

of de-Islamification and Hanification, for instance the banning on Qur'anic study at Mosques in 2016 (87) and the removal of Arabic script from street signs and business placards in 2017 (81). Chapter 4, "Consuming", focuses on the Hui Muslims' food consumption in relation to the Islamic purity, for the distinction between Hui and non-Hui identity is strictly marked by practising *qingzhen* (Pure and True) in all aspects of life. Yet the lack of stringent enforcement to Halal standard certification does not only result in proliferation of Hui's scepticism towards restaurant and food industry, *qingzhen* ironically provokes internal divisions among Hui (109). In chapter 5, "Performing", Stroup deals with the public performance and religious rituals of Hui Muslims. Failure of observing daily prayer and infiltration of Sinicized practice (e.g., burning incense), diverse interpretations over Islamic wearing, different stances of celebrating Islamic festivals, all weakens the internal solidarity of Hui Muslim identity.

In the concluding chapter, Stroup intriguingly reconsiders the new wave of migration enabling different Hui Muslims from countryside and urban areas to contact each other, which, however, does not enhance mutual understanding nor stronger internal solidarity. When the state continues its policy of highlighting ethnic diversity, it creates intragroup contestation and fragmentation within Hui identity. Following this line of thought, if the state one day resumes to the heavy-handed policing of ethnic practices, it will nonetheless enhance the cohesion of Hui people and strengthen ethnic distinction of Hui from non-Hui people. In closing his book (Epilogue), Stroup provides a most updated observation of Hui Muslims facing a new wave of Islamophobic harassment during the outbreak of Covid-19 since 2019 as well as the escalating national campaign of religious Sinicization.

As such, "Pure and True" effectively opens up a thought-provoking perspective and new backdrop to make sense of Muslims (and other faith groups) in the era of Xi Jinping. Standing on the masterpieces of scholarship – Dru Gladney's "Muslim Chinese. Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic" (1991) and Jonathan Lipman's "Familiar Strangers. A History of Muslims in Northwest China" (1998) – depicting Hui Muslim life and attitude respectively, Stroup's book is another important addition preparing us to understand what it means to be a Chinese Muslim living in the Post-Covid People's Republic.

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**Suryadinata, Leo:** *Peranakan Chinese Identities in the Globalizing Malay Archipelago*. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing. 2022, 289 pp. ISBN 978-981-4951-67-8. Price: SGD 42.70

"Peranakan Chinese Identities in the Globalizing Malay Archipelago" came into fruition, after the COVID-19 pandemic crisis allowed the author the time and opportunity to go through decades of papers on the Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, i.e., the three main countries of the Malay Archipelago and "put them into a book" (viii) which "not only discusses the past and the present, but also the future of the Peranakan Chinese" (back cover).

The book contains fourteen chapters on themes and issues about Peranakan Chinese identities that are most synonymous with the author's expertise as a Sinologist whose research work was mainly based on the Sino-Indonesian context. Therefore, the book is divided into two parts. The first part contains nine chapters on terminology, sociocultural and political identity, and their resurgence and prospects at the regional level with Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore as representations of the globalizing Malay Archipelago. The second part of the book is dedicated to five chapters on Indonesia per se, including language and literature; religion, politics, and integration into mainstream Indonesian society. The book is also supplemented with two appendices. The first appendix is a transcript of a speech by Dr. Tan Ta Sen, the President of the International Zheng He Society (Singapore) that was first published in *Asian Culture* 40 in December 2016. The second appendix lists 35 books on the Peranakan Chinese that were published between the years 2007 and 2021; 23 of the titles are on Indonesia, nine on Malaysia/Singapore and three on Southeast Asia/Malay Archipelago.

Understandably, there is a sense of déjà vu when reading the book, as it reintroduces ten chapters and an appendix that was partially or fully reproduced from articles written from the year 2002 to 2017 (Chapters 3, 5–7, 9–14, and Appendix 1). Indeed, such compilation does help some readers who will be finally able now to access articles that were previously difficult to find. However, it may cause some confusion as readers must juggle between reading old and outdated information in certain chapters, and new discourses and information in other chapters. For instance, the phrase "[t]he current president, Ling Liong Sik" (35) refers to a president of a political party in Malaysia in the year 2002. A more refreshing and updated insight into the discourse on the Peranakan Chinese identities in the globalizing Malay Archipelago is presented in Part I, particularly in chapters 1–2, 4, and 8.

The book begins with one of the most fundamental issues at the heart of the Peranakan phenomenon itself, viz., terminology. The development of the term Peranakan in history is often seen from the authority-defined perspective in the host society. As the term Peranakan derives from the root word *anak* in the Malay language which means "child" or "offspring," the basis

of its generic meaning, i.e., local-born members of a community believed to have descended from localized non-native ethnic groups, is mutually understood and shared across the Malay Archipelago with regional peculiarities that may have added localized specificities to the term in a certain time and locality. Although the Peranakans appear to be homogeneous to the point that it was conveniently used as an abbreviation of Peranakan Chinese, Peranakan as a social phenomenon is neither limited to the Chinese nor there is a singular version of Peranakanness within the Peranakan Chinese communities. However, the historic and academic discourse is heavily influenced by the abundant literature on the Peranakan Chinese communities along both sides of the Malacca Straits. This has resulted in other terms specific to such communities becoming both well-known and often mistakenly used interchangeably with Peranakan Chinese, such as the ethnonym Straits Chinese/Straits-born Chinese, and personal titles of Baba for male, and Nyonya/Nonya/Nona for female.

In most chapters, the author highlights the notion that the term “Peranakan Chinese” often changes according to the time in history and geographical location. For Indonesia, the meaning of the term Peranakan Chinese throughout its history changed according to the perception of the authority of the day, i. e., from offspring of mixed marriages to local-born Chinese who were Muslim to local-born Chinese who are partially assimilated. Nevertheless, the term Peranakan is constantly used to refer to local-born ethnic Chinese (Tsinghua) in comparison to the *totok*, the other Chinese subethnic group who consisted of newcomers who arrived in Indonesia in the 20th century. Due to their later arrival, the latter were less localized culturally and less involved in the history of Indonesian independence either via politics or literature than the Peranakan Chinese. When the whole Chinese population in Indonesia was rapidly Indonesianized during the Suharto era, the Peranakan-Totok dichotomy ceased to be formally recognized by the state. Presently, Indonesian Chinese are peranakanized at varying degrees. Nevertheless, the Peranakan roots and routes that recognize the group’s early arrival and esprit de corps with Indonesia historically and culturally which peaked at the national level during the Sukarno era, remain an important source for people to identify as Peranakan Tionghua even today.

Discussion on the Peranakan Chinese identities in Malaysia and Singapore contexts in the book is often with the former being limited to the Peranakan Chinese communities in the west coast of the Peninsular, i.e., the Straits Chinese in Penang and the Baba-Nyonya in Melaka. It is against this background the author argues that the term Peranakan tends to be inaccurately used interchangeably with other terms, particularly Baba/Nyonya. Baba and Nyonya are a part of Peranakan Chi-

nese. Hence, a Baba or a Nyonya is always a Peranakan Chinese but a Peranakan Chinese may not be a Baba or a Nyonya. Before the mass arrival of new Chinese immigrants in the 20th century, the Peranakan Chinese in Malaysia (Malaya) and Singapore were clearly distinguished from the mainstream Chinese along socio-cultural lines. The Peranakan Chinese who were the minority, characteristically display varying degrees of localization with the Malay culture, including language, food, and attire. Their English-oriented sociocultural backgrounds and bilingual skills contributed to their involvement in elite economic activities such as shipping and banking business. The division between Peranakan and mainstream Chinese (the *singkeh*) became less obvious among the younger generation who were both increasingly educated in the homegrown national education system and facing new political developments with the emergence of race-based political parties at the end of World War II. With the Chinese in Malaysia becoming a minority ethnic group and their counterpart in Singapore becoming a majority ethnic group, the Peranakan Chinese in both countries came to face a different set of challenges in terms of the recognition of their Peranakan identity and heritage at the state level.

The main contribution of the book is in chapter 4 which serves as a general conclusion to the recent developments of the Peranakan Chinese communities and their identities in the globalizing Malay Archipelago. The discussion centers around two landmark occasions that occurred in the last five years. First, it was the 31st Peranakan Convention that was held in November 2018 where the author was a keynote speaker. Second, a pivotal scientific discovery by the Genome Institute of Singapore in the year 2021 proves the age-old presumption of mixed ancestry especially with the Malay among the Peranakan Chinese. The author concludes that the interest in the Peranakan Chinese identities and heritage is on the rise not only within the Malay Archipelago but also beyond, such as in Australia. This can be seen from the increased number of Peranakan associations that joins the annual Peranakan Convention, and the popularity of the convention that is attended not only by the members of the Peranakan associations whose core members can trace their Peranakan lineage across many generations and identify with their Peranakan identities, but also non-members who are mostly Peranakan enthusiasts and willing to spend time and money to attend and participate in the convention. The more established Peranakan associations from the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia are the main members and contributors in the Federation of Peranakan Associations, whose member is selected as host to the convention on rotation. They are more likely to come from middle and upper-class backgrounds with a significant influence and consumer power in

shaping the trend of the Peranakan popular culture and discourses on the Peranakan as a historical and social phenomenon. Hence, while the term Peranakan Chinese is now widely used as an accepted ethnonym by the insiders (the Peranakan Chinese themselves) and the outsiders (state and society) to refer to individuals who identify with Peranakan Chinese lineage and heritage in general, the term Baba and Nyonya remains popular and used interchangeably with Peranakan, particularly in Malaysia and Singapore despite being history- and geography-bound to select Peranakan Chinese communities. With the increasing influence and dominance of China as a global power today, the resurgence of Peranakan Chinese associations and the interest in the Peranakan Chinese identities and heritage also suggest that the Peranakan Chinese identifies more with the Malay Archipelago region and civilization rather than with other overseas Chinese and the mainland Chinese. Together with the scientific discovery of the mixed ancestry with the Malays that proves the amalgamation with the locals did take place sometime in the distant past, the Peranakan Chinese of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore at varying degrees, continue to celebrate their Peranakanness while seeking its recognition and legitimacy as part of the national history and heritage. In Indonesia and Malaysia in particular, this includes the recognition of the indigeneity of the community in their respective country.

All in all, the book is interesting as it marks the perseverance and development of the Peranakan as a social phenomenon that is unique to the Malay Archipelago from the precolonial era up to the present. Despite its huge potential to lead the discourse on the Peranakan Chinese identities in the globalizing Malay Archipelago cum Southeast Asia, particularly on the definition of

what and who is a Peranakan (Chinese) and its relevancy in the contemporary society especially with regards to nation-building, the book misses the mark with recent scholarly works on Peranakan Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore having been published in the new millennium (year 2000 onwards) and being substantively absent from this book as shown in the Reference and Appendix 2. One particularly glaring limitation of the book was the restriction of the discussion on the Peranakan Chinese in Malaysia to only the communities in the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia. Indeed, before the year 2000, the literature on the arcane Peranakan Chinese of the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia such as in Kelantan and Terengganu, was difficult to obtain as the communities were understudied and the bulk of academic writings on the communities were written as academic exercises and theses. However, such academic writings along with other forms of publication including e-books, e-proceedings and journal articles are now easily accessible on the internet. Considering that he met the representatives of the communities at the Peranakan Convention at least twice (in 1993 and 2018) and the communities were also occasionally mentioned in other scholars' writings (26, 139), and given the advantage of virtual globalization through the Internet, it is odd that the author does not take the opportunity to be more inclusive.

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**Errata.** – The correct e-mail address of reviewer Clara-Luisa Weichelt (*Anthropos* 118.2023.1: 254) is <Clara-Luisa.Weichelt@misereor.de>.