

## ETHNIC CHINESE DURING THE NEW ORDER: TEACHING MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT FOR HISTORY LEARNING BASED ON MULTICULTURALISM

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### ABSTRACT

The history of Indonesian Chinese society is still rarely studied in history learning at school. One of them concerns the discriminatory treatment of them during the New Order era. This article aimed to describe discriminatory policies against ethnic Chinese during the New Order era, to present it as a history teaching material, and to elaborate on the importance of studying it for the younger people. This research used historical and qualitative descriptive method using literature. The result showed that (1) Ethnic Chinese in the New Order era received discriminatory treatment in various sectors. It was a violation of human rights and susceptible to trigger conflict. (2) The study of the Chinese people can be served as a history teaching material in the subject of the New Order era. (3) Teaching materials development is expected to be used to create awareness of multiculturalism through history teaching.

Keywords: Chinese, New Order, history teaching materials, multiculturalism

### ABSTRAK

Sejarah masyarakat Tionghoa Indonesia masih jarang dikaji dalam pembelajaran sejarah di sekolah. Salah satunya mengenai perlakuan diskriminatif terhadap mereka pada masa Orde Baru. Maka penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan kebijakan diskriminatif terhadap etnis Tionghoa selama Orde Baru, menyajikannya sebagai bahan ajar sejarah, dan menguraikan arti penting mempelajarinya bagi generasi muda. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode historis dan kualitatif deskriptif dengan studi pustaka. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa (1) Etnis Tionghoa pada masa Orde Baru menerima perlakuan diskriminatif di berbagai sektor. Hal itu merupakan pelanggaran atas hak asasi manusia dan terbukti rentan konflik. (2) Studi tentang dinamika masyarakat Tionghoa tersebut dapat disajikan sebagai bahan ajar sejarah pada pokok bahasan masa Orde Baru. (3) Kajian tersebut diharapkan dapat menciptakan kesadaran multikulturalisme melalui pembelajaran sejarah.

Kata kunci: Tionghoa, Orde Baru, bahan ajar sejarah, multikulturalisme



## INTRODUCTION

During the New Order, the government issued assimilation policies to solve the Chinese problem. These policies abolished all aspects of Chinese community life to be equal to any other. Cultural freedom restrained, moreover, the political opportunity was just a dream. The Chinese community was treated as a second-class citizen with a variety of discriminatory policies.

Policies applied by the New Order government had put the Chinese society in a full dilemma position. Some of them were being tended exclusively because they had financial ability above average. This condition triggered social inequality chasm. When tragedy erupted in 1998 due to the prolonged financial crisis, the Chinese community was subjected to mass amok. Surely it wasn't solely for economic reasons only, but also socially politically, the Chinese community placed as a foreigner (outsider).

Linguistically, the term *Tionghoa* and *Tiongkok* are Indonesia typical terms. *Tionghoa* means China's people or Chinese, and *Tiongkok* means China's state (Mahfud, 2013, p. 51). 'China' term was used in the colonial period to humiliate and insult the Chinese community. During the New Order, 'China' term used was expected to reduce or remove the superior and inferior feeling among Chinese and natives. This policy resulted in the psychosocial and discriminatory impacts on social relations.

Every Chinese person who had declared themselves to be an Indonesian citizen (WNI) ought to be automatically entered into the Indonesian society (Mahfud, 2013, p. 50). They also blend with the natives, even do intermarriage. It shows that the Chinese is equal to the other tribe or ethnic groups who also form this country. Thus it is proper if the Chinese community obtain the same rights as other citizens.

The discrimination practice against minorities is challenging to be ended. According to *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI)/Indonesia Dictionary in the net-

work, discrimination is defined as the difference in treatment to fellow citizens based on skin color, race, ethnicity, economics, religion, and so on. Discrimination became a severe problem when the discrimination practice against citizens was legalized through various legislations and policies. It is a violation of human rights and humanitarian principles.

This discrimination practice had become populist policies and systematically since the Dutch colonial period. Through Article 163 Indische Staatsregeling Wet van 2 September 1854, Ned. S. 1854-2, 1855-2 S. jo. 1, residents of the Dutch East Indies were divided into three groups, namely: (1) Europe and the Netherlands group, (2) Foreign Easterners group, including Chinese, Arabic, and India, and (3) *bumiputera* group (Verdiansyah, 2007, p. viii). Their place was also isolated, so the Chinatown appeared (Ongkhokham, 2008, p. 2).

Ironically this colonial's model policies were re-applied by the New Order government even in more diverse dimensions and institutionalized. Of course, it violated various provisions that regulate the democratic life embodied in Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. The New Order success in creating a stable socio-political and economic development, but many controversial policies appeared. One of them was the discrimination practice against ethnic Chinese. The closeness between the rulers and Chinese businesspeople in this period tended to put the Chinese as an economic tool for personal interest.

New Order was the government under the President Suharto leadership that lasted from 1967 to 1998. In the post-1965 incident, Indonesia entered a new stage. PKI that was accused of being the mastermind of the tragedy were exterminated. This extermination ended with the dismissal of peoples in President Soekarno's inner circle. Since then, Suharto appeared as the new leader that reinforced his position through *Surat Perintah 11 Maret 1966* (*Supersemar*).

Various dynamics experienced by the Chinese community in the New Order should be appointed in learning at school. It is crucial for the younger generations. They can learn from history so that the discriminatory practices against minority groups are not repeated. All this time, the study of Chinese community history in the New Order has not been touched in a curriculum of history subject. In this democratic era, teaching materials development had to be done to disseminate students' critical thinking skills.

Article 4 Paragraph (1) of Law Number 20 Year 2003 about the National Education System, confirmed that the teaching materials development is also made on the basic education that is democratic, justice, and not discriminatory by upholding the human rights, religious values, cultural values, and pluralistic nation. Associated to history teaching materials development, Djoko Suryo also explains that the history materials should be started from some subjects of study (Aman, 2011, pp. 97–98). One of them is the social history or history of society (history from bellows) to complete the dynamics overview and process of society development widely, entirely, and continuously.

So that discriminatory practices didn't recur, it needs multiculturalism awareness in society. The most appropriate means to build multiculturalism awareness is education. So the teaching material development about Chinese community dynamics in the New Order is right to be given in history learning based on multiculturalism.

All this time, the multiculturalism of Indonesian nations proved not fully-understood by all citizens as something given, divine Providence, and not by human factor. Masdar Hilmy argued that cultural diversity is not automatically accompanied by a positive reception (Mahfud, 2011, pp. 78–79). In fact, the cultural (and religion) diversity has contributed to the most significant donation of tensions and conflicts arising.

Multicultural education can be interpreted as an education for people of color (Banks & Banks, 2005, p. 3). It wants to explore difference as a necessity (grace of God) and respond to it by full-tolerant and egalitarian spirit. Educational space as a knowledge transformation media (transfer of knowledge) should be able to give the multiculturalism value through appreciating and respecting the diverse realities (plural), both background and socio-cultural basis.

Therefore this study examines the discrimination practice against ethnic Chinese in the New Order as a history teaching materials development, especially in high school. Hopefully, through these materials, students can understand the reality of pluralism led to the inculcation of multiculturalism value. The development of appreciating and respecting differences will increasingly develop a sense of tolerance that began to fade.

The aim of this study was (1) to describe various discriminatory policies against ethnic Chinese in the New Order; (2) to prepare history learning materials; (3) outlines the importance of history learning based on multiculturalism. The result can be input for teachers in developing history teaching materials that can open students' insight into the nation's diversity and the importance of full respect for multicultural values. Furthermore, it also can be proposed to the government in the History curriculum development.

#### **RESEARCH METHODS**

To examines the discriminatory policies against ethnic Chinese in the New Order, this research used historical method including heuristics that was gathering, critics or analysis was assessing resources, interpretation or synthesis was interpreting the source, and historiography (Gottschalk, 1985, p. 32). While the teaching materials design and its importance examined using qualitative descriptive methods with detailed sentences, complete, and sincerely (Sutopo, 2006, p. 40). The data is collected from various

library sources such as books about studied issues and curriculum 2013's documents. Data collection was done by using a literature technique to read, record, and analyze various library resources. The historical study phase prioritized the interpretation sharpness by using different theories, while the next step used inductive analysis technique.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **Various New Order's Policies Against Chinese Community**

The issue of Chinese in the New Order began since the outbreak of the 1965 incident. After this incident, not only communists and sympathizers became the scapegoat, but the Chinese community was also affected. China's alleged involvement by giving support to communist forces in Indonesia was the reason. However, China wasn't necessarily involved in the kidnapping of generals G30S's victims, of course.

Siauw Giok Tjhan establishes Baperki (*Badan Permusyawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia*) in 1954, accused of being a tool of the *Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI)*. This organization intended to unite the Chinese society's political purpose who had declared itself as Indonesian citizens (Wasino, Putro, Aji, Kurniawan, & Shintasiwi, 2019, p. 217). Even Baperki not only consisted of Chinese people (Siauw & Oey, 2000). As a result, after G30S, BAPERKI accused of being involved. On October 15, 1965, Res Publica University (the forerunner of *Trisakti* University) owned by Baperki damaged and burned by a mob-backed by military force.

Since it began a campaign of anti-China and anti-Chinese, the mass media was used to create a hostile atmosphere against the Chinese government and the Chinese community (Setiono, 2008, p. 896). Seeing the situation heats up, on October 21, 1965, President Soekarno proclaimed to stop all destructive actions such as racism, vandalism, and arson. However, this warning didn't heed, even rumors that led to the outbreak of anti-

Chinese racism continued to spread. At the same time, some Chinese political leaders who were being part of the Soekarno government began to be suspected and arrested.

Sinophobia campaign or anti-Chinese is allegedly sponsored by foreign powers, especially Britain and the United States. In the Cold War context, the Western capitalist countries tried to stem communist influence by conducting anti-China/Chinese to distract Indonesian people from the activities of US-British anti-imperialism. They were trying to turn the public opinion that the national enemy was a China/Chinese that was believed as the communist source (Setiono, 2008, p. 975).

Another interesting thing revealed by Mackie that the Chinese people had always been an easy target for pillage or persecution when the power that had been established encountering shock (Chang, 2012, p. 37). The reality was posted G30S incident; the intensity of anti-Chinese riots was rampant. Pillage, vandalism, and arson of houses, shops, and schools belonging to the Chinese people happened everywhere. Campaign and various acts of anti-Chinese, also repressive actions by the military rulers, are causing misgivings and prolonged trauma. It caused the Chinese society tried desperately to avoid the political realm.

Chineseness appeared in the New Order was something imposed and had a negative impact. Chineseness was not a sincerely aware identity by every Chinese. Chinese identity artificially is created by the New Order government that was placed then as the outsider that existed in the country and hostile to those who were called natives. As a result, not all Chinese people wanted to be recognized as part of the Chinese community.

In the process of making Chinese as outsiders, the New Order imposed a social stigma to Chinese such as exclusive, asocial, vibrant, and China oriented (and hence considered as communists). This stigmatization manifested in the formulation and institutionalization that called as

"Chinese problem in Indonesia." Ethnic Chinese, cultural, religion, role, and their existence were labeled as a problem. It was what makes the Chinese position so vulnerable to be blamed on current social unrest.

The anticommunist pretext is used as a weapon to face the Chinese as part of New Order paranoia. Finally occurred an essentialist and general identification between ethnicity (Chinese) and ideology (communism). Stigma as Chinese ideologically considered "unclean," and it was down through generations to the next generation. Instead of a solution, the formulation of government policies regarding the "Chinese problem" even more distanced from a harmonious relation.

In the cultural sector, the restrictions on the Chinese community mainly felt in the culture sector. Even this period could be called a genocide effort of the Chinese culture. At least there were four rules issued by the New Order government to restrict the Chinese community movement in preserving their culture, there were: (1) Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967 about the prohibition of religion, beliefs, and customs of China; (2) Instruction of the Minister of Home Affairs No. 455.2-360 about temple structuring; (3) Decree of the Minister of Trade and Cooperatives No. 286/1978 on the prohibition of import, sale, and distribution of goods with Chinese language and characters; (4) Circular letter of Minister of Information Circular Letter No. 02/SE/Di about the prohibition of Publishing and Printing paper/Advertisement with Chinese language and characters

Post-1965 incident, all schools that used the Chinese language was closed in 1966. In 1967 also imposed a ban on the Chinese characters using in public places, including magazines and newspapers with Chinese characteristics. Presidential Instruction No. 14 of 1967 stated that all forms and the manifestation of Chinese culture and traditions such as Chinese New Year, *potehi* puppet show, lion dance, etc. could only be celebrated among families in the house or temple

(Tan, 2008, p. 200). These policies could not be separated from efforts to remove the Chinese component from Indonesian culture.

In the social sector, one of the most influential and continually exist was the 'China' call. From August 25 to 31, 1966 happened the second Army Seminar in SESKOAD, Bandung, under Major General Suwanto leadership. One of the results was to replace the use of term *Republik Rakyat Tiongkok* and *Tionghoa's* people became *Republik Rakyat Cina* and China's people. The reason was for eliminating inferior feelings on natives and superior to Chinese society (Setiono, 2008, p. 985). The government then followed by the Presidium Circular letter of Indonesian Republic Cabinet No. SE-06 / PresKab / 6/1967 dated June 20, 1967.

Foreign citizen, especially Chinese, was asked to change their name to Indonesian name (Java's name) by a reason to accelerate the assimilation process. The Chinese were already a citizen was also considered a "stranger," so they must have proof of citizenship in Indonesia. They should be made Surat Bukti Kewarganegaraan Republik Indonesia (SKBRI)/ Proof Letter of the Indonesian Republic's Citizenship. Surprisingly, despite being renamed, the Chinese people still being asked their Chinese names while taking care of various documents.

SBKRI could be termed as another form of apartheid that was expressed through laws and customs. The assimilation concept imposed under the New Order for the Chinese community was clearly not the right policy. It didn't mean the Chinese society didn't want the assimilation process to the natives, but the process should run as normal and natural. In fact, the intermingling concept that was run by the New Order government did not lead to a harmonious society.

In the political sector, in the 1930s, the Chinese political awareness began to appear along with the growth of Indonesian nationalism spirit. The birth of *Partai Tionghoa Indonesia* (PTI)/Indonesian Chinese Party that coordinated by Liem

Koen Hian emphasized this fact. PTI wanted to maintain their ethnic identity but politically assimilated into the natives. Indonesia was also the homeland for Chinese and demanded equal rights and obligations, including willing to fight for Indonesia's independence.

Towards Indonesia's independence, many Chinese figures were included in the BPUPKI members and taking part in the independence planning. Some of the Chinese people after independence became a member of *Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat* (KNIP)/Central Indonesian National Committee that served as the legislative body then (Mahfud, 2013, p. 65). They were Drs. Yap Tjwan Bing, Liem Koen Hian, Tan Ling Djie, Nio Beng Goat, Siauw Giok Tjhan, dr. Oey Kiem Hway, and Ir. Tan Boen An.

Some Chinese figures also sat at the party, such as Oei Gee Hwat from Socialist Party and Lauw King Hoo from PKI. In the Liberal Democracy era, the Chinese role in politics was also appeared in the cabinet, such as Ong Eng Die (Minister of Finance from PNI) and Lie Kiat Teng (Minister of Health from PSII). Similarly, in the Guided Democracy era recorded that Tan Liong Kim served as Minister of Revenue, Finance and Supervision, Oei Tjoe Tat as Minister of State from Partindo, and David G. Cheng as Minister of Human Settlements and Construction.

This condition changed dramatically since the New Order. None of the Chinese citizens sat as a minister, except in the last months before the collapse of the New Order. Mohammad Bob Hasan or The Kian Seng became Minister of Trade and Industry on Development Cabinet VII. At the local level, some Chinese citizens sat in the legislature, such as Hendry Jurnawan, Edy Pajarai, Bong Wui Khong, and Bong Cin Nen, all from Golkar in West Kalimantan in the period 1992-1997 (La Ode, 2012, p. 25).

Interestingly though, they were not involved in practical politics, but some Chinese figures (the activists' generation 66) established the Centre for Strategic

and International Studies (CSIS). This institution later became thinktank at once a conceptual foundation and political policies of the New Order. Some of them were Panglaykim, Tjan Dhiam Hok alias Harry Tjan Silalahi, Liem Bian Kie alias Yusuf Wanandi, Liem Bian Koen alias Sofjan Wanandi, etc. (Cahyono, 1998, p. 30).

Along with the assimilation policy, Chinese people were not allowed to form their political party in the New Order. Consequently, very limited people were engaged in practical politics, especially for entry in an executive room. Their loyalty to Indonesia was always suspected and questionable. Likewise, opportunities as civil servants, soldiers, and active in government educational institutions were minimal.

In the economic sector, in the New Order era, Chinese people tend to be used in the economics sector. They were allowed to develop in the trade until giving conglomerates that became government economists' cronies. This policy helped to create the Chinese image as an economic animal. As a result of business success, unwittingly encouraged the strengthening of anti-Chinese sentiment. No doubt that negative things also attached, such as greed, extortion, and had fun at the natives' misery.

The New Order government took advantage of the Chinese people's business skills to recover economic decline. Mackie (Chang, 2012, p. 43) notes the Chinese economic role during the New Order as follows: (1) Contribution of Chinese to the country's economic transformation from 1966 to 1967 had far exceeded the natives' businessmen and state enterprises. (2) Various privileges and opportunities presented by the New Order regime supported the position and business interests of Chinese people. (3) Chinese businessman built close ties to officials or military regime called *cukongs* system.

Interestingly, as noted by Cohen, many natives could not distinguish between the Chinese conglomerates' actions

and other Chinese (Chang, 2012, p. 45). On the other hand, the behavior of Chinese conglomerates giant business owners also raised concern and fear among the Chinese in general. They kept the doubt because they were politically less-protected and economically also depended on domestic conditions. If the anti-Chinese violence happened, they would bear the brunt. It was later proven, especially in the last years of the New Order.

### **Teaching Materials Design**

Sartono Kartodirdjo explains that national history should reveal the activity of various society segments, not only the elite and majority groups (Mulyana & Darmiasti, 2009, p. 5). It was necessary to pay attention to the study area of social history or social history (history from bellows) that centered on a specific group to complete the dynamics overview and society development process widely, thoroughly, and continuously (Aman, 2011, pp. 97–98). These ideas further reinforced that Chinese history in the New Order can be one of the subjects for history teaching materials development in schools.

The history learning in schools indeed can not be released from the applicable curriculum. In curriculum 2013 of high school, there are Indonesian History subjects must be given at every level and every specialization. Special for Social Sciences class, it's completed by history subjects that emphasize the scientific perspective. The material studied is essential and strategic for the social life, so it needs to be given to all students in high school through Indonesian History subject, Particularly on class XII in the New Order's issue.

The materials about Chinese in the New Order can be integrated at KD 3.5. "Evaluating the economic and political life of Indonesia in the New Order." KD contained these cognitive content clings to KD 4.5. "Doing simple research on the political and economic life of the Indonesian nation in the New Order and presenting it in a written report."

Teaching materials about Chinese in the New Order can be used as a sub material with indicators development as follows: (1) Explaining the background of discriminatory policies emergence against the Chinese community in the New Order; (2) Describing the various forms of discriminatory policies against the Chinese community in the New Order; (3) Explaining the discrimination impact against the Chinese community in the New Order era to the present.

While at KD 4.5. can be formulated indicator "presenting a variety of information regarding discrimination against the Chinese community in a particular field and its effect in writing."

Associated with teaching materials that can be developed are quite varied. Based on these teaching materials, teachers can make a worksheet that contains questions and discussion. Teachers can also download images and videos related to the internet. For example, about the 1998 riots that lead to ethnic conflict targeted to the Chinese community, the success of Chinese descent athletes to make Indonesia proud in prestigious sports events during this time, a portrait of Chinese families living only in the *Cina Benteng*, various articles in magazines or newspapers and other relevant materials.

In principle, the teaching materials used should not give a unilateral overview. Chinese community living facts in the New Order must be juxtaposed between those whose life modestly and mingle with other people and the conglomerates who close to the government. News about ethnic violence seemed to give a negative stigma that the Chinese were not part of this nation and the success of Chinese descent athletes to make Indonesia proud in the international. It is expected the students can find their multiculturalism awareness and the importance of unity value.

### **Methods for Multiculturalism Growing**

Teaching materials are expected to open up insights into the background, conditions, feelings, and the discriminatory

treatment impact received by the Chinese community in the New Order. Students will understand the reasons why the Chinese community tended to be apolitical and asocial during the New Order era, and the remnants still brought up today. Including the assumption that the Chinese were outsiders who were not part of the Indonesian nation. Of course, it should be straightened out for the nation's future.

Along with the reform, the Chinese began to be received by the public more positively. Today, quite a lot of Chinese people who sit in government and engage in a variety of professions. This situation must be supported by a good understanding of the role and dynamics of Chinese community life in this nation's history. Mutual respecting and appreciating are expected to end the ethnic conflict and support national integration.

Ethnic conflict can be avoided by emotion, removing the feeling and put the lofty ideals of the founding fathers and its development as outlined in this teaching material as a reference. Indonesia formed and evolved over the plurality with the positive and negative sides. History showed that the struggle for independence occurred because of the Indonesian spirit that unites the freedom, independence, and progress.

In a higher level, to make the public life peaceful, harmonious and tolerant multiculturalism efforts are needed to enhance awareness. The most appropriate method for building awareness of multiculturalism in education. According to Anderson and Cusher, multicultural education can be defined as education about cultural diversity (Mahfud, 2011, p. 175).

Multicultural education wants to explore differences as a necessity (grace of God) and responded to it by full-tolerant and egalitarian spirit. This idea is in line with the liberation education spirit stated by Paulo Freire (Mahfud, 2011, p. 176). Multicultural education can be reached through history learning in schools. Therefore it can create a harmonious life on the *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*.

## CONCLUSION

Chinese community received discriminatory treatment in various sectors during the New Order government. These policies violated human rights and susceptible to trigger conflicts. This study can be used as a history teaching material in the New Order subject. These teaching materials need to be balanced and noted to its objectivity. Studying these materials is essential to instill multiculturalism awareness for students as the young generation. This study requires further research related to teaching materials trials based on the recommended learning design. After that, evaluating to determine the students' mastery level to this material. At once, know the response from teachers and students to criticize these results. At a later phase, it can be a recommendation for governments in developing the curriculum of history subject in high school.

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