will unfortunately see a lot of rhetoric based on religion and ethnicity, basically to divide and for certain political forces to gain political support. The use of the blasphemy law I think also falls in the broader category of limiting people's freedom of organization, and by extension also limiting freedom of speech, and those things are very worrying trends if we talk about a broader picture of human rights.

Peter Clarke: We have ethnicity, certainly the attacks on Chinese communities. We obviously have aspects of Islam involved here as well. With that looming election coming up in 2019, it's all going to be happening on one day. What are the forces at work now, Ken, that work against human rights?

Ken Setiawan: Maybe if we think about political campaigning in Indonesia, there will be a lot of emphasis on nationalist discourses, on religious discourses-

Peter Clarke: Islamic populism.

Ken Setiawan: Islamic populism. Absolutely. Of course we will see Jokowi enter the race as the sitting president. I think he will be keen to have another term. I think he will be very insistent on doing whatever it takes to secure his next term. When Jokowi came to power there was an idea that he would bring certain changes. Also with regards to the human rights agenda, he was the only candidate at the time that had a specific human rights agenda in which justice for past human rights violations was actually explicitly mentioned.

Now we should always be very careful about campaign promises and how they play out, but the fact is is that it was in his plan, and of course not much has happened there. Partially that had to do with that he was so reliant on more liberal communities or certain activist communities. Volunteers, human rights activists were part of that, so they were able to steer that agenda, if you will.

However, by now the political constellation has changed a little bit. It will be interesting to see to what extent he still needs that support from volunteers and activism, how that will play out in the agenda that he puts forward.

Peter Clarke: Very briefly, how has it changed, that constellation?

Ken Setiawan: When Jokowi was elected he only won on a very small margin, so he didn't really have a lot of political power. He has sought very cleverly in the first years of his presidential term to establish himself as a strong president. With that has

come some very strong rhetoric and actions that are not at all in compliance with human rights ideas, and that, I think, is very worrying. If we think about 1965, for instance, not so long ago he said in public, "If there's any communists, show them to me and I will kill them."

Peter Clarke: Ken, is that term, the Indonesian way ... Everybody sort of knows what it means, but it's a bit of a very large band-aid, isn't it?

Ken Setiawan: It is. It's true. I think what we mean by the Indonesia way is that there have been some initiatives on under the Jokowi government to deal with past human rights violations. Initially it included a so-called reconciliation committee. Then there was specifically for the 1965 case a national symposium, which is actually really interesting, because for the first time it brought people together from the government, from the activist community, survivors, to talk together in a forum organized by the state, so I think that was truly a very interesting development, even though we haven't seen clear results yet.

Then under Wiranto there's been a move towards what has been called a harmony council. The way that we look at it is that there's been a watering down of this concept of human rights, of truth and reconciliation. First a little bit of reconciliation and then dialog, and now just harmony all together. So we're not really talking about what actually happened during the violence, who did what, who was responsible. And those, I think, are very fundamental questions if we talk about justice for human rights crimes.

Now when we talk about the Indonesian way, it's that these initiatives have been presented by Indonesia, including at the international stage, so during its periodic review at the UN, as this is the way that Indonesians are dealing with this in a manner that is acceptable to us.

In that is an undertone which suggests that these international norms are not suitable for the Indonesian context, and indeed Wiranto on several occasions has said, "We don't do trials because they're European and they're confrontational, and that's just not the way that Indonesians do it."

Of course there should be a fair dose of criticism of where this concept of human rights comes from and where all these mechanisms are designed and how they are also transplanted to all these vastly different contexts where they might not really work, but we believe that the manner in which this argument is now being played out in Indonesia serves only the interests of the security forces, of keeping them from being held accountable for crimes that were committed.

Peter Clarke: Kate and Ken, I've been listening to those themes that you've been weaving together here. It seems to me one of the strong through lines is that deep, deep current of authoritarianism in the Indonesian mindset. Where does that come from? Is that a hangover from Dutch Colonialism? Is it part intrinsically of the Indonesian makeup? We're talking about a monolithic society here which doesn't really exist. Am I right, Ken, in saying that authoritarianism is one of the great stumbling blocks to improvement in human rights?

Ken Setiawan: I think it's obvious in an authoritarian context as we've seen during the New Order there is very little room for human rights. However, I don't think that we should completely brush away the achievements of Indonesia in the past 20 years. As someone who researches a lot based on the law, I think there is a lot of room there on paper. And when I talk to human rights activists and people involved in human rights organizations in Indonesia, they often say we have got law, and that's there.

The question is more how do we make it work, and that is a question I think that is ... If you are going to unpack that, it's going to be much more complicated, because then we need to talk about institutional strength and capacity. We need to talk about political structures. We need to talk about economic structures as well, and we need to talk about that consciousness. There's a general sense of agreement that this is something that is so important that needs to be addressed.

A lot of human rights communities in Indonesia are tirelessly working towards that, so I don't think it would be fair to say that in this context it's never going to happen. I think it's unlikely in the short term, but these issues aren't solved overnight, and admittedly I think a lot of people, including myself, would have liked to see change much quicker than it has been the case.

At this moment I think we've stitched together quite a bleak picture, but it doesn't mean that there are no progressive forces and there are no people working towards this. There are, and I think that's really important to remember.

Peter Clarke: Kate, you get the final word, and I can feel this ever so slightly leaning towards a more optimistic view, authoritarianism, but lots of activity within civil society. But there are huge stumbling blocks, aren't there? Are you optimistic about say the next decade if the elections go next year with the re-election of the current president? Perhaps he may be out to maneuver himself into a bit more wriggle room, who knows? But how do you see it as an historian?

Kate McGregor: It's very difficult to as an historian about the future. We don't normally go there. [laughs]

Peter Clarke: I know. That's why I did it.

Kate McGregor: No, we can't look forward. [laughs]

I just wanted to reiterate what Ken is saying about also recognizing ... We've been talking a lot about the government and the role of military, and there are a lot of other players in contesting past human rights cases, including survivors of those cases who've also become activists in some cases, not all cases. But also other groups of concerned people who form a variety of different civil society organizations who might focus on legal justice mechanisms or more broader forms of just acknowledgment and truth telling with regard to past human rights abuses.

It's very interesting, as the 2014 election was approaching a lot of groups focused on the slogan, Melawan Lupa, to oppose forgetting, especially as Prabowo was presenting himself as a presidential candidate.

Since that time, I think also ... And with the lack of success in many official mechanisms to address the past, I think activists have become also more aware that they need to group together. A coalition of activists did form in 2008, for example, called the Coalition for Justice and Truth, and they held their own sort of human rights cases with citizen councils here in cases of human rights abuses in which survivors of violence gave testimony to accounts in large public halls that were different than used throughout Indonesia.

So they realized that they'd just take the initiative themselves to socialize to the public what had happened before and to reiterate that there were ongoing consequences of the fact that there's continuing impunity for the military. So I think that they realized that there was a need to socialize the existence of past human rights abuses, because Prabowo actually appealed to a lot of young Indonesian in the last presidential candidacy campaign.

They were asking the question why? Maybe people don't know about this past. So there are many creative ways now to socializing the many histories of repression in the past, through song, through film, through performance, and we think that that is connecting with the young generation in Indonesia, maybe creating a new awareness about the past and its consequences for today.

Peter Clarke: A slow process. And both your descriptions of Indonesian politics makes Australian politics really sound like a kindergarten. It's very layered and very complex. But thank you both, Kate and Ken, for being with us today on Ear to Asia.

Kate McGregor: Thank you Peter.

Ken Setiawan: Thank you Peter.

Peter Clarke: Ear to Asia is brought to you by Asia Institute at the University of Melbourne, Australia. You can find more information about this and all our other podcast episodes at the Asia Institute website. Be sure to keep up with every episode of Ear to Asia by following us on the Apple podcast app, Stitcher, or SoundCloud, and it would mean a lot to us if you'd give us a generous rating on iTunes or like us on SoundCloud. And, of course, let your friends know about us on social media.

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