

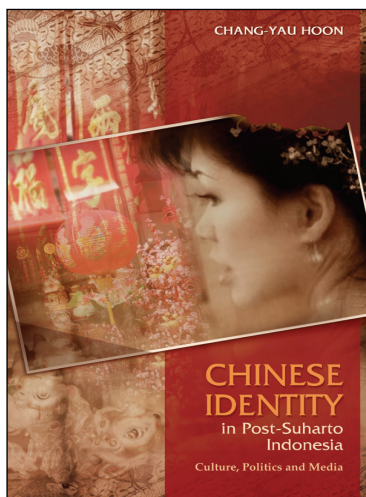
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Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia

Culture, Politics and Media

Chang-Yau Hoon



Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia

by CHANG-YAU HOON

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“C.Y. Hoon skillfully navigates the treacherous waters of post-Suharto (1998) ethnic politics in Jakarta... This engrossing study heralds a new generation of Chinese diaspora scholarship.” Evelyn Hu-Dehart, Director of Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America; Professor of History and Ethnic Studies, Brown University

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During Suharto’s New Order (1966–1998), the ethnic Chinese expanded the nation’s economy (and their own wealth), but, paradoxically, were marginalized and discriminated against in all social spheres: culture, language, politics, and entrance to state-owned universities, public service and public employment. Following the fall of Suharto, and the anti-Chinese riots in May 1998, Indonesia underwent a process of Reformasi and democratization, whereby for the first time in several decades Chinese culture became more visible. Many ethnic Chinese took advantage of the new democratic space to establish political parties, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and action groups to fight for the abolition of discriminatory laws, defend their rights and promote solidarity between ethnic groups in Indonesia. They utilized the Reformasi atmosphere to promote pluralism and multiculturalism, and to liberate their long-suppressed identity and cultural heritage.

This book sets out to unpack the complex meanings of Chineseness in post-1998 Indonesia, including the ways in which the policy of multiculturalism enabled such resurgence, the forces that shaped it and the possibilities for “resinicization”. The author examines how ethnic Chinese self-identify, and investigates how the pribumi “Other” has contributed to identifying the ethnic boundary in terms of “race” and class. A unique aspect of the study is its discussion of the complexities of cultural crossing, borrowing and mixing experience of Chinese-Indonesians through localization and globalization.

Chang-Yau Hoon is Assistant Professor of Asian Studies at Singapore Management University. He previously lectured at the University of Western Australia.

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