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# Ethnic Chinese in Contemporary Indonesia



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# Ethnic Chinese in Contemporary Indonesia

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CHINESE  
HERITAGE  
CENTRE



*Singapore*

and



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First published in Singapore in 2008 by  
ISEAS Publications  
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies  
30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Pasir Panjang  
Singapore 119614

*E-mail:* [publish@iseas.edu.sg](mailto:publish@iseas.edu.sg) • *Website:* [bookshop.iseas.edu.sg](http://bookshop.iseas.edu.sg)

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**ISEAS Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data**

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Ethnic chinese in contemporary Indonesia / edited by Leo Suryadinata.

1. Chinese—Indonesia.
  2. Chinese—Indonesia—Politics and government.
  3. Indonesia—Ethnic relations.
- I. Suryadinata, Leo, 1941-.

DS632.3 C5E852                      2008

ISBN 978-981-230-834-4 (soft cover)

ISBN 978-981-230-835-1 (hard cover)

ISBN 978-981-230-836-8 (PDF)

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Typeset by International Typesetters Pte Ltd  
Printed in Singapore by Utopia Press Pte Ltd

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# PREFACE

On 19 July 2007 the Chinese Heritage Centre (Singapore), Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (Singapore), and NABIL Foundation (Indonesia) organized a joint one-day seminar on “Ethnic Chinese in Indonesia in an Era of Globalization” in Singapore. The purpose of the seminar was to provide comprehensive and up-to-date information on the topic to the educated layman in Singapore by fully examining the position of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia before and after the fall of Soeharto, with special reference to the post-Soeharto era.

To reach a wider audience, the organizers have decided to publish ten papers from the seminar. All of the papers have been extensively revised and they will be useful for readers who want to know the current situation of the Chinese in Indonesia.

I would like to thank the paper-writers for revising their papers and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Publications Unit for agreeing to publish these papers.

*Professor Leo Suryadinata*  
*Editor*



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# GLOSSARY

- Cina An old Indonesian/Malay term which was used to refer to the ethnic Chinese and China; it became derogatory in the twentieth century, especially after the Sino-Japanese War, in Indonesia. In 1967 the Soeharto regime adopted the term to replace *Tionghoa* (ethnic Chinese) and *Tiongkok* (China). See also *Tionghoa*.
- Cukong A Hokkien term (*zhu gong*) to refer to a boss. During the Soeharto period, it was used to refer to a Chinese businessman who collaborated with a government high official, including military generals.
- Era Reformasi  
(or Reform Era) A term used to refer to the post-Soeharto era.
- Imlek This term is often used together with *Tahun Baru Imlek* in Indonesian, which means Lunar New Year. It is also called “Chinese New Year”.
- New Order  
(or *Orde Baru*  
in Indonesian) A term used to refer to the Soeharto period (1965–98).
- Old Order  
(or *Orde Lama*  
in Indonesian) A term used to refer to the Sukarno period (1957–65).
- Pembauran Originally means “mixing”, sometime it is also used to mean “assimilation” by some Indonesians.
- Peranakan An Indonesian/Malay term which originally refers to the descendants of mixed marriages between foreign males and Indonesian/Malay females. In the nineteenth century in Indonesia the term *Cina*

	<i>Peranakan</i> is used to refer to Chinese Muslims and in the present day usage, it refers to the descendants of old established Chinese who are local born and speak Indonesian/Malay or a local dialect in their daily life. It is also a form of self-identification.
Pribumi (Pri)	An Indonesian term which refers to the indigenous population.
Non-Pribumi (non-Pri)	A phrase used in Indonesia to refer to non-indigenous people, usually it means ethnic Chinese Indonesians.
Tionghoa	A Hokkian term to refer to the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia. It was popularly before the New Order. But the Soeharto regime abolished the term and replaced it with a derogatory term Cina for the ethnic Chinese and China. It is now becoming popular again among the <i>totoks</i> and some <i>peranakans</i> . See also Cina.
Totok	An Indonesian term which originally means pure blood; in the twentieth century, it was used to refer to the new Chinese migrants to Indonesia who were foreign born and were culturally still Chinese. In the present day usage, it refers to the migrant Chinese or their immediate descendants who still speak (some) Chinese. It is comparable to <i>Sinkeh</i> or <i>Singkeh</i> .
SBKRI	Surat Bukti Kewarganegaraan Indonesia, or the document proving the Indonesian citizenship. This document was required by the Indonesian authorities to prove their citizen status before applying for passport and other official documents.
Sinkeh (Singkeh)	Literally means “new guest” ( <i>xinke</i> ) in Chinese. See also totok.
Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 (UUD 1945)	The 1945 Indonesian Constitution, which is also a current constitution; it has been amended four times since the fall of Soeharto to make it more democratic.
WNI (Warganegara Indonesia, Indonesian citizens)	This term is often used to refer to Indonesian citizens of Chinese descent as “indigenous Indonesians” are automatically Indonesian citizens.