

Construction of Tiong Hoa Identity as Portrayed in *Pao An Tui* and *Clara Atawa Wanita Yang Diperkosa* Short Stories

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Abstract

Chinese ethnic identity in Indonesia has historically been shaped by hegemonic tension and marginalization. This paper explores the complexities of Chinese ethnic identity in Indonesia through the lens of two short stories, "Pao An Tui" by Dwicipta and "Clara Atawa Wanita Yang Diperkosa" by Seno Gumira Ajidarma. These stories span from the era of struggle against colonial powers to the Reform Era, highlighting the shifting power relations and tensions between the Dutch, Chinese, and Indigenous Indonesians, and later, between the Indigenous and Chinese communities. The hegemony of identity over Chinese ethnicity has often led to social conflicts and marginalization. Drawing on Stuart Hall's theory of Cultural Identity and Diaspora, this paper examines how identity construction is portrayed in the characters of Chinese ethnicity in these stories. Both narratives reflect the struggles and transformations of the Chinese community in Indonesia, capturing the shifts in status, roles, and identity across different historical periods. "Pao An Tui" and "Clara Atawa Wanita Yang Diperkosa" offer valuable insights into the challenges faced by the Chinese ethnic group, shedding light on their complex experiences and social positioning within Indonesian society during critical moments in history. Through the characters' experiences, the narratives emphasize how identity becomes a source of both conflict and resilience in the face of adversity and social injustice.

Keywords: cultural identity, diaspora, chinese ethnic, tionghoa.

Introduction

An introduction that presents the specific problem under study and describes the research strategy or design. A good introduction explains the background of the research, its importance, and urgency in just a few pages and, by summarizing the relevant arguments and the past evidence, gives the reader a firm sense of what was done and why. The body of the manuscript must be thoroughly typed using Times New Roman 12. The length of the manuscript is for about 3000 to 7000 words (Times New Roman, 12).

Cultural identity is an unstable point of identification created within the discourses of culture and history. "Cultural identities are points of identification, unstable and shifting, formed within the discourses of history and culture. Not an essence but a positioning. Hence, there is always a politics of identity, a politics of position, which has no absolute guarantee in an unproblematic, transcendental 'law of origin.' (Stuart Hall, 1990). Talking about the Chinese ethnicity in Indonesia is a complex discussion. The Tionghoa ethnic group came to Indonesia during that time, known as Nusantara, in the 7th century. The journey of the Tionghoa ethnic group in Indonesia has been documented in the history of the country up to this moment. The long journey and process of socio-cultural adaptation of the Tionghoa ethnic group in Indonesia raises significant questions about how the construction of Chinese ethnic identity is shaped through the community's 'positioning' in Indonesia.

Several short stories that depict the dynamics of the Chinese ethnic community are written by authors of Chinese descent as well as Indigenous writers. Among them is the short story "Pao An Tui" by Dwicipta, which is one of the best short stories published by Kompas Gramedia that represents the dark historical context of the Tionghoa ethnic group and the Indonesian nation during the struggle after independence. Pao An Tui means City Security Police Force. This organization was established by the Tionghoa ethnic group in 1947 as a civil security guard with the aim of protecting the safety and security of the Chinese community, both from threats posed by the Dutch and from the Republic, which did not favor them. The reason for the formation of Pao An Tui is closely related to the numerous abuses beyond limits, such as violence, discrimination, and oppression against the ethnic Chinese minority. At that time, although Indonesia had proclaimed its independence, after the war ended, the Dutch still attempted to reoccupy Indonesia. (Anne van der Veer, 2013).

Another equally captivating short story that illustrates the dynamics of the Chinese ethnic community in Indonesia is "Clara or The Woman Who Was Raped," a short story by Seno Gumira Ajidarma about the life of the Tionghoa ethnic group in Indonesia during the late New Order era. The story is set against the backdrop of the May 1998 riots, depicting indigenous people discriminating against the presence of Chinese individuals in Indonesia. In the short story, indigenous people are portrayed as looting the belongings of the Chinese ethnic community, culminating in instances of rape and sexual harassment against Chinese women during the riots of '98.

From the era of struggle to the reform era, the hegemony of identity over the Tionghoa ethnic group has led to a dominance of power relations, transitioning from the trichotomy of Dutch vs Chinese vs Indigenous to the dichotomy of Indigenous vs Chinese, ultimately resulting in the emergence of social conflict. "Pao An Tui" and "Clara Atawa Wanita Yang Diperkosa" provide insights into the issues faced by the Tionghoa ethnic group during a dark period in their history and in the world.

Previous research on the short stories "Pao An Tui" by Dwicipta and "Clara Atawa Wanita Yang Diperkosa" by Seno Gumira Ajidarma has delved into the depiction of the Chinese ethnic community in Indonesia across different historical periods. Studies such as Lukito's (2010) and Halim's (2015) have examined "Pao An Tui" in the context of Dutch colonial rule, focusing on the portrayal of Chinese intermediaries and their complex interactions with Dutch colonizers and Indigenous Indonesians. This narrative highlights issues of identity formation and socio-political challenges faced by the Chinese community under colonial dominance. Conversely, research on Ajidarma's "Clara" by Pratama (2018) and Wibowo (2020) explores the Chinese experience during Indonesia's Reform Era, emphasizing the vulnerabilities and systemic discrimination encountered amidst political and social upheaval. These studies reveal how both narratives reflect the struggles of the Chinese community with identity and exclusion, providing critical insights into their socio-political realities during these pivotal periods in Indonesian history.

The construction of Chinese ethnic identity from the early independence period (1945) to the reform era (1998) has led to various conflicts between nations. Through the identification of comparative issues of identity in the cultural and historical discourse depicted in the short stories "Pao An Tui" by Dwicipta and "Clara Atau Wanita Yang Diperkosa" by Seno Gumira Ajidarma, a deeper understanding and interpretation of the processes by which culture and society construct identity can be achieved, particularly concerning the Chinese ethnic characters in the stories. This brief paper will discuss and analyze the conflicts in the construction of Chinese ethnic identity, using Stuart Hall's theory of Cultural Identity and Diaspora as the basis for identifying the existence of identity (cultural) construction among the Chinese ethnic characters in the short stories.

Theory and Method

This section describes in detail how the study was conducted, including theoretical and operational concepts as well as variables used in the study. As an author explains it, different types of studies will rely on different methodologies (Stake, 2010). The readers need to know whether the research was done quantitatively or qualitatively. Kothari says that the latter makes use of available facts or information to analyze and to make a critical evaluation (2004). However, a complete description of the methods used enables the reader to evaluate the appropriateness of the methods and the reliability and the validity of the results. Research design, participants, sampling procedures, data characteristics, and others (if necessary) are parts of this point.

The main sources in this research are the short stories "Pao An Tui" by Dwicipta and "Clara Atawa Wanita Yang Diperkosa" by Seno Gumira Ajidarma. The research on this short story employs a literature study and qualitative descriptive method by collecting, reading, and analyzing data related to the re-search (Creswell, 2014) to obtain the significance of the text regarding how the characters in the short story represent the existing issues and relate to the construction of Chinese ethnic identity. Subsequently, the researcher will examine the connection of these issues using Stuart Hall's identity theory, which will provide an understanding of Chinese ethnic identity in Indonesia from the early independence period to the reform era.

Findings and Discussion

The history of Chinese-Indonesian identity is deeply shaped by political changes and social tensions across different eras. Instead of being fixed, this identity has constantly shifted due to government policies and social pressures. To understand how these challenges are reflected in literature, this study explores the historical experiences and social positioning of the Chinese community in Indonesia.

Tionghoa Ethnic Identity in Indonesia

1. During the Colonial Era

During the colonial era, the Chinese ethnic community in Indonesia was strategically positioned by the Dutch as a social class between the native population and Europeans. They were classified as second-class citizens, seen as intermediaries for managing trade and economic affairs between the indigenous people and the Europeans. This system allowed the Chinese to thrive in business but also solidified their distinct ethnic identity, setting them apart from both the Dutch and the native Indonesians (Prasetya, 2019).

Within the Chinese community itself, a significant cultural divide existed between the Cina Totok (recent Chinese immigrants) and the Cina Peranakan (those of Chinese descent born in Indonesia). The Cina Totok maintained stronger ties to their Chinese heritage, language, and customs, reflecting their recent migration from China. On the other hand, the Cina Peranakan adapted more to local customs, adopting local languages and, in many cases, integrating elements of local religion, politics, and nationalism into their identity. This division created layers of identity within the Chinese community, influencing their cultural and political orientation (Suryadinata, 2003).

2. Old Order

During the Old Order period under Sukarno, the Indonesian government implemented policies aimed at integrating the Chinese community into Indonesian society, albeit under a sense of suspicion and control. According to Dwipayana and Hadimadja (in Suryadinata, 2003), government regulations restricted the Chinese from enrolling in their own secondary schools,

emphasizing national education instead. In addition, Chinese-language publications and media outlets were strictly regulated, and in many cases, shut down. This policy marked an effort to suppress the influence of Chinese culture and foster loyalty to the Indonesian state.

However, despite these restrictions, Chinese-language schools, Chinese ethnic organizations, and Chinese-language media continued to survive, albeit in a more controlled form. These three institutions were seen as the "pillars of Chinese culture," and their resilience during this period showed the Chinese community's determination to maintain its cultural identity despite government pressure to integrate (Suryadinata, 2003).

3. New Order

The most profound and repressive policies toward Chinese identity occurred during the New Order under Suharto. The regime's approach was heavily assimilationist, aiming to erase visible signs of Chinese identity and fully integrate the Chinese into the larger Indonesian society. One of the most notable policies was the name-changing policy (*kebijakan ganti nama*), which required Chinese Indonesians to change their Chinese-sounding names to ones that resembled Indonesian names (Turama, 2014).

The assimilation policies also included the prohibition of Chinese-language media, schools, and cultural organizations, which were seen as potential threats to national unity. The government viewed these institutions as symbols of the Chinese community's separateness and, thus, targeted them for elimination. The result was a forced cultural assimilation that sought to eradicate the distinctiveness of Chinese identity in Indonesia. By dismantling the three main pillars of Chinese culture schools, media, and ethnic organizations the New Order government sought to ensure that future generations of Chinese Indonesians would identify solely as Indonesians, with no visible ties to their ancestral heritage (Turama, 2014).

Despite these efforts, the Chinese community continued to find ways to preserve their identity through informal networks, private cultural practices, and hidden forms of resistance. However, the assimilation policies of the New Order left a lasting impact on the Chinese community, contributing to a complex legacy of identity that has persisted even after the fall of Suharto.

The Processes of "Becoming" and "Being"

1. The Tionghoa Ethnic Group in the Short Story "Pao An Tui"

In the short story "Pao An Tui," the Tionghoa ethnic group is portrayed through the concept of positioning and being positioned, highlighting the complexity of Chinese identity in Indonesia. Internally, the Tionghoa community strives to preserve its cultural heritage and traditions, while externally, they are often marginalized and viewed with suspicion by the larger society. This dual positioning reflects the community's ongoing struggle to maintain their identity in the face of societal pressures to assimilate, as they negotiate their place within Indonesia's broader social and political framework.

"Ayahku selamanya membela Republik. Ia lahir di sini. Dan mati pun di sini. Tak sudi ia membela orang-orang Belanda itu. Ayahku teman baik Oei Kim Sin, pendiri Pao An Tui," kata Ling-Ling menirukan suara A Siong.

"My father will always defend the Republic." he was born here. And he died here too. He is unwilling to defend those Dutch people. "My father is a good friend of Oei Kim Sin, the founder of Pao An Tui," said Ling-Ling, mimicking A Siong's voice.

"Kau memang terlalu baik hati terhadap orang-orang Republik. Anakmu sendiri menjadi korban, dan kau diam saja,"

"You are indeed too kind-hearted towards the people of the Republic." "Your own child has become a victim, and you remain silent."

The quotes above show how the Tionghoa ethnic group positions itself as "Part of Indonesia" or "Defenders of the Republic." Cultural identity as a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being' (Stuart Hall, 1990) as Hall suggests, the process of cultural assimilation has made the character Keng Hong and his family feel like part of the Indonesian people. As in his non-essentialist perspective, Keng Hong was born and raised in Indonesia, so the tendency to defend the republic is a fitting one. However, this differs from the views of the Indigenous people and the Dutch, as illustrated in the following quote:

"Tak ada seorang pun tetangga yang melayatnya. Ia baru saja menjejakkan kaki di Kembang Jepun-jepun ini setelah selama hampir dua hari merangkak-rangkak di antara desingan peluru dan menyelinap menghindari laskar-laskar perjuangan yang anti orang-orang kuning dan bermata sipit seperti dirinya. Revolusi kemerdekaan benar-benar membara di seluruh pelosok negeri. Korban berjatuhan. Tak jarang di antaranya adalah korban korban kesalahpahaman belaka. Ia tak tahu kapan situasi perang akan berhenti." "No neighbor came to pay their respects." He has just set foot in this Kembang Jepun after crawling for almost two days amidst the whizzing bullets and sneaking away from the fighters who are against yellow-skinned people with slanted eyes like him. The independence revolution is truly blazing across the entire country. Victims are falling. It is not uncommon for them to be victims of mere misunderstandings. "I don't know when the situation of war will end."

The excerpt above describes the situation at that time, when the Chinese ethnic community in Indonesia found themselves in an unsafe condition, leading them to be placed in special areas, one of which was Kembang Jepun. Kembang Jepun is the name of a specific residential area designated for the Chinese ethnic community in Surabaya. (Prasetya, 2019). The Tionghoa ethnic group is positioned as spies for both sides; both the Indigenous people and the Dutch.

"Semalam, hampir lima orang tak dikenal mendatangi rumah Keng Hong, me-nanyakan apakah lelaki itu ada di rumahnya atau tidak. A Siong yang pertama kali membukakan pintu. Di belakangnya Ling-Ling mengikuti dengan tubuh gemetaran. Ia selalu ketakutan bila ada orang asing datang ke rumahnya. Tapi A Siong mewarisi keberanian ayahnya. Ia menjawab ayahnya tidak ada. Kalau ada apa-apa, ia bisa mewakili ayahnya. Kelima orang itu bertanya apakah ayahnya terlibat Pao An Tui atau tidak, apakah ia pergi untuk membela Republik atau KNIL. Sayangnya A Siong yang pemberani itu berkata sedikit ketus kepada kelima orang itu."

"Yesterday, almost five unknown individuals came to Keng Hong's house, asking whether the man was at home or not." A Siong was the first to open the door. Behind her, Ling-Ling followed with a trembling body. She always feels scared when strangers come to her house. But A Siong inherited his father's bravery. He answered that his father was not there. If anything happens, he can represent his father. The five people asked whether his father was involved with Pao An Tui or not, whether he went to defend the Republic or the KNIL. Unfortunately, the brave A Siong replied somewhat curtly to the five of them."

The excerpt above illustrates how the Tionghoa ethnic group was killed by the Dutch due to suspicions of supporting the Indigenous people who were fighting for independence and seeking revolution. Although positioned in class 2 below the Dutch. For the Dutch citizens in Indonesia, the Tionghoa ethnic group is divided into two factions that played a role in the struggle for the land of Indonesia, namely the allies of the Dutch and the allies of the Indigenous people. Despite the pros and cons, the sentiment of the Indigenous people towards the Dutch ethnic group continues to scrutinize the movements of the Chinese ethnic group. Like the following quote:

"Antek-antek Pao An Tui kalau berani bersekutu dengan Belanda akan di-musnahkan."

"Those who dare to ally with the Dutch will be destroyed."

Terror during the early independence of Indonesia colored the struggle of the Chinese ethnic group, who were caught in a situation between two great nations on one land of power.

"Kita benar-benar berada di tempat yang sulit. Kedua belah pihak mencurigai kita," katanya sambil meremas kertas itu sampai hancur. Kedua adik iparnya memandang bingung, tak tahu mesti berbuat apa".

"We are really in a tough spot." "Both sides suspect us," he said, crumpling the paper until it was torn. "Both of her sisters-in-law looked confused, not knowing what to do."

There is a trichotomy of the Netherlands vs China vs Indonesia in the events of the short story, so in this case, the Chinese or Chinese ethnicity is positioned in between. Nevertheless, the presence of pros and cons regarding the Chinese ethnicity does not create a safe situation due to the suspicions of the Dutch and the Indigenous people towards the Chinese identity. For the indigenous people, suspicion towards the Tionghoa ethnic group is not without reason, as the Chinese have a higher identity status than the indigenous people in the eyes of the Dutch. Thus, the Tionghoa ethnic group is always viewed as an ally of the Dutch.

2. The Tionghoa Ethnic Group in the Short Story "Clara Atau Wanita Yang Diperkosa"

In the short story "Clara Atau Wanita Yang Diperkosa" Tionghoa ethnic identity in Indonesia is viewed from the community's own perspective, following a non-essentialist or constructivist approach, as outlined by Stuart Hall. This view sees identity as shaped by social and historical contexts, rather than being fixed. The story shows how Chinese Indonesians construct their identity in response to external pressures and discrimination, highlighting the fluid and evolving nature of their ethnic identity, as characters redefine themselves within a changing social environment.

"Belum sempat berpikir, kaca depan BMW itu sudah hancur karena gebukan. Aduh, benarkah sebegitu bencinya orang-orang ini kepada Cina? Saya memang keturunan Cina, tapi apa salah saya dengan lahir sebagai Cina?"

"Saya orang Indonesia," kata saya dengan gemetar.

"Saya hanya tahu bahasa Indonesia dan bahasa Inggris untuk urusan bisnis. Ka-ta orang, bahasa Cina sangat kaya dalam hal menggambarkan perasaan, tapi saya tidak bisa bahasa Cina sama sekali dari dialek manapun, kecuali yang ada hubungannya dengan harga-harga. Saya cuma seorang wanita Cina yang lahir di Jakarta dan sejak kecil tenggelam dalam urusan dagang."

"Before I had a chance to think, the windshield of the BMW was already shattered from the blows." Oh dear, is it really true that these people hate China so much? I am indeed of Chinese descent, but what is wrong with being born as a Chinese?"

"I am Indonesian," I said, trembling.

"I only know Indonesian and English for business matters." For some people, the Chinese language is very rich in expressing feelings, but I can't speak Chinese at all from any dialect, except for anything related to prices. I am just a Chinese woman born in Jakarta who has been immersed in trade matters since childhood."

The quotes above show how the Tionghoa ethnic group positions themselves as "Indonesians." Cultural identity is a matter of both 'becoming' and 'being' (Stuart Hall, 1990). According to Hall, the process of cultural assimilation has led the character Clara to feel that she is Indonesian. As in her non-essentialist perspective, Clara was born and raised in Indonesia, uses the name Clara, not her Chinese ethnic name, and has a Javanese boyfriend. However, this is different from the Native view, as in the following quote:

"Cina!" "Cina!" Mereka berteriak seperti menemukan intan berlian.

"Sialan! Mata lu sipit begitu ngaku-ngaku orang Indonesia!"

"China!" "China!" They shouted as if they had found a diamond.

"Damn! With your slanted eyes, you claim to be Indonesian!"

The Tionghoa ethnic group is positioned as "the Chinese" or the 'other.' For the indigenous people, even though the Chinese have assimilated for decades in Indonesia, they are still regarded as 'the other.' The process of assimilation of Chinese citizens is the result of cross-cultural interactions (Indonesia-China), including local cultures (Javanese, Malay, etc.) as well as Western culture. (agama, nama, dll).

According to Stuart Hall, "Cultural identity as one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self,' is how indigenous people interpret Chinese identity from an essentialist perspective, which is the first way to interpret identity. Cultural identity is seen as a shared culture, collective in nature, and already inherent in an individual. Stuart Hall, 1990.

Thus, the perspective of the indigenous people makes Tionghoa in Indonesia still viewed as Chinese. They are considered to have the same identity as those from China, even though they were born and raised in Indonesia and have no connections to China.

Conclusion

The early period of independence (1945) to the reform era (1998) has led to various conflicts between nations. Through the comparative identification of identity issues in the cultural and historical discourse depicted in the short stories "Pao An Tui" by Dwicipta and "Clara Atau Wanita Yang Diperkosa" by Seno Gumira Ajidarma, an understanding and interpretation is provided on how culture and society construct identity, particularly regarding the Chinese ethnic characters in Indonesia within these short stories. In the short story "Pao An Tui" by Dwicipta, the Tionghoa ethnic group still occupies a higher position than the indigenous people as second-class citizens after the Dutch or European nations. Thus forming a trichotomy of Dutch vs Chinese vs Indigenous during the colonial period and the struggle for the Republic. In the short story "Clara Atau Wanita Yang Diperkosa" by Seno Gumira Ajidarma, the Tionghoa ethnic group holds a lower position and creates a dichotomy of Indigenous vs Chinese. The formation occurred due to the policies during the New Order regime, namely assimilation and the elimination of the three main pillars of Chinese culture.

The process of constructing that identity has led to several conflicts that reduce the Chinese ethnic identity in Indonesia. In the short story "Pao An Tui" by Dwicipta, Keng Hong and his family are Chinese descendants who have adapted to the local context, such as language and nationalism. Their identity as part of Indonesia plays a role in the political power struggle between the Dutch and the Indigenous people. Nevertheless, the Tionghoa ethnic group is caught in an identity construction between being allies of the Indigenous people and allies of the Dutch. In contrast, in the short story "Clara Atau Wanita Yang Diperkosa" by Seno Gumira Ajidarma, Clara feels that she is an Indonesian who has gone through the process of assimilation and plays a role in Indonesia's economic development by creating job opportunities for the Indigenous people. However, such an attitude in the eyes of the Indigenous people, Clara remains Chinese.

Both of these short stories depict the differences in status, roles, and ethnic identity of the Chinese community during different periods throughout Indonesia's journey. These short stories serve as a social critique of the government's politics during the Old Order and New Order towards the Chinese ethnic minority in Indonesia, depicted through the character of Prime Minister Syahrir in the short story "Pao An Tui" and uniformed officials in the short story "Clara or The Woman Who Was Raped."

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