

Reviews

Anders Uhlin, *Indonesia and The 'Third Wave of Democratisation': The Indonesian Pro-democracy Movement in a Changing World*, Nordic Institute for Asian Studies, Democracy in Asia Series no. 1, Curzon Press, Richmond, 1997. 289 pp.

Anders Uhlin has performed a valuable service for anyone interested in modern Indonesian politics by producing an extraordinarily readable and comprehensive overview of the thinking of different segments of the pro-democracy movement in that country. His primary interest is in the process by which ideas about democratization from elsewhere in the world are 'diffused' in Indonesia. He wants to explore the extent to which experiences in other countries swept up in what Samuel Huntington has termed the 'third wave of democratization' are adopted and adapted by pro-democracy groups in Indonesia.

This is a book which grows out of a Ph.D. dissertation. After a brief general discussion of some of the theoretical and methodological problems associated with the study of democratization, the book quickly divides into two parts. The first is an extensive empirical account of the major pro-democracy groups in Indonesia and the second a more analytical discussion of the selective adoption of international ideas about democratization.

In my view, the first section is the more valuable of the two. It begins with two quick chapters surveying the evolution of Indonesia's modern political history and the key institutional features of authoritarian rule under Suharto's New Order regime. These chapters are essentially digests of the existing literature on the subject. The next several chapters are the most interesting. The author describes and discusses four broad discourses on democratization: Radical, Liberal, Conservative, and Islamic, which are explored in more detail as ten distinguishable sub-discourses (Marxism, Left Populism, Feminism, Social Democracy, Political Liberalism, Economic Liberalism, Conservatism, Islamic Modernism, Islamic Neo-modernism, Islamic Transformism). In some cases the distinctions seem a little artificial, but Uhlin is clearly on to something interesting in highlighting the (re-)emergence of a diverse spectrum of political ideologies in Indonesian political life.

