Identity and Education: Negotiating differences between the Expectations of Chinese Indonesians and National Education Policies.

(A case study from Lombok, the Province of West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia)

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Abstract

After the restriction of Chinese organizations and cultures in Indonesia in 1966, Chinese-Indonesians (the Tionghoa community) began to lose the opportunity to express their ethnic identity. Thus, Christian schools that are well known as schools for the Tionghoa indirectly play roles as the only places where the Tionghoa can strengthen bonds among themselves. This study examines the different expectations of Christian schools and Tionghoa parents in regard to Tionghoa students’ identity and how Tionghoa students perceive and embrace their identity. Through class observation and interviews in Lombok, West Nusatenggara, Indonesia, this study suggests that Tionghoa parents’ expectations are varied across generations and different economic stances. At the same time, Tionghoa students are multiplying and negotiating as well as claiming, un-claiming, and reclaiming their identity, depending on the accepted norms.
# Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. i

Table of Contents .................................................................................................................. ii

Chapter 1: Introduction ........................................................................................................ 1

A. Significance of issues ....................................................................................................... 2

B. Research methodology .................................................................................................... 6

1. Settings ....................................................................................................................... 7

2. Participants .................................................................................................................. 12

3. Procedures .................................................................................................................. 13

C. Objectives of this study ................................................................................................. 14

D. Research Questions ....................................................................................................... 15

Chapter 2: The Tionghoa in Indonesia and Lombok: Their Identity and Historical Narratives ............. 17

A. The Identity of the Tionghoa ......................................................................................... 17

B. History and Background of Chinese-Indonesians in Indonesia ........................................ 27

1. Early contact and migration ....................................................................................... 27

2. The Tionghoa’s position under different Indonesian regimes (from the Dutch to the post-Soeharto regimes) ......................................................................................... 29

C. Chinese-Indonesians in West Nusatenggara Province .................................................. 37

1. West Nusatenggara Province; An overview ................................................................ 37

2. Early Chinese contact and migration to Lombok ......................................................... 40

3. The features of the Chinese-Indonesians on Lombok .................................................. 43

Chapter 3: Education for the Tionghoa: Past and Present .................................................. 49

A. The History of the Education of the Tionghoa in Indonesia ........................................ 49
B. The Education of the Tionghoa in the municipality of Mataram ........................................ 59
C. Education System in Indonesia Today ............................................................................ 62

Chapter 4: Interviews ........................................................................................................ 65
A. Case Study 1: Two Tionghoa students ........................................................................ 66
B. Case study 2: Two non-Tionghoa students ................................................................. 74
C. Case study 3: Two staff members .............................................................................. 78
D. Case Study 4: Two Tionghoa parents ........................................................................ 85

Chapter 5: Interview Analysis .......................................................................................... 96
A. The schools’ expectations ......................................................................................... 98
B. Parents’ expectations ............................................................................................... 100
C. Tionghoa students’ identity ..................................................................................... 104

Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusion ............................................................................. 112

Appendix .......................................................................................................................... 119
Appendix A: Map of Indonesia ....................................................................................... 119
Appendix B: Map of the Island of Lombok .................................................................... 120
Appendix C: Interview Guide for Teachers .................................................................... 121
Appendix D: Interview Guide for Non-Chinese Students .............................................. 122
Appendix E: Interview Guide for Chinese Students ....................................................... 123
Appendix F: Interview Guide for Chinese Parents .......................................................... 124

References ....................................................................................................................... 126
Chapter 1
Introduction

Identity is an important part of the existence of human beings. It defines the way individuals socialize with others. It constitutes the boundaries between insiders and outsiders. It also defines the rules of membership and the recognition of sameness among members of a group, which, at the same time, define their differences from other groups. However, individuals vary in how they respond to identity. Sometimes their responses depend on social and political situations, and most of the time they depend on whether a particular identity might be an advantage or disadvantage. Individuals’ responses to their identity also contribute to their expectations about their descendants’ identity.

Among the less affluent Chinese-Indonesians (Tionghoa) in Lombok, the oldest family members, who are mostly the first or second generation to live in Indonesia and who apparently still practice most of the Chinese traditions, usually live in the same house with their children and their children’s families. Thus, the second or third generations naturally inherit their elders’ sense of Tionghoa-ness through daily interaction with their parents. Yet this does not make them expect their descendants to strongly embrace their identity as Tionghoa. In contrast, the affluent Tionghoa families usually live separately from the older generations. As a result, it is fairly hard for them to transmit the Chinese traditions to their children. However, this does not make their expectations that their children embrace their Tionghoa-ness less strong. This paper discusses the intertwined influences of Christian schools’ and Tionghoa parents’ expectations on Tionghoa students’ identity.
A. Significance of issues

The Tionghoa\textsuperscript{1} (Chinese-Indonesian) had their own education system during the Dutch colonial period in the East Indies (especially during the 1900s). Their schools were initiated by the Peranakan (Indonesia born Chinese) association called the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan (THHK), which was established on March 17\textsuperscript{th}, 1900. Its members were concerned that the Chinese in the East Indies were becoming either more Dutch or more indigenous in terms of culture and traditions. They hardly spoke Mandarin or any Chinese dialect, only irregularly practiced some of the sacred Chinese traditions and they were more Dutch-oriented in terms of education.

For that reason, on the one hand, the founding fathers of the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan saw the significance of resinicizing the Peranakan Chinese. On the other hand, they saw education or schooling as the most obvious solution to the problem, since the Dutch colonial government did not provide education for Foreign Oriental inhabitants, including the Chinese. Since its first establishment in 1901, the THHK School gained its popularity among the Chinese community. Although criticized for the impracticality of the curriculum and school program (they taught Confucianism and Mandarin to their students, which was seen as appropriate for living in China but inappropriate for living in the Indies), the number of these schools grew steadily throughout the Indonesian archipelago. One of their primary goals was to strengthen the Peranakan’s consciousness of their Chinese identity and to tighten their links to China, which they considered as their motherland although in fact, the earlier overseas migrations from China especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were regarded as traitors.

\textsuperscript{1} I use the term “Tionghoa” to refer to Chinese-Indonesians after Indonesian independence (1945 onward) and I use the term “Chinese” to refer to the Chinese inhabitants of Indonesia before 1945 (during the colonial period).
Unfortunately, due to political developments in Indonesia (to be discussed later), the Chinese were marginalized and were pinpointed as the cause of several problems because of various politically “made-up” reasons. In other words, the Indonesian government’s arguments blaming the Chinese for episodes of political and economic turmoil in Indonesia seemed very subjective and un-provable. For example, the Chinese were associated with the Indonesian Communist Party, which was said to have attempted to take over government in 1966, and in 1998 during the economic crisis they were again blamed. Thus, all Chinese schools and institutions were completely banned beginning in the 1970s. After the closing of Chinese schools, instead of sending their children to public schools, most of the Tionghoa preferred to send their children to Christian schools.

If we look back to the initial motivation of the establishment of the THHK schools back in the 1900s, we might assume that the preference of Tionghoa parents to send their children to Christian schools relates to their intention of maintaining their children’s identity as Chinese-Indonesians. However, all schools in Indonesia, including Christian schools, are guided by the national education system which mandates the implementation of Indonesian national culture within the school environment. As a result, it is less likely that Chinese culture will be emphasized within the school although the majority of the students are Tionghoa.

In examining this situation, I conducted research in a Christian school in Nusa Tenggara Barat Province, the island of Lombok, Indonesia. Through this research I wished to examine how

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2 Both Catholic and Protestant schools. We should notice that in Indonesia, Christianity is considered as two different faiths: Catholic and Protestant. When people say Christian they usually mean Protestants.

3 The majority of the Christian schools are run by Churches, and most of Church-goers are Tionghoa.

4 The term “Indonesian national culture” in the constitution of Indonesian National Education System is problematic because the constitution itself does not give a definition for it.
Tionghoa parents’ expectation about their children’s ethnic identity is contested, negotiated, or mediated within the school. Through interviews with both older Tionghoa people and Tionghoa and non-Tionghoa students, I also look at how Tionghoa students deal with their parents’ and school’s expectations in regard to their identity, and I ask to what extent these different expectations contribute to a consciousness of identity among Tionghoa students.

This chapter provides the background of the issues that I am investigating, that is, the differences regarding the expectations of the Christian school and Tionghoa parents toward the children’s identity. This chapter will also discuss the objectives of my study in more detail, as well as explaining the methodology I used during my field research. In the methodology section I describe the research, including the setting, the participants, and the procedures. I will also provide details about the features of the school in which I conducted my research, and I will describe the process of collecting data during my field research.

Chapter 2 examines important terms that are significant in explaining the socio-cultural life of the Tionghoa in Indonesia, as well as some concepts that are important in discussing Tionghoa identity. This chapter also examines some historical narratives regarding the presence of the Chinese in Indonesia, from their early contact through the colonial periods, until Indonesia’s independence, and finally to the collapse of the Soeharto regime, which ruled the country for more than thirty years, in 1998. This history is important for seeing a broad picture of the “ups and downs” of life for the Chinese in Indonesia. I also address both historical features and the recent life of the Tionghoa in Lombok, particularly in the city of Mataram.

Chapter 3 is a literature review, which is divided into three parts. In order to understand the circumstances surrounding Tionghoa educational and identity problems, the first part will explore the Indonesian government’s education and religion policy, which I consider to be
strongly related to the process of addressing Tionghoa identity. For instance, President Policy No. 1/PNPS/1965 and constitution No.5/1969 are among the factors that drove the Tionghoa to convert to Christianity. Although a significant number of Tionghoa were already Christian, this constitutes a new “attribute” of the Tionghoa. I will also discuss the government’s changing education policy that, to some extent, affects the Tionghoa’s opportunities to express their ethnic identity, particularly within the school environment.

The second part of Chapter 3 focuses on the education of the Chinese community in the municipality of Mataram from the time when Chinese schools still existed to the time when Chinese schools were banned. This part will also give some initial information about the current educational situation of the Chinese in Mataram.

The last part of this chapter will focus on concepts of identity in order to help us understand the way the Tionghoa students who are apparently Peranakan, see themselves in term of ethnic identity. It is also important to us to understand to what extent the fact that they inherit Chinese blood contributes to their consciousness of “being or feeling” Chinese (Bakalian, 1994:6-7). With this understanding we can, then, turn to answer the research question of how these students deal with their parents’ and schools’ expectation about their identity.

In Chapter 4, I will focus on the interviews I conducted during the research, describing the results of my interview with Tionghoa and non-Tionghoa students, teachers, school administrators, and Tionghoa parents as well as with certain people outside the school, such as leaders and officers of the Tionghoa Association. Although Christian elementary schools are not

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5 These regulations list the five religions (Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Buddhism) that are embraced by most people of Indonesia

6 Citizens of Indonesia who are of Chinese descent.
the main object of this research, I did conduct research in some of these schools in order to give a broader picture of the patterns of interaction among Tionghoa students and how these patterns are perpetuated while they are in high schools.

Chapter 5 will provide an analysis of the data from the interviews. This part extracts the data from the research and presents some generalizations from the data. In addition, based on the interviews in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 will challenge the existing theories about Chinese schools, Chinese-ness, and the concept of identity. Finally, Chapter 6 is the conclusion. This chapter examines how Christian schools’ expectations have not changed as opposed to the dynamic expectation of Tionghoa parents toward their children’s identity. In addition, this chapter elaborates how Tionghoa students deal with the different expectations between their parents and schools.

**B. Research methodology**

The methodology I used for this research is qualitative and includes some library and archival research. For library research, I mainly focus on literature about the history of Chinese traders and settlers in Indonesia, the history of Chinese schools from the earliest documentation until their closure in the 1975, and some literature on ethnic identity to a theoretical background for analyzing the Chinese-Indonesians (Tionghoa) ethnic identity. I conducted my research in the municipality of Mataram, in the Province of West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia from May to July 2011. During this research period, I conducted class observations and interviews with students, teachers, and parents. Given that I am not a Tionghoa and I have never been to Christian schools, conducting a research within Tionghoa communities and within Christian schools is very challenging.
This research was primarily conducted in a Catholic senior high school called “Sekolah Menengah Atas Katolik (SMAK) Kesuma”. One of the reasons for selecting this site was because in order to answer my research question, I had to conduct my research at a school in which the majority of the students are Tionghoa. For many years, SMAK Kesuma has been considered a “Sekolah Cina” (school for the Tionghoa), although in fact, now, the number of Chinese students at this school is equal to the number of students of other ethnicities. The second reason is that because this is the only Christian school that exists in the municipality of Mataram, most of the Chinese send their children there.

At the SMAK Kesuma, I undertook class observations for one month as well as carrying out interviews with students and teachers. For class observations, in some classes I become an observer sitting in the class without interrupting the teaching/learning processes. However, in other classes, particularly in English classes, I was asked to teach or to help students with their English tasks. I also interviewed some leaders of Tionghoa associations and Tionghoa parents. For both my interview and observations I took field notes. I conducted the interviews in Bahasa Indonesia, and then transcribed them and translated into English for analysis. I also engaged in informal conversations with Tionghoa parents I met at the Avalokiteshvara Temple during the teaching sessions on a Sunday class.

1. Settings

As mentioned, this research centered mostly at the Kesuma Catholic Senior High School in the municipality of Mataram. This school was established in August 1965 by a team led by the Bali-Lombok bishop, Paulus Sani. The name of the school, Kesuma, is an abbreviation for

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7 Sunday class is a weekly class established at place of worship for students whose religious subject is not provided at school. Usually, Sunday class is started with religious rituals followed by teaching session.
Kecerdasan Suluh Masyarakat (Intelligence, torch, community). This reflects its mission, which is to actively work to educate and to provide education for the people. Since it was established by the church community, most of its students were originally the children of families in the church community, and therefore mostly Chinese. Thus, this school was regarded as the Sekolah Cina (school of the Chinese).

Nowadays, this school is no longer dominated by Tionghoa students. There are no statistics on the numbers of students by ethnicity. The available data only describes the numbers of students by religion. Of a total of 726 students, 46% are Hindu, 30% are Christian (either Catholic or Protestant), 11% are Buddhist, and 13% are Muslim. Even though Konghucu (Confucianism) has been regarded as one of the officially acknowledged religions in Indonesia, none of the students are reported as Konghucu. Although I am not sure of how many students at this school are Tionghoa, I can give an estimate based on their religions. In fact, all of the Buddhist students and most of the Christian students are Tionghoa and none of them is Hindu. Most of Hindu students are Balinese with a very small percentage of Hindu Sasak students. Thus, the number of Tionghoa students in this school is approximately 41%.

Similarly, there is no data available about the ethnicity of the members of the school board. According to a teacher at the school, they are mostly Christian with some Hindu members. As for the teachers, most of them are also Christian, but none are Tionghoa.

The curriculum used in this school is the same as that used in other schools in Indonesia. The language used as the medium of instruction is Bahasa Indonesia (the Indonesian national language), which is also used in other schools. There are no special events or occasions celebrated at this school that relate to any Chinese culture. In Indonesia, religion is categorized as one of the compulsory subjects of study. Public schools usually only provide Islamic
teachings, basically because most of their students are Muslims. Non-Muslim students have their religion classes on Sunday at their churches or temples. Likewise, Protestant schools usually only provide their students with Protestant teachings. Kesuma, unlike public schools and Protestant schools, provides lessons relevant to all of its students’ religions.

In order to get an idea of the educational quality at Kesuma, I look at school facilities, such as laboratories, the library, internet access, sports facilities, and students’ achievement in the national exams. School facilities in Kesuma, such as laboratories, are very standard, with only basic instruments such as microscopes and the lack of other features that should be part of a laboratory. Similarly, the school library is somewhat standard. The book collections consist mainly of required books provided by the government. The number of books on general subjects is very limited, and the students’ interest in reading is very low. Internet access is provided by the school but students have to pay for every hour they use it. Sport facilities are very limited due to the restricted space of the school grounds. There is only one yard in the middle of the school building. This yard functions as a basketball and badminton field and is used as a flag ceremony ground every Monday morning. Compared to other schools, Kesuma students’ academic achievement is average, with ten students who did not pass the national exams in 2011. Although these criteria do not reveal everything about the quality of the school, as a private school, it does seem that Kesuma should be able to be better than it does.

Besides conducting research at Kesuma Catholic Senior High School, in order to understand better how Tionghoa students interact and embrace their identity within a pan-ethnic school context, I also observed two other Christian schools: Alethea Christian Junior High School (SMP Alethea) and Sekolah Tiga Bahasa (Three Languages School) Budi Luhur. These schools are considered to be the exclusive schools in the municipality of Mataram, partly
because of the better quality of education they provide compared to that at most of public schools. In addition, they provide their students with three languages, namely Bahasa Indonesia, English, and Mandarin. Due to the expensive school fees, most of the students at these schools are from affluent families, and most are Tionghoa.

Alethea is a school complex constituting a Play Group for students aged three to five, Kindergarten for students aged five to seven, Elementary School, and Junior High School. About 80% of the students in these schools are Tionghoa. These schools were established by the Evangelical Church of Mataram. Unlike SMAK Kesuma, which is more welcoming to the outsider\textsuperscript{8}, Alethea is somewhat more exclusive and stricter toward outsiders.

Sekolah Tiga Bahasa (Three Languages School) Budi Luhur shares some similarities with Alethea. Like Alethea, Budi Luhur was established by a Christian church centered in Surabaya. Additionally, most of the students in Budi Luhur are Tionghoa, and less than 5% percent are non-Tionghoa. Budi Luhur is also a school complex. Because this school was established recently in 2005, so far it only consists of a play group, kindergarten, and first and second grade of enlementary school. However, the school board plans to establish both a junior and senior high school.

Unlike at Alethea, at Budi Luhur, Chinese traditions are strongly embraced. From the entrance gate to the teachers’ office and classrooms, Mandarin writings and proverbs, Chinese images, color and decoration dominate every corner of the building. Bahasa Indonesia, English, and Mandarin are taught in all levels of the school. More interestingly, Mandarin is very well taught at these schools. Mandarin teachers at these schools are native speakers from Taiwan who

\textsuperscript{8} In this context, outsiders means those who are not part of either the school such as students, teachers, staff, school board members, as well as school’s custodian; or member of the church to which the school is affiliated.
are contracted to teach at the schools for a period of time. Most of the teachers and members of
the school board are also Tionghoa. Students’ activities such as singing and dancing focus on
Chinese dances and songs, along with those from Indonesian. I was able to attend the graduation
ceremony for the kindergarten where students gave performances, including dances and songs in
Mandarin. All in all, a Chinese identity is strongly felt in this school compared to Alethea and
Kesuma.

Because the students of both Alethea and Budi Luhur are still under seventeen years old,
I was unable to conduct interviews with them. In Alethea I only conducted observations, while in
Budi Luhur I conducted observations and was able to interview Tionghoa parents and
grandparents as well as the school principal, committee members, and teachers. To gain more
knowledge about how Tionghoa students embrace their identity and their parents’ expectations
regarding their identity, I also observed a Sunday class for Buddhist students at the
Avalokiteshvara temple in Mataram. At this temple I was able to interview some students and
parents, as well as the temple’s attendant.

I was able to broaden my picture of the Tionghoa community in the municipality of
Mataram through interviews with some Tionghoa leaders. In the municipality of Mataram alone,
there are two big dialect communities, the Hakka and the Hokkien. However, there are also a
number of smaller Tionghoa communities that do not belong to either of these groups. Hence,
there are two big associations of the Tionghoa in Mataram: one belongs to the Hakka community
and the other one belongs to the Hokkien community. In Indonesia there is also a national
organization for all of the Tionghoa, regardless of place of origins, dialects, clans, or family ties;
called Paguyuban Sosial Marga Tionghoa Indonesia /PSMTI (Social Association of the
Tionghoa in Indonesia). I was able to interview the leaders of each organization and I also attended two events held by the Hokkien association.

Another important site for the Tionghoa community in the municipality of Mataram is the Mandarin Language Center. This is a well established center which offers students very thorough programs in Mandarin. This institution is under the Siddhartha Gautama Foundation of Mataram. Unfortunately, I was unable to conduct either observation or interviews with students or attendants of the center because when I introduced myself to the receptionist, who is a Tionghoa, and told her about my intention of undertaking an observation, she felt offended and refused to talk and to give any information. I assume this was first, because she considered me to be an outsider and that she felt uncomfortable talking about her identity to an outsider; and second, she was suspicious that I was a government spy because during Soeharto the regime used to spy the Chinese community in order to control them from practicing or even talking about their Chinese-ness in public spaces.

2. Participants

As this research centered in Kesuma Catholic Senior High School, most of the participants, the subjects, and the informants are students and teachers at this school. The subjects of this research are two twelfth grade classes. The first class is a social science class consisting of 35 students; while the second class is a natural science class consisting of 34 students. The participants who engaged in the observation for this study are the Tionghoa students in both classes. The total number of Tionghoa students in both classes is 23; 15 in the natural science class and 8 in the social science class. During the observation I focused on Tionghoa students’ engagement with different subjects, their attitude toward their classmates
(both Tionghoa and non-Tionghoa), and their interaction with teachers and friends outside the classroom.

Interviews were conducted, as I have mentioned, not only at Kesuma but also at Budi Luhur, the Avalokiteshvara Temple, and the Hakka and Hokkien Association offices. Informants for this study are two Tionghoa students, two non-Tionghoa students, a teacher and a school principal, and two Tionghoa parents. Other informants are one Tionghoa grandfather at Budi Luhur, one Tionghoa mother and one temple attendant at the Avalokiteshvara Temple, two attendants at the Hakka office, the leader of the Hokkien Association and the leader of the PSMTI.

3. Procedures

I conducted class observation at Kesuma for one month from May 23rd to June 25th. I began my observation when school started at 7 am and stayed until it was over at 2 pm. There are two breaks during the school hours, which are at 10.15 am and 12.45 pm. I divided my observation into two parts; during the first two weeks I carried out class observations in the natural science class and during the second two weeks I did a class observation in the social science class. Interviews with teachers were conducted at school after school hours, while interviews with students were conducted outside the school.

Class observation and interviews were recorded through field notes and an open questionnaire was also collected from the informants. During the class observation I only observed the classes without interrupting the teaching and learning process, although there were two English classes where I was asked to help students with their tasks. Observations outside the classroom were conducted during the break time. I usually observed the students who were
interacting with their friends outside the classroom and generally I spent the break time observing students at the school cafeteria, where most students spend their break time.

My observations and interviews at places other than Kesuma High School were conducted from June 27th to August 30th. During this period I visited, observed, and interviewed people in order to better understand and be able to draw a more complete picture of the Tionghoa community in Lombok. The information thus gained will help me to better understand the sense of identity among the Tionghoa community, particularly in the municipality of Mataram.

C. Objectives of this study

After the reformation era (1998 onward), Chinese were given the freedom to practice their culture and retain their identity as Chinese. They are allowed to celebrate their holidays, to speak their language, to pass down their heritage to future generations, and to introduce their culture to the local communities. However, it is still very hard for them to re-establish Chinese schools like those that existed during the colonial period. Thus, they continue to send their children to Christian schools with a national curriculum and at the same time many are trying to teach their children Chinese culture.

By attending Christian schools, Chinese students mingle with other Chinese students because most of the students in Christian schools are Chinese. However, the schools are still based on the Indonesian national education system. Bahasa Indonesia is the main language of instruction, although there are several bilingual Christian schools. It is worth noting, nonetheless, that acquisition of English is preferred, rather than Mandarin. The curriculum represents Indonesia’s culture and sometimes gives attention to the local culture. Students are also taught
the Pancasila\textsuperscript{9} (the five principals) and the major points of Indonesia’s Basic Constitution of 1945. In short, regardless of their Chineseness, it seems that the national education system and the schools’ curriculum expect Chinese students to perform as Indonesians by teaching them lessons with Indonesian content.

The sometimes conflicting expectations of parents and educational administrators regarding students’ identity have to be negotiated within schools. Theoretically, by focusing on several situations and individuals, this study will explore: (1) the extent to which the national curriculum and their parents’ expectation about Chinese students’ ethnic identity is contested and mediated within the Christian school, (2) the way Chinese students react to and mediate the different expectations of their parents and the national curriculum through their school, and (3) the extent to which these different expectation contribute to the Chinese students’ consciousness about their ethnic identity.

In focusing on a particular case study, this research will assess to what extent tensions arise in this situation, how they are mediated, and to what extent they contribute to a consciousness of identity among Chinese students.

\textit{D. Research Questions}

In this study I address three research questions in order to guide my analysis: first, \textit{to what extent do tensions arise in situations where Chinese parents and educational administrators have different expectations regarding Chinese students’ ethnic identity?} Second, 

\textsuperscript{9}Indonesia’s Five Principles consist of: belief in the one and only God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives, and social justice for the whole of the population of Indonesia.
how do the Chinese students mediate these different expectations? Third, to what extent do these different expectations contribute to a consciousness of identity among Chinese students?
Chapter 2
The Tionghoa in Indonesia and Lombok: Their Identity and the Historical Narratives

History is always a controlling factor influencing the current situation, and this applies very much to the Chinese community in Indonesia. It is very important to understand their historical situation as well as the political and social pressures they faced that formed them as they are nowadays, for us to be able to talk about their current situation. For this reason, two sections in this chapter will elaborate the history of the existence of the Chinese community in Indonesia. Meanwhile, the first section of this chapter examines the identity of the Chinese in Indonesia. This part discusses some important terminologies that will be used in the following chapters as well as concepts of identity that will be applied to analyze the Chinese community in Indonesia.

A. The Identity of the Tionghoa

In terms of social and culture, Chinese community in Indonesia is very diverse. There are some socio-cultural labels attached to Chinese communities in Indonesia that carry different socio-cultural meanings such as Huaqiao, Huayi, and Huaren (see below). Other labels attached to them are Totok and Peranakan which constitute boundaries between the socio-culturally different groups of ethnic Chinese people. Beyond their ethnic groups, the Chinese communities are separated from the “indigenous” inhabitants of Indonesia through the terms Pribumi and non-Pribumi. In addition, Indonesian government under the Soeharto administration labeled the Chinese as WNI Keturunan Asing (Indonesian Citizens of foreign ancestor) as opposed to WNI (Warganegara Indonesia, or Indonesian Citizen) that is associated with native Indonesians.
The Indonesian Constitution of 1945, Art 26 explains that Indonesian citizens are indigenous Indonesians (Pribumi) and persons originating in other countries (non-pribumi) who are legally authorized as citizens. The term Pribumi is also translated as “son of the soil” as opposed to the term non-Pribumi, perceived as the descendants of foreign ancestors. This constitution explains that non-Pribumi includes the Peranakan-Arab and Peranakan-Chinese. However, since the Peranakan-Arab, who are Muslims, were easily assimilated and accepted by the indigenous people, the term non-Pribumi is essentially applied to the Peranakan-Chinese. These socio-cultural terms are perpetuated in the political sphere where Indonesian citizens are divided into two categories: WNI (Indonesian citizens) and WNI Keturunan Asing (Indonesian citizens of foreign ancestors) (Antons, 2001: 14).

In regard to the socio-cultural diversity within the Chinese communities themselves, Wang Gungwu (1991) and Jamie Mackie (2003) have both examined the terminologies that refer to the Chinese or groups of Chinese people who made their living in particular places outside China. In China the term Huaqiao refers to those who left China. This term, according to Mackie, means the people who left China and stayed in particular places only for brief periods. Their lifestyle was still oriented to China and they returned home when they had successfully established their economic standing. In addition, Huaqiao also refers to Chinese emigrants who still retain their Chinese nationality. Mackie uses the term “Chinese sojourners” for these groups (Wang, 2001: 184-186).

On the other hand, Mackie uses the terms “Chinese overseas” to refer to groups of Chinese people who decide to stay, intermarry, and adapt to the local or indigenous culture (Mackie, 2003: 4-5). Andrea Louie (2004) refers to Chinese descendents who have adopted foreign nationality as “Huayi.” She explains that Huayi have different living habits: “they would
not eat Chinese food and are unused to squat toilets” (Louie, 2004: 175-176). Chinese people in China regard themselves as *Huaren* or ethnic Chinese. Some scholars, however, would see this term as much more inclusive. Chang Yau Hoon (2006), for example, defines *Huaren* as ethnic Chinese people with multiple identities. Thus, according to Hoon, all ethnic Chinese people regardless of their place of birth and citizenship are *Huaren* (C.-Y. Hoon, 2006: 91-92).

In Indonesia the Chinese, to a considerable extent, do not comprise a cohesive community. Instead, they are very diverse. In terms of origin they came from different groups, for example, from the Hakka and Hokkien language groups, the Cantonese, and the Teochiu; in terms of education there are Dutch or Western-educated Chinese and China-educated Chinese; in terms of generation the Chinese in Indonesia are split into the *Totok* and the *Peranakan* (Mackie, 2003: 4-8).

In regard to the socio-cultural diversity of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia, Leo Suryadinata (1972, 2001) argues that there are at least two categories of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia namely the Totok and the Peranakan. Initially, Suryadinata defined the Totok as China-born Chinese and pure blood Chinese who still culturally oriented toward China. Later, he explains that the Totok also comprise the mixed-blood Chinese who still retain their Chinese culture and whose first language is one of the Chinese dialects. On the other hand, he defines the Peranakan as Indonesia-born Chinese who communicate in the native languages and adopt the native way of life, beliefs and religions (Suryadinata, 1972: 502-503, 2001: 49).

Regardless of those differences, the Chinese in Indonesia are seen by most outsiders as a unified socio-cultural entity with recognizable and distinct cultural elements. Names created or attached to them are a significant aspect of constructed identity because the meaning and symbolism within them plays an important role in gathering and binding them (Okamura, 2008,
Before the twentieth century they used to be called *orang Cina* (People of China). This term carries negative socio-politic nuances which often caused bitterness among the Chinese because that attachment of this name attached meant they were always seen as “China-oriented.” During the Soeharto administration the Chinese expressed their views in regard to their ethnic identity, saying that they preferred to be called “Tionghoa” instead of *orang Cina* in order to eliminate social and political discrimination and fear toward them.

The term “Tionghoa” did not come into widespread use until later, after the collapse of the New Order period in 1998. Culturally, it refers to Chinese communities who have resided in Indonesia for centuries and have been culturally assimilated into Indonesian local cultures. In respect to the Chinese-Indonesian community, in this paper I will use the term Tionghoa to refer to the Chinese-Indonesians for several reasons; first, this paper will not emphasis the differences among them; second, nowadays this term is the commonly used among Indonesians, and third, using a “native category” like this bypasses the whole debate about *huaqiao* or sojourner. However, in the previous chapter I often used the term Chinese in regard to the time setting in which some of them still considered themselves to be Chinese citizens and to some extent, the government was still lenient toward the issue of citizenship.

Cornells and Hartmann (1998) argue that ethnic identity is not fixed but is contingent and fluid, depending on circumstances. This suggests that a particular ethnic identity can perform differently in different times and places. The Tionghoa ethnic identity from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century is undoubtedly different from that of in the twentieth century. The migration of so many Chinese to Indonesia during this period led to the creation of groups of Totok Chinese; consequently, the Chinese in Indonesia during that period strongly asserted their
ethnic identity by regularly practicing their culture, speaking their own language, and celebrating their specific rituals and traditions.

Later on, from the early twentieth century, the number of Chinese who migrated to Indonesia declined considerably. The decreasing numbers of the Totok and the increasing amount of intermarriages between the Tionghoa and the indigenous people has changed the sense of ethnic identity among the Tionghoa, if it has not decreased its strength. Today’s generation of Tionghoa are in a phase where they have moved “from being to feeling” Tionghoa (Bakalian, 1994: 1-9). Only a minority speak a Chinese dialect. Most of them no longer practice Chinese rituals such as Chin Minh (worshiping of ancestors), Sin Chia (New Year’s prayers), or Cheng Beng (visiting ancestors’ grave) because most of them have converted to Christianity or, in some small numbers, to Islam, which both prohibit those rituals (Ari, 2002: 51-57). Even if they do practice these rituals, not many of them clearly understand the meaning. Chinese cultures, traditions, rituals and even cuisine have been relegated from playing a central role as a significant part of ethnic identity to having symbolic connotations. However, despite this change of attitude among the Tionghoa toward their cultures, the majority, even the great-grandchildren, continue to maintain a high level of Tionghoa identity, pride in their ancestral legacy and a strong sense of we-ness and people-hood (Bakalian, 1994: 346). Bakalian defines “sense of we-ness” and “people-hood” as a feeling which is formed by emphasizing unity, interdependence, shared roots, bloodline, and history.

Culture is a prominent aspect of ethnicity. It explains the substance and the sense of ethnic identity. It animates and verifies ethnic boundaries through their distinctive history, ideology, symbolic universe, and system of meaning (Alba, 1990: -85). The Tionghoa in Mataram are different from their indigenous counterparts (the Sasak) in many ways. Their
language is considerably different. Although both the Tionghoa and the indigenous people speak the national language, Bahasa Indonesia, they both have their own languages, which are mutually incomprehensible. They also practice different religions or belief systems, which often times, if not well-managed and properly bridged, strengthens the boundaries between them and creates tension among them. Through these different languages and belief systems, both the Tionghoa and the indigenous people set a border line that distinguishes them from the “outsider” and by which the “outsider” sees them as a different entity. Nowadays, the Chinese can use Chinese names, which was not the case previously. If they choose to use a Chinese name, this also marks them off.

Being different does not necessarily mean the relationship between the Tionghoa and the indigenous people be characterized by tension. Indeed, there are some prejudices that exist among each ethnic group toward the other, which I believe is one of the results of the social and political boundaries constructed many centuries ago. In the case of the Tionghoa in Mataram, nowadays they are very well-integrated into the local community. Despite their different ethnic identities, both the Tionghoa and the indigenous people live side by side harmoniously. As businessmen the Tionghoa employ local people in their enterprises.

From my personal communication with a Tionghoa grandfather who employs some local employees, I noticed that the ethnic boundary between the Tionghoa and the indigenous people is still maintained, but this is only to the extent to which their ethnic identity is being acknowledged. He said that although they are culturally different with “orang kita” (our people or the Tionghoa) the Sasak are good workers, they are good neighbors. We live peacefully. If one of our neighbors (indigenous) passes away, we send his family some money as a sign of condolence (Chen Yao Min, pers. comm., June 2011).
Despite the fact that Min obviously sees a boundary between himself as a Tionghoa and his counterparts, the Sasak, by mentioning “orang kita” to refer to his Tionghoa ethnic group, according to him, he does not take this as a means to denigrate the Sasak.

Amin Leiman, a Tionghoa businessman, is a third generation Tionghoa. His family owns a very successful bakery in Surabaya. He says that at the grass roots level, the Tionghoa are very well accepted by their local community. If there is any boundary between them it is not that they are trying to build exclusivity among their own group. To Leiman, boundary exists simply because the government deliberately intended to maintain those historical boundaries. He continues:

I still remember my best time playing with my friends near my house. Most of their parents were working in my family's bakery. But that wasn't a problem. I played with them. I spoke their language. I did see myself different. I had Chinese heritage, as they had Javanese heritage. I spoke my Chinese dialect at home, as they spoke their Javanese. But I did not separate myself from them (Amin Leiman, pers. comm., April 2011).

From these personal communications I assume that on one hand, the Tionghoa do not want to separate themselves from the indigenous people; they even voluntarily acquire some elements of the local culture and add them to their own culture to the extent that they can without losing their identity. In other words, at the same time, they are fiercely proud of their identity and strongly wish to maintain it.

Cornell and Hartmann (1998: 169) believe that the salience of ethnic identity depends on certain factors. One of them is the acceptance or denial of social institutions toward a particular group. This can be manifested in access to jobs, housing, schools, or churches. Institutional denial on the basis of ethnic or racial identity can be a powerful mechanism in constructing boundaries between ethnic or racial groups. If social institutions are available and accessible to
everyone within the society, the salience of identity will be reduced. On the contrary, if social institutions are unavailable and inaccessible to particular groups of the society, then the salience of identity is increased (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998:168-172).

In the case of the Tionghoa in Indonesia, schools and churches play important roles in permeating the salience of ethnic identity among them. As explained earlier, the Dutch government provided schools for the inhabitants of the East Indies on the basis of racial and ethnic groups. This condition created boundaries between ethnic groups: the Dutch, the Chinese, and the Native remained separate. At the same time, this also increased the salience of ethnic identity among the Chinese. Consequently, the Chinese established Chinese-medium schools for their ethnic groups in order to cope with the denial or the inaccessibility of Dutch medium schools to them.

Besides social institutions, prominently the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan, churches also have played significant roles in binding the Tionghoa and increasing the salience of ethnic identity among them, not only through religious activities such as preaching but also by establishing Christian schools. In the 1920s, the Christian Tionghoa had started to establish Christian Tionghoa associations, such as the Bond Kristen Tionghoa (BKT), which initiated the establishment of the first Tionghoa Church in 1934, namely the Tiong Hwa Kie Tok Kauw Hwee (THKTKH). Later, in 1938, another church called Tiong Hwa Kie Tok Kauw Hwee Thay Hwee Djawa Barat (THKTKH THDB) was established in Jakarta (Hartono, 1990: 95-105).

The founders of these churches believed that although they strongly emphasized Chinese culture and all of their congregations were ethnic Chinese, the churches were Dutch oriented. Later, after the independence of Indonesia, their orientation shifted to Indonesia in the sense that they obeyed the regulations enacted by the authorities. Another important fact is that these
churches were exclusively for the ethnic Chinese. During the 1950s, they experienced political pressure to “assimilate” to the Indonesian mainstream, and they were forced to open to people of other ethnicities and to change their Chinese names to Indonesian names. As a result, they officially changed their name to Gereja Kristen Indonesia (Indonesian Christian Church) in 1958. By this transformation, these churches became to some extent more inclusive and their congregations more multiethnic. However, it is still obvious that most of them are Tionghoa (Hartono, 1990: 203-215).

These churches have a mission to distribute knowledge to people based on the Christian teachings. Thus, they established Christian schools all over Indonesia in which students are taught the Christian faith as well as sciences (Aritonang, 1994: 21-24; Boehlke, 1997: 772-777). These churches continue to play important roles in establishing, managing, and maintaining Christian schools, which are mostly attended by the Tionghoa.

Wang contends that if all children studied in the same school, some integration or even assimilation should take place. He continues that educational and cultural values imparted in such schools would affect the racially different students in similar ways (Wang, 1991: 144). This has become a major concern to the Tionghoa parents who want to pass down their Chinese identity to the younger generations. They are worried about the consequences of sending their children to study with non-Tionghoa in public schools. They are apprehensive that the importance of being Chinese and the sense of Chineseness will decrease or even vanish among their children (Wang, 1991: 144-146). Thus, Chinese-medium schools are seen as an effective way to minimize this consequence. Since Chinese-medium schools were prohibited in Indonesia for decades, the Tionghoa see Christian schools, which were mostly established by Christian
Tionghoa communities, a way to maintain their children’s identity by providing them with more Chinese circumstances.

There are two concepts introduced by Gay Reed (2001) about identity adjustment within a multiethnic society, namely identity fastening and unfastening. Identity fastening is a situation in which individuals claim their status as an insider as they attach insider status to other individuals, while identity unfastening takes place when they move to another milieu where the customs and regulations for membership are different. Here individuals or groups often unfasten their ethnic identity to cope with the rules and norms applied in that particular situation (Reed, 2001: 327-339).

For the Chinese students, their reactions toward their parents’ expectations in regard to their ethnic identity are varied, depending on circumstances. When they are in a Chinese community, they voluntarily claim an identity that gives insider status and they attach insider status to other individuals who share similarities with them. Unlike the Haole and the Happa that were used by Reed in her paper to explain identity unfastening, the Tionghoa do not necessarily need to unfasten their identity when they interact with their non-Tionghoa friends at school or at other places. However, they do need to unfasten their identity when they are in other circumstances where the customs and regulations are extremely different.

In conclusion, the acceptance or the denial of some ethnic or racial groups by the government’s institutions groups strongly contributes to the sense of ethnic or racial identity among them. The long history of the denial of the Dutch government’s schools to the Chinese, followed by the restrictions of the New Order regime toward any Chinese institutions, created strong bonds among the Chinese and increased the salience of the sense of being Chinese. Churches and Christian schools obviously have played very significant roles in this process.
Through churches and Christian schools, Chinese parents feel more confidence that their children can, to some degree, succeed in maintain their Chineseness, although sometimes they have to fasten and unfasten their ethnic identity in order to cope with the milieus in which they are situated.

**B. History and Background of Chinese-Indonesians in Indonesia**

1. Early contact and migration

Although there is no certainty about when the first contact of the Chinese with Indonesia was, ties through trade, Buddhist pilgrimages, and even state-sponsored voyages have been in place for centuries. Wang Gungwu explains that China’s early contact with the outside world can be divided into two categories, overland and overseas contacts. These contacts were initially built under “the myth of superiority” and the concept of *te* (virtue), and designed to convince outsiders to accept the leadership of their King, the son of Heaven (Wang, 1985: 171). This concept was also extended in their contacts with overseas empires in Southeast Asia.

Based on evidence from countries with which Indonesia traded, such as China, scholars believe that Indonesia had been in contact with China through maritime trade perhaps as early as 500 BCE when some ports of Java routinely traded with mainland Southeast Asia and South China. In addition, by the first century CE, Java was tied to the trade route that linked South China and the Roman Empire in Mediterranean (Brown, 2003: 13).

Chinese contact with Southeast Asian realms continued not only in terms of international trade but also in terms of political affiliation. This is proved by the fact that in the third century CE, the Chinese empire sent their envoys to a trading area that the Chinese called “Funan” on the border of what is it now Thailand and Cambodia. An interesting fact about this visit is that the Chinese envoys recognized not only Funan but they had also learned about other kingdoms in the
maritime realms of Southeast Asia. They mentioned “Zhiaying”, which is believed to be Northern Sumatra, and “Sitiao” (most likely Java), as a fertile land that possessed cities with streets (Shaffer, 1996: 26).

In the late fourth century CE Fa Xian, a Buddhist monk, left China for a pilgrimage to India to study Buddhism, and he mentioned that on his journey back to China had stayed on an island in what is now Indonesia.10 Another Chinese Buddhist monk, Yi Jing, sailed from China to India at about the seventh century CE and recorded more details about his pilgrimage, particularly about the Srivijaya Kingdom in the land of Sumatra (Miksic & Tranchini, 1990: 20-21).

Yung Lo’s empire’s missions to Southeast Asian kingdoms such as Champa, Cambodia, Siam, Java, Brunei, Malacca, and the port of Palembang (South Sumatra) took place between 1402 and 1424. Of those missions, the one led by Cheng Ho was remarkable in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia.11 Since that time, Chinese have migrated to Southeast Asian countries, including Indonesia, as traders or laborers. Under the Qing dynasty between 1644 and 1894, overseas trade and settlement were forbidden. China’s government viewed those who left China without official approval from the government as criminals (Govaars, 2005: 14). However, the Chinese, particularly those from the southern coastal provinces of China such as; Fujian and

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10 Fa Xian writes that when he left China, he took the land route from Changan across the deserts, climbed Karakoram Mountain, and made a frightening journey through the Indus River. In 415 CE, he decided to return to China. However, considering the difficult journey by the land route from India, he decided to sail the sea route instead and stopped in a port on South China Sea, which later acknowledged as Srivijaya Kingdom in Sumatra (Shaffer, 1996: 29-38).

11 Scholars believe that on a journey to the Indian Ocean in 1416, one of Cheng Ho’s trusted men, Ong King Hong, became sick during their journey to the Indian Ocean and asked to stop in what is now Semarang. He finally decided to discontinue his journey and stayed in Semarang (Hariyono, 2006: 15-35). There is now a famous Sam Po temple there (Choy, 1999: 234).
Guangdong, and from the Hokkien, Teochiu, Cantonese and Hakka language groups, continued to do so.

In Indonesia, the Chinese were concentrated in West Kalimantan, Bangka, and Java. Mackie (1976) clarifies that there were two phases of Chinese migration to Indonesia. The first phase took place between 1860 and 1890 when the Chinese flocked to the estate area in North Sumatra and tin islands. The second phases happened after the 1900 when the Dutch government lifted their restriction against Chinese migration (Mackie, 1976: 4-5).

2. The Tionghoa’s position under different Indonesian regimes (from the Dutch to the post-Soeharto regimes)

The Tionghoa have different experiences under different circumstances and different governments in Indonesia. Under the Dutch, the Tionghoa were subjected to various policies that often weakened their position politically but at the same time, they were rewarded with opportunities in the economic field. With perseverance and hard work, as well as chances from the government, the Tionghoa were able to establish themselves economically.

Mackie (1976) illustrates the Chinese position in Indonesia under the Dutch government in the following words:

Dutch policy toward the Chinese developed in such a way that they come to occupy an intermediate position in what Wertheim has aptly called “the colonial caste structure”, based on an essentially racial stratification system, between the great mass of the subject Indonesians and a few Europeans who occupied the top level (Mackie, 1976: 4).

The Chinese were considered as bangsa tengah (middle race or middle men), and acted as a bridge or intermediaries between the European and the native Indonesians. They worked for the colonial government as tax collectors in a monopoly concession system through which they could make a considerable amount of money. Furthermore, they expanded their economic
position by owning shops, soap and ice factories, tanneries and lumber companies, and rice-
husking operations. They were also well known for their important roles in money-lending and
the opium trade.

Even though since 1823 the Dutch colonial government had implicitly established a
policy forbidding leasing property and territory to the Chinese and other foreigners, until the
1870s the Chinese were allowed the right to possess capital in the Dutch East Indies. As a result,
they owned large pieces of land, which in some cases they bought from the Europeans. They also
possessed large private estates, and they were allowed to collect taxes from them and to
command labor for their businesses.

Based on these facts, myths about the richness of the Chinese began to grow among the
people of the East Indies. Indeed, there were hundreds of Chinese families who, based on the
income taxes they paid, could be considered rich or even millionaires. Therefore, they were often
subjected to animosity from both the colonial government and the native people. On numerous
occasions they were treated as scapegoats for certain issues, particularly during economic crises
because of their excellent entrepreneurship and the significant amount of capital and properties
they possessed. Unfortunately, both the colonial government and the native people forgot that, in
fact, there were also “hundreds of thousands of the Chinese whose income was barely sufficient
to make ends meet” (Toer, 2007: 90).

During their occupation in Indonesia, the Dutch strictly controlled the Chinese in terms of
citizenship and residence because they believed that the Chinese might create or be involved in
subversive movements (Hariyono, 2006: 15-35). Thus, the Dutch colonial government enacted at
least two regulations that strictly controlled the Chinese community in Netherland East Indies:
passenstelsel and wijkenstelsel. Passenstelsel is a regulation enacted in 1816 in order to control
the Chinese in terms of movement. Through this regulation the government required the Chinese to bring their pass card anytime they traveled to other places. *Wijkenstelsel* is a population policy enacted in 1866 that aimed to centralize the residential place of foreign oriental citizens, including the Chinese. Through this policy, they ordered the Chinese to stay in a particular place called *pecinan (China town)* (Noordjanah, 2010: 83-84).

The Chinese position was also difficult in regard to their civil status; the Dutch and Chinese governments enacted policies based on different principles regarding citizens’ civil status, which allowed the Chinese in Indonesia to have dual nationality. On the one hand, the Dutch followed the principle of *jus soli*, which acknowledged the Chinese as Dutch subjects instead of Dutch citizens while China enacted the principle of *jus sanguinis*, which considered individuals who possess Chinese blood as Chinese citizens despite their place of birth.

After independence, the Indonesian government tried to solve problems relating to the Chinese. However, instead of solving the problems, the government often passed policies that caused the cultural gap between the Tionghoa and the indigenous Indonesian to become wider. It was not until the 1960s that the Indonesian and Chinese governments reached an agreement about the status of Chinese-Indonesian and that the Chinese were given the freedom to choose their nationality. As a result, at least 65% of the Chinese in Indonesia chose to be and registered themselves as Indonesian, and the rest chose to keep their Chinese nationality.

This, in fact, did not completely solve the problem. Although many Chinese had decided to be Indonesians, the Chinese were neither completely accepted as a part of the Indonesian community nor did the discrimination against them stop (Wang, 1976: 209). Native Indonesians still could not totally accept them as an integral part of the Indonesian people. They were still seen as different. More importantly, the fact that there were many Chinese who had been very
deeply involved with the revolution did not change the ‘native’ perception toward the Chinese (Heidhues, 1988, p. 115-116). The stereotype that emerged in the Indonesia was that the Chinese were exclusive groups of people who merely thought about their economic position, and that they were ignorant and careless of their social environment and political situation (Hatta, 1991: 27-28).

To solve this problem, the first president of Indonesia, Soekarno, through Soekarno’s Mandate on February 22, 1963 and the National Building Mandate on July 15, 1963, suggested that exclusivity should be eliminated from among the Indonesia people. All Indonesian citizens should be assimilated into the national culture and group cultures should be set aside. This policy was made clearer by the Instruction of the President No. 14/1967, issued by Soeharto, which suggested that on behalf of the assimilation effort and process, Chinese customs and belief systems, as well as practices that maintained affiliation with China, should be practiced only privately or internally within families (Dwipayana & KH, 1989: 278-279).

As a result, the Chinese were not only banned from practicing their religion, culture, customs, and tradition in public space but they were also prohibited from using Chinese names and were forced to change them to more Indonesian names. Moreover, they were also required to obtain the Indonesian Citizenship Certificate (SBKRI) as a proof of their nationality. Tjia Kiok Eng is the birth name of Krisnawati Suryanata (1998), a citizen of Indonesia and an assistant professor at the University of Hawai‘i, who narrates her experience:

It banned all cultural practices of Chinese origins, and required us to change our names. My parents never felt comfortable with the new names they picked from thin air. For us kids, what we missed the most were all the celebrations surrounding the lunar New Year: the lion dance, the lantern festival, and of course, the red envelopes of pocket money we could have asked from neighbors and relatives. Imagine taking away Christmas or Hanukkah from your children (Tjia, 1998).
There are at least two economic policies passed by Soekarno and Soeharto’s administration that greatly restricted the Chinese from expanding their economic position: first, Government Policy Number 10/1959 which restricted the Chinese from residence at the district and village levels and thus required them to live in urban areas and to transfer their businesses to Indonesian nationals. Through this policy, the government meant to centralize the Chinese so that they were only in the urban areas and to take over their kiosks and small outlets that were located in rural areas. As result, there were at least 90,000 Chinese merchants whose retail outlets and kiosks would be taken over by government cooperatives, and thus, at least 90 thousand Chinese families would lose their source of revenue (Toer, 2007: 84-89). Second, in 1967 the Soeharto’s cabinet issued a policy called “Basic Solution to the Chinese Problem”. This policy basically stated that capital owned by Chinese-Indonesians should not be viewed as foreign capital but as national or domestic capital in the hands of “aliens”, distinct from foreign capital.

Anti-Chinese riots are not new in Indonesia. Animosity towards the Chinese community in Indonesia has been recorded at least since 1740 when many Javanese joined the Dutch following conflict with the Chinese. During the violence that resulted, approximately 10,000 ethnic Chinese were killed (Choy, 1999: 232-233; Klinken, 2003: 66). Other violence towards the Chinese during the Soeharto period occurred during the September 30th 1966 movement, which in Indonesian is known as G30S PKI (this stands for the September 30th Indonesian Communist Party’s Movement) and the May 1998 riots. Both of these events, regardless of their political or economic causes, were catastrophic for the Chinese. An untold number of Chinese were killed, many Chinese women became the victims of gang rape, and their houses, kiosks, outlets, and shops were looted and burnt. They were blamed for political reasons, although in
fact most of them were politically indifferent. They were also blamed for economic reasons because some of the Chinese are economically affluent (Purdey, 2005: 23-27).

After the collapse of the Soeharto administration in 1998, the focus of government policy toward the Chinese gradually shifted from assimilation and the eradication of the group’s exclusivity to the issue of their safety and freedom. After the riots, the government tried to ensure the safety of the Chinese and assure them that there would be no more similar outbreaks of hostility. However, this assurance was just like words in the thin air. The Chinese believed that no one could guarantee their safety as no one could clearly explain the reasons behind the anti-Chinese riots that have been so common in Indonesia.

President BJ Habibie\(^{12}\), who took over the presidency after Soeharto gave up his position, was well known for his “bring the Chinese back home” policies. He enacted at least three fundamental laws in order to eliminate discrimination against the Chinese-Indonesians. In July 1998 he established the Joint Fact-Finding Team for the May Violence in order to respond to lobbying from women’s groups and victims’ groups as well as from the International community, and to investigate the facts behind the May 1998 riot. In September 16, 1998 Habibie enacted Presidential Instruction No. 26/1998, which instructed that the terms \textit{pri} (indigenous) and \textit{non pri} (non-indigenous) should no longer be used in official government policy and business. In addition, equal opportunity should be granted to all Indonesians regardless of their ethnic group, religion, or race (Kusno, 2003: 154-176). Further, in May 1999, Presidential Instruction No.4/1999 was enacted which declared that the Indonesian Citizenship Certificate (SBKRI) that once was required for Chinese-Indonesians would no longer be

\(^{12}\) He led Indonesia only for a short term from 1998-1999.
necessary and that the KTP (identity card) is sufficient as a proof of citizenship (Lindsay, 2005: 52).

In term of politics, in the 1999 general election there were at least three political parties using Tionghoa issues as their platform namely: The Indonesia Assimilation Party, the Indonesia Tionghoa Reform Party, and the Bhinneka Tunggal Ika Party. Unfortunately, these parties failed to gain votes during the first selection and thus were not able to compete in the 1999 election. Hence, they converted to nongovernmental organizations.

The failure of the Tionghoa parties in gathering votes for the election might have been caused by two kinds of factors: internal and external. Some of the internal factors are, first, the lack of confidence among the leaders of the parties themselves about whether they would be able to compete and contribute to the politics of the nation. Second, these parties barely had strategic perspectives or identifiable objectives; thus they lacked support even among the Tionghoa themselves. Third, the Tionghoa were still suffering from the trauma of the past. Thus, they tended to stay away from politics, and voted for sake of their safety and the continuity of their businesses and life in Indonesia. For that reason, in the 1999 election most of them voted for the big political party in the hope that whoever was elected as the president from that party would ensure the stability and the security of the country. As a result, Tionghoa parties are fairly difficult to develop (Kusuma & Dharma, 2006: 197).

Other factors that contribute to the difficulty of developing Tionghoa parties indicate that the stereotypes that have labeled the Tionghoa for centuries still persist within the society. When politics opened to the Tionghoa, they began to become involved by establishing Tionghoa parties or organizations, but then they are viewed as being exclusive. Some people see them as trying to develop their own sub-culture. Others think that they are not loyal to the nation, do not want to
integrate with Indonesian culture, and simply do not understand the value of Indonesian unity (Dawis, 2010: 60-70).

In the 2004 general election, the Tionghoa were more active. Although the Tionghoa party still did not gain a significant number of votes, there were many Tionghoa competing in the election. Additionally, their political affiliation was wider in the sense that they no longer focused only on issues. Instead, they were more concerned about their safety and the convenience of doing business and investing. In terms of culture and tradition, at least since 2000, Chinese New Year is publicly celebrated with the performance of the barongsai (Lion dance). Moreover, Chinese characters have begun to appear in public spaces and some buildings have begun to incorporate explicit elements of Chinese architecture (Kusno, 2003: 166).

The experiences of the Tionghoa under the varying policies of different regimes in Indonesia have generally placed them in precarious position. Although they have now been granted freedom to practice their traditions and the political restrictions toward them have been abolished, they still feel the trauma of being oppressed for decades. Additionally, it is apparent that nowadays in Indonesia the Chinese are still politically “weak” but economically “strong”.

These facts are important in order to understand the features of contemporary Tionghoa not only in Java but also in the outer islands. These facts are also important as background information to clearly see that the stereotypes about Tionghoa still exist and among other Indonesians, and, to some extent, this influences the form of interaction between these groups. From this study, we will see that this unintended stereotyping is manifested not so much in words but in actions.
C. Chinese-Indonesians in West Nusatenggara Province

1. West Nusatenggara Province; An overview

West Nusatenggara, officially named Nusatenggara Barat, is a province in the south-central part of Indonesia. It occupies 20,153.15 square kilometers of land, which consists of two islands, Lombok and Sumbawa. To the west, this province shares a sea border with Bali, as it does to the east with East Nusatenggara province; to the north it is surrounded by the Java Sea and the Flores Sea, and to the south it is surrounded by the Indonesian Ocean (BPS, 2011).

In general, Indonesia divides its administration into five levels: state, province, region, district, and village. As a province, Nusatenggara Barat consists of regions across both islands. Four regions are located on Lombok (Lombok Barat, Lombok Tengah, Lombok Timur, and Lombok Utara) with the one municipal city of Mataram, and four are on Sumbawa (Sumbawa Barat, Sumbawa, Dompu, Bima) with the one municipal city of Bima. Both of these islands are occupied by several different ethnic groups with different customs and traditions. Historically, these islands have been occupied by different kingdoms, which have contributed to their inhabitants’ ways of life, cultures, and traditions.

Sumbawa was occupied by the Gowa Kingdom from south Sulawesi in the early seventeenth century (Andaya, 1981: 280-289; Bulbeck, 1996: 305). This kingdom introduced Islam to Sumbawa’s inhabitants, who were originally animists. The Sultanate of Gowa expanded its territory from the central to the west part of Sumbawa, and even to the eastern part of Lombok. There are two main languages in Sumbawa; Basa Semawa is mainly spoken in the central part, with a different dialect of the same language being spoken in the west. The other language, spoken in the eastern part of the island, is Basa Mbojo. This eastern area was under the
Bima Sultanate, which was also under the influence of the Gowa Sultanate, and thus also had an Islamic influence.

Lombok’s history has been quite different from that of Sumbawa. Because of its fertile soil, Lombok was conquered by two different kingdoms, and so was separated in terms of culture. While the Gowa Sultanate occupied the central-east part of the island, the Karangasem Kingdom from the central-east part of Bali conquered the west-central part of Lombok. The eastern to the central part of the island developed an Islamic culture, which was introduced and developed by the Gowa Sultanate. On the other hand, the central to the western part of the island developed Balinese-Hindu culture, which was introduced by the Karangasem Kingdom.

However, by the time the Karangasem Kingdom took control of the east-central part of the island from the Gowa Sultanate, the native inhabitants (the Sasak) were Muslim, although they had a Hindu ruler.

Hagerdal (2001) explains that the Sasak in the western and the eastern parts of Lombok reacted differently toward their Hindu counterparts and rulers. “While the two ethnic groups were fairly well integrated in the western part of the island, the central-eastern part saw an increasing dissatisfaction toward their Hindu ruler” (Hagerdal, 2001: 5). This condition could hint at an answer to the question of why the Sasak in the western part of the island are fairly well integrated with the Chinese-Indonesians compared to those in the central-eastern part.

The population of Lombok comprises different ethnic groups including the Sasak (the indigenous population of the island), Bimaese, Sumbawanese, Balinese, Javanese, Bugis, Tionghoa, and so on. However, these groups, particularly the Sasak in the eastern and western part of the island, react differently toward those of other ethnicities, and especially toward those of different religions. The people in western Lombok are more open to other people of different
ethnicities and religions, while people in eastern Lombok are fairly conservative and less open to other cultures and religions.

Pancor, in eastern Lombok is the base for Nahdhatul Wathan, the biggest Islamic organization in Nusa Tenggara Barat, which was established in 1935. This organization mainly works on Islamic-based education from the *ibtidaiyah* (elementary school) to university level. The community members there are obedient followers of this organization. They strongly honor their leader who is not only the leader of the organization but also a religious leader or teacher who is often called *Tuan Guru* (Master Teacher).

During my field research, I happened to talk with Sulmi, a woman from Selong, eastern Lombok, who has lived on Sumbawa for more than ten years. Although she does not return to Selong regularly, she still carries with her the spirit and the tradition of that place. When asked her opinion about people of different religions in Selong, she brought up the story of the expulsion of the Chinese from eastern Lombok in 1966, during what is known as *Gestapu* (the September 30th movement) and *Gestok* (the October 1st movement). All of the Chinese assets, such as houses, retail outlets, and business kiosks, were burnt and the Chinese themselves were evacuated to Ampenan, western Lombok. This riot, to some extent, was a continuation of the anti-Chinese riot under the label of the “anti communist movement” that swept across Java and was particularly pronounced in Jakarta because many Chinese were accused of being communist. In another way, the anti-Chinese riot in eastern Lombok was veiled by the religious issue, where the Chinese were associated with Christianity or other religions that were different from the religion of the majority of the indigenous people, Islam.

Sulmi herself does not clearly understand why it happened. To her, it was because the Chinese are not Muslim: “All of us in Selong are Muslim and we don’t eat pork. But they are not
Muslim. I don’t know their religion but I know that they eat pork and some of them also have pig farms. People don’t like it” (Sulmi, pers. comm. Sumbawa, June 2011). Although it is clear that the Nahdhatul Wathan as well as the Tuan Guru play significant roles within the community, the extent to which they influence people’s attitudes toward their counterparts of different religions should be understood more deeply in order to understand whether or not inter-religions prejudice is influenced by religious leaders.

2. Early Chinese contact and migration to Lombok

There is no significant information about the first contact of the Chinese with the islands of Lombok and Sumbawa, nor about which island was first visited by the Chinese. Neither the Tionghoa themselves nor the local government could explain this in a convincing way, since there are no written documents and no research has been conducted to retrieve the history. During my fieldwork, I asked the people I interviewed about this history, and I also talked to the local government officials at the museum of the province. Some Tionghoa told me that their ancestors have been in the island since the Japanese occupation (1942 – 1945), but they emphasized that these are stories from their parents and they did not know for sure if they were true. Hence, some materials, such as ceramics and Chinese temples, as well as those stories and memories that are passed down from generation to generation, are very helpful in providing primary data.

Although there was probably much earlier trade, the first tangible evidence of Chinese contact with the islands of Lombok and Sumbawa dates to the early nineteenth to twentieth centuries. The Chinese temple (klenteng), Pho Hwa Kong in Ampenan, was founded in 1804. This klenteng is also known as the second oldest in Indonesia (the oldest is in Semarang). A traditional Chinese belief is that parents and ancestors are the most important part of a person’s
life. Being respectful to the elderly, particularly one’s ancestors, is a fundamental belief for them. To demonstrate their respect, the Chinese usually have a special spot in their house decorated with candles, the image of some deity such as Guanyin (the Boddhisatva of compassion), and dupa (incense). This spot is used as a special place to pray for their ancestors.

Klenteng Pho Hwa Kong was built close to the port of Ampenan, which is one of the oldest ports in Lombok. Pak Mangku, the caretaker, explained that this klenteng was built because the Chinese traders needed a place to celebrate Qing Ming, a monthly ceremony when they pray for their ancestors. The Chinese traders who stopped over at the Ampenan port would stay there for weeks to load and unload their ships. They usually brought Chinese textiles to be bartered for local products such as rice.

An official informant from the Museum of the Province provided the information that the Chinese traders who stopped over at the port of Ampenan usually also sailed through the Saleh Bay to the port of Alas at the island of Sumbawa. By that time, in the early twentieth century, Sumbawa and Lombok were well known as places of early Chinese contact and migration, where the Chinese came to obtain supplies of rice and wood. Sumbawa’s folklore mentions the Sumbawa Sultanate’s trading and political relationships with the Gowa Sultanate, which was interested in the horses of Sumbawa (popular because of their endurance), and with the Bima Sultanate, including the Dutch Government but Chinese traders are barely mentioned in the folklore.

In April 1815, Mount Tambora on the island of Sumbawa erupted. Thousands of inhabitants died and three kingdoms, Sanggar, Pekat, and Tambora, which were located around the mountain, disappeared (Boers, 1993). In 2004, the government carried out an excavation on

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13 The Dutch was interested in the sappanwood of Sumbawa for export to the European markets.
the island and found important historical artifacts, including pieces of Chinese ceramics, showing that the Chinese had been in contact with the island at least since the early nineteenth century, and probably earlier. For research and scientific purposes, these ceramics are now kept in the Regional Museum in Bali.

The time of the first migration of Chinese to the island is also unknown. Loe Kaw Hwe (also called Alvin Loe) is a member of the first generation of Tionghoa in Lombok. His father was a China-born Chinese who migrated to the island after two years in Singapore. He was 30 years old by the time he migrated to the island. Loe does not know exactly when that was, but he has reconstructed the time span it by counting back from the year of his father’s death in 1962: “He was 87 years old when he passed away in 1962” (Alvin Loe, pers. comm., 2011).

Meanwhile, he had been in Indonesia for 57 years, so it seems that he migrated to Indonesia in 1905. Loe explains that when his father arrived, there were already some other Chinese settlers on the island. However, their number was very small and they were scattered from the east to the west part of the island.

Hau Hok Kiang (also called Anton Hau) is also among the first generation of Tionghoa on the island. He was born in 1937 and is now working as a caretaker of the Hakka Association Building. Like Loe, Hau does not know when his father migrated to the island, but he believes that it was during the early 1900s, based on his knowledge of his family history:

My father had married my mother when he migrated, but he couldn’t take my mother with him because my mother had just given birth to my first brother. Then she waited for some time, until my elder brother was older and able to go on a long and dangerous journey. My mom did not migrate directly to the island. For some reason she stopped over at Semarang for months and waited for my father to pick them up to go to the island” (Hau Hok Kiang, pers. comm., June 2011)
Based on Hau’s memories, we can assume that the first phase of the migration of the contemporary Chinese community to Lombok took place in the early 1900s. Since then, many other China-born Chinese have migrated to the island. Some of them stayed for years on other islands such as Sumatra and Kalimantan before moving to Lombok. Fu Ching Si (Bernard Fu), a senior high school student, says that his grandfather, Lau Fu, is a China-born Chinese who stayed in Banjarmasin for more than fifty years. In 1966, he decided to move to Lombok because his business in Banjarmasin was not very successful.

The Pho Hwa Kong Klenteng in Ampenan gives important information about many things in regard to the existence of the Chinese in the island, such as their trade and business networks, social relationships with the Sasak, and their religious affiliation. Loe adds the information that the klenteng was first built in 1804, but at that time, it was not regarded as a sacred shrine. Instead, it was only a house that functioned as a place to pray. It was renovated in 1908, and in 1911 was rebuilt as the klenteng that can be seen today.

3. The features of the Chinese-Indonesians on Lombok

Ronny Abdikesuma, the Chief of the Paguyuban Sosial Marga Tionghoa Indonesia (PSMTI; Indonesian Tionghoa Social Association), says that the number of Tionghoa in the province of Nusatenggara Barat is around twelve thousand, which constitutes 0.3 percent of the population. Two thousand of them are scattered from the western to the eastern part of Sumbawa. Of the remaining ten thousand, most are concentrated in the west-central part of Lombok, while a small portion are scattered from the central to the eastern part of Lombok.

Official statistics on the number of Chinese on the island have not been released by the government. The Indonesian government, through the provincial governments, regularly does a population census every ten years. The last census was in 2010, but some information, including
the number of Chinese on the island, will not be released until 2012. The existing data that is available is from the 2000 census, which does not provide the exact number of Chinese on the island or any clear explanation about their economic and social life.

Abdul Hakim, an official at the Statistic Center of the province, explains that the government did not recognize the Chinese as an ethnic group like any other ethnic group, such as the Javanese, Buginese, or Bataknese, until 2002, when the country was ruled by its third president, Abdurrahman Wahid, who then established a policy to recognize the Chinese as an integral part and equal citizens of Indonesia. Thus, the 2010 survey is the first survey that investigates the Chinese in Indonesia (Abdul Hakim, pers. comm., 2011).

Most of the Chinese who migrated to the island in the early part of the twentieth century worked as traders. They began their businesses as small retailers. At that time, the sea ports played an important role in connecting one island to the others and ensuring the distribution of goods from one place to the other. There are three significant sea ports on the islands of Sumbawa and Lombok: the port of Ampenan in the west-central part of Lombok, the port of Labuan Haji in the eastern part of Lombok, and the port of Labuhan Alas in the west-central part of Sumbawa. These ports also were important as places where traders met, sold, and bartered their goods.

Life was not easy for the Chinese. They had to work hard to establish and develop their businesses. They had to deal not only with the normal challenges of life, but also with social challenges because they were hardly accepted by the Sasak due to their culture and religious affiliation, which is different from the local people who are mostly Muslim.

Hau’s father began his business by selling pork. It was not easy for him since pork is not a halal food (i.e., Muslims are not allowed to eat it). Therefore, his market was limited only to
the Chinese community, which was very small. He sold the pork while traveling by bicycle from Selong in eastern Lombok to Cakranegara and Ampenan in central Lombok, which is not less than forty kilometers. His business was not very successful, and became worse when the government enacted a law with major restrictions on the Chinese (Government Policy No. 10/1958), which permitted the Chinese to live and run their businesses only at the regional level. They were not allowed to move to higher or lower levels of the state administration.

Hau did not stay with his family in Selong after he was about seven years old. His parents sent him to Mataram to stay with relatives because there was no good Chinese school in Selong at that time. Hau’s parents were very concerned about their children’s education, and they told Hau it was because they did not want him to be a merchant. They wanted their children to find better jobs.

Hau went to Chinese primary and secondary school at Ampenan. After secondary school, he went to Surabaya for high school because there was no Chinese high school in Lombok and the Chinese were not allowed to attend the national public schools. After one year in high school, Hau decided to quit school and he worked as a laborer. After two years, he decided to go back to school. Hau graduated from high school in 1960. After he graduated, he returned to Lombok and served as a teacher at both the Chinese primary and secondary schools. As a teacher, his salary was very small. Besides being a teacher he also helped with his family’s business.

Hau’s family business was not very successful. None of his children graduated from high school. In his old age, he still works as an official of the Hakka Association Building, which is a low-paying job, and he has no pension benefits.

Lau Fu moved to Lombok during the political crisis in 1966. He began his business by selling clothes at the Ampenan market, where he owned a small kiosk. Unfortunately, the market
was burnt in 1970. Then he began another business. He knew that the Sasak liked to eat venison. Lau Fu began to make venison jerky and even now his jerky is very popular on the island. He was one of the successful Chinese businessmen on the island. Nowadays, his children continue making jerky not only from venison but also from beef and lamb; they run the business he started and have expanded their market not only to other islands in Indonesia but also to Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines.

Alvin Loe’s experience was less happy. He has nine siblings. His father worked as a merchant and sold pork in Labuhan Haji, eastern Lombok, for two years. Selling pork was not a good business. After staying in Labuhan Haji, his father decided to move to Selong and started building a small kiosk where he sold bicycles. Unfortunately, during the 1966 riots (the Gestapu and the Gestok), his kiosk, house, and all of his assets were burnt. Because the Chinese in eastern Lombok were the target of the riots, all of them were relocated to Ampenan in west-central Lombok, which was more conducive to community acceptance than other places in east and some parts of central Lombok.

During that crisis, the majority of the Chinese decided to return to China; however, some opted to stay, frequently because of financial reasons or fear of an unknown life in China. Chen Yao Min was one who stayed. He told me: “We really wanted to go back. But of course it needs a lot of money, which we couldn’t afford” (Chen Yao Min, pers. comm., 2011). Other Chinese decided to stay because they were unsure about what their life back in China would be like. Ang Ai Li, Loe’s wife, says that “we couldn’t return to China because we were no longer accepted there” (Ang Ai Li, pers. comm., 2011). She continues that although it was possible for her to find her family back in China, but the Chinese people in China, including her family, saw overseas Chinese as different community. Although they are no longer considered as traitors as was the
case in the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries they are still seen as different group of people. They are seen as either Huaqiau or Huayi which is different from the Huaren.

Loe’s family is one of the small numbers of Chinese families who decided to stay. In 1966, he was attending a Chinese secondary school. Unfortunately, his school was closed four months after he started. Since his father was not able to afford the tuition for him to continue his education in Surabaya, he decided to go and find a job in Jakarta. After four years, he decided to return to Lombok and start his own business. He began his business with a small kiosk at Cakranegara selling groceries. Then, in 1980, he expanded his business by opening a small photo shop. He explained, “At that time, my photo shop was a really promising business since there weren’t many people who had photography skills. I learned this skill from my elder brother, who also owned a photo shop at Selong” (Alvin Loe, pers. comm., 2011).

However, his business did not run smoothly because the Chinese were not recognized as citizens by the Indonesian government. Consequently, they were not given the right to own land or buildings unless they requested citizenship. At that time, Loe did not have citizenship status. But he was lucky because his older brother, Loe Ko Tiang, had converted to Islam, married a local woman in Selong, changed his name to Lukman Taufik, and gone on the hajj to Mecca. Thus, he was very well accepted and respected by the Sasak. At that time, Lukman owned a stable photo shop. When Loe started his business and faced difficulties because of his citizenship status, he was able to put all his assets in Lukman’s name. Other Chinese acquired land or buildings by buying from the local people and keeping the certificates of ownership under the previous owner’s name.

According to the 2000 survey, more than 52 percent of Lombok dwellers are merchants (BPS NTB, 2001). This, of course, does not mean that most of them are Chinese. However, it is
clear that most of the Chinese are merchants. Ronny Abdikesuma gave several reasons why the Chinese prefer to be merchants. First, it is easier for them to be merchants due to the difficulty of getting official papers, which are not required for a merchant. Second, it is very difficult for them to be officials in a government institution because ethnic boundaries between “the locals” and the Chinese are strongly maintained. Hence, they are likely to fail from the beginning because they are Chinese and not “local.” Third, even when they are able to pass the test to be an official in a government institution, it is less likely for them to hold a significant position. Most of them would probably end up in a low position. “For these reasons, they would rather be merchants through which they can make money and earn a good living” (Rony Abdikesuma, pers. comm., 2011).

However, this does not mean that all of the Chinese are rich. Some of them are indeed, such as Alvin Loe, who now owns two luxurious photo shops in Mataram, and a traditional-style restaurant and a hotel in Senggigi, a central tourism destination in Mataram. But there are also poor Chinese who own very small kiosks or work in low-paying jobs. These different features of the Tionghoa in the municipality of Mataram, to some extents, could explain their different perceptions on their identity as well as their different expectations regarding their children’s identity.
Chapter 3
Education for the Tionghoa: Past and Present

As I explained in the previous chapters, the Chinese in Indonesia had faced numerous political, social, and economical adversities regarding their existence and their identity. Their politically constructed social and economic status as middle men for the Dutch created a social gap which, to some extent, is still transmitted from generation to generation. They, too, are always regarded as scapegoats for economic crises in Indonesia and have been subjected to anti-Chinese movements where their houses, shops, kiosks, and other assets were burnt and looted. In addition, they have always faced great uncertainty in terms of education for their children. All of these difficulties and the pain of discrimination have contributed to creating strong bonds among the Chinese in Indonesia (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998: 169).

This chapter is divided into three parts: the first part focuses on the history from the establishment to the closure of Chinese schools in Indonesia, with some information about Chinese schools in the province of West Nusatenggara; the second part examines the education of the Tionghoa in the municipality of Mataram from the past to the present time; and the third part discusses the current education system in Indonesia.

A. The History of the Education of the Tionghoa in Indonesia

After the 1998 reforms that took place in Indonesia, the Tionghoa began to enjoy the freedom to express their cultural and ethnic identity, which had been taken away from them for about three decades. Following the reforms, they were permitted to use their Chinese names, establish pan-Chinese organizations, speak their languages, and celebrate their rituals and traditions. Many people assume that at least since 1998 the Tionghoa have been considered completely as Indonesians, and indeed, the Tionghoa themselves believe that despite the fact
that they are reclaiming their Chineseness, they are absolutely Indonesians since they no longer have any affiliation or orientation toward China.

The Tionghoa transmit their sense of ethnic identity from generation to generation through schools, church activities, temple events, social gatherings, and traditional celebrations. Although the more recent generations of the Tionghoa hardly speak any Chinese at all, parents attempt to inculcate a sense of Chineseness in their children if it is only to a very small degree. Schooling, the focus of this paper, is an important means through which the Tionghoa can transmit their identity.

Today there is one elite and well-known pan-Chinese school in Indonesia called the Jakarta Taiwan School. This school consists of an elementary school and junior high school and is situated in Jakarta. This school was built by Taiwanese sojourners and businessmen in 1991 and was initially intended to provide the same education their children would have received in Taiwan. The Jakarta Taiwan School uses Mandarin as the main language with some classes in Bahasa Indonesia. 90% of the teachers at this school are qualified teachers from Taiwan, while for classes in English are taught by highly qualified Indonesian teachers and some native speakers. To encourage cultural exchange among students, the school began to accept students of other nationalities. It became highly attractive to the Tionghoa because it uses Mandarin and English as mediums of instruction. Not many Indonesians attend this school, partly because this is an elite private school that demands high tuition, which only affordable to the affluent.

The majority of the Tionghoa send their children to either Catholic or Protestant schools, depending on their religious faith. As noted earlier, in the municipality of Mataram there are some elite Christian schools (mainly Protestant), notably the Alethea School and Budi Luhur School, described in Chapter 1. Both schools provide English and Mandarin lessons for their
students. However, at Alethea, English and Mandarin are taught as foreign languages while at Budi Luhur, they prepare their students to use English and Mandarin as second languages. Budi Luhur also attempts to use these languages as mediums of instruction within the school.

The Mandarin teachers at Alethea are mostly Tionghoa who graduated from a university in either China or Taiwan, while at Budi Luhur, the Mandarin teachers are native speakers from either China or Taiwan, and they are accompanied by an early generation of Tionghoa teachers who speak Mandarin as their second language (along with Bahasa Indonesia). During my field research in both schools I found that despite the similarities—the majority of students (around 80%) at both schools are Tionghoa—Alethea, to some degree, is more exclusive than Budi Luhur in a sense that Budi Luhur welcomes “outsiders” more openly than Alethea.

In Indonesia, private schools must be run by a social foundation that technically belongs to the community. Commonly, Christian schools in Indonesia, including those in Mataram, are supported by churches. Churches play important roles in establishing and financing the schools in the early stages. Later on, the churches support the schools in terms of management, in which they usually cooperate with the government (the Ministry of Education) in the sense that these schools have to be in accordance with the Indonesian national education system and curriculum. Additionally, besides recruiting their own teachers, these schools employ teachers recruited by the government. However, churches play very prominent roles in deciding on the school principal and board members.

In terms of the school system and curriculum, these schools incorporate the same curriculum as is used in national public schools. Bahasa Indonesia is the primary medium of instruction, although some Christian schools nowadays have begun to emphasize the use of English and Mandarin as second languages (for instance at Alethea and Budi Luhur). Indonesian
history, geography, economic system, and civic education are compulsory subjects at all school in Indonesia, including Christian schools. In addition, religion is also a compulsory subject in Indonesian schools.

Christian schools differ in terms of religious subjects. Catholic schools usually provide all students with classes about their own religion. Usually, the religion class is given every Friday morning from seven to eight o’clock; students are grouped according to their religions and are taught by their religion’s teacher. In some Protestant schools such as Alethea, Protestantism is the only religion taught at school.

Nowadays, the education system in Indonesia, particularly the education for the Tionghoa, differs considerably from the type of instruction during the period when Indonesia was colonized by the Dutch and the Japanese, and also during the early period of Indonesian independence. It is important to understand the dynamics of the Tionghoa’s educational experiences so that we can better understand how, at present, Christian schools play very significant roles in transmitting ethnic identity and a sense of Chineseness among the Tionghoa.

There were two phases in the development of schools under the Dutch in Indonesia: the first was 1600-1800, when Indonesia was ruled by the Dutch East India Company (VOC); the second was 1800-1900 when the Dutch colonial government took over control of Indonesia from VOC. Govaars (1995) explains that before the second arrival of the Dutch in Maluku in 1605, the Portuguese had built schools that offered their students a Catholic education and used Portuguese as the medium of instruction. Thus, when the Dutch arrived, it was rather difficult for them to take over the Portuguese schools and both convert them to the Protestant faith and shift from Portuguese to Dutch as the medium of instruction.
In Java, the Dutch tried to offer the native Javanese and the Chinese education in Dutch missionary schools. In 1611, the Amsterdam Church Council required these schools to teach students religion, reading, and writing and attempted to promote evangelization within the Javanese and the Chinese communities. However, these schools were filled by Chinese students because the native Javanese had become Muslim before the arrival of the Dutch and so were less interested.

In fact, before the arrival of the Dutch in Java, both the Javanese and Chinese had already established their own education systems. The Muslim Javanese provided education to their children in langgar (mosques) and were led by a kyai (Islamic scholars) to teach the Islamic faith. On the other hand, the Chinese also provided their children, particularly boys, with several skills such as reading, arithmetic and bookkeeping using Chinese characters. During the sixteenth to the seventeenth century, there were at least two hundred traditional Chinese schools. These schools were known as Hokkien schools due to the fact that they used Hokkien as the medium of instruction. In addition, these schools trained their students mainly to memorize, rather than to understand, the Confucian classics. Chinese from affluent families provided education for their children in several ways, such as hiring teachers from China and, holding classes in their own houses, while the Chinese community provided education for the children of less affluent families (Suryadinata, 1972: 51).

During the nineteenth century, the Dutch in the East Indies began to establish schools with a modern curriculum. The first Dutch government school was opened in 1817 in Batavia; however, this school was only for European students. During this period, it was almost impossible for both the Chinese and the native students to go to the European schools since the
Education Council believed that “the admission of the Chinese and the Javanese together with the Europeans would be detrimental to the moral development of the latter” (Govaars, 2005: 41).

Prior to 1854, the Dutch government allowed native children to enroll in European schools, but in fact it was only the children of the headmen or wealthier parents who were admitted to these schools. Children of less-affluent native or Chinese parents were left out. It was not until 1854 that the Dutch began to address the importance of providing education for the natives and established 58 elementary schools for native students in Java (Govaars, 2005: 40-42). Govaars explains that in 1893 the Dutch reorganized the education system by classifying schools for the indigenous peoples into two classes. The first class of schools offered five-year courses for students and was designated for the children of headmen and prominent persons, while the second class of schools offered three-year courses and was designated for common people.

European elementary schools were officially closed to the Chinese. Thus, they sent their children to Protestant missionary schools. In fact, these schools had been meant for the native students, but as the natives were Muslim and already had established schools led by their kyai (Islamic scholars), they were less interested in the missionary schools, which, therefore, were filled with Chinese students (Suryadinata, 1972: 52). In 1872, the Dutch government enacted a new regulation that allowed the Chinese to enroll in both first class and second class European schools; nevertheless, the Dutch implemented higher fees for Chinese students. Consequently, only students from affluent families could afford to enroll in these schools, while students of less affluent families could only go to second class European or native schools, which were less expensive and admitted charity students. Second class European and native schools were less attractive to wealthy Chinese because these schools only used Malay, instead of Dutch, as the language of instruction.
Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan (THHK) is a modern Chinese organization that was founded in Batavia in 1900. Realizing that the Dutch government were not inclined to provide children of Chinese descent with an education in the Chinese tradition, the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan established schools whose main goal was to ensure that Chinese culture – in particular, the teachings of Confucius, which include such concepts as *te* (virtue) (Mackie, 1976: 26) – was taught to Chinese students. These schools were open to all of the Chinese community regardless of differences in language, geographical origin, ancestry, or whether they were Totok or Peranakan (Murray, 1964: 75-78).

These Chinese schools used Mandarin as their language of instruction whilst the curricula and books were identical to those used in China. Students also learned about Chinese culture and heritage and learned both Mandarin and English. In fact, the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan attempted to offer their students the Dutch language as well; however, the Dutch colonial government rejected their proposal to provide students with help learning Dutch. Since it was cheaper to bring teachers from Singapore to teach students English rather than paying Dutch teachers, the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan decided to teach English as a second language for their students.

A goal of the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan was to resinicize the Chinese who could not speak any Chinese dialect, in particular the Peranakan. Since their establishment in 1901, the Chinese schools under the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan had been effectively used as a tool to promote and strengthen Chinese tradition within the Chinese community in Indonesia. This was achieved not only through the use of Mandarin as the language of instruction, but also by sending their graduates to receive secondary education in China, with the expenses being covered by the Chinese government.
After the political movement in China in 1911 that led to the establishment of the Republic of China, the Dutch government became more aware of the existence of Chinese schools because these schools apparently showed their affiliation with China. The Dutch believed that strong affiliation between the Chinese in the Indies with China might lead to subversive movements by the Chinese that could harm the colonial position. Consequently, all private schools – particularly the Chinese schools – were considered “wild schools” and were put under the direct supervision of the government. Furthermore, the Dutch then established Dutch-Chinese schools that aimed to attract Chinese students and thus detach them from their affiliation to China (Suryadinata, 1972: 54-55).

By 1908, wealthier Chinese parents preferred to send their children to Dutch-Chinese schools rather than to the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan schools because they saw that Dutch-Chinese schools held out greater prospects than the THHK schools, in the sense that the curriculum at Dutch-Chinese schools was applicable to life in the Indies; in addition, the Dutch-Chinese schools offered their students the possibility of higher education in the Netherlands. Meanwhile, students of THHK schools could rarely continue to higher education because THHK only slowly established post-primary schools, while continuing school in China was also difficult because of the existing stereotypes in China that those who had left China were traitors. Thus, it was not easy for the Chinese in Indonesia to be accepted within the Chinese community in China (Govaars, 2005: 85-88).

The Tiong Hoa Hwe Kwan schools encountered difficulties not only from the Dutch government but also from within the Chinese community. The western-educated Peranakan criticized some aspects of the THHK schools: first they thought that the curriculum was not appropriate for Chinese living in the Indies due to the fact that Chinese languages were not used
in government service; second, graduates from these schools were often subject to discrimination and paid less compared to those who graduated from the same level of Dutch schools; and third, until 1920 the THHK school system ended with primary education. To solve these problems, some efforts were made by the committee of the Tiong Hoa Hwe Kwan to reform their schools, but they were not successful due to lack of funds. Consequently, affluent Chinese parents preferred to send their children to Dutch schools rather than to THHK schools.

Protestant missionary schools played very prominent roles in filling the gap between the inclination of the Chinese to send their children to Dutch schools and their ability to afford the tuition at those schools. The first missionary school established in the Indies was set up in 1862 by C. Albers, G. J. Grashuis, D. J. van der Linden, and S. Coolsma. These schools taught reading, writing, arithmetic, Malay, and Dutch in the upper grades. More importantly, these schools taught students the Protestant “way of holiness.” Initially, missionary schools were designed to attract and to convert native students to Christianity. However, because they were faithful to Islam, missionary schools were not attractive to the native inhabitants of Java. The missionaries found that their preaching was more acceptable among the Chinese, particularly the Peranakan, regardless of their religious affiliation, because missionary schools employed the western education system like the Dutch schools, which the Chinese expected would be useful for their children’s life in the Indies (Govaars, 2005: 89-91).

Although declaring its independence in 1945, until 1949 Indonesia continued to be ruled by the Dutch, who divided the country into federal and republican areas. Unlike its previous stance, in which it did not fully support the existence of Chinese schools, the Dutch government at this period gave considerably more assistance to Chinese schools in order to gain the Chinese community’s support for the restitution of Dutch power.
From 1945 to 1957, vernacular schools operating in Indonesia, including Chinese schools, were not obliged to follow an Indonesian education system. There were two groups of schools operating for Chinese during this time: pro-Taipei schools, which received financial support from and adopted the education system of Taipei, and pro-Peking schools, which got financial support from and adopted the education system of Peking. Of the 1600 Chinese schools operating in Indonesia, 700 were pro-Taipei, 56 were operated by the church, and the rest were pro-Peking. The Indonesian government only had diplomatic relations with Peking, a situation that influenced government policy toward the pro-Taipei Chinese schools (Suryadinata, 1972: 65-67).

After the first election in 1955, Indonesia’s political and governmental system was rather unstable. Corrupt government as well as unequal development in Java and the outer islands triggered several rebellions and separatist movements in the outer islands, such as the Permesta (Rebellion of the people of the universe) in Sulawesi and Sumatra. Thus, in order to control its citizens as well as to avoid more rebellions in the future, beginning in 1957 the government enacted education policies that rigidly controlled schools and social organizations. In regard to subversive and separatist movements, the government was particularly suspicious of the Chinese community and their organizations. Thus, Chinese schools were put under strict government control and supervision. Their teachers, as well as books and curriculum, were closely monitored. As a result, in the following months the number of Chinese schools plummeted. In 1958, 1100 Chinese schools were converted into national schools, while those that remained independent were mainly pro-Peking. Those Chinese schools that were converted to national schools were managed by Baperki (Badan Permusyawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia), a social organization for the Chinese in Indonesia, and used the same curriculum as other national
schools. There were three kinds of schools in Indonesia: the national schools (Indonesian-medium schools), Chinese-medium schools, and schools run by missionaries. Converted Chinese schools were still allowed to teach Mandarin as a supplementary subject; after the 1965 Coup, however, all left-wing organizations and those believed to have alliances with Beijing (such as the Indonesian Communist Party, Chinese-medium schools and Baperki, as well as schools and universities) were totally banned (Tan, 1990: 114-119).

As a result, after 1965 the Chinese were largely excluded from education. Because their schools were closed and the number of schools in Indonesia was so limited that it was barely enough to accommodate even Indonesian students, most of the Chinese did not continue their schooling. It was not until 1969 when the government established the Special Project National Schools (SNPC; Sekolah Nasional Proyek Chusus) that the Chinese could continue to go to school. According to the government, SNPCs were established to address the discrepancy between the Chinese need for education and their hesitation about attending Indonesian schools.

These schools used the same curriculum as the national schools, and Bahasa Indonesia was the only language used. Over the next two years, the number of SNPCs grew steadily, particularly in Sumatra. In 1973, the central government found that SNPCs in Sumatra taught Mandarin as a supplementary subject and, because of this, a year later all SNPCs in Sumatra were closed and converted into national schools and managed by the local government. Finally, in 1975 the Ministry of Education enacted a policy to close all SNPCs and convert them to private national schools (Tan, 1990: 114-119).

**B. The Education of the Tionghoa in the municipality of Mataram**
Portuguese and Dutch missionaries and also the Dutch government were less interested in West Nusatenggara (Lombok and Sumbawa) because they thought these islands were poor in terms of natural and human resources. Although later Sumbawa was well-known as the main source of sappanwood, by that time the Portuguese and Dutch governments were mainly interested in spices, which these islands did not have. In addition, the massive destruction caused by the eruption of Mount Tambora in April 1815 and a drought in the same year there were disasters that caused great difficulties the inhabitants of the islands. Thus, both the Portuguese and the Dutch thought that they could not get anything from these islands. In addition, the inhabitants of these islands were very obedient to their kyai or Tuan Guru, which made the Christian missionaries uninterested in establishing many schools there. Consequently, there were not many Christian schools in West Nusatenggara. Until 1974, there were only two Christian schools in the province: Sekolah Dasar (Elementary School) Diponegoro in Sumbawa, and Sekolah Dasar Anthonius in Ampenan (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1984: 95-96).

A history of education in West Nusatenggara released by the Ministry of National Education and Culture of Indonesia provides a historical narrative of education in the province that covers early traditional school and pan-religious education, such as Islamic boarding schools and the later Dutch schools (nineteenth – twentieth centuries), until the establishment of modern schools in independent Indonesia (Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1984: 8-24). Interestingly, there is no information about the existence of Chinese schools, which are believed by the Chinese in Lombok to have existed during the twentieth century in some port cities (namely Ampenan and Labuan Aji) as well as in some trade centers such as Selong and Cakranegara.
Based on my personal communication with some first generation Tionghoa in Lombok who attended Chinese-medium schools, there were some Chinese-medium schools scattered throughout Lombok, but they existed relatively later than those on other islands such as Java, Kalimantan (Borneo), or Sulawesi (Celebes). In the 1950s, there was a Chinese-medium elementary school in Ampenan called Lang Hwa. This school taught reading, writing, English, Mandarin, Budi Pekerti or Kong Hu Chu (Confucianism), and Bahasa Indonesia for the fifth graders. There was also a junior high school called Long Chung. Another elementary school was the Chi Hwa Shaio Shiuk located in Cakranegara, a trade center in central Lombok. My informants such as Hau Hok Kiang and Loe Kaw Hwe believe that Chinese schools were also located in other parts of Lombok such as Selong and Labuan Aji. But unfortunately, they do not have any information about those schools.

In fact, there was no Chinese senior high school in Lombok. Thus, those who wanted to continue their education had to go to either Surabaya or China. One of the most well-known Chinese high schools in Surabaya was the Chung-Chung. There is no information available about this school but because there were almost no China-oriented Chinese high schools in Indonesia in 1958 (Tan, 1990: 117), I assume that Chung-Chung School was established by the Peranakans and oriented toward Indonesia.

As mentioned earlier, nowadays the Tionghoa prefer to send their children to Christian schools. As a result, the number of Christian schools funded by churches or by the Christian Chinese community in Mataram has grown considerably. Although the National Education Affairs office of the province has not released the exact number of Christian schools in the province, I know from my own observations that the number is no less than twenty. However, these schools are mostly elementary and junior high schools. There is only one Christian senior
high school in the municipality of Mataram and one in the Sumbawa Regency. Thus, most of the affluent Chinese students continue their school at elite Christian senior high schools in Surabaya, Malang, Jakarta, or other parts of Java and even to Singapore.

**C. Education System in Indonesia Today**

In accordance with Indonesian Act No. 20/2003 about the National Education System (chapter 15 concerning community participation in education and section 2 about community-based education), the state gives the communities the right to establish educational institutions according to particular religious affiliations, social and cultural environments, and the communities’ interests. This act also states that community-based education can be partially funded by the government and the community itself. These educational institutions should be in accordance with the national education system in terms of curriculum. However, unlike the education system during the 1950s, which emphasized Bahasa Indonesia as the only language used at school, this act permits schools to teach their students in languages other than Bahasa Indonesia such as traditional languages, if necessary, and foreign languages. Additionally, there are no regulations about which foreign languages can be taught.

As a result of this act, private schools nowadays are more competitive in providing different skills for their students. Some schools such as SMAK Penabur in Jakarta, Buah Sulung and Gloria Christian in Surabaya, and Budi Luhur and Alethea in Mataram, provide their students with foreign language skills, both English and Mandarin. In some international schools, such as British and Australian international schools, students have a wider range of choices in terms of foreign language because these schools not only provide English and Mandarin but also Germany, French, and Spanish.
This act also regulates educational institutions established by foreign institutions in Indonesia. This means that an institution of a particular foreign country is allowed to establish educational institutions in Indonesia, adopting the education system used in its home country. Usually these kinds of educational institutions are established to provide education as practiced in the home country for foreign parents who are in Indonesia for long periods. Apparently, most of the students in these kinds of schools are foreigners, but at some schools there are also some Indonesians.

There are several regulations for such schools, including a ruling that they should provide religious and civic education for their Indonesian students. They should also include teachers and education managers. The government emphasizes that although these schools are given the privilege of adopting their own education systems, they should be in accordance with the Indonesian national education system.

According to Indonesian Government Regulation No. 47/2008, education is compulsory from the age of six to the age of fifteen. Parents and the surrounding community share the responsibility of ensuring that children in this age range are going to school. Another law, Indonesian Act No.20/2003 chapter VI, divides education into three levels: primary, secondary, and higher education.

Elementary school is primary education and is mandatory for children at the age of six to twelve years old. Junior and senior high school are secondary education. Junior high school is three years of schooling and is mandatory for students from twelve to fifteen years old or after graduating from elementary school. Senior high school is another three years of schooling and, like higher education, is not compulsory. The government is only responsible for nine years of compulsory education while parents are responsible for the tuition and educational necessities for
those who want to continue to senior high school and higher education (Indonesian Government, 2008: 1-10).

Beginning in the second year of senior high school, students have to opt for one of three majors: natural sciences, social sciences, and languages. Usually students are guided by their teachers in deciding their major. In addition, there is a common stereotype among students that those who study natural sciences are more intelligent than those who study social science and languages. The grade requirements for natural sciences are higher than for social sciences and languages. Because most students see mathematics, physics, and chemistry as difficult subjects, they tend to avoid those subjects and think that those who get good grades in those subjects must be smart and deserving of being natural sciences students.

Some students decide on their major based on their understanding of their future expectation for higher education. There is a widespread belief that those who study natural science must be from affluent families because if they go to a university, they will follow particular majors such as medical, nursing, engineering, or chemistry, which are very expensive and can hardly be affordable for less affluent families. On this point, people consider that the Tionghoa students have a better chance of enrolling in these elite fields because they are perceived as affluent within the community.
Chapter 4
Interviews

In this chapter, I will discuss some of the interviews I conducted with my informants, particularly those at Kesuma High School. As mentioned earlier, I carried out some interviews outside the school in order to more thoroughly understand the Tionghoa community in the municipality of Mataram. However, as my focus is on Tionghoa students’ ethnic identity within a school context, the four case studies I present in this chapter center on the school context.

The first case study is based on interviews conducted with two Tionghoa students, a male and a female. These interviews focused on the interviewees’ experience of their ethnic identity within the school and how strongly or loosely they embrace that identity.

The second case study is based on interviews conducted with two non-Chinese students, and mainly examines their feelings about being non-Tionghoa students within a so-called “Sekolah Cina” (school for the Tionghoa). In addition, I conducted these interviews to study how non-Tionghoa students see their Tionghoa counterparts building, maintaining, embracing, fastening, unfastening, or refastening their ethnic identity within school.

The third case study is based on interviews with two teachers at Kesuma School. These interviews are important not only to study how Tionghoa students, from the teachers’ perspective, perform and interact at school with their Tionghoa and non-Tionghoa schoolmates but also to examine whether or not the school, as an institution, has a particular expectation about its students’ identity.

The fourth case study is based on interviews with Tionghoa parents. From these interviews, I try to understand the expectations of Tionghoa parents for their children, and
whether or not these Tionghoa parents want their children to inherit and strongly embrace their Tionghoa identity.

A. Case Study 1: Two Tionghoa students

Mona is a student in the eleventh grade social science class at Kesuma Catholic Senior High School. She is a fourth generation Indonesian and her family is of Hakka Chinese origin. Her grandparents converted to Islam during the 1960s. Her father is a successful businessman. He owns a very well established and well-known pearl shop in the tourism center of Senggigi Beach, Lombok. Mona herself graduated from a Catholic junior high school in Surabaya. She spent most of her childhood in Surabaya, going to live with her aunt there when she was four years old and going to school there. She has never been to a public school, and although she is a Muslim, all of her schooling has been at Christian schools.

Mona returned to Mataram in 2008 and registered at Kesuma High School to continue her education. She returned to Mataram because she had been away from her family for quite a long time and she wanted to spend some time with them before going to college, which she plans to do at a university in either Surabaya or Jakarta. To her, there is no specific reason why she chose to go to Kesuma High School, which is a Christian school, instead of to a public school, although she feels more comfortable with the situation and learning environment at a Christian school because she is used to them. In addition, she feels it is easier for her to adjust to the school environment as well as to teachers and staff at Kesuma because her elder brother (koko) and sister (cece) are alumni of this school. Hence, according to her, teachers, school staff members, and the principal know her family very well. Because she wants to continue her family business, Mona plans to continue her studies at a business school. Therefore, she decided to attend the social science class.
The classroom arrangement is similar to that at other schools, where teachers sit in front and are the center of the class while students sit facing their teachers. Students’ seats are arranged in rows from the front to the back of the class. In Mona’s class, there are four rows and each row consists of five pairs of seats. All classes in this school are arranged in the same way. There is a whiteboard and a blackboard in front of the class facing the students. There is a table and chair for the teacher opposite the door and facing the students. Every class is decorated with a cross at the highest point, above the boards. Below the cross hang pictures of the president and the vice-president.

In this class, Social Science 3, there are thirty-five students, eight of whom are Tionghoa. Mona sits with another Tionghoa student in the middle row. At the time I conducted my research, the students were wrapping up their lessons because they had less than a month before the final exam. In every lesson I observed, Mona and the other students were rarely engaged in any discussion. Teaching and learning processes are very much one way, where teachers explain and students listen, and only one or two students actively engaged in discussion. Other students tend to be quiet. Mona said that the students who do engage in the discussion are the best students in her class, who always get the highest scores on exams. Both of them are Balinese.

When I asked her opinion about Tionghoa students’ academic achievement compared to that of non-Tionghoa students, Mona said that academic achievement has nothing to do with ethnicity. It is more about students’ diligence and their study habits. She compared Tionghoa students’ and non-Tionghoa students’ academic achievement at Kesuma and at her previous school in Surabaya, where most of the students are Tionghoa. According to her, here at Kesuma it seemed as though non-Tionghoa students (the Balinese and the Sasak) perform better than their Tionghoa counterparts due to the fact that most of the best students of every class in Kesuma are
non-Tionghoa students, whilst in her previous school in Surabaya it seemed like Tionghoa students perform better that their non-Tionghoa counterparts, with the “top scorers” in every class being Tionghoa. But, to Mona, this is not necessarily about ethnicity. She thinks it is merely because of the unequal proportions of Tionghoa and non-Tionghoa students in both schools that makes it seem as though students of a particular ethnicity are smarter that students of other ethnicities.

Outside the classroom, Mona is very talkative. She usually spends her break time going around from one class to another chatting with her friends. I saw her talk with some non-Tionghoa friends, but most of the time she gathers with her Tionghoa friends from other classes, particularly from the natural science classes. She said she likes “hanging out” with friends regardless of their ethnicity. She also said that when she was in Surabaya, she had two very close friends. One of them was a Tionghoa and the other one was a Javanese. Mona continued,

I can make friends with any one; with a Tionghoa as well as with a non-Tionghoa. As long as they (non-Tionghoa) are respectful of my culture and my identity as a Tionghoa, as long as they don’t look down on me just because I am a Tionghoa, and as long as they aren’t mean to me, I will be fine.

When I asked her about her feelings and inclinations in making friends, she said she basically wants to make friends with anyone, regardless of ethnicity but she also says that she feels more comfortable having a Tionghoa rather than a non-Tionghoa for a close friend, because she thinks that a Tionghoa can understand her feelings and thoughts better than a non-Tionghoa. She believes that people of the same cultural background will understand each other better than those from different backgrounds. Mona believes that there are unspoken customs strongly emphasized within Tionghoa families that a non-Tionghoa family might not have, or if they do have them, they might apply differently. Although Mona could not explain this more explicitly,
she still believes that her Tionghoa friends understand her much better than her non-Tionghoa friends because they embrace the same cultural values.

When I asked her about how she sees herself, Mona took a deep breath and finally said that it’s difficult to say. She said she is a Tionghoa but she is also an Indonesian.

I was born and raised in Indonesia, which makes me an Indonesian. I know that I inherit Chinese blood, which makes me a Tionghoa. But sometimes I also feel that neither am I an Indonesian nor am I a Tionghoa because the fact that I have yellow skin and slanted eyes makes me feel somewhat different from my “Indonesian” friends, and another fact is that I can’t speak any Chinese dialect, and I am a Moslem, and I don’t really understand and practice any Chinese culture, so this makes me not confident to acknowledge myself as a Chinese. Anyway, I think I am a Chinese-Indonesian (Tionghoa).

To Mona, being Tionghoa means you have to embrace Confucianism (Kong Hu Chu), in which being respectful to ancestors is strongly emphasized. She continued that within “a true Tionghoa” family there are always ancestors’ tablets where members of the family gather, pray, and make offerings. In her understanding, the absence of ancestors’ tablets from her house is due to the fact that her family is Moslem and that kind of practice is prohibited in their religion. She further said that although she does not speak any Tionghoa dialect and there is no ancestors’ tablet in her house, she is really proud of her Tionghoa blood. She usually attends Tionghoa celebrations at the houses of her extended family, who are Buddhists or Kong Hu Chu. She said she enjoys Tionghoa New Year celebrations (Imlek) and baby showers (Manye’), where she can eat many Tionghoa foods.

When I asked her about what identity other people attach to her, she expressed no doubt that people acknowledge her as a Tionghoa. At school, her friends and teachers also see her as a Tionghoa. However, at her school, Tionghoa culture, including language, has never been embraced or celebrated. All students speak Bahasa Indonesia and must embrace Indonesian national culture. Speaking about the school’s expectations for students’ identities, Mona thought
the school wants them to be Indonesians and detached from their ethnic identity, and that this is proven by their lessons, which are mostly about nationalism and national identity.

On the other hand, her parents strongly emphasize the sense of Chineseness, not only to Mona but also to her siblings. Her parents believe that Chineseness is in their blood, and that this will not be changed by the language they speak and by the food they eat. Her parents also believe that Indonesia is their homeland because they were born, raised, and make their living in the land of Indonesia. Although they are Tionghoa by blood, they have no ties with China or Tiongkok and Indonesia is the only country they know as their homeland.

Speaking of making friends, Mona said that her parents let her “hang out” with anyone, regardless of ethnicity. But they prefer Mona to make friends with Tionghoa. According to Mona, this is because her parents think that non-Tionghoa are usually mean and impolite to Tionghoa. Mona’s parents do not want their children to have trouble with their non-Tionghoa friends. Mona told me about a news item she read in a national newspaper about a non-Tionghoa housemaid who was raped by her Tionghoa master, and how people reacted to that news. She went on to say, “my parents say one mistake by a Tionghoa means trouble for all of us, and my parents don’t want me to be in trouble.” Her parents also want their children, including Mona, to marry a Tionghoa, and Mona herself agrees with her parents.

Patrick is the second Tionghoa student I interviewed during my research in Kesuma. He is a fourth generation Tionghoa. Like Mona, Patrick does not speak any Chinese dialect. He said his parents speak Chinese with his grandparents but they never taught him or his siblings the language. However, Patrick said that he can understand when people talk in Chinese. Patrick is a Christian. His father is a successful businessman and a preacher who converted to Christianity when he married his mother, whilst his grandparents are Kong Hu Chu.
As a Christian family, they do not have ancestors’ tablets in their house, they do not celebrate Chinese festivals, and they do not embrace Confucianism. However, during Chinese festivals Patrick’s family usually gathers with their extended family at his grandparents’ house. To Patrick the best part of Chinese festivals is gathering with family because they live far apart and are very busy with their daily routines, which makes it very hard for them to see each other.

Patrick is a student in a natural science class. He is a new student at Kesuma. He was in an international school in Mataram but decided to move to Kesuma. Part of his reason for doing so was that he was unsure about where to continue his studies, whether at a university in Indonesia or at a university abroad. He believed that his international school intended to direct their students toward attending a university abroad. Thus, they do not follow the Indonesian national curriculum, they do not follow the Indonesian national exams, and they are not certified by the Indonesian government. To be safe, he decided to go to a school that employs the national education system.

Despite feeling uncomfortable about the substantial differences between his previous school, the international school, and his current school, in terms of school facilities, learning circumstances, and discipline, Patrick chose Kesuma High School because he knew that some of his friends from Alethea Junior High School were there, and two of his cousins had graduated from Kesuma. Hence, he feels he has a connection with the school.

Patrick is a smart student. In class, he sits with another Tionghoa student. Patrick is very active and enthusiastic in every subject, particularly English. As he was at an international school, he speaks fairly good English. He confidently said that he wants to be a doctor. The natural science class’s students are very actively engaged in class discussions. Most of them state
their thoughts and opinions without hesitation. This different learning and teaching circumstance makes natural science students acknowledged as smart students.

In Patrick’s class (Natural Science 1) there are fifteen Tionghoa students out of the total of thirty-four students. Almost all of the Tionghoa students share their tables with their Tionghoa friends, except one male Tionghoa student who sits alone in the very back seat. During my observation, he was not really enthusiastic about the lessons. He rarely paid attention to his teacher and most of the time he did things other than class activities. The best student in this class is a female Tionghoa who sits in the front row seat. She is a quiet student. Most of the time she spends her break time in class reading books, working on assignments, or chatting with her classmates.

When I asked Patrick about his opinion of students’ academic achievement based on their ethnicity, he said basically that he believes that academic achievement has nothing to do with students’ ethnicity. However, Patrick continued, in his class most of the best students are Tionghoa. To Patrick, this is because non-Tionghoa students seem lazy and do not pay attention to their lessons whilst, he believes, his Tionghoa friends are more diligent and more enthusiastic in every lesson. Moreover, Tionghoa students are more disciplined in terms of study. Patrick said that they study every day preparing themselves for the exams but non-Tionghoa students usually study for exams at the very last minute. To Patrick, this learning habit definitely influences their grades.

During the break, Patrick usually spends his time in class chatting with his classmates or socializing in the cafeteria. Most of the time I saw him enjoying his meals or chatting with his Tionghoa friends. Patrick usually drives his own car to school and he usually offers rides to his Tionghoa friends. Although he said that he also likes to “hang out” with his non-Tionghoa
friends, he prefers to make friends with Tionghoa. This is partly because he thinks non-Tionghoa are usually very rude. Patrick told me a story about when his Tionghoa classmate fought a Balinese student because the Balinese student wrote an insulting sentence about Tionghoa students in a corner of the school. Patrick’s Tionghoa classmate could not stand this humiliation. He had words with the Balinese student, which led them to a fight. The parents of the Balinese student reported this matter to the police and both of the students were brought to the police for interrogation. Patrick continued, “I feel that they (non-Tionghoa) haven’t completely understood and accepted us. I always feel that they hate us and that’s why they often act rudely toward us.”

Patrick admitted that his father prefers his children to make friends with Tionghoa and advises them to carefully choose their non-Tionghoa friends so that they will not get into trouble. Another reason is if Patrick makes friends with Tionghoa it is easier for his father to control and to monitor his activities outside the house because his father basically knows every Tionghoa parent in the city. Thus, when he “hangs out” with his Tionghoa friends, their parents keep in touch and inform each other about their children. To Patrick, this is their way of taking care of each other.

In sum, the Tionghoa students I interviewed are fairly loose in terms of their ethnic identity as Tionghoa. However, although they no longer speak any Chinese languages or dialects nor are they exposed to Chinese cultural, religious, or belief systems, they are still very proud of their Chineseness. They obediently follow their parents’ commands to be careful about socializing with non-Tionghoa friends and particularly in becoming close friends with other Tionghoa. In terms of identity, they strongly profess that they are Indonesian, since they were born and raised in Indonesia. Additionally, they also acknowledge themselves as Tionghoa due to their Chinese blood, which is visible in their physical appearance.
B. Case study 2: Two non-Tionghoa students

I interviewed two non-Tionghoa students, both students in the social science class. Budi is a Hindu-Balinese student in Social Science 1, whilst Rina is a Muslim-Sasak student in Social Science 3. Basically, I asked them about how they feel about being non-Christian students in a Christian school as well as being non-Tionghoa students in a so-called “Sekolah Cina” (school for the Tionghoa). I also asked them about their personal interactions and relationships with their Tionghoa classmates and how they think about their Tionghoa counterparts’ sense of identity.

As mentioned, Budi is a Balinese, and like most other Balinese, he is a Hindu. His father is an employee in a bank whilst his mother is a housewife. He went to public elementary and junior high school. He chose Kesuma High School because of his low exam grades, which meant that he could not meet the passing grade at public schools. To Budi, Kesuma as a private school is somewhat different from public schools. Besides the lower passing grade, students’ discipline in terms of both studying habit and personal behavior in Kesuma High School is somewhat less compared to public schools.

Although he said that on average Tionghoa students have good if not excellent academic performance, Budi believes that academic achievement has nothing to do with students’ ethnicity. He said that in his class, the best student is a Balinese. Although he admitted that he himself is not an excellent student, he believes that this is not because of his ethnicity. It is just because he is not disciplined and does not pay attention to his lessons. He also said that Tionghoa students’ good academic achievement is not necessarily because of their Chineseness but because of their good discipline in studying.
When I asked him about his inclinations in making friends, he said that he makes friends with anyone but he is particularly careful when making friends with Tionghoa because he does not want to make them feel bad just because he says or does something that unintentionally humiliates them. He thinks he does not know or understand much about his Tionghoa friends’ cultural background, which to some extent is different from his. Thus, he keeps a distance from his Tionghoa friends so that he will not do wrong to them. And speaking of the Tionghoa students, Budi said that most of them mingle well with other students. He thinks Tionghoa friends make friends with anyone including non-Tionghoa. Yet they tend to be close friends only with other Tionghoa, because usually they have been friends since they were in kindergarten and their families are old friends.

Speaking of Tionghoa students’ sense of ethnicity and the way they embrace their Chineseness, Budi thinks that his Tionghoa friends never show or practice their Tionghoa culture, they do not speak Chinese languages, and they do not celebrate any Chinese festivals at school. They are just like other Balinese, Sasak, or Sumbawa students. They speak Bahasa Indonesia, they celebrate Indonesia’s Independence Day, and they eat Indonesian food. The only thing that makes them Tionghoa is their slanted eyes and yellow skin.

Budi said that the school praises students in the same way. The school never organizes an ethnicity-specific event. The school always emphasizes Indonesian national culture in which all of the ethnic groups’ cultures are considered to be Indonesian national culture. Budi further said that actually there hasn’t been any cultural festival at his school, but that his school usually is involved in Independence Day celebrations. He told me that on this day there is usually a national parade where students are urged to wear their traditional dress, so that Indonesians see the traditional attire of different ethnic groups in Indonesia.
Rina is another non-Tionghoa student I interviewed at Kesuma High School. She is a Sasak and a Muslim. Her father is a lecturer at a public university in Mataram whilst her mother is an employee at a public school. She is a student in the Social Science 4 class. Like Budi, she attends Kesuma High School because she has no better choice. Her final exam grades were too low for her to be accepted at a public school. According to Rina, compared to other private schools, Kesuma is somewhat better in terms of the quality of the education.

In terms of students’ interactions within school, Rina does not see significant differences between Kesuma as a Christian school and public schools. She experienced the same learning process in her previous schools and her current one. According to her, some differences that actually exist are that most of the students at Kesuma are non-Muslim whilst at public schools, usually, most of the students are Muslim; and the percentage of Tionghoa students at Kesuma is somewhat higher than at public schools. To some extent, Rina said, she feels that students at Kesuma are more segmented in terms of ethnicity and religion.

I think it might be because the number of students based on both ethnicity and religion is not too imbalanced that students tend to make friends with those of the same ethnicity or religion. However, I think this is not unusual. I personally believe that everyone feels more comfortable hanging out with people that they already know or with those with similarities.

Rina went on to say that at Kesuma it is not only the Tionghoa who tend to “hang out” with their Tionghoa fellows. Students of other ethnicities also socialize with others of the same ethnicity. Students socialize with the friends they have from the same church, temple, junior high school, neighborhood, or extracurricular activities. This is also applicable to the Balinese, the Sasak, the Javanese, and the Sumbawa students. Speaking of her personal intentions in making friends, Rina explained that she does not have any preferences in making friends. Her best friend is a Balinese, and she socializes with everyone.
When I asked her about the Tionghoa students’ inclinations in making friends, Rina thought that her Tionghoa friends often befriend their Tionghoa fellows because they meet more frequently at their church or temple and they know each other from junior high school. From Rina I found out about Alethea School, the Christian school described earlier where the majority of the students are Tionghoa. Rina explained that most of her Tionghoa friends at Kesuma used to be students at Alethea School. Hence, when they meet again at Kesuma it is easier for them to interact.

In terms of recognition of the Tionghoa culture, languages, and traditions, Rina claimed that her Tionghoa friends barely show their Chineseness at school. They never speak Mandarin among themselves. She continued on to say that to her knowledge, at Kesuma, there has never been any celebration or festival to celebrate a particular ethnic culture or tradition. There are, indeed, some holidays to celebrate religious holidays such as Idul Fitri (an Islamic holiday), Christmas (Christian), Nyepi (Hindu), and Waisak (Buddhist). But these are national holidays, which are celebrated not only by students at Kesuma but also by all schools and government institutions in Indonesia.

All in all, non-Tionghoa students at Kesuma do not see noticeable differences with the public schools they attended where the students are mostly non-Tionghoa students. In terms of ethnic boundaries among students, they admit that students, particularly the Tionghoa, tend to socialize and make friends with people of the same ethnicity due to factors such as church affiliation, having gone to the same junior high school, family relations, or family business networks. However, this fact does not necessarily create boundaries among students because students of all ethnic backgrounds are to some extent still socializing with each other.
C.  Case study 3: Two staff members

For the third case study, I interviewed two staff members at different Catholic schools. The first respondent is Petrus, an English teacher at Kesuma High School. The second respondent is Handoko, the principal of Budi Luhur School. I did this in order to gather information from staff who have different experiences within the context of a Christian school or a so-called “Sekolah Cina” (school of the Chinese). As mentioned earlier, both Kesuma High School and Budi Luhur School are Christian schools that have the image of being schools particularly for the Chinese. However, they are somewhat different in terms of the way the Tionghoa culture and tradition are embraced within the school context. Thus, I assume that teachers at these schools might encounter different experiences and have different opinions about schools’ and parents’ expectations about Tionghoa students’ identity and about how the Tionghoa students themselves actualize their sense of Chineseness or Tionghoa-ness.

These interviews are basically to understand school systems, regulations, and policies from the staff’s perspective and to better understand the school’s expectations about its Tionghoa students’ identity. Moreover, these interviews also examine Tionghoa students’ sense of ethnic identity from their teachers’ point of view.

Petrus is a non-Tionghoa English teacher in the natural science classes at Kesuma High School. He is a civil servant teacher\(^{14}\) who has been teaching at Kesuma for eight years. Before passing the civil servant test and becoming a civil servant teacher he used to be a freelance teacher at a Christian junior high school called Saraswati. Although he has never taught at a non-Christian school, Petrus is convinced that there are no significant differences between Kesuma

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\(^{14}\) Teachers that are recruited by the government through a national civil servant exam and are paid by the government.
and public or other private schools in terms of the education system. According to him, all schools in Indonesia, including Christian schools, follow the same education system and regulations. However, schools have the autonomy to develop certain programs in order to enhance students’ skills, with the government’s approval. For instance, at some elite Christian schools, students learn not only English as their second language but also other foreign languages, such as Mandarin.

As a private school, Kesuma is not fully funded by the government. Besides depending on the government’s limited subsidy, Kesuma is financially dependent on students’ tuition fees and some donors. As a result, the school fees at Kesuma are somewhat higher than at some public schools. However, Petrus claimed that Kesuma is not an elite Christian school because he has seen very elite Christian schools in Java, which have superior facilities, such as Hwa In in Malang, East Java, and Santo Yosep in Surabaya. Moreover, those schools do not depend on the government for financial support. They can hire the best teachers to teach their students. Hence, their fees are high, and only affluent students can afford the tuition at those schools. Not surprisingly, most of the students are Tionghoa.

Petrus further said that although Kesuma is the only Christian senior high school in Mataram, there are not many Chinese families who send their children to this school because of the low quality of the education compared to other Christian schools. Affluent Tionghoa families in Mataram usually send their children to an elite Christian senior high school in Surabaya, Malang, Jakarta, or even Singapore. The Tionghoa who attend Kesuma are less affluent or do not have any relatives in Java.

As mentioned earlier, the education system and regulations are the same at Kesuma and other schools. Although teachers and schools are given the right to recommend some books for
their students, the required text books at every school are the same. Although different schools
require their students to wear particular uniforms on Wednesday and Thursday, students wear the
same uniform during the other days. Petrus further explained that, as at other schools, students at
Kesuma also perform the flag ceremony every Monday. All rituals associated with the flag
ceremony are the same as at other schools, with the declamation of the five principals and the
1945 Basic Constitution as well as the raising of the flag accompanied by the Indonesian national
anthem.

Speaking of his Tionghoa students, Petrus said he admires his Tionghoa students because
of their tenacity and their diligence. In his class, most of the Tionghoa students perform better
than the other students. They speak English more fluently compared to their non-Tionghoa
counterparts. When I asked him why, he explained that he thinks it is because the Tionghoa
students follow the class more seriously and are more disciplined than the non-Tionghoa
students. Moreover, most of the Tionghoa students take extra English classes after school. Petrus
believes that this condition is, to some extent, influenced by the students’ economic condition.
The Tionghoa are mostly businessmen’s children, who can afford extra classes. In contrast, most
of the non-Tionghoa students are from less affluent families for whom extra English classes are
unaffordable.

Regarding Tionghoa students’ attitudes in their interactions with their friends, Petrus said
that they interact with their Tionghoa and non-Tionghoa friends equally. Although Petrus
admitted that his Tionghoa students tend to “hang out” more often with their Tionghoa fellows,
he also believes that in terms of manner Tionghoa students interact and treat both their Tionghoa
and non-Tionghoa counterparts equally. Petrus explained that students’ inclination in making
friends is usually because they share things in common such as hobbies and other interests. He
knows some of his male Tionghoa students make friends with their Tionghoa fellows who share the same hobby, motor racing.

Speaking of the school’s expectations about the students’ identity, Petrus thinks the school expects all students to perform one national identity as Indonesian within the school context. This is shown not only by the Catholic school’s mission statement, but also by the talks delivered by the school principal every week in the flag ceremony, which proclaim that each participant and every individual at the school should behave with love and affection toward each other regardless of social, religious, and ethnic background. Everyone is required to interact with and treat each other equally. Moreover, the school expects its students to reflect their national identity as Indonesians rather than their ethnic identity as Tionghoa, Sasak, Balinese, Sumbawanese, Javanese, and so on.

When I asked Petrus about his opinion of his Tionghoa students’ attitudes in embracing their ethnic identity, Petrus claimed that at school he has never seen Tionghoa students practice or show their Tionghoa traditions. He said that his Tionghoa students never speak Mandarin at school, because most of them do not speak the language. On the other hand, he witnesses the strong bond among the Tionghoa students that he believes is also witnessed by others. He further said, “When you see them you know that they are Tionghoa even though they don’t speak Mandarin or they don’t celebrate Cap Go Meh.”\(^\text{15}\)

Unlike Petrus, who is a civil servant, Handoko, the school principal at Budi Luhur School, is not a civil servant. Handoko’s journey to become the principal at Budi Luhur is a long story. He previously was an education consultant for a Christian school in Surabaya, Petra Christian School. He moved to the municipality of Mataram in 2008, initially as a consultant for

\(^{15}\) Cap Go Meh is a Chinese celebration that is celebrated fifteen days after the Chinese New Year celebration.
Budi Luhur School. At the time he came to Budi Luhur, the school was newly established and there was no school principal. Hence, the school board asked him to become the school principal.

Budi Luhur is interesting in terms of school status. Usually schools clearly express whether they are Protestant or Catholic in their name. But Budi Luhur does not clearly state its affiliation because, according to Handoko, the school is neither a Protestant nor a Catholic school. When I attended the graduation ceremony for Budi Luhur’s playgroup and kindergarten students, I talked to Chandra Jap, one of the school board committee members. Like most of the other board committee members, Chandra is a Tionghoa. He explained that Budi Luhur was initially founded by the Hokkien Association. Later, the PSMTI also gave its support to the school. Thus, all of its committee members are Tionghoa.

Furthermore, besides following the Indonesian national education system in terms of curriculum, books, and school activities, Budi Luhur strongly emphasizes Confucian tradition within the school context. Handoko explained that there are three pillars of the school, which are based on Confucian values, namely endurance, honesty, and respect. He expects that by embracing these values students will become virtuous people in the future. These Confucian values, along with some other norms suggested by the national education system, are interlocking and applied within the school with an expectation that these students are the next generation, who will build a better nation.

As mentioned earlier, students at Budi Luhur learn not only English but also, and more dominantly, Mandarin as their second language. Most of the signs within the school are written in Chinese. There are several Chinese proverbs painted on the walls. These proverbs are apparently written in Mandarin. There are not many signs written in English or Bahasa Indonesia. Those that are tend to be trilingual. For instance, there is a welcome sign near the
main entrance of the school, which is written in bold Chinese characters, followed by English
and Bahasa Indonesia. The school bulletin, which reports students’ activities, also uses
Mandarin.

When I attended the graduation ceremony, most of the parents or grandparents who came
to accompany their children or grandchildren were speaking Mandarin. Moreover, most of the
performances during the event are closely related with Tionghoa art and culture. In fact, students
were not yet able to sing in Mandarin, but they danced to Mandarin music and songs. When I
asked Handoko about how Tionghoa culture is embraced within the school context, he said that it
is fairly strongly embraced in Budi Luhur. He further said that this is because from the
beginning, the founders of the school, who are in the Hokkien community and had witnessed
the Tionghoa culture fading away among the younger generation, wanted their descendants to
inherit their culture. Thus, they founded the school where their descendants could learn not only
the language but also their values, norms, and traditions.

Seventy percent of the students at Budi Luhur School are Tionghoa, whilst twenty
percent of them are Balinese and the rest are Sasak. Speaking of Tionghoa students’ academic
performance, Handoko did not see any specific tendencies in students’ academic achievement
based on their ethnic background. His Tionghoa students’ academic performances are average;
they are neither too good nor are they too bad: “If they do become the best students in their class
the disparity between students is not too great” (Handoko, pers. comm., June 2011)

However, the Tionghoa students do show more interest and ability in second languages,
namely English and Mandarin. Handoko said that Tionghoa students show more progress and
perform better in both languages. Since most of the students at Budi Luhur are from affluent
families, I assume that their parents’ economic background might not be an important factor.
Handoko believes it might be because the Tionghoa students are more exposed to Mandarin compared to their non-Tionghoa counterparts. He continued that because their parents are usually busy with business, the children are usually watched by the grandparents. Since those children spend more time with their grandparents, who still speak Chinese dialects, it is easier for them to learn it at school.

Speaking of the Tionghoa students’ inclinations in making friends, Handoko explained that his students are never “picky” in making friends. He observed that students at Budi Luhur mingle well with each other, regardless of their ethnicity. Moreover, the students usually play not only with those in the same grade level but also with students at other levels. For example, the elementary school students also play with the kindergarten students. When I asked him about Tionghoa students’ preference for spending time with their Tionghoa fellows, Handoko explained that it is not because they prefer to play with friends of the same ethnicity but simply because the number of Tionghoa students is much greater than the number of non-Tionghoa students.

Handoko believes that students in Budi Luhur, from playgroup to elementary school, are at a critical age where their future character as well as their identity awareness as individuals or as members of social groups will to some extent be influenced by their early education. Thus, school plays a significant role in transferring information to students. Handoko sees Budi Luhur as a bridge to connect the expectations of the national education system that Indonesian children be educated and trained with useful skills and education within the frame of Indonesian nationalism with the expectations of Tionghoa parents that they can pass down their heritage to their children. Handoko, who is fully aware of the political suppression against the Tionghoa community in Indonesia during the New Order regime, believes that the political atmosphere in
Indonesia today is totally different from that during the Soeharto regime. He believes that nowadays, the Tionghoa are no longer seen as part of Tiongkok. Instead, they are seen as one of the ethnic groups of Indonesia, just like the Javanese, the Balinese, and other ethnic groups. Thus, they possess the same right to establish their own social organization. Handoko further said that “it is school that has to teach them about what it means to be a Chinese-Indonesian and that being a Tionghoa is not contrary to being an Indonesian.”

From these two interviews, one with a teacher and one with a school principal at different schools, I gathered information on how Tionghoa culture, traditions, and values are embraced at school. As mentioned by the English teacher at Kesuma, although Kesuma has been long well known as a school for the Tionghoa, in fact Tionghoa culture and tradition are hardly embraced at the school. Meanwhile at Budi Luhur, a newly established school, some Confucian teachings are adopted as the school’s pillars, along with norms adopted from the national education guidelines. Moreover, Tionghoa culture and tradition are strongly performed. Although I did not conduct interviews with students at Budi Luhur, and Budi Luhur was not my main research site, the information I gathered there is very important in helping me to understand how the sense of ethnic identity along with national identity among Tionghoa students is initially built during their early school age at a Christian school.

D. Case Study 4: Two Tionghoa parents

My interviews with Tionghoa parents were quite interesting. At first I planned to interview the parents of the Tionghoa students that I interviewed at Kesuma so that I could connect the information I gathered from the students and the information I gathered from the parents. I set up two meetings with Tionghoa parents through Tionghoa students I interviewed,
but they both ended up being canceled for the same reason, that the parents were very busy with work and they did not have time for an interview.

When I visited Budi Luhur School, I sat in the playground where students’ caretakers usually wait for the children, and I became involved in an informal talk with a Tionghoa grandfather and grandmother who were there to accompany their grandson and granddaughter. This informal talk indirectly answered all the questions I had prepared for my interview with Tionghoa parents. Another interview with a Tionghoa parent took place at the Avalokiteshvara temple where I conducted an informal interview with a Tionghoa mother who accompanied her daughter to a Sunday class.

In fact, it was not easy to talk and to conduct interviews with the Tionghoa. Although I am an Indonesian, I am still an “outsider” to them, and it is understandable that talking about their Tionghoa-ness with me made them uncomfortable. I assume that most of them are still traumatized from their past experiences. Some of the Tionghoa I met in the temple refused to let me take their pictures.

The interviews I discuss in this section were conducted in order to understand Tionghoa parents’ expectations about their children’s identity. As most Tionghoa parents prefer to send their children to a Christian school, I wanted to know their reasons and the extent to which Tionghoa parents expect that their ethnic identity as Tionghoa could be embraced and retained through and within school.

**Chen Yao Min** is a Tionghoa grandfather with whom I conducted an informal interview. He is the first generation of a Peranakan Tionghoa family that originated in Guangdong. He was born in 1950. Chen does not know exactly when his parents migrated to Indonesia. He assumes that they migrated several years before the Japanese occupied the country in 1945. His parents
worked as laborers in the mining industry in Bangka. When the mining industry declined, they moved to Surabaya and then to Lombok. They then started a business as traders. His parents’ business was buying and reselling agricultural products.

Chen tells me that when his parents were in Surabaya their business was not very good, and they decided to move to another place to make a better living. They then moved to Labuhan Haji in Lombok where they started to buy agricultural products from farmers in the village to sell to bigger traders in Ampenan. It was not until 1959 when the government issued the PP No.10/1959 that his parents were forced to move to Mataram. Despite the pressure, there were some Tionghoa families who insisted on staying in villages because they were unsure about their life in the city. Those who insisted on staying closed their businesses and worked as farmers or laborers.

For Chen’s family, life was not easy in Mataram because they had to re-establish their business: “Our family business grew very well until the Indonesia coup d'état in 1966 that mainly affected the Tionghoa all over Indonesia including in Lombok. Our house and shop were looted. Other Tionghoas’ shops were even burnt.” He went on to say that from then on, the Tionghoas’ life was difficult and haunted by fear of the anti-Tionghoa movement.

Chen, who speaks Mandarin fluently, told me about his school experience. He went to a Chinese elementary and junior high school in Mataram. He gave up school after graduating from junior high school because his parents were unable to bear the expense for him to continue at a senior high school in Surabaya. From then on he helped his parents in the family business.

Chen married a Tionghoa woman and has three children. According to him, all of his children graduated from Christian schools. When I asked him why he sent his children to Christian schools, he said he believes that Christian schools offer a better education compared to
most public and private schools. In addition to that, he sent his children to Christian schools due to his connection with the school committee. Chen knew most of the members of the board committee from his church. He explained that, “most of them are my friends at church and most of my friends at church also sent their kids to Christian schools.”

Chen admits that he does not really know what books were used by his children at school, or about the school curriculum or school system. Yet he believes that they were the same as at other schools. When I asked him how multiculturalism and diversity were emphasized within school, Chen was also unsure. He explained that he was unfamiliar with matters related to his children’s school, but he was sure that Tionghoa culture and traditions were not practiced at any school: “Soeharto banned all of Tionghoa culture and traditions. We were forbidden to practice our traditions in public spaces, yet we were even afraid to do it at home.”

In his experience, being a Tionghoa meant a bitter life. Chen told me that his parents were always reminding him about a classic Confucian teaching that “only with endurance can one pass through the storm.” His parents did everything that the Indonesian government required them to do. To them, as long as they could run the business to make their living, they would obey every policy the government put upon them because returning to China was not a better option. Chen talked about how Tionghoa during both the Soekarno and Soeharto periods strongly held their ethnic identity, but they were hardly able to embrace it and they were even forced to give it up. In contrast, nowadays, he said, the Tionghoa are given more freedom to embrace their ethnic identity; however, nowadays, generations of Tionghoa tend not to know their own roots.

Chen expressed his disenchantment by saying that he wants his grandchildren to proudly embrace their Tionghoa-ness not only because they are Tionghoa by physical appearance and by blood but also because they are Tionghoa by culture, tradition, and values. Chen and his wife
said that that is the reason why they send their grandchildren to Budi Luhur. They want to expose their grandchildren to Chinese language and traditions, not only at home but also at school, and more than they were able to do for their children.

When I asked Chen and his wife whether they want their children and grandchildren to be acknowledged as Chinese or as Indonesian, they emphasized that the term “Chinese” and the term “Indonesian” cannot be separated. To really represent the Tionghoa, these terms should stand together as “Chinese-Indonesian” because, Chen continued, they were born and raised in Indonesia but they cannot deny their Chinese blood. For this reason, Chen said that it is important to acknowledge them as Chinese-Indonesian instead of merely Chinese or Indonesian.

Chen told me that the ancestors’ tablet is a sacred and important thing that should be present in a Tionghoa house. Besides putting Chinese traditional foods on the ancestral tablet altar, worshipping ancestors by bowing in front of their tablet every day is also important “because it is by remembering and respecting our ancestors that we remember our roots.” These values were passed to him by his parents through daily practice at home. However, due to the political situation, he was unable to pass it down to his children. Additionally, he converted to Christianity and his children were more exposed to Christianity than to Confucianism. In fact, Chen admitted that although he converted to Christianity he was still quietly practicing worshipping his ancestors and he still had ancestors’ tablets in his house. But it was not easy to teach his children this tradition because he was afraid of being spied on by the government. For Chen, converting to Christianity was also a matter of safety, just as changing his Chinese name to an Indonesian sounding name was.16 Chen went on to say that, “during that time, there were many Tionghoa who converted to Christianity. My friends became board members at a Church. I

16 For safety and privacy reasons, he refused to tell me his Indonesian name.
saw Church as a place where I can come and meet other Tionghoa to share grievances, but I’m not a religious man.”

Speaking of their daily interactions with people in their neighborhood, Chen and his wife told me that they had never experienced any problems with their non-Tionghoa neighbors or even workers. They told me that most of the workers in their shops and house are non-Tionghoa and they have good relationships with them. They help them whenever they are in need. Chen’s wife told me, “one of our housemaids had a financial problem when her mother went to the hospital and she had no money to pay the fee. Then we helped her to pay all the payment.” She continued that their family usually helps non-Tionghoa families in their neighborhood. Most of their neighbors are Muslim Sasak. When a Muslim passes away, his or her neighbors will come to express their respect and mourn, and they will also give some alms for the family. Chen’s wife told me that even though they are not Muslims they do go to show their respect to the deceased and his or her family. Additionally, they also give alms for them. All in all, they say that their relationships with their non-Tionghoa counterparts in their neighborhood are always good and they have never had any problems with them.

When I asked Chen and his wife about their expectations for their children’s and grandchildren’s identity and whether they want their heirs to be more Indonesian or more Tionghoa, both of them agreed that they are Indonesian because they were born and raised in Indonesia. To them, being Indonesian means they have to obey the government’s policies and adapt themselves to the local culture and traditions. They further said that adapting themselves to the local culture and traditions should not make them give up their own culture and traditions. They mean that they want their children and grandchildren to be good citizens of Indonesia but at the same time they want them not to forget their roots. Chen emphasized, “that’s why I’m so
happy that we have Budi Luhur where Tionghoa tradition and values are also taught at school. And I’m so happy to send my grandchildren here because I want them to learn our traditions from a very young age.”

As mentioned earlier, the second interview I discuss in this section was with a Tionghoa mother who accompanied her daughter to a Sunday class at the Avalokiteshvara temple. At first, she refused to do an interview. She even refused to tell me her name or to let me take a picture of her. During the interview, she chose some questions to answer while she refused to answer other questions. She mainly refused to talk about her family background and some things related to her Tionghoa-ness. In fact, she did not tell me her Tionghoa generation, but because she was in her mid to late thirties, I assume she is second generation Peranakan Tionghoa.

For descriptive purposes, let me call her Lili. Because she refused to talk about her Tionghoa-ness, I began the interview by telling her that I met her daughter when I was invited to teach in her English class. I also told her that her daughter performed very well in that class. She then told me that their family is unlike other Tionghoa families who are mostly rich: “We are poor Tionghoa (Cina miskin). I can hardly afford my daughter’s school fee. She really wants to take an extra class for her English skills but I don’t have extra money for that.” Lili further said that her parents’ business was very stable prior to the 1998 political reformation, which caused chaos in many places in Indonesia including Mataram. At that time, her father’s shop was looted and burnt, and her father also was in debt to a bank. After the shop was burnt, the family had to start another business by selling whatever was available and needed by people in the market to support themselves as well as to pay the debt.

She told me that from then on she and her husband started to sell meat and fresh vegetables in the market. Because they did not have much capital to start the business, they did
not have a shop or kiosk. They set up a table in front of a shop that belonged to another Tionghoa family to sell their merchandise. But it was not easy for them to sell meat because they are Tionghoa. People usually thought that they were selling *haram* meat (meat that is forbidden to Muslims), such as pork.

Being a poor Tionghoa and being compared to the image of the rich Tionghoa makes her feel like a loser, Lili said. She feels shy and has low self-esteem when she compares her family with other Tionghoa families who are relatively rich and can afford to send their children to the best Christian schools in Surabaya or Jakarta and then to colleges in Singapore or in the United States. She decided to send her daughter to Kesuma despite her daughter’s wish to attend a senior high school in Surabaya because of their economic situation. Lili herself wanted her daughter to attend a good public school because the school fee is cheaper. However, her daughter’s final exam grade was below the public schools’ passing grade so she was not accepted by any of them. Thus, she sent her to Kesuma High School despite the higher tuition there. According to Lili, the majority of private schools in the city are not good, and she thought Kesuma was a better one. Lili and her husband realize that education is very expensive but they do want their daughter to get a highly paid job. Thus, she was very happy when I told her that her daughter does a great job in her English class.

When I asked her about religion, Lili told me that they are not a religious family. They embrace Buddhism, but not for religious reasons. Lili explains that her parents actually did not embrace any religion when they first arrived in Indonesia. However, they continued to worship ancestors as they did back in China. When the Indonesian government required all Indonesian citizens to embrace one out of five officially acknowledged religions and show it on their identity card, her parents put Buddhism as their religion. However, they had never been to a
temple. Speaking for herself, she comes to the temple every weekend to accompany her daughter to her Sunday class, but she does not necessarily practice Buddhism. She continues her parents’ ritual practice of worshipping ancestors at home.

When I asked her why they chose Buddhism as their official religion, she explained that it is the closest religious practice to their ancestor worshipping rituals. She further said that in worshipping ancestors they use incense. Similarly, in Buddhism they also use incense as a medium of purification, whilst in Christianity and Islam, incense is not used in their ritual practices.

Although I felt hesitant to talk about Tionghoa-ness, I closed my interview with Lili by asking her about her expectations about her daughter’s ethnic identity. She said she has no expectations about her daughter’s identity: “I don’t mind whether she is more Tionghoa or more Indonesian. If I could choose, I want her to be completely Indonesian.” To me, this is interesting because despite the fact that her family still strongly practices some Tionghoa traditions at home, she personally wants her daughter to be totally Indonesian. When I asked her about this, she said it was because it’s hard to be a poor Tionghoa. She continued,

If you are Tionghoa you’d better be rich. If not, then people will look down on and pity you. It’s a shame when people look down on you. If you are rich, people will praise and honor you despite your ethnicity. But if you are poor, people will look down on you particularly if you are Tionghoa. When there is a riot, people will loot every Tionghoa even if they are poor. Isn’t it sad?

Additionally, Lili said that if her daughter could be totally Indonesian it would be easier for her to be accepted within the Indonesian community, and thus it would be easier for her to make a better life.

Just a few minutes before she left, Lili said that she feels very sad about her economic condition and she is still traumatized by her past experiences. Although she said she wants her
daughter to be totally Indonesian, I can see that she is really proud of her Chinese heritage. This is proved by the fact that her daughter could speak Mandarin and has a reasonably good knowledge of Tionghoa traditions.

Based on these two interviews, I suggest that Tionghoa families’ expectations for their children’s identity are varied depending on several factors; first, their generation or their distance from their first ancestor who migrated to Indonesia. The closer they are to their first ancestor, the more intensely they want to expose their descendants to Tionghoa values and culture, and the greater their expectation that their children or grandchildren will inherit and strongly embrace their Tionghoa-ness. The further they are from that first ancestor, the less they expose their children to Tionghoa traditions, the less they expect them to embrace their ethnic identity, and the more they want their children to embrace their national identity as Indonesians.

Second, their expectations are influenced by the extent to which their past experiences caused them psychological distress. This is not a matter of resentment, but more of ambition for a better life for their children. As explained in Chapter 2, the Tionghoa were exposed to violence and riots between 1996 and 1998, when the Tionghoas’ shops, kiosks, and even houses were looted and burnt. To Chen, those incidents were very unjust, but he was grateful that he could re-establish a successful business afterward. To Lili, those incidents were indeed unjust. This makes her look for any way to save her daughter from those kinds of bitter experiences. Thus, she thinks if her daughter can be more Indonesian instead of more Tionghoa it will be easier for her to be accepted as an Indonesian by the local Indonesian community and she will be safer.

A third factor that affects their viewpoint is their current economic condition. The rich Tionghoa who were able to rebuild after the riots and were successful in establishing their family businesses think that embracing their ethnic identity as Tionghoa is as important as building and
advancing their family business. For the poor Tionghoa, being able to live a better life is a lot more important than embracing their ethnic identity. However, this does not mean that poor Tionghoa families do not pass down their traditions to their children. The way the Tionghoa traditions are passed down from generation to generation, as well as the meaning of being Tionghoa, are different among affluent and less affluent Tionghoa families.

The less affluent Tionghoa usually live with more than two generations in one house. The grandparents usually still practice Tionghoa traditions. Thus, the grandchildren are more exposed and accustomed to their traditions and culture. On the other hand, more affluent Tionghoa families usually have separate houses. Thus, the children are less exposed to their ethnic traditions. To introduce their children to their ancestors’ traditions, parents usually send them to an elite Christian school where students can learn Mandarin and, in some cases, they also expect their children to learn Tionghoa culture and traditions at school. For the rich Tionghoa families, embracing their Tionghoa-ness is not merely about ethnic identity but is also about family business, because usually they have huge Tionghoa business networks. These networks are very important for them to expand their business. In contrast, less affluent Tionghoa who are small retailers primarily deal with non-Tionghoa sellers and buyers, and assimilating with the local people and lessening the degree of their Tionghoa-ness is more helpful for them to establish and maintain their business.

Because these conclusions are based on only two interviews, there must be other explanations that are not covered in this research due to the very small sample. Thus, a more comprehensive study is necessary.
Chapter 5
Interview Analysis

This chapter will analyze the interviews and the observation results to come up with a general understanding of the schools’ and the Tionghoa parents’ expectations about Tionghoa students’ identity within the context of Christian schools. From the interviews, as well as from the observations that were conducted in the field at several schools, a clearer picture of the role Christian schools play in defining Tionghoa-ness can be drawn. In Indonesia, as in other places, Christianity is divided between the major streams of Catholicism and Protestantism, although in Indonesia they are regarded effectively as separate religions. In the context of Indonesia, the Catholics call themselves “Catholic” whilst the Protestants call themselves “Christian.” This is also applied to the school context, where Christian schools are referred to either as “Catholic schools,” for those that belong to the Catholic community, or “Christian schools,” which belong to the Protestant community.

Despite their different religious affiliations, these schools share some similarities in that both types implement the same curriculum and are in accordance with the Indonesian national education system. However, there are some differences between them, since they are supported by different Christian denominations. In addition, these schools have different policies regarding religious instruction for their students. Catholic schools provide religious instruction based on the students’ religion. They have Islamic instruction for Muslim students, Catholic instruction for Catholic students, Protestant instruction for Protestant students, and so on. In contrast, Christian schools only provide Protestant instruction for all students, regardless of their religions.

Usually these schools are established and financially sponsored by a church community, as in the case of Kesuma Catholic School and Alethea Christian School, or they are established and financially supported by an ethnic community, as is the case of Budi Luhur, which was
established and is financially supported by the Hokkien community. Most of the Christian and Catholic schools in Indonesia are financially supported by churches in which most of the congregation is Tionghoa. Usually the rich Tionghoa play prominent roles and are highly respected in their church. These people are also involved as the schools’ board members. There are also schools that do not have an affiliation with a particular church, but are financially supported by a Christian or Catholic community; for example, Penabur Christian Senior High School in Jakarta is supported by a community-based organization called Yayasan BPK Penabur (The Foundation of Penabur Christian Education Agency). Most of the people who hold managerial positions both in the foundation and in the school are Tionghoa. The top leader, Tjiputra, is an outstanding Tionghoa businessman.

One of the interesting features of Christian schools in Indonesia is that, on the one hand, most of their students as well as members of the school board are Tionghoa, and on the other hand, most (if not all) of their teachers are non-Tionghoa. In my analysis, this might be partly due to the Tionghoa’s higher education choices as well as their career preferences. The Tionghoa are very well known as businessmen. Those who own a large family business will urge their children to go to a business school so that they will be able to lead their family business. Those who do not go to business school and prefer professional careers tend to choose particular majors that can help them to work in highly paid jobs in the future, for instance, in medicine and engineering.

Being a teacher and being a civil servant are two of the most common jobs in Indonesia. However, these jobs are not options for the Tionghoa. In West Nusatenggara province, less than ten out of ten thousand Tionghoa work as civil servants. It might be that this is because the Tionghoa are less interested in those jobs as, in Indonesia, teaching and working as a civil
servant are considered low-paid jobs. However, this might not be the only reason. Another reason might be because, in the past, it was not easy for Tionghoa to be accepted to work in government offices. To be a civil servant, one must complete a lot of paperwork. For the Tionghoa, this was not easy, not only because it is very difficult for them to deal with paperwork, but also because the Soeharto government set up a regulation that only WNI (Indonesian citizens) could apply to be civil servants, while WNI Keturunan Asing (Indonesian citizens of foreign descent), including the Tionghoa, were prohibited from applying for these jobs.

Tionghoa and non-Tionghoa groups say that they have no problem with each other and they regard each other with respect. However, it is not easy for either group to mingle with the other. Additionally, stereotypes about the other group still exist in each group, and to some extent these might influence the way they interact with each other.

This chapter will use the theoretical frameworks on identity discussed in Chapter 3 to analyze the interviews presented in Chapter 4 to examine the way the Tionghoa students deal with their parents’ and schools’ expectations about their identity. At the end, some controlling factors that can explain the different expectations among the Tionghoa community will also be examined.

A. The schools’ expectations

Since 1998, Indonesia has experienced a great shift from authoritarian to democratic government, which influences every aspect of the country, including education. As explained earlier, during the authoritarian regime of Soeharto (1966–1998), education was strictly controlled by the government with a particular emphasis on the implementation of Indonesian national culture as the only cultural aspect emphasized within the school context. After 1998, the new government began to enact more lenient policies in education. By the implementation of
Indonesian Act No. 20/2003 in relation to the National Education System, every community was given the right to establish its own formal or non-formal education. In addition, the communities were also given the right to emphasize particular characteristics or interests of the community itself.

However, this freedom does not necessarily mean that community-based education is free from government regulations, since schools have to operate in accordance with the government’s educational policy. Additionally, values, norms, or regulations implemented and traditions celebrated in schools should not harm the country’s national unity. This regulation is translated by each school into the school’s vision and mission, which mostly emphasize the universal values of humanity. For example, at Kesuma, the mission talks about compassion, creativity, quality, and skill; and at Budi Luhur, they talk about endurance and honesty.

From the interviews with teachers as well as from observations at Kesuma and Alethea, it is clear that these schools, which are known as “Sekolah Cina” (school of the Chinese), do not follow the spirit of Confucianism or any Chinese norms within the school environment, books, or curriculum. During the weekly flag ceremony, the Kesuma and Alethea school principals give speeches that deliver messages about national unity, students’ code of conduct, nationalism, and the practice of the Pancasila (Indonesia’s Five Principles) in students’ daily life, like the speeches of other schools’ principals. On the other hand, as explained in earlier chapters, the implementation of Confucian and Chinese norms is prominent at Budi Luhur.

In terms of the school system and curriculum, most Christian schools such as Kesuma and Alethea expect their students to reflect one national identity as Indonesian. In other words, schools expect students to behave in terms of their national identity more than their ethnic identity in their daily interactions in the school context and in the larger context of the society.
This means that Christian schools in which the majority of the students are Tionghoa expect that their Tionghoa students as well as their students of other ethnicities will perform their national identity as Indonesians more than their ethnic identity as Tionghoa or non-Tionghoa.

However, in terms of the school environment, since most students at both Kesuma and Alethea are Tionghoa, the Tionghoa students mostly interact with other Tionghoa. Part of the reason for this is because the Tionghoa students are mostly already known to each other from their previous schools or from their churches. These intensive and continuous interactions amongst students who share similarities, to some extent, contribute to their sense of ethnic identity and this makes the boundaries between students of different ethnicities become clearer.

Unlike Kesuma and Alethea, Budi Luhur, which was established six years ago, is a private school with specific emphasis on Chinese traditions and cultures as well as Confucian norms. The school’s expectation for students’ identity is clearly expressed through the school environment and education system. In terms of the school system, such as curriculum and books, Budi Luhur, like other schools, is in accordance with the national education system. At the same time, in terms of school environment, the school buildings are decorated with Chinese characters and decorations with red and gold as the dominant colors. Based on the interview with the school principal, the school expects that the students, who are mostly Tionghoa, will strongly embrace their national identity as Indonesians but at the same time also be proud of their Tionghoa heritage.

**B. Parents’ expectations**

From the interviews, it seems that parents’ expectations about their children’s identity varied depending on several factors such as parents’ generation and their economic status, and external factors such as the acceptance and denial they had experienced from social institutions.
Generational links, as explained earlier, contribute not only to the sense of being Tionghoa among the Tionghoa community but also to the particular generation’s expectations for their children’s sense of ethnic identity. In addition to generational connections, socio-economic status also plays a role in explaining expectations for the parent’s identity as well as for his or her children’s identity. Besides generation and economic status, Cornell and Hartmann (1998) explain that the acceptance or denial of social institutions within a population to a particular group will increase or decrease the salience of ethnic bonds among the members of the excluded group.

Different generations of Tionghoa have different expectations about their children’s identity. As explained in Chapter 4, earlier generations of Tionghoa express their disappointment that later generations tend to not pay attention to their ancestors’ traditions. They regret that later generations of Tionghoa, particularly those who have converted to Christianity and Islam, no longer preserve ancestors’ tablets in their houses and most of them do not go to a temple to worship their ancestors. On one hand, they realize that this situation has been caused by factors such as the later generations’ religious affiliation and the political situation that placed them in difficult situations so that it was very hard for them to practice and to pass down their traditions. On the other hand, with the changing political and social situation, which means they now can freely express and practice their rituals in public spaces, Tionghoa parents expect school to be an important agent that can help them to pass down their traditions so that their offspring can learn Tionghoa traditions more intensively within the school context.

For earlier generations, sending their children and grandchildren to Christian schools is not merely about the quality of the school itself. More than that, they see these schools as the only comfortable space for them to both educate their children and to preserve their sense of
Tionghoa-ness. Based on the interviews, later generations see school more as education and training institutions. Their decisions to send their children to Christian schools are simply because in Indonesia most of the Christian schools offer a better quality of education than most of the other private and public schools. According to them, since there are no Tionghoa traditions or norms taught at Christian schools, except Mandarin in some cases, they cannot expect that their children will strongly embrace their Tionghoa-ness through Christian schools.

There are different situations faced by the earlier and later generations of Tionghoa in terms of education, particularly regarding the Christian schools. For the earlier generations, education for their children was a difficult matter. After the closure of Chinese schools in 1966 and the closure of SNPCs, which were aimed at providing the Tionghoa with education, in 1975, attending public schools was not easy. This was not only because of the limited number of public schools available during that time (1966–1980) and because the Tionghoa were not prioritized in this matter, but also the very strong stereotypes of both the Tionghoa and the pribumi that made the Tionghoa uncomfortable attending public schools, which were dominated by the pribumi. Thus, Christian schools were the most comfortable place for their children to study. Because Christian schools were not financially supported by the government, there were no regulations about whom to prioritize and there were not many pribumi attending these schools; apparently, the majority of students at Christian schools were Tionghoa. Hence, the earlier generations expected that letting their offspring engage with their Tionghoa fellows would certainly strengthen their perception of self-sameness (Erikson, 1994: 22).

In contrast, the later generations, particularly the post-Soeharto generation, faced different social and political situations. Social institutions, including educational institutions, are available and accessible for anyone, regardless of ethnic identity. Unlike the earlier generations
who attended Christian schools because those were the only schools available and accessible for
them, for this later generation, attending Christian schools is a matter of choice for those seeking
a good education for their children.

As pointed out by Cornell and Hartmann (1998), whenever social institutions within the
population are unavailable and inaccessible for particular groups, the attachment among
members of the groups as well as the salience of the groups’ bonds are strengthened. On the
other hands, whenever the social institutions within the population are available and accessible
for all groups within the community, the attachment among members of the groups as well as the
salience of the groups’ bonds are weakened. For the Tionghoa, in terms of access to education,
the bond among the earlier generations was strengthened particularly because they experienced
denial from educational institutions; this made them bond with one another within Christian
schools, which were attended mainly by those who shared common experiences of suffering.

In contrast, the later generations do not necessarily share the experiences of the earlier
generations. Their access to education is very much more open. They were not “forced” by the
situation to send their children to Christian schools, but they do so because they choose and want
to do so. This situation, to some extent, reduces the salience of being Tionghoa among the later
generations and thus, reduces their expectations that their children will strongly embrace
Tionghoa identity. All in all, for the earlier generations, embracing Tionghoa identity within
school contexts was an important matter, but for the later generations, school is about education
and training and thus the quality of the school itself is more important than its emphasis on
Tionghoa traditions.

Regarding the Tionghoa parents’ economic and social status, from the interviews I
realized that different expectations are held by the more affluent and the less affluent Tionghoa
parents. Better-off parents tend to expect their children to equally perform their national identity as Indonesians and their ethnic identity as Tionghoa. Within the school context, they do not mind if their children consider themselves more as Indonesians than as Tionghoa. However, although it is not their main intention, they are also pleased if their children can also learn Tionghoa traditions at their schools.

Less-affluent parents that I interviewed, particularly those who are less able to succeed in their business, seem to be traumatized more deeply compared to the better-off Tionghoa families who were able to rebuild their businesses. On one hand, they feel it was sad and unjust that when anti-Tionghoa riots took place in Lombok, they were targeted as scapegoats for the economic crisis in Indonesia. On the other hand, they assume that those incidents happened to them merely because they are Tionghoa. With this assumption in mind, the Tionghoa mother that I interviewed, who admitted that her family has been unable to rebuild their business, and thus she considered her family to be a poor Tionghoa family, strongly urges her daughter to embrace her national identity as an Indonesian. She wants her daughter to be totally Indonesian because she believes that if her daughter is more Indonesian she can be wholly accepted within the pribumi community and thus, she hopes that her daughter can avoid becoming the victim of another anti-Tionghoa riot. This Tionghoa mother feels that her identity as Tionghoa had a negative influence on her life experiences. Having this in mind, she tends to urge her daughter to decrease her degree of Tionghoa-ness in order to decrease the negative experiences she might encounter because of her ethnic identity.

C. Tionghoa students’ identity

The identity of Tionghoa students is never singular. Instead, it is always multiplying and in the process of changing. Additionally, it is always constructed differently across different
circumstances. On the one hand, they claim that they are Indonesians despite the fact that they are hardly acknowledged as pribumi (sons of the soil). On the other hand, they still are strongly proud of their Tionghoa-ness despite the fact that they do not quite understand their Tionghoa culture and traditions.

This analysis of Tionghoa students’ sense of identity is based on my interviews with students (Tionghoa and non-Tionghoa) and my observations at Kesuma Catholic School. From the interviews and observations, it is apparent that Tionghoa students do not speak any Chinese dialect. One of the Tionghoa students that I interviewed told me that she still calls her family members with Chinese terms, such as Koko for older brother, Cece for older sister, Memei for younger sister, Engkong for grandfather, and so on. However, she does not speak the language. Another Tionghoa student I interviewed said the same thing. Although their parents still speak the language with their grandparents and uncles or aunts, their cousins hardly speak the language.

Not only language, but other aspects of Tionghoa traditions, especially ancestor worship, are also no longer practiced within their nuclear families. Part of the reason is because their parents have converted to either Christianity or Islam. They sometimes celebrate Chinese New Year or other celebrations with other families, but because they do not really understand the philosophy beyond these celebrations they see them more as events for reunions with other family members than as rituals.

Although they no longer embrace Tionghoa culture, they are still strongly proud of it. They believe that they have their identity as Tionghoa not only when they practice all of the traditions or speak the languages, but also when they feel they share the same blood and they share similar physical appearances with their ancestors and with other Tionghoa.
students I interviewed explained that although they do not practice any Tionghoa traditions, do not speak Chinese, and do not use Chinese family names, these does not make them “not Tionghoa” to non-Tionghoa. They continue to see themselves as Tionghoa, since their Tionghoa as well as non-Tionghoa friends continue to acknowledge them as Tionghoa, despite the fact that the degree of their Tionghoa-ness is reduced to some extent compared to their ancestors. In addition to that they admit that they no longer have any affiliation to China as was their ancestors. In terms of social and cultural development they are more oriented to the United States and European countries.

At Kesuma Catholic High School, Tionghoa students unconsciously build their ethnic identity through contact and relations with others and through recognition of self-sameness within the Tionghoa students themselves and recognition of their differences with non-Tionghoa students. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Tionghoa students at Kesuma usually graduated from the same elementary and junior high schools. Thus they know each other long before they attend high school. Some of them know each other because of their family or business connections. This continual contact, to some extent, influences their sense of self-sameness as Tionghoa students.

As for the school’s expectations that they be more Indonesian than Tionghoa, these students do not see this as a crucial problem. To them, this expectation is reasonable because they were born and raised in Indonesia and they, too, see themselves as Indonesians. Both of the Tionghoa students I interviewed said that they are not only born and raised in Indonesia, but they also speak Bahasa Indonesia like other people, they eat Indonesian foods more than Tionghoa foods, they understand Indonesian culture more than they understand Tionghoa culture, and they embrace religions (Christianity and Islam) that are also embraced by other Indonesians. Thus,
they see the school’s expectations for their identity as actually in accordance with their daily self-consciousness.

Regarding their parents’ expectations, these Tionghoa students told me that their parents do not really emphasize whether or not they want them to embrace their Tionghoa identity more than their Indonesian identity. They said that their parents do explain to them about their Tionghoa heritage and Tionghoa family lineage. However, even their parents do not have any extensive knowledge of Tionghoa culture and traditions, so they are unable to nurture them with their ancestors’ legacy. As a result, most of the Tionghoa students feel that they are Tionghoa not because they understand the fundamental meaning of being Tionghoa but simply because they inherited Tionghoa blood.

However, although their parents never explicitly explain their expectations regarding whether or not they want their children to strongly embrace their Tionghoa-ness, they do explicitly explain their preference for their children to make friends with Tionghoa. Both of the Tionghoa students I interviewed told me that their parents clearly instruct them, because of possible racist attacks from the pribumi and the fear of them being humiliated or being denigrated, to keep a distance from non-Tionghoa. Furthermore, they also told me that within their families it is a rule to marry a Tionghoa. They explained that their older brothers and sisters married Tionghoa and they want to do the same.

From my interviews with students and teachers as well as my observations at Kesuma, it appears that Tionghoa students make friends with everyone, regardless of their ethnicity or religion. So do non-Tionghoa students. One of the non-Tionghoa students I interviewed said that her Tionghoa friends are very friendly and mingle with everyone. However, during my observations in class and during the break, I saw that most of the Tionghoa students spend their
time with other Tionghoa. In class they share tables with their Tionghoa friends, and during the breaks they spend more time with them, too. And non-Tionghoa students also tend to spend more time with students of the same ethnic background.

As a general overview, in Indonesia, ethnic boundaries are strongly maintained within the context of Indonesian-ness. This means that the Indonesian people, who have diverse ethnic backgrounds, are still strongly attached to their ethnic identity and maintain their ethnic borders, and at the same time they merge themselves into one identity as Indonesians. There is a generally accepted ethnic tendency within Indonesian society that most of the time people of a particular ethnicity say that they are ready to interact and mingle with people of other ethnicities, while at the same time their actions show their preference for socializing with their ethnic fellows.

This situation also applies within the school context. It seems fine when the Sasak prefer to mingle with their Sasak fellows, but it seems problematic when it comes to the Tionghoa. I assume that this is because native Indonesians, to some extent, still perceive the Tionghoa as people who have a different origin, history, and culture. Thus, they see it as improper when the Tionghoa socialize only with other Tionghoa. For the Tionghoa students themselves, they do not see this as a problem, as they observe that all their schoolmates also prefer to mingle with their ethnic fellows.

In terms of interaction and socialization, Tionghoa students do not encounter very different or difficult social environments where they have to negotiate carefully and change their identity from Tionghoa to Indonesian, because at this point in their lives, they mostly socialize and interact with their Tionghoa fellows in their daily activities. For instance, a Christian Tionghoa student I interviewed at Kesuma passes his time almost entirely with his Tionghoa friends, including non-Christian Tionghoa, at school and at his extracurricular activities after
school. I once met him at his church, where he usually spends time playing basketball and being
involved in other activities with his friends, and most of his friends at church are also Tionghoa.

The same is true for a Tionghoa student I observed at her temple during her Sunday class.
At a Buddhist temple where she and other Tionghoa students gather for praying and Sunday
class, she apparently spends most of her time interacting with other students who are also
Tionghoa. Similarly, a Muslim Tionghoa student I interviewed at Kesuma also experiences the
same thing. Although she is a Muslim, she admitted that she had never been to a mosque. She
also admitted that she had never attended Friday prayer, which is held as an optional activity at
her school and where she would be able to mingle with her Muslim friends who are mostly non-
Tionghoa. She also confessed that she spends most of her time with her family at home or with
her Tionghoa friends at Kesuma or in her neighborhood. This pattern is most likely to change in
the future when they graduate from high school and continue to university where they will
probably interact more with people of different ethnicities.

There are at least two factors that make it fairly easy for Tionghoa to adjust to having
different identities in different situations. The first is the fact that they were born and raised in
Indonesia and have always had exposure to Indonesian culture. This makes it easy for them to
negotiate their identity as Tionghoa and adjust to non-Tionghoa people. Second, nowadays, the
younger Tionghoa have benefited very much from the political and social progress in Indonesia,
where there is no longer the kind of political pressure on the Tionghoa that there was during the
Soeharto period. With the more democratic political environment in Indonesia nowadays, the
Tionghoa do not need to unfasten their identity or, in other words, they do not need to detach
themselves from their identity when they interact with their non-Tionghoa counterparts.
In contemporary Indonesia, where people are more receptive to diversity among themselves and after the pain of several ethnic and religious riots in many places in Indonesia, people tend to be more respectful toward people of different ethnicities and religions. These situations, to some extent, contribute to Tionghoa students’ and their parents’ sense of Tionghoaness. Since they do not encounter denial from schools or other social institutions—or, in other words, because every social institution, including the schools, is very accessible and available to them, the tight bond that united their ancestors because of social institutions’ denial has become looser.

Earlier generations of Tionghoa had to send their children to Christian schools because those were the only schools available and accessible to them. Within these schools they built very strong bonds among themselves. The younger generations of Tionghoa nowadays send their children to Christian schools because they believe that these schools provide a better education compared to most public and private schools. In other words, Tionghoa nowadays send their children to Christian schools because they consciously choose to do so, not because they are forced to do so by their situation. This different situation creates a different bond among members of the Tionghoa community, as well as a different personal sense of Tionghoa-ness for every individual. The earlier generations of Tionghoa developed a strong sense of Tionghoa-ness through their bitter experience of the government’s rejection and their social exclusion, especially in terms of school. Although they were strictly prohibited from practicing their traditions, they were able to secretly preserve their culture through their own education system. These days, the younger generations symbolically retain their Tionghoa-ness. However, they seem to be unable to preserve their traditions in any substantial ways, although they are given ample opportunities to do so both within and beyond school. All in all, Tionghoa students
accommodate both their schools’ and their parents’ expectations about their identity by simultaneously multiplying their identity (Reed, 2001: 329). This means they embrace their identity as Tionghoa and as Indonesian at the same time. Sometimes, they also have to fasten and unfasten their identity, depending on the accepted norms where they are situated, in order to create comfortable, equal, and mutually respectful interactions with their non-Tionghoa counterparts.
Chapter 6
Summary and Conclusions

In terms of their relationship to the Indonesian state, schools’ expectations for their students’ identity have not significantly changed since the country gained its independence. Schools still expect their students to strongly embrace their national identity as Indonesians. In contrast to the slight change in schools’ expectations, Tionghoa parents’ expectations about their children’s identity, particularly within the context of Christian schools, have changed considerably from generation to generation and they are different for affluent and less-affluent Tionghoa parents. To deal with their schools’ and parents’ expectations, it seems that it is fairly easy for Tionghoa students to embrace their identity both as Indonesians and as Tionghoa by multiplying, negotiating, fastening, and unfastening their identity at the same time and in a variety of ways.

Schools’ expectations about their students’ identity are well described through the national education system, curriculum, and books used at schools, as well as extracurricular activities at schools. During the Soekarno (1950–1966) and Soeharto (1966–1998) regimes, schools and national education in Indonesia were very centralized. As a newly independent nation, the government was very concerned about the development of the nation. They also believed that sustainable development could be reached only if the nation was politically stable, and they believed that political stability could be reached if all of the people were loyal to the government and willing to unite regardless of their diverse social, religious, and ethnic backgrounds.

This political arrogance led to the implementation of a monoculture and an assimilation policy, even at the school level. At that time, schools were obliged to teach the Pancasila (the five principles), to give seven days’ training on the P4 (the Guidelines of Appreciation and
Practices of Pancasila) every year for new students, and to perform a weekly Monday flag ceremony where the recitation of the Pancasila and the 1945 Basic Constitution, singing the Indonesian national anthem, and honoring the flag was mandatory, as well as the performance of an annual ceremony on Indonesian independence day. These obligations were perpetuated in the school context, where all schools, including private schools, and all students, particularly Tionghoa, were discouraged from performing their ethnic or group identity and expected to perform only one single identity as Indonesians.

This expectation has changed slightly during the post-Soeharto regimes, when schools are given freedom to embrace different cultures and different ethnic identities. In addition, the government also allows the right and the freedom to communities such as ethnic or religious groups to establish educational institutions based on the specific characteristics of those ethnic or religious groups or based on their interests. However, this freedom must be in accordance with the law and, more importantly, the national identity must be embraced.

Several parts of the monoculture and assimilation policy are still retained in schools, such as the teaching of the Pancasila, the weekly Monday flag ceremony, the recitation of the Pancasila and 1945 Basic Constitution, the singing of the Indonesian national anthem, paying tribute to the flag, and the annual ceremony of Indonesian independence day. This suggests that schools’ expectations about their students’ identity has changed from an expectation that all students, regardless of their ethnicity, religions, cultures, and traditions, have to embrace one single national identity as Indonesians to an expectation that students will embrace and be proud of their national identity as Indonesian, but at the same time they are expected to embrace and be proud of their ethnic or other groups’ identity.
Parents’ expectations for their children’s identity are varied depending on at least two factors: generation and socio-economic status. Earlier generations of Tionghoa, especially those whose experiences are before 1998, underwent repeated rejections from political and social institutions. In terms of education, under the Dutch, they were unable to attend Dutch schools unless they were very rich and able to pay the high tuition, and they were also prohibited from attending native schools. As a result, they attended missionary schools and established their own schools. All Dutch schools as well as missionary schools were converted to national schools during the Japanese occupation (1945–1948) but Chinese-medium schools were still allowed to operate. It was not until 1966, when a coup d’état took place in Indonesia, that all Chinese-medium schools were converted to private and public national schools and all Chinese social organizations were banned, including the use of Chinese names and the practice of Chinese traditions in public spaces.

Some of the Chinese-medium schools were converted to public schools and some of them were converted to Christian schools and were managed by Christian Chinese communities, particularly those in Java. After the closure of Chinese-medium schools, Tionghoa students were very much left out of education. They felt hesitant to attend public schools because at that time public schools were prioritized for native students, and they felt uncomfortable mingling with non-Tionghoa students because of the very strong stereotypes against the Tionghoa. Thus, they preferred to attend Christian schools, which were mostly managed by Tionghoa communities.

With the political and social pressure from the government by which the Tionghoa were not allowed to practice their traditions and they were forced to change their Chinese names to Indonesian names, the Tionghoa saw Christian schools as the only and the best place where they could expect their children to build and maintain their sense of Tionghoa-ness by continuing to
interact with other Tionghoa. In short, the earlier generations of Tionghoa saw Christian schools as important sites for passing down their sense of self-identity to their children, and they strongly expected their children to embrace their sense of Tionghoa-ness although they could not practice any of their traditions.

After the enactment of the new education policy, where communities were given freedom to establish educational institutions, and with the later development of schools that strongly emphasize Tionghoa culture, through practices such as language and traditional celebrations, these earlier generations are very grateful and strongly urge their grandchildren to attend such schools because they want their grandchildren to inherit their self-consciousness as Tionghoa. At the same time, later generations of Tionghoa tend to send their children to Christian schools for practical instead of ideological reasons.

The current generation of Tionghoa parents in Lombok tends to be more lenient in terms of their children’s identity. They do not really mind if their children do not understand or do not embrace their Tionghoa-ness. Yet they feel happy if school can provide their children with Tionghoa culture and traditions. They believe themselves and their children to still be Tionghoa although they no longer speak Chinese and they do not practice their ancestors’ traditions.

In terms of economy and social status, affluent Tionghoa parents who were able to regain their business success after the anti-Tionghoa riots tend to urge their children to embrace and feel proud of their Tionghoa-ness because they believe that by doing so they can establish larger business networks with other Tionghoa businessmen. On the other hand, less affluent Tionghoa parents who were unable to successfully rebuild their business after the riots tend to encourage their children to be more Indonesian because they believe that being more Tionghoa may subject
them to more anti-Tionghoa riots, where they were targeted as scapegoats and subjected to violence.

Regarding Tionghoa students’ self-consciousness of their own identity, they see themselves as both Tionghoa and Indonesian. They perform both of these identities by multiplying and negotiating as well as claiming, unclaiming, and reclaiming their identity depending on the accepted norms. It is fairly easy for them to multiply their identity as Indonesian and Tionghoa and to adjust it to meet accepted norms. Because they were raised in an Indonesian atmosphere and were exposed more to Indonesian culture than to Tionghoa culture, it is quite easy when they have to socialize in a more Indonesian community. However, because of the political and social progress in Indonesia, where there are no longer the political pressures on the Tionghoa that there were during the Soeharto period, they do not need to totally detach themselves from their ethnic identity as Tionghoa. They only need to unfasten their Tionghoa-ness to a certain degree so that they can comfortably mingle with their non-Tionghoa counterparts.

Besides these findings, there is an important point that emerged in this study that needs to be emphasized because it seems to contradict the generally accepted assumption that Tionghoa-ness is always there and that it is static and unchanging and will re-emerge given the opportunity. This study shows the opposite fact, that Tionghoa-ness is a much more dynamic process in which, for various reasons, certain expressions or admiration of Tionghoa-ness can become desirable, important, and meaningful to certain persons at certain times. For instance, as the study shows, Tionghoa-ness is more meaningful and more important to the better-off Tionghoa than it is to the poor Tionghoa. More importantly, the meaning of being Tionghoa has become less important to the later generations than it was to the earlier generations. This, to some extent,
is because they no longer are excluded from Indonesia’s political and social mainstream, as were
the earlier generations. In other words, contemporary Indonesia’s political and social life is very
much open for them.

In addition, there is a wide variety of experiences of Tionghoa-ness that are quite
different across regions. In some bigger cities, such as Jakarta, Surabaya, Medan, Makassar, and
Pontianak, there is an explosion of expression of Tionghoa-ness among the Tionghoa
themselves, as well as among the non-Tionghoa, as the government shows better political will
toward them since 1998. In these cities, Chinese festivals are extravagantly celebrated, Mandarin
newspapers such as *Shang Bao* and *Sinchew* are produced and widely circulated, Mandarin radio
stations such as Cakrawala FM-Mandarin Station play Chinese music and broadcast news daily.
In addition, a national private television station called Metro TV has a regular Mandarin program
and consistently broadcasts Chinese programs.

On the other hand, the Tionghoa community in Lombok is less blatant in terms of
expressing their Tionghoa-ness. There have not been any especially glorious Chinese
celebrations in Lombok. Unlike Chinese celebrations in the bigger cities, which usually hold
massive celebrations in the main roads of the cities and involve thousands of people including
the performers and the spectators, the Tionghoa in Lombok celebrate their festivals at particular
places such as at their temples, churches, and associations. There is no Mandarin radio that
reaches the Tionghoa community in Lombok, and the Tionghoa have not established one
themselves. There is no locally produced Mandarin newspaper there. All they have are sent from
the nearest big city, Surabaya. These newspapers are not widely circulated among the Tionghoa
community but are only available at the Tionghoa Associations’ offices, such as at the Hakka
building, the Hokkien building, and the PSMTI’s office. Most of the time, these newspapers are
not read because the Tionghoa, especially those who are able to read Mandarin, do not routinely come to those places. Most of them come to these offices only on certain occasions. Additionally, many Tionghoa do not read Mandarin. As a result, these newspapers have only a symbolic meaning of Tionghoa-ness. All in all, in Lombok the expression of Tionghoa-ness is less prominent and its importance seems more symbolic.
Appendix

Appendix A: Map of Indonesia

Source: Kerry B. Collison Asia News.
Accessed on 5/27/2012
Appendix B: Map of the Island of Lombok
Appendix C: Interview Guide for Teachers

a. Are you a civil servant teacher?
b. How did you start teaching in a Christian school?
c. What do you think the difference is between a national school and a Christian school in the sense of the system, the environment, etc.?
d. Have you ever taught in a national school (public/private)? If yes, which do you prefer, teaching in a national school or in a Christian school?
e. What do you think of Chinese students in terms of their academic achievement?
f. Are they different from other students with different ethnic backgrounds?
g. What are the differences?
h. What do you think of Chinese students in terms of their interactions, both in and out of the classroom?
i. Are they different from other students with different ethnic backgrounds?
j. What are the differences?
k. Do they interact differently with other Chinese students and with students of other ethnicities?
l. What about non Chinese students? Do they interact differently with the Chinese students than with students of other ethnicities?
m. What do you think of the school system, including policies, curriculum, and textbooks? Do they acknowledge ethnic diversity among the students?
n. What do you think of the school’s expectations about students’ identity (regardless of their ethnicity)? What does the school want students to be (in terms of their identity)? Does the school want all the students to perform the same identity? Does the school treat the students equally (regardless of their ethnicity)? Does the school acknowledge students’ ethnicity?
o. What do you think of Chinese students’ performance at school (in terms of their ethnicity)? Do they clearly confirm their ethnic identity? Or do they physically look Chinese but behave like the non Chinese students?
p. What do you think about Chinese students’ preferences in making friends (close friends)? Do they prefer to make friends only with Chinese students or with non Chinese students?
q. What do you think about Chinese students’ preferences for a second language? What language do they prefer to study as their second language?
r. What do you think about Chinese students’ enthusiasm about learning about Chinese culture?
s. How is Chinese culture acknowledged at the school?
Appendix D: Interview Guide for Non-Chinese Students

a. Why did you choose to enroll in a Christian school?
b. What do you think the difference is between national schools and Christian schools in the sense of the system, the environment, etc.?
c. Have you ever studied at a non-Christian school? If yes, what do you like the most, to go to a national school or to a Christian school?
d. What do you think of your academic achievement?
e. What do you think of your friends’ (of other ethnicities) academic achievement?
f. Are there any differences between Chinese and non-Chinese students’ academic achievement?
g. What are the differences?
h. Do they interact differently with other Chinese students and with students of other ethnicities?
i. What about non-Chinese students? Do they interact differently with the Chinese students?
j. What do you think about the school system, such as policies, curriculum, and textbooks? Do they acknowledge ethnic diversity among the students?
k. What do you think about the school’s expectations about students’ identity (regardless of their ethnicity)? What does the school want students to be (in terms of their identity)? Does the school want all students to perform the same identity? Does the school treat the students equally (regardless of their ethnicity)? Does the school acknowledge students’ ethnicity?
l. What do you think of Chinese students’ performance at school (in terms of their ethnicity)? Do they clearly perform their ethnic identity? Or do they physically look Chinese but behave like the non-Chinese students?
m. What do you think about Chinese students’ preferences in making friends (close friends)? Do they prefer to make friends only with Chinese students or with non-Chinese students?
n. What do you think about Chinese students’ preferences for a second language? What language do they prefer to study as their second language?
o. What do you think about Chinese students’ enthusiasm about learning about Chinese culture?
p. How is Chinese culture acknowledged at the school?
Appendix E: Interview Guide for Chinese Students

a. Why did you choose to enroll in a Christian school?
b. What do you think the difference is between national schools and Christian schools in terms of the system, the environment, etc.?
c. Have you ever studied in a non-Christian school? If yes, which do you like the most, to go to a national school or a Christian school?
d. What do you think of your academic achievement?
e. What do you think of your friends’ (from other ethnicities) academic achievement?
f. Are there any differences between Chinese and non-Chinese students’ academic achievement?
g. What are the differences?
h. What do you think about the school system, such as policies, curriculum, and textbooks? Do they acknowledge ethnic diversity among the students?
i. What do you think about the school’s expectations about students’ identity (regardless of their ethnicity)? What does the school want students to be (in terms of their identity)? Does the school want all students to perform the same identity? Does the school treat the students equally (regardless of their ethnicity)? Does the school acknowledge students’ ethnicity?
j. Do you clearly confirm your ethnic identity? Or do you want people to acknowledge you as a Chinese?
k. Which do you prefer, to make friends with a Chinese or a non-Chinese person? Why?
l. What language do you prefer to study as a second language?
m. Do you speak Mandarin or any Chinese dialect?
n. Do you know about your Chinese culture?
o. Do you practice your culture?
p. Do you often gather with other Chinese? How often?
q. Do you often celebrate traditional Chinese celebrations?
r. Do you like practicing your Chinese culture?
s. Do you think it is important to preserve your culture? How important is it? Why do you think it is important?
t. Do you learn about your Chinese culture at home? Do your parents retain their culture and pass it on to their children?
u. Do you voluntarily or involuntarily learn about your Chinese culture?
v. Do you prefer to be acknowledged as Chinese or Indonesian? Why?
w. What do you think about non-Chinese people’s behavior toward you in regard to your ethnicity?
x. What do you think about the school policies? What do you think about the school’s expectations for your identity? Do you think the school wants you to be a Chinese or an Indonesian? Why?
y. What do you think about your parents’ expectations? Do they expect you to be a Chinese or an Indonesian? Why?
z. How do you deal with your parents’ and school’s expectations?
aa. How do you feel about your parents’ and school’s expectations?
Appendix F: Interview Guide for Chinese Parents

a. What Chinese generation are you?
b. Do you speak any Chinese dialect?
c. Why did you choose to send your child to a Christian school?
d. Has she/he ever attended a national school? If yes, which do you think is better, a national school or a Christian school? Why?
e. What do you think of the school system, such as policies, curriculum, and textbooks? Do they acknowledge ethnic diversity among the students?
f. What do you think about the school’s expectations for students’ identity (regardless of their ethnicity)? What does the school want students to be (in terms of their identity)? Does the school want students to perform the same identity? Does the school treat the students equally (regardless of their ethnicity)? Does the school acknowledge students’ ethnicity?
g. Do you prefer your children to clearly perform their ethnic identity? Or do you want people to acknowledge them as Chinese?
h. Which do you prefer for your children, that they make friends with Chinese or non Chinese people? Why?
i. What language do you prefer your children to study for a second language?
j. Do you speak Mandarin or any Chinese dialect?
k. Do you know about your Chinese culture?
l. Do you practice your culture?
m. Do you often gather with other Chinese? How often?
n. Do you often celebrate traditional Chinese celebrations?
o. Do you like practicing your Chinese culture?
p. Do you think it is important to preserve your culture? How important is it? Why do you think it is important?
q. Do you teach your children about your Chinese culture at home? Do you want your children to retain their culture? Why?
r. Did you voluntarily or involuntarily learn about your Chinese culture?
s. Do you force your children to practice Chinese culture?
t. Do you prefer to be acknowledged as Chinese or Indonesian? Why?
u. Do you prefer to acknowledge your children as Chinese or as Indonesian? Why?
v. What do you think about non Chinese people’s behavior toward you in regard to your ethnicity?
w. What do you think of the school’s policies? What do you think about the school’s expectations for your children’s identity? Do you think the school wants your children to be Chinese or Indonesian? Why?
x. What is your expectation for your children’s identity? Do you expect them to be Chinese or Indonesian? Why?
y. How do you deal with the school’s expectations for your children’s identity?
z. How do you feel about the school’s expectations for your children’s identity?
aa. What do you think of your children’s preferences for their identity? Do they acknowledge themselves as Chinese or Indonesian?

bb. What do you feel about this?
References


