An Identity to Retain: Self-Expressive Chinese Indonesians under the Rule of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono

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Abstract

From the Dutch colonial era until the end of Suharto administration, Chinese Indonesians have perpetually been the victims of racial prejudice and negative stereotyping addressed by pribumi. However, the most difficult situations and unpleasant experiences occurred under Suharto's New Order, where the forced assimilation policy was implemented and Chinese Indonesians at that time were drawn to Chinese films and series to search for their Chinese-ness, while escaping reality. The previous researches did not provide comprehensive studies on the identity formation of Chinese Indonesians in Post-Suharto era, especially after the reformation era, under different presidents. Therefore, the subjective reality of third and fourth generations of Chinese Indonesians who spent their adolescence and/or adulthood over the course of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY)'s tenure has been explored in this study. From the constructive nature of reality to the situational constraints that shape inquiry, the Chinese Indonesians were indeed more emotionally expressive, supported by a more stable political and economic condition, exposure to the new media, and enhanced bilateral partnership between China and Indonesia. The use of new media in disseminating the Chinese cultural values through the media product, as well as the Chinese cultural practice publicly held by mostly Chinese communities in Indonesia became the influential factors in connecting those younger generations of Chinese Indonesia to their heritage. Ethnic pride and cultural long-distance nationalism can be eventually observed.

Keywords: Chinese Indonesians, cultural long-distance nationalism, ethnic pride, identity formation, Pribumi

1. Introduction

The ascension of China to global power, along with its international influence, has been recently discussed among a number of scholars around the world. China's rise with its "going-global" policy certainly has multidimensional impacts on overseas Chinese, especially their cultural identity. However nowadays there is no exact definition of Chinese-ness since a changing meaning of this term did occur due to "the relationship among such elements as time, place, self-identification, and categorizations made by others" (Wu, 1991). What it means to be Chinese in United States today, with a struggle to adjust to American values, will be much different from being Chinese in the world's largest archipelagic state, Indonesia, with the cultural differences they will encounter. Furthermore, Zhu (2017) argued that first generations and subsequent generations of Chinese Americans would perceive their identity differently in regard with their social and cultural experiences. In other words, particular sociocultural environment and political situation in the host country the migrant Chinese or their subsequent generations encounter will surely have affected their association to Chinese identity.

Racial stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination towards Chinese Indonesians have been prevalent throughout Indonesia's history, starting from the Dutch colonial era until the end of Suharto's authoritarian regime, but a deep emotional dislike against Chinese Indonesians became stronger and more intense under Suharto's rule. In the midst of restrictive regulations that curb Chinese cultural expression, a study by Dawis (2009) stated they were drawn into Chinese films and series so as to cope with the stressful situation. Suharto resigned as President of Indonesia in May 1998, followed by the beginning of Chinese cultural freedom, where the removal of a number of race-based legal

restrictions took place and Indonesia's government declared the Lunar New Year as one of Indonesia's national holidays. Nonetheless, in the post-Suharto era, with a new political environment and different types of media, there was a lack of comprehensive research in the subjective reality of younger generations of Chinese Indonesians. A number of previous studies focus solely on the negative stereotyping of Chinese Indonesians in media products (Sen, 2006; Tickel, 2009; Setijadi, 2013). In addition, the first six years after the fall of Suharto is commonly known as "transition into democratic era", wherein institutional racism experienced by Chinese Indonesians still occurred and Indonesia has not really embarked at democratic phase. The political situation has not been stable enough as observed through the different leadership style under 3rd President Habibie, 4th President Abdurrahman Wahid, and followed by Megawati Sukarnoputri as the 5th President. Different from his predecessors, under the 6th President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), the vast majority of Indonesians embraced moderation and tolerance, even though they sometimes had to deal with the challenge of extremism, as in many other countries, and some terrorists' cells still existed. However, as Aspinall (2005) stated, "the elections of 2004 brought to an end the 'transitional period' in Indonesia's politics that began in 1998".

The administration period of the 6th President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), started from October 2004 and ended in October 2014. During his presidency, the political and economic conditions in Indonesia are relatively stable. In addition, the racial discrimination has also been drastically reduced. These conditions were much better when compared to the first six years after the end of Suharto era. During SBY era, along with the China's going global policy, Chinese Indonesians had gained more access to Chinese culture, through education, language, Chinese communities, and cultural practice. Thus, this study is aimed at finding how actually those younger generations of Chinese Indonesians people maintain their Chinese identity in real life under the reign of SBY.

2. Materials and Methods

In terms of the theoretical foundation, it is commonly known that community, communication, social relationships, and self-concepts influenced one's identity. In addition, individuals' identities have four different layers, i.e. a personal layer (self-image and self-concept), an enacted layer (expression of identity), a relational layer (the way other view them), and a communal layer (identities held in common by groups rather than individuals; Hecht & Choi, 2012; Hecht, Warren, Jung, & Krieger, 2004; Jung & Hecht, 2004).

The study is trying to figure out the personal layer and relational layer of Chinese Indonesians who spent their adolescence and/or adulthood under the reign of SBY in relation with sociocultural context and political situation at that time. In this case, ethnic identity is socially constructed and is a reaction to changing social environment (Yang, 2000). Before it eventually turns into ethnic identity, Wong (2010) stated that a person is supposed to experience a cultural long-distance nationalism at first. Cultural long-distance nationalism refers to the practices of culture in the diaspora that, as much as possible given altered circumstances, derive their sense of legitimacy, genuineness, and often a state of satisfaction from the perceived source of culture - the nation-state from which the practitioners are now physically removed.

In order to discover the identity formation of younger generations of Chinese Indonesians during the SBY era, the method used was qualitative research, which includes screening questionnaire, in-depth interview, and participant observation. Links to screening questionnaires were shared via social media and e-mail. Those who were self-identified as Chinese Indonesians, with ages range from 25-35, and resided either in Jakarta, Tangerang, or Bandung, were asked to be part of in-depth interview and participant observation. Besides, their fluency in Chinese language, and also their answers in relation with Chinese films/serials and their perspectives, were criteria in selecting the participants. There were then 25 participants who were involved in the survey.

3. The Progress of Democracy and New Policy under SBY's Leadership

3.1 Transition into "Real" Democracy

The 2004 presidential election was a landmark in the reform of Indonesia's political institution (Crouch, 2010). Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY), a formerly reformist army general, had served two full terms in office, starting from 2004 until 2014. Under his reign, the spread of democracy had been realized in Indonesia, with increased participation rates of voters (Sheridan, 2012).

SBY has gained good reputation prior to his appointment. SBY formerly had much experience as Coordinating Minister in cabinets of Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati. As early as 2001, he had sponsored the formation of Democratic Party (PD: *Partai Demokrat*), as a potential vehicle for a bid for the presidency in 2004. In addition, SBY had gained popularity as Indonesia's best political leader. As his presidential running mate, SBY selected Jusuf Kalla, who had been the Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare in the Megawati government, and was a long-established businessman from Sulawesi and brought both financial backing and votes from Eastern Indonesia to the Javanese SBY's campaign

(Crouch, 2010).

It is beyond doubt that SBY's presidency had been a period of revolutionary stability. Unlike his three post-Suharto predecessors, none of them served the normal five-year term defined by constitution. Instead, the length of SBY administration surpassed the Indonesia's first experience with democracy between 1950 and 1957. During his reign, the ethnic and religious violence have declined, the 30-year Aceh civil war was finally ended, and only a few intra-elite conflicts occurred. In terms of economic performance, Indonesia's achievements under SBY's rule looked impressive as well, achieving a satisfactory economic growth rate. In addition, dealing with the foreign affairs, SBY had brought back the country on the map of regional and global powers. Indonesia's leadership of ASEAN was undisputed under SBY's rule, and the country confirmed its membership to the G20, giving it a stable and apparent role on the world stage (Mietzner, 2014).

According to Crouch (2010), SBY also launched an anti-corruption campaign based on laws that had been adopted by his predecessors, but not widely exploited by them. In contrast to Megawati who had delayed investigations by failing to provide the necessary presidential permission to investigate senior officials and members of the legislatures, SBY promised to prosecute high-profile politicians, bureaucrats, and other officials who soon found themselves in courts where many received prison sentences. In addition, SBY presidency was also marked by the further democratization of regional government through direct elections of provincial governors and district heads. There was much public speculation about the likelihood of communal and political violence when local leaders were elected in thirty-three provinces and over four hundred districts, but in practice, the need to attract majorities encouraged the formation of multi-communal and multi-party coalitions that brought ideologically diverse candidates together in pursuit of public office. There was a widespread acceptance of the results.

Even though McGibbon (2006) stated that SBY was very vigilant with his approach to reform, ignoring "radical and potentially unsettling political and economic change" and his anti-corruption measures "did little to challenge the system of patronage and collusion that were entrenched at the centre of power", under SBY the earlier reforms provided an institutional foundation for both consolidation and cautious advance (Crouch, 2010). In addition, Aspinall, Mietzner, and Tomsa (2015) stressed the stability and stagnation under SBY, wherein Indonesia's democracy suffered no reverses, but it didn't move forward either. There were contradictory views on SBY performance, wherein supporters considered his presidency as a period of democratic consolidation and success, while critics regarded his administration as a state of stagnation and unnoticed opportunities. However, with all the shortcomings of SBY's presidency evaluated by leading experts on Indonesia's economy, politics, and society, he presided over a decade of inter-ethnic harmony and peace in a multicultural society.

Until 2007, no reports indicated significant violence against Chinese Indonesians in Jakarta (Refugee Review Tribunal). On March 1st 2007, Kalinga Seneviratne of the Inter Press Agency (IPS) reported that SBY attended celebrations of Chinese New Year in Jakarta and many Chinese Indonesians were involved in the event as citizens of the country after the Indonesia's government passed the new Citizenship Law in July 2006. A member of the Regional Representative Council in Jakarta, Mawan Batubara, stated that,

> *In terms of economic advantage or economic opportunity control, compared to pribumi's, ethnic Chinese have more favorable positions. Since Chinese community already received (official) recognition of what they have, Chinese community was no longer reluctant to open up and mingle with the rest of the people more openly than before.*

In addition, a Senior Fellow at the Habibie Centre in Jakarta, Mustafa Kamal Ridwan, stressed the effort of government to accommodate the Chinese, wherein there was a willingness to integrate the Chinese community into Indonesia. In Medan, the capital city of North Sumatera, Indonesian people of Chinese descent is one of the largest ethnic groups and had involved in direct election that was held twice during SBY administration. Even though the participation rate of Chinese community in Medan was considered low, the presence of Sofyan Tan as a candidate of Medan mayor had somehow dramatically increased the participation level of ethnic Chinese community who resided in Medan. Moreover, Sofyan Tan, who was an ethnic Chinese, was awarded as "Marga Ginting" (a clan in Karonese) by head of Karonese community (Nasution, 2014). This condition explained that ethnic Chinese in another part of Indonesia, Medan, had been well accepted by native Indonesians in Medan.

As stated by Nasution (2014), pluralism and local people participation in democracy are highly valued in sustainable democracy. Democracy has finally arrived when a state provides space for active participation in social, cultural, political, and economic matters. However, some scholars stated that Indonesia during SBY presidency has not yet embarked in a democratic phase for his government has not well implemented the good governance. It is not only that the corruption and internal mismanagement continued to characterize the bureaucracy (Mietzner, 2008, Davidson, 2009), within the new political and economic regimes, the avarice and acquisitiveness of New Order's political business

continued to exist after reorganizing and reconstituting themselves (Robison and Hadiz, 2004). Nevertheless, it is too naive to not include SBY's international reputation for his outstanding record of social, economic, and political stability as indicators for his success to bring Indonesia into a "real" democracy.

3.2 Indonesia – China Relations in the Reign of SBY

As stated by Fukuoka and Verico (2016), the policy of re-engaging China continued to occupy SBY's foreign policy agenda. Under his administration, Indonesia and China enhanced cooperation in the political and security realms as well. According to Priyambodo RH (2013), in order to establish a strategic partnership in 2005, Indonesia and China had signed an agreement. In 2013, both countries agreed too on strategic and comprehensive partnerships in various fields that will benefit both countries (Utomo, 2013). Despite recent improvements in bilateral relations, it needs to be noted that Indonesia has not entirely broken away from the past.

Indeed, many Indonesian elites are persistently cautious about Indonesia's partnership with China. Novotny (2010, p.179), for example, argues that 'though the present Indonesian leaders tend to describe China as a challenge rather than a threat, the substance of their security concern vis-à-vis China has not undergone a significant change'. Wanandi (quoted in Smith 2003, p.4) similarly notes that to mitigate the uncertainty over China's role in the region, 'it would be wise for East Asia to commit China to the web of rules and institutions in the region'. The bilateral ties could potentially be destablised if a sense of uncertainty and a fear of losing out economically to China occupied Indonesian side.

In spite of the fact mentioned above, Indonesia - China relations improved significantly after the Suharto's fall from power, which had portrayed China as a threat to national security. Post-Suharto governments reversed the country's foreign policy and sought to re-engage with China. The need to attract Chinese investment so as to recover Indonesia's economy after Asian economic crisis in 1997 and 1998 had been the main reason for the re-engagement policy. This had eventually led economic cooperation, as well as political and security cooperation, into restoration, especially under SBY administration. The establishment of 'strategic partnership' in 2005 and 'strategic and comprehensive partnership' in 2013 reflected such a shift. In addition, the economic opportunities provided by the rise of China will continue to be the primary driver of bilateral relations.

During SBY Presidency, Indonesia - China bilateral ties had increased and its scope of bilateral cooperation had been expanding rapidly. According to Tjhin (2012), other than the notable progress in political and security relations, economic relations had gradually been depicted as a new kind of threat even as they flourish. Immediately after reformation, Indonesia had built an intensive economic cooperation with China, wherein the 3rd Energy Forum convened in Jakarta in December 2008 and the deals comprised cooperation in eight energy and mining projects worth US$3.13 billion (Oil and Gas Journal 2008). In terms of trade, a target was set in 2005 to double trade to US$ 30 billion by 2010, and was fulfilled in 2008. Besides, China was Indonesia's second-largest trading partner for non-oil exports after Japan. The Indonesian Minister of Trade at that time who was of Chinese descent, Mari Pangestu, maintained that over 90 per cent of such import comprised of capital goods, intermediate goods and raw materials, all of which were mainly used for production, investment, and increasing productivity in Indonesia (Pangestu, 2010, as quoted by Antara News in September 2010).

According to Tjhin (2012), investment had been regarded by many officials as one of the channels to reduce trade tension. Energy, mining, power plants, and electronics sectors were the focus of China's investment in Indonesia. In addition, infrastructure projects, transportation, and alternative energy (bio-fuel) were also becoming increasingly lucrative. Director of Investment and Promotion of the Coordinating Body for Capital Investment (BKPM), Erwin P. Siregar, stated that there were 574 projects worth over US$8.060 billion (on approval basis), an amount for which China had been investing since 1967 to 2007 (Sinar Harapan, 2008). One of the biggest contributions of China that represented the solid bilateral relationship between Indonesia and China was its assistance in building Suramadu bridge in 2009, Indonesia's longest bridge which connects East Java and Madura Island. (Tjhin, 2012). In this case, Chinese Indonesians were considered as useful bridge to mediate bilateral relation between Indonesia and China, even though their nationalism was still prone to being questioned in the process (Tjhin, 2012 and Setijadi, 2015).

3.3 SBY Policy – Changing the 'Chinese' Term into 'Tionghoa'

Under his leadership, SBY released a Presidential Decree No. 12/2014, wherein the 'Chinese' term was changed into 'Tionghoa' for Chinese descendants as well as the country itself. The decree mandated the revocation of Ampera Cabinet Presidium Circular Letter No. SE-06/Pred.Kab/6/1967 dated June 28, 1967. In the reign of SBY, a number of important Chinese political leaders emerged, occupying gubernatorial and ministerial posts, among others Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (popularly known as Ahok) and Mari Elka Pangestu.

Ahok explained that the 'Chinese' term actually refers to a country. The term was actually Japanese insult for the Chinese, but then it started to be used as a negative connotation during the New Order to name the Chinese descendants in Indonesia. He added that according to the Citizenship Law in 2006, anyone of any descent who is born in Indonesia

is automatically a citizen of Indonesia, including Indonesian of Chinese Descent.

3.4 Critics Over SBY's Rules

Critically, Indonesia also witnessed the erosion of religious minority rights under SBY's rule. In addition, there were concerns about how pluralism and tolerance had been targeted by certain radical groups (Tjhin, 2012). Conservative Muslim groups were permitted to spread its religious doctrine that undermined the moderate and liberal thought, given the fact that SBY was reluctant with their roles in his coalition. Moreover, radical militas took aggressive action against a number of religious minority groups; non-muslim groups, Ahmadiyya, etc. There had been outrage among critics over SBY's performance when in 2013 SBY was granted the international religious tolerance (Mietzner, 2014).

In 2013, SBY expressed concern in parliament about growing religious intolerance after enduring criticism for averting his eyes from the growing menace, not condemning it and doing nothing to rein it in. On his watch, incidents of religious extremism and violence skyrocketed, and he did little to defend the rights of religious minorities. SBY's legacy of a decade in power was considered as one of eroding freedom of religion, growing intolerance and unchecked violence targeting minorities. This toleration of intolerance under SBY emboldened hardliners and sowed insecurity while undermining Indonesia's pluralist foundations and the national slogan, "Unity in Diversity" (Kingston, 2017). Meanwhile, there was also lingering anxiety about the position of SBY and his vice president, Jusuf Kalla, toward Chinese Indonesians. In particular, some statements by Jusuf Kalla on affirmative action for indigenous businesses and limiting ethnic Chinese business led to emotional debates about the possible anti-Chinese position of the SBY's government (Inter Press Service, 2004).

Tjhin (2012) stated that Anti-Chinese sentiments might have eroded, but not completely. There were enough examples to show how easily anti-Chinese sentiments could resurface. Even though this had not affected the bilateral relations, it could not be denied that anti-China (or anti-Chinese Indonesians) sentiments were always linked to bilateral relations with Mainland China. Indonesian government's views on China were still diverse and often uncertain during SBY Presidency. There were desires to be independent and not to rely on any superpower excessively, but at the same time, there were needs and interests to be fulfilled both domestically and internationally. In the case of Chinese Indonesians, even though their political participation had increased dramatically, in terms of their contribution to policymaking, the quality of participation was still far from ideal. In this sense, democratization in Indonesia had its challenges and loopholes, but it had allowed the country to have a more productive and pragmatic China policy.

4. Transnational Media Flows – Going Global Policy

According to Hu and Li (2017), China is attempting to make its voice better heard in the contemporary stream of world communication, although its effort is met with scepticism and criticism, especially in the neo-liberalist economy of communications. Therefore, in the contemporary global media scene, China might appear to struggle to find its position, where Western media remain more or less dominant. Following the Chinese economy's great expansion in the last two decades and its rapid globalization as well, China's media has been internationally recognized through its "going global" policy. Since 2006, according to Thussu (2018), China has been the largest holder of foreign-currency reserves, and surprisingly in 2014, China became the world's largest economy, overtaking the United States in GDP.

Chinese media have been going global for over a decade to combat such negative discourses in the mainstream international media and to provide their own version of the China story (Wang and Wang, 2014; Wang, 2010; Sun 2015). As emphasized by President Xi Jinping in 2014, while delivering his welcome remarks in the Central Conference on Work Relating to Foreign Affairs, the good image of China should be appropriately disseminated internationally (quoted in Reuters, 2014). Xiaoling (2010) argued that making big investment in its "going global" project was one of its efforts, among others are the launch of satellite TV channels and website, the cultural performances and exhibitions conducted overseas, and the educational support provided for students who were willing to study in China.

Thussu (2018) argued that Chinese media were going global at a time when the media sphere - including the digital space - was crowded and dominated largely by US and UK media outlets. Studies have shown that mainstream Anglophone media 'still play an influential role in the construction of China's national image' (Xiang, 2013). However the globalization of China's media nowadays has been accelerated. This condition has been termed variously as 'post-American' and post-Western' world (Zakaria, 2008; Jazques, 2009; Acharya, 2014; Stuenkel, 2016). In other words, we have entered the new period of 'Easternization', as introduced by Rachman (2016).

There were a number of Chinese media; Xinhua news agency, China Global Television Network, China Radio International, China Daily, and People's Daily, that were funded by Chinese government so as to expand globally through the dissemination of its message to the world (Shambaugh, 2013). In addition, Chinese media companies were developing Chinese content, ranging from historical dramas, feature films, game and chat shows, to news and current affairs, potentially to a global audience (Keane, 2013). Culture is considered the main sources of attraction. The

"Chinese New Year Gala" on CCTV is an example, in which its entertainment program has been institutionalized as part of the ritual of the Chinese New Year celebrations and broadcasted as well to overseas Chinese. Furthermore, the Chinese media also present an active defense of sensitive issues, in which China is often criticized, giving much prominence to China's environmental protection, political and social stability, national cohesion (especially the issue of Taiwan and Tibet), anti-corruption, human rights, and reduction of poverty (Xiaoling, 2010).

The audience for Chinese content is likely to be the Chinese diaspora (the world's largest), Chinese employees working abroad, Chinese students and Chinese tourists. As these tourists and students start traveling to countries beyond Europe and US, Chinese culture and media also be globalized and become more present. In addition, in order to disseminate its cultural values worldwide, cultural exchange also plays important role to improve Chinese cultural presence. As part of the cultural 'going out' strategy, since 2004, 500 Confucius Institutes (CIs) and 1,000 Confucius Classrooms (CCs) have been opened on campuses around the world (Mei, Yadong, & Yang, 2018). According to Ju Lan (2017), there have been seven Confucius Institutes established in Indonesia. One of them is Jakarta BTIP (Bina Terampil Insan Persada).

Beside BTIP, the other six university institutes were established by an agreement signed by the representatives of both governments on 28 June 2010. It is argued by Ju Lan (2017) that Pusat Bahasa Mandarin at Al Azhar University was built by philanthropic donations from a number of Chinese Indonesians. Its office was assisted by Nation Building Foundation (Nabil) under the leadership of Eddie Lembong, one of the well-known ethnic Chinese leaders, who eventually revealed that the motives of ethnic Chinese leaders were not entire philanthropic, but also political overtones. He underlined that indigenous Indonesians needed to learn about China in order to make them less prejudice towards the Chinese, through communication and cultural exchange. Ardaiolo (2013) puts an emphasis on the cultural exchange involved in studying at a Confucius Institute, saying that Confucius Institutes served as powerful tool of Chinese public diplomacy. Ju Lan mentioned the "observable" power of "intangible" attraction "implanted" in the language and culture offered by the Institute, i.e. "shared values".

In the case of the Confucius Institute at Universitas Al Azhar (UAI), it is apparent that the portrait of China itself has worked as an attraction. Most students' primary intention to learn language through Confucius Institute is to benefit from Chinese economic expansion and stimulate their cultural awareness. Apart from the Confucius Institutes, a large array of customs and rituals accompanying the celebration of Chinese New Year in Indonesia during the rule of SBY, were considered the cultural practices that most Chinese Indonesians did not hesitate to demonstrate as their way to express the emphasis of cultural freedom.

5. New Media Users' Increase in Indonesia

The use of new media cannot be separated from the utilization of digital technology. It is the oldness and novelty that have been the main distinctions between old media and new media. In contrast to old media, television programs (only analog broadcast), feature films, magazines, books, were not considered as new media unless they took advantage of computers and Internet. Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia, is a good example of New Media. Besides, Facebook and Twitter are other types of New Media which belong to social media category, through which users interact with one another and make announcements to which users interact with one another and make announcements to which the public receive (Wikipedia).

The number one social media at that time is Facebook, followed by Twitter (Hale, 2015). Around 2010, there were dozens of other websites providing social media services of some kind. For example, several photo sharing social media platforms had gained popularity, especially Instagram for its business purpose. One of the things that started happening right in that period is that social media not only became widely used, it also became widespread in business. In addition, for the purpose of business, both the television commercials and some other websites began to list their social media addresses, especially Facebook and Twitter addresses (Hale, 2015).

In Indonesia, both Facebook and Twitter had risen in usage in the late 2000s (in the reign of SBY) and had also become an online resource for acquiring information. Most young generations during SBY's period, including Chinese Indonesians, were very much into new media to obtain information worldwide. If during the Suharto era, most Chinese Indonesians used television as the vehicle in the formation of their Chinese identity, during the SBY era, their identity were possibly maintained mostly through the use of new media. The type of media used during SBY's leadership, is mostly new media, such as Youtube, Facebook, Twitter, etc, in which the cultural values are depicted in a particular way through Chinese films or Cinema. Below are the media, both old and new, users in Indonesia from 2009 to 2012.
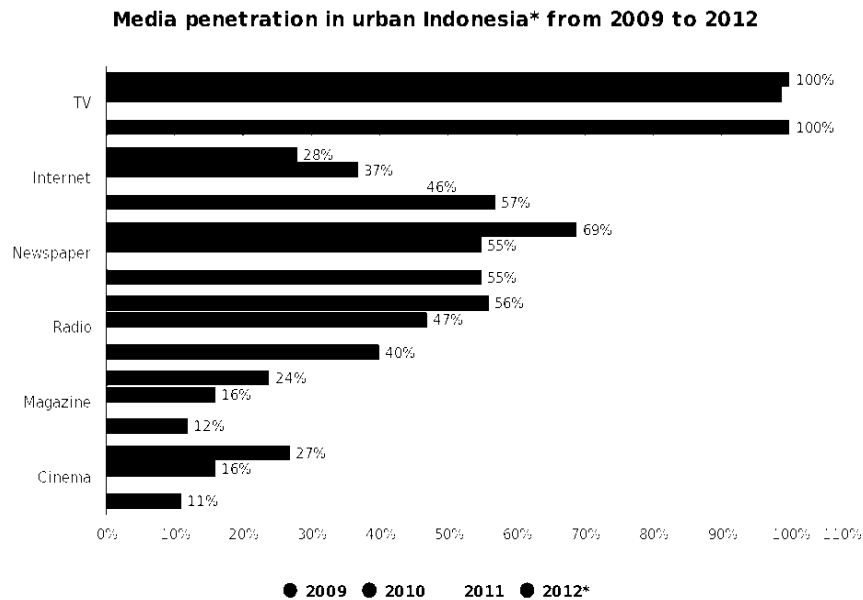
Figure 1. Media Penetration in Urban Indonesia 2009 – 2012 (eMarketer, 2013)

According to the figure above, during SBY era, there was a gradual increase of Internet users from 2009 to 2012. Meanwhile the number of old media users had decreased from 2009 to 2012, excluding television users, which had been stable during 2009 to 2012. This shows us that access to Internet in Indonesia had grown to reach 57% of population in 2012. However, since in several remote areas across Indonesia, Internet had not yet connected to Internet, television was still considered important medium until 2012, and would possibly remain so for years to come. Meanwhile, below are the social media users in Indonesia from 2011 to 2014.
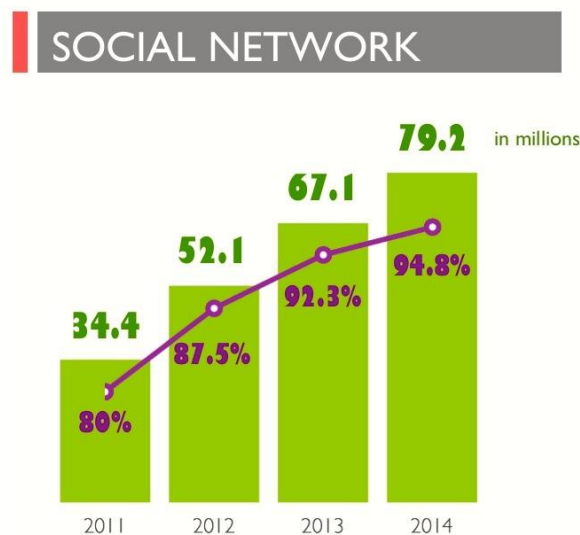

Figure 2. Social media users in Indonesia from 2011 to 2014 (eMarketer, 2014)
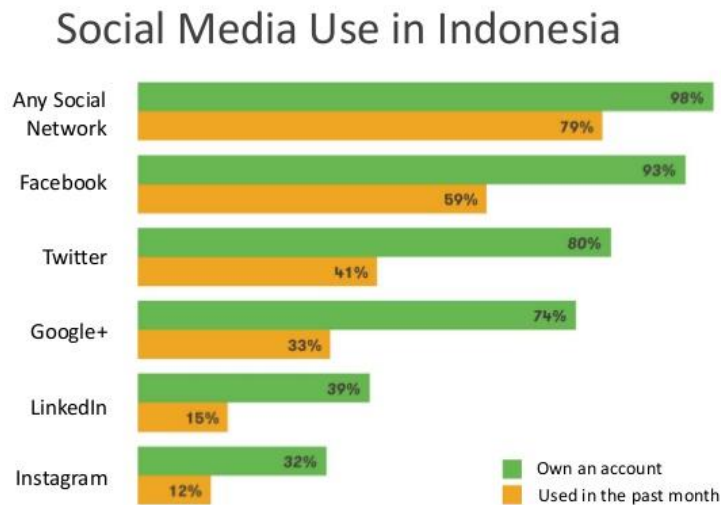
Figure 3. Social Media Use in Indonesia 2014 (Global Web Index, 2014)

The two figures above show us that social media use in Indonesia continued to grow until 2014 (the end of SBY Presidency). Facebook and Twitter were the second and third most prominent social networking sites, where the social media here enabled identity expression, exploration, and experimentation. Social media may also contribute to the construction of identity where online users built social communities where people share online their common thoughts, interests, and tendencies with acquaintances, and interact with them. "Rapid development experienced in communication technologies brings every culture of the world closer each other. As a result of this interaction of every culture of the world with other culture of the world has increased" (Karacor, 2009). In other words, through the development of communication technologies, Chinese Indnesians may consume any Chinese cultural products faster and easier through the new media, than the conventional media.

6. Chinese Indonesians under SBY: A Cultural Awakening

Under the rule of SBY, an enlightenment of Chinese culture can be observed through the coexistence of host culture and ethnic culture, the consumption of Chinese cultural products through the use of new media, the emergence of Ahok as "the man of the people", the celebration of Chinese cultural activities, and the presence of Chinese communities.

6.1 Third and Fourth Generations: Coexistence of Host Culture and Ethnic Culture

There were 25 Chinese Indonesians aged 25 - 33 interviewed and observed, who resided in Jakarta, Bandung, and Tangerang. They come from different regions and were descended from the same province in Mainland China, Guangdong. They have been shortlisted based on their answers on the screening questionnaire, wherein they stated they were ethnic Chinese who could speak Chinese language very well and loved watching Chinese movies through both Internet and cable television. Links to the screening questionnaires were shared through social media and e-mail and those who were self identified as Chinese Indonesians and met the criteria were asked to further interviewed and observed. Below are details of the participants:

Table 1. Participants Details

No	Participants Place of Residence	Number of Participants	Place of Birth						Place of Ancestral Origin	
			Jakarta	West Borneo	North Sumatera	Banten	West Java	East Java	Guangdong	Unknown
1.	Tangerang	7	-	2	2	2	-	1	7	-
2.	Jakarta	15	2	5	2	3	1	2	14	1
3.	Bandung	3	-	2	-	-	1	-	3	-

According to the Table 1 above, most of the participants, aged 25 to 33, came from West Borneo; which forms the majority of Chinese Indonesians, while their ancestors mostly came from Guangdong, a province in South China. According to statistics on percentage of Chinese Indonesians in 2010, ethnic Chinese in West Borneo (West Kalimantan) has the fifth largest percentage after West Jakarta, Medan, North Jakarta, and Surabaya (Arifin, Hasbullah, & Pramono, 2016). The following table is the ten districts with the largest number of Chinese Indonesians in 2010.

Table 2. Number of Chinese Indonesians in 2010

No	Code	Name of Province	Name of District	Chinese	Distribution to Total Chinese
1	3174	Jakarta	West Jakarta	313,178	11.06
2	1275	North Sumatra	Medan	201,519	7.11
3	3175	Jakarta	North Jakarta	198,248	7.00
4	3578	East Java	Surabaya	147,047	5.19
5	6171	West Kalimantan	Pontianak	104,325	3.68
6	3671	Banten	Tangerang	96,831	3.42
7	3273	West Java	Bandung	83,320	2.94
8	3173	Jakarta	Central Jakarta	68,186	2.41
9	6172	West Kalimantan	Singkawang	67,691	2.39
10	2171	Riau Archipelago	Batam	61,883	2.18
			Others	1490,282	52.61
			Total	2832,510	100.00

Note. The third digit differentiates the type of districts with seven means city while other number means regency

Source: Arifin, Hasbullah, & Pramono, 2016

Based on the survey conducted, most of the participants came from Singkawang, a city located in West Borneo. The word Singkawang itself was originated from San Khew Jong, Hakka Chinese, which refers to a hill town located closed to a sea and wide part of a river. Meanwhile, some of them while residing in major cities, i.e. Jakarta and Bandung, were actually born in other regions in Sumatera and Java.

Based on the in-depth interview, following the screening questionnaire, most of them who came from West Borneo still have basic characteristic of Chinese-ness; particular language style (Hokkien dialect) and Chinese names. They respected their ancestral traditions, as aspect of filial piety. A 32-year-old man from Singkawang who had resided in Tangerang since 2010 talked about the cultural practice he did while celebrating the Chinese New Year (Cap Go Meh):

> *When in Singkawang, after the ban of public celebrations of Chinese New Year was lifted since 2002, my family and I welcomed the larger-scale festivities with excitement. Something unique is the spirit-mediums parade that was performed along the celebration of Cap Go Meh. The spirit mediums were dressed in such a way imitating Ming generals and foot soldiers as represented on the Chinese opera stage. Today the ritual elements of the performance those Chinese Tatungs demonstrate are not only the religious rituals, but also the attraction of cultural origin. (Interviewee #1)*

Those third and fourth generations of Chinese Indonesians who were born in West Borneo, particularly in Singkawang, but then moved to major cities, either to continue to study or find a better job, still maintained their cultural distinctiveness, yet upheld the dominant culture where they settled; Malay and Dayak. Those two words; brotherhood and *chamsiang* were often heard while interviewing them. They mentioned frequently that the performance of the spirit-medium parade in Singkawang symbolized the spirit of Confucian teaching that all men are brothers. The important message was beyond the celebration itself. In addition, in order to bring a peaceful and stable order in a multi-ethnic region, they preferred to bring together the similarities rather than differences when negotiating. They explained that "cham" could be translated as "bring together", while "siang" stands for "similarities".

Different from those who were born in West Borneo, those Chinese Indonesians who were born and reside in major cities; Jakarta and Bandung, had different point of views, where they thought celebrating Chinese New Year was no more than a ceremony to remind us of the virtue of respect for our parents, elders, and ancestors.

> *My parents spent their childhood and adolescence in Singkawang, but moved to Jakarta in their 20s. They told me several times about the medium-spirits parade when celebrating Chinese New Year back in Singkawang, but our family never did that kind of ritual anymore. We kept in mind the main message of the cultural festival and share the sheer of joy and love to all humankind. We preserve some cultural values passed down by our ancestors, but we also mingle with our pribumi friends. (Interviewee #2)*

As the third-fourth generation who were born in Jakarta and co-existed with people from different ethnic and religions, they still held their Chinese identity, but not as strong as those who were born and raised in Singkawang. Their ideologies and personalities had been shaped in such a way by certain cultural environments. Similar to those who had

resided in Jakarta and Bandung, those who were born in East Java had oriental looks, but spoke a mixture of Bahasa (Indonesian language) and ngoko (the low level Javanese) with their very distinct accent of local language. This also occurred to Chinese Indonesians who were born in West Java, wherein their language were a mixture of Indonesian and the local language; Sundanese or Jakartanese.

However, the hybrid language they used does not mean that their Chinese-ness had been completely fading, but they had come in contact with the mainstream culture, while protecting their Chinese identity that had been constructed through the transmission of cultural values in the family. Most of them had their own Chinese names, and they even use Chinese terms to address their family members and relatives.

Something unique can be found to those Chinese Indonesians who were born in North Sumatera, but moved to major cities during their adolescent years. They retained their native language, similar to those in West Borneo (Hokkien dialect is the most), when they met someone with the same ethnic group. One of the interviewees who were born in Medan, North Sumatera, in 1988, and had lived in Tangerang since 2004, was very enthusiastic about their Chinese identity development.

> *Although the expressions of Chinese culture and any materials in Chinese were banned in during Suharto regime, the Chinese performing arts had survived, especially the lion dance or barongsay. My dad told me that during festivities, such as Chinese New Year, the lion dance was believed to ensure good fortune. The lion dance was accompanied by specific rhythms that accompany particular movements of the lion, such as bowling, walking, climbing up a pole to grab the green vegetable, and so on. We regarded the performance of lion dance was aimed at protecting us against evil spirits which might bring bad luck. Well, Chinese traditions and customs have been well introduced to me since I was a child. I might be 1970 kilometres away from Medan, but I left my heart there with my family who taught me many things about Chinese cultural values. (Interviewee #3)*

In spite of the fact that Medan as the capital city of North Sumatera province consists of plural society, there is no dominant culture there. Every ethnic group has a clan associations or social organization based on ethnic lines, even each clan has their own organization. Clan associations, customary organizations, and ethnic based organizations do not only function as the preserver of culture, customs, and the media of adaptation to city life, but also protector of their ethnicity in facing different "enemies" (Agustono, 2008). Each ethnic group in North Sumatera could maintain a good inter-ethnic relationship. In addition, an open ethnic conflict had never taken place during SBY regime.

Based on the in-depth interview and participant observation conducted to the 25 third and fourth generations of Chinese Indonesians who reside in Jakarta, Bandung, and Tangerang, it can be argued during the more democratic regime ruled by SBY, those subsequent generations of Chinese Indonesians did preserve their Chinese identity through the cultural practice, shared values, customs, and rituals passed down from their parents, while co-existed with Native Indonesians. They were no longer reluctant to demonstrate their ethnic identity through the Chinese New Year parade and festival and the use of their native language in public, in order to prevent any racial prejudice addressed by *pribumi*.

6.2 New Media: New Type of Cultural Long-Distance Nationalism

Based on the screening questionnaires, 19 participants stated that they watched Chinese movies, TV series, and TV shows anywhere via their computers, laptops, smart-phones, or tablets. They mentioned Youku, one of the largest online video providers in China, and YouTube, a free video sharing website that lets people upload, view, and share videos, as their online platforms to watch any Chinese cultural products. They had those applications on their smart-phones as well. Meanwhile, the other 6 participants watched movies with a cable or satellite subscription, wherein CCTV-4 and Celestial Movies, were among the Chinese channels preferred. They chose watching cable television, instead of watching any content online, since online streaming was frequently interrupted by loading screens and unstable Internet connections.

One fifth of the participants had their own Facebook and Blackberry Messenger (BBM) account, while the other participants used WhatsApp as their social networking application. Moreover, they had their own Chinese online communities, either in Facebook, BBM, or WhatsApp, which provided real-time communication. Since the online groups were formed based on their common ethnic backgrounds, interests, and motivations, their sense of belonging was fostered through the intense online communication between online groups' members. By means of the online platforms, they shared their common thoughts and recent activities, and even set regular meet-ups that helped them breed a sense of belonging to their virtual group. In addition, they had regular offline meet-ups at certain coffee shops as well, as their community matures. They had topics and issues to discuss, and shared some upcoming valuable activities they may engage in. The more intense their online and offline meet-ups, the greater their sense of Chinese-ness grows.

Meanwhile, some participants stated they still watched Chinese films, TV series, and other TV shows through CCTV-4

and Celestial movies. Most male respondents tend to prefer action movie genre, especially those that feature numerous martial arts fights between characters. Meanwhile, the majority of female respondents chose drama movies and TV series, instead of martial arts films. Both cable TV and the new media play the same role in disseminating the image of China, along with its customs and traditions, as it was described in the stories their parents passed on. In addition to the cable TV and media use, almost all participants being interviewed imagined China in the present much more different from that in the past based on mediated sources, including stories their parents instilled in them, and the portrait of China in either Indonesia's media or Chinese media.

Since the image of China and Chinese were commonly associated with Communism and country's minority who dominate the Indonesian economy's strategic sectors, by viewing other sides of China and Chinese people who lived overseas through the online platforms and cable TV, they grew up thinking that they were to some extent connected to China through ancestral ties, which provoked sentimental attachment to the place they had never resided before. By consuming more Chinese cultural products, they could turn aside any negative views of ethnic Chinese among native Indonesians. In addition, given China's worldwide success with its going global policy, it is natural that most Chinese Indonesians feel an increase in pride and confidence. They were no longer reluctant to publicly express their cultural identity through Chinese cultural celebration held all over Indonesia in order to avoid any anti-Chinese sentiments.

The cultural long-distance nationalism of Chinese Indonesians during SBY era was actually developed through the revival of Chinese culture, which in turn led them to the manifestation of Chinese cultural identity through the Chinese cultural festival and even celebrations, including the lion dance parade and West Kalimantan's marches of spirit-medium. Their involvement in cultural activities, as well as the media consumption on any Chinese cultural products, gave rise to the romanticized attachment to their ancestral homeland. Their emotional feelings to their ancestral motherland cannot be separated from the "language of blood" (Schiller, 2005).

> At first I was thinking that China was an ancient place with its dynastic cycle and communism, until I found the difference when during my teenage years, I looked for some popular Chinese films, such as The Grandmaster and Apart Together, and was overwhelmed by feelings of nostalgia and certainty. All at once, I felt like I thank God I was born Chinese!" (Interviewee #4)

6.3 Basuki Tjahaha Purnama (Ahok) as a New Figure of Hope

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, popularly known as Ahok (Hakka Chinese nickname), was a politician and governor of Jakarta. Ahok stepped into Jakarta politics in 2012, following his resignation as a legislator in the Indonesian People's Representative Council and Regent of East Belitung. As a running mate of Joko Widodo in the 2012 election, he was successfully elected as Deputy Governor of Jakarta. His great efforts to fight corruption and implement bureaucratic reform programs systematically had attracted public attention. Despite his double-minority, wherein he was the second governor of Jakarta with Chinese ancestry and also the city's second Christian governor, he was greatly loved because of his commitment and integrity while ruling Jakarta. In addition, he gained strong support from a great number of Jakarta's residents to take over as Acting Governor after Joko Widodo was elected as President in 2014, for he represented the majority of Jakartans' voice. He was then officially appointed as Governor of Jakarta in November 2014, following the appointment of Joko Widodo as the 7th President of Indonesia.

At the end of SBY's two terms in office, the emergence of Ahok as "the man of the people" was like "a breath of fresh air". As a Chinese Indonesian, he came up with great solutions for Jakarta's main problems. By ensuring transparency and accountability in his government, while improving public service, he was a figure of hope for both the native Indonesians and ethnic Chinese themselves. Furthermore, he proved the world that "being Chinese in Indonesia is no longer a nightmare". Indonesia has reached a more democratic regime under SBY, where native Indonesians and Chinese Indonesians coexist and racial prejudice and discrimination has considerably diminished. Ahok became the symbol of hope and confidence among the participants being interviewed.

6.4 Chinese Communities and Cultural Activities

One of the notable Chinese associations during SBY administration is *Asosiasi Peranakan Tionghoa Indonesia* (ASPERTINA) that was established in 2011 and was aimed at gathering anyone who had interests and concern for Chinese culture. The presence of ASPERTINA is important because this organization led the young generations of Chinese Indonesians to search for Chinese cultural values, while preserve and introduce the society to the rich cultural heritage exist in Indonesia. Some of the participants were involved in the cultural activities held by ASPERTINA. The annual cultural fashion show and Chinese New Year exhibition were among the cultural activities frequently held by ASPERTINA.

Aside from the cultural fashion show held in 2013, there was also a puppet show, dances, songs performed. The show was very impressive and reminded me of the rich cultural diversity in our country. (Interviewee 5)

The statement of one of the interviewees above supported the peaceful coexistence between the culture of majority and culture of minority, without a fear of disintegration. Moreover, during the Chinese New Year celebration, most people can enjoy special performances, such as lion dance, Shanghai Jazz, fashion show, and food festival which were held in many shopping malls, so as to celebrate the Chinese nuance, especially among Chinese Indonesians.

Beside ASPERTINA, there are Chinese Moslem Association, Indonesian Chinese Enterpreneur Association, and The Chinese Indonesian Association which were actively engaged in any cultural activities and exhibition in Indonesia in order to preserve the noble values of Chinese culture. Those activities were emotion-provoking activities, which led those Chinese Indonesians to develop their long-distance nationalism to their ancestral homeland.

Figure 4. The celebrations of Chinese New Year in a shopping mall of Indonesia

7. Conclusions

Young generations of Chinese Indonesians during SBY administration have a more stable identity, compared to the first six years after the fall of Suharto, when they had to keep their ethnic identity low-key. They have a lot more access to associate their Chinese-ness, through the use of new media, involvement in Chinese communities and any cultural events they held, and present socio-cultural context that support minority groups' freedom of expression. Through the portrait of China, the emotion-provoking songs, dances, drama, and other cultural products, Chinese Indonesians started to build ethnic pride and nationalism. They were devoted to their ancestral motherland and entitled to act upon the values their parents instilled into them. In short, they have experienced a cultural freedom and long-distance nationalism. However, it should be taken into account that since Indonesia is an archipelagic country, the Chinese identity in Indonesia is heterogenous, depending on the different local culture of certain area they come in contact with. Future research on the ethnic identity of Chinese Indonesians today in different parts of Indonesia, with a mixed-method study, is strongly recommended.

This study has shown the personal layer and enacted layer of the participants being interviewed and observed. Younger generations of Chinese Indonesians who spent their adolescence / adulthood under the rule of SBY kept a sense of their Chinese identity through any cultural expressions. This indicates that SBY administration has been more democratic and politically stable. In addition, it should be taken into account that the sociocultural environment the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia had experienced was certainly different with the situation ethnic Chinese in other parts of the world had gone through. Therefore, their cultural identity was developed and maintained in particular ways.

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