

CHRONOLOGY OF THE USAGE OF THE TERMS “TIONGHOA” – “CINA” – “TIONGHOA FOR INDONESIAN CHINESE

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the chronology of the usage of the terms “Cina” or “Tionghoa” in Indonesia will benefit all people, namely in preventing misinterpretation and in enhancing the relation between nations and countries. This article uses the literature review method to search the meaning of the term, and questionnaires to find out the opinion of the young generation of Indonesian Chinese about the meaning of the term “Cina”. From literature review we find that initially the term “Cina” does not have a negative meaning, but because of the government’s discriminative policy towards the Chinese ethnic in Indonesia, the term “Cina” gets a negative connotation. The result of our survey shows that the young generation of Indonesian Chinese mostly do not think that the term “Cina” has a negative connotation. This fact indicates that Indonesian internal affairs policy is becoming better. However, there are still a few of young Indonesian Chinese who still think that the term “Cina” has a negative connotation from the former historic relation of their parents. However, this issue will lessen with the passage of time if the internal affairs policy of our country remains harmonious as at the present time.

Key words: Indonesia, Chronology, Terms, Cina, Tionghoa

INTRODUCTION

There has been a long debate on the usage of the term “Cina” for addressing Indonesian Chinese since the time of President Soeharto’s administration (1966 – 1998) until President Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY)’s administration. The usage of the term becomes clear after President Bambang Yudhoyono issued the President’s Decree number 12 year 2014 about the change of the word “Cina” into “Tionggok” when referring to the country and “Tionghoa” when referring to the people/language/culture. This article tries to present the chronology of the term designated to Indonesian Chinese. After the Indonesian reformation (1998-2013), some Indonesian Chinese feel offended when the term “Tionghoa” is changed into “Cina”, but some other Indonesian Chinese do not mind. While among non Chinese ethnics after the reformation, namely after president Soeharto stepped down from the presidency in 1998, some retain the term “Cina”, and some other change it into “Tionghoa” or “China” as in the English language. Some television stations use the term “Cina” in their newscast, and some other stations use the term “China” as in the English language. However we have not yet found any television station which uses the term “Tionggok” in their newscast. Lembong stated (2011) that from the time before the Indonesian reformation to the time after the reformation, the usage of the term “Cina”, “China”, and “Tionghoa” is still being the subject of debate (p. 6) [1]. The significance of this article is to help Indonesian young generation, who were born after the Indonesian reformation (after 1998) know the chronology of the term designated to Indonesian Chinese, so that they will not have wrong interpretations about the term. This article is written for that purpose. We also feel the need to give information to other nations in the world about the chronology of the different terms

designated to Indonesian Chinese according to different governmental policies in the history of Indonesia.

The word “Cina”, in English “China”, in Dutch “Chinees”, in German “Chinesische”, in French “Chinois”, is derived from the Sanskrit word “China” which means “a very far region”. According to Sutami (2008), the term “China” has been presented in the book Mahabaratha around 1400 BC. The term “China” then spread from Asia to Europe and underwent phonological evolution. Marco Polo pronounced it “Chin”, which was then converted into “China” by Barbosa (1516) and Gracia de Orta (1563) (pages Liv-v) [2].

Lembong (2011) wrote that initially the term designated to citizens of Chinese origin in Indonesia was “Tionghoa”, not “Cina”. This was seen when the first modern Chinese organization was formed in year 1900 in Batavia. The organization was named “Tionghoa Hwee Koan” (Chinese Association). Since then the term Tionghoa was used in Indonesia. The term “Tionghoa” is derived from Hokkian (*Fújiàn*) dialect and was used officially at that time (p. 8) [1]. The Hokkian dialect was used because the Chinese who migrated to Indonesia were mostly of the Hokkian race (Coppel and Suryadinata, 2002:102) [3]. During President Soekarno’s administration, the term “Tionghoa” was used to address Indonesian Chinese, and in President Soeharto’s administration the term was changed into “Cina”. The usage of the terms were most confused during the time of the Indonesian reformation, some used the term “Cina”, some used “Tionghoa”, and some other used the English term “China”. Now, after the issuance of the President’s Decree No. 12 year 2014, all mass media either electronic or non electronic, use the term “Tionghoa” for the Chinese nation and culture, and “Tiongkok” for the Chinese country.

From the phenomenon of the changing usage of the terms “Tionghoa” – “Cina” – “Tionghoa”, we try to trace the cause of the change. There is an article which has discussed the history of this change, written by Lembong in his small book titled *Istilah “Cina”, “China” dan “Tionghoa: Tinjauan Historis dan Masalah Penggunaannya Dewasa ini*. (The Term “Cina”, “China”, and “Tionghoa”: Historical review and Their Usage At Present), but the discussion is only until the time of Indonesian reformation before the President’s Decree was issued and does not give a detailed picture of the political situation when the term was changed.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND WRITING METHOD

This article uses the literature review method in examining the government’s Decree and the president’s Decree about the usage of these terms, and in examining books about the political situation between Indonesia – Tiongkok which have caused the change in the usage of the terms “Tionghoa” – “Cina” – “Tionghoa”. And the presentation method used in this article is historical literature review, namely reading and collecting historical articles which contain discussions about the terms “Tionghoa” and “Cina”, collecting the government’s Regulations concerning these terms. The essence of the discussions is sorted and described chronologically according to the year when the change occurs, and the presentation of the analysis follows the method of Karsono (2013) in her journal titled *Evolution and Gender Bias Reflected in Chinese Characters*, which presents the early history of the formation of Chinese characters followed by the development of the characters (p. 22-26) [4]. The analysis process is similar to that of Karsono’s journal (2014) titled *The Application of Cooperative Learning Concept in Teaching Literature Through Budi Darma’s Novel Orang-orang Bloomington*, which relates cooperative theory with the events of the novel; and in this article we relate government’s Regulations with the events that happen around that time (p. 24-26) [5].

BEFORE THE DUTCH COLONIZATION PERIOD

Wàn (2010) states that since the opening of the silk road in China during the time of the west *Hàn* dynasty 西汉 (206 BC – 25 AD), many typical Chinese goods were sold to western countries, and new words appear which describe the valuable Chinese goods which were sold through the silk road to the western countries, including the English word “China” which is derived from the translation of a Chinese sound “*cí* 瓷” which means porcelain or ceramics (p. 114) [6]. From its spelling, the word “China” has the same consonant and vocal as “*cí* 瓷”, namely “c” and “i”, only the pronunciation is different. Because in the English phonology, the consonant which has the same pronunciation with the word “*cí* 瓷” is “ch” then the new word “China” is formed. Thus, when we trace the formation of the term in the English language, “China” does not have a negative connotation.

DURING THE DUTCH COLONIZATION PERIOD

According to Liào (2002), during the 19th century, “Cina” was an official term designated to people who came from *Tiongkok* and to overseas Chinese. In the Malay history book, the word “Cina” has been recorded since the 17th century, namely in the book “*Kenangan Melayu*” (Malay Memoirs). Up to the 20th century nobody questioned it or thought about it with a negative connotation, and nobody suggested to change the term “Cina” to “*Tionghoa*” or “*Tiongkok*”. The reason was simply because the terms “*Tionghoa*” and “*Tiongkok*” were not known, even in China. In China, the term “*Tionghoa* / *Zhōnghoá* 中华” appeared and became known in the 19th century (p. 32) [7]. *Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Chinese Language* (1962) states that “*Zhōnghoá* 中华” is the synonym of the word “*Zhōngguó* 中国” which is used to call the central plains “*Zhōngyuán* 中原” (p. 431) [7]. “*Zhōngyuán* 中原 ” is China central plains which covers the middle and lower reaches of the River *Huánghé* 黄河 or the Yellow River (Pān & Chén, 1995:1157) [8]. After the Chinese Democratic Party overthrew the Emperor *Qing* 清 and built a country called “*Zhōnghoá mínguó* 中华民国”, the term “*Zhōnghoá* 中华” began to become popular. The word “*Zhōng*” in *Hokkian* pronunciation becomes “*Tiong*” which means “central”, and in Indonesia the term “*Tionghoa*” becomes more popular than “*Zhōnghoá* 中华” which is a *pīnyīn* 拼音 spelling which began to become popular in Indonesia in 2000.

Still referring to Liào (2002), in early 20th century, to be more exact, in 1930, overseas Chinese were called “*baba*”. Most of them could not speak Chinese because the first Chinese who went overseas did not bring their families, and they later married local residents who only speak local language, namely Melayu language. Cài (1986) wrote in his book that the number of Chinese citizens in Indonesia during the second world war (1939 – 1943) was four million five hundred thousand people (p. 21) [9]. During the second world war there was mass murder on the Chinese citizens who live in Jakarta, Menteng, Mojokerto, Medan. 3.600 Chinese citizens died and more than 1.600 Chinese citizens were lost. Their houses were burned and their property was looted. After the Proclamation of the Indonesian Independence in year 1945, the Indonesian government practiced a radical policy, for example, the Regulation of “Registration for Foreigners”. The registration fee was Rp. 400,- for each person, and Rp. 300,- for each family. The government also watched over the entry of people from China into Indonesia. Each Chinese who lived in Indonesia had to pay Rp. 1.500,-/year. Later, the Chinese people who had become Indonesian citizens were not regarded as Indonesian trader, for example an Indonesia Chinese who had established a factory which

exported rice was forced to leave the factory, other Chinese traders were not allowed to employ foreign Chinese. These regulations caused the Indonesian Chinese to feel depressed (Cài, 1986: 21-22) [9]. During these times the term “Cina” was largely used with a negative connotation, because of the political situation which discredited Indonesian Chinese.

THE OLD ORDER (1945-1966) UNTIL THE NEW ORDER (1966-1998) PERIOD

Before the term “Cina” was used during president Soeharto’s administration in 1966 – 1998, the term “Tionghoa” was designated to the culture, associations and people who came from China. Liào, (2002) states that when president Soekarno reigned Indonesia, in 1963 he recommended that the Chinese people born in Indonesia be accepted as Indonesian people, just the same as other Indonesian people from Madura, Jawa, and the other parts of Indonesia. However, this policy only lasted for two years and then was aborted by president Soeharto. President Soeharto argued that the Chinese people in Indonesia were immigrants and originally there was no such race in Indonesia, therefore they could not be given the same facilities to advance as other Indonesian races (p.11) [7].

Nearly the end of president Soekarno’s government which was called the Old Order, a rebellion erupted led by the Indonesia Communist Party in year 1965 (G-30-S/PKI rebellion). Because of the suspicion that there was a bilateral relationship between the government of president Soekarno and the government of China, president Soeharto issued the President’s Instruction Number 14 year 1967 which “bans all forms of religion, belief, and culture practiced by the Chinese people in Indonesia, changes the terms “Tionghoa” and “Tiongkok” into “Cina”, and changes the abbreviation “RRT” (People’s Republic of Tiongkok) into “RRC” (People’s Republic of Cina), and designates the name Republic of Cina to Taiwan. This policy of the New Order caused the Indonesian Chinese to feel discriminated from other Indonesian races and resulted in their feeling a negative connotation to the term “Cina” introduced by president Soeharto’s government.

According to Còi (1986), in year 1966 a massive cultural revolution occurred in China. This cultural revolution produced the “leftist” ideology and considered all overseas Chinese as rebelling against the “leftist” movement. Because of the cultural revolution, the fund sent by overseas Chinese to build a school in Fujian Province was stopped (304) [9]. The very communist political situation was also a factor which urged president Soeharto to issue the Circular of Presidium Kabinet Ampera No. SE-06/Pred.Kab/6/1967 which required Indonesian citizens to use the term “Cina” and discard the term “Tiongkok” and “Tionghoa”. The issuance of President’s Instruction No. 14 year 1967 and the Circular of Presidium Kabinet Ampera No. SE-06/Pred.Kab/6/1967 had caused Indonesian Chinese to dislike the term “Cina”. The new term introduced by president Soeharto’s government also caused difficulties to Indonesian delegations to China because they felt confused about which term they should use, “Cina” or “Tionghoa/Tiongkok” (Utomo, 2014) [10].

Còi (1986) wrote that in the 1970’s, the political situation in China underwent a great change, South East Asian countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines, harmonized their relation with China. When the countries’ relation with China improved, their citizens welcomed the overseas Chinese, while formerly they refused and were prejudiced against the overseas Chinese. In September 1980 the China government issued a regulation about China citizenship which states: “The China government does not recognize Chinese immigrants with multiple citizenships.” Because of this regulation, many overseas Chinese acquired the citizenship of the country in which they live (307) [9]. The overseas Chinese who acquired Indonesian citizenship had been sworn to become loyal Indonesian

citizens, but because of the President's Instruction No. 14 year 1967 the Indonesian Chinese of the old generation do not feel accepted as a part of the Indonesian nation.

THE INDONESIAN REFORMATION PERIOD (1998-2014)

It has been generally known that the foreign policy and the economy of China is becoming better and more open. Consequently, the relation between China and Indonesia is improving, too. On the 11th of September, Joko Widodo, after being elected as Indonesia's president for year 2014-2019, in his overseas tour visited China first (Wan, Jawa Pos, 2014:1) [11]. During president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's administration (2004-2014) the relation between the two countries have been harmoniously established, which was marked by the mutual agreement signed by the Indonesian president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and the president of China Hu Jintao on April 25th, 2005.

Thus we can see that the diplomatic relation between Indonesia and China has experienced its ups and downs, which is described in the following table.

Table 1. The series of events in the relation between Indonesia – China.
(Owel, Jawa Pos, 2014:1) [12]

Year	Event
1950	Indonesia recognized the sovereignty of China
1953	Indonesia sent her first ambassador to China
1964	The formation of Jakarta-Peking-Pyongyang axis
1967	The freezing of diplomatic relations because of the Indonesia Communist Party rebellion (G 30 S/PKI)
1977	The Indonesian Chamber of Commerce sent its delegation to Guangzhou Trade Expo
1985	The trade relation between Indonesia – China was officialy opened.
1990	Memorandum of Improved Relation between Indonesia – China
1999	China disbursed aid to Indonesia which amounted to US\$ 5 billion and credit facility which amounted to US\$ 200 million.
2005	Partnership Agreement between Indonesia – China

In Table 1 we see that the worst diplomatic relation between the two countries occurred in 1967, during the time of the New Order, when president Soeharto issued the President's Instruction No. 14 year 1967 which bans all forms of religion, belief, and culture of Chinese people in Indonesia, which was cancelled in year 2014. This historical event has caused the Indonesian Chinese which were born during the time of the Old Order and the New Order to feel sore with the term "Cina" and prefer to be addressed with the term "Tionghoa".

With the change of relation between the two countries, we surveyed the young generation of Indonesian Chinese who were born after the Indonesian reformation, to find out

whether they have the same feeling towards the term “Cina” as that of the older generation. This survey was carried out by distributing 100 questionnaires which ask about how the young Indonesian Chinese feel towards the term “Cina” and “Tionghoa” and the reason why they feel that way. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 The responses of Young Indonesian Chinese (age 17 – 23 years) towards the terms “Cina” and “Tionghoa”, presented in number and reasons of the responses

The number of young Indonesian Chinese surveyed	The number of young Indonesian Chinese who do not mind the usage of the term “Cina”	The number of young Indonesian Chinese who feel uncomfortable with the usage of the term “Cina”	Reason
100	87		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is only a term which has similar meaning with the other term • Indonesian community is more mature now • They have been used to the term • They feel that they are in fact Chinese people so they do not mind to be called “Cina” • Because they have many non-Chinese friends • The term needs not be disputed too much • The pronunciation is almost the same as the English pronunciation of “China” • They are proud of being “Cina” • It is no problem, what matters is the tone by which the term is expressed • They are children of mixed marriage between non-Chinese and Chinese, or their relatives are married to non-Chinese • They are used to being called “Cina” • They feel that they are now Indonesians • They feel that they are also people of God’s creation like other people
		13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The term “Cina” is often used to ridicule the Chinese people • Know from their parents’ story that the term “Cina” contains racism

From Table 2 it is clear that many young Indonesian Chinese do not mind the term “Cina” designated to them. From the reasons why they do not mind the term “Cina”, we can conclude that their parents do not tell them the policy of past governments towards Indonesian Chinese. This may mean that their parents consider that the past policy will not happen again and that the present government’s policy is more democratic and does not discriminate any ethnic and race. The young people who were born of mixed marriage between non Chinese and Chinese have been assimilated and do not perceive the term “Cina” with a negative connotation. Some of them even feel that they are really Indonesians and do not feel annoyed being called “Cina”. Only a very few young Indonesian Chinese who feel uncomfortable with the term “Cina” because they feel that the term contains racism or because they are told by their parents about the discriminative treatment of the government towards Indonesian Chinese in the past.

CONCLUSION

From the chronology of the usage of the terms “Cina” or “Tionghoa/Tionggok” we can know the history, policy, and president’s regulation concerning it which reflects the government’s treatment towards its citizens. The development of bilateral relation between the two countries can also change the government’s internal policy. A country’s politics can remove a negative connotation of a term, such as the term “Cina”, which for the older generation of Indonesian Chinese has a negative connotation, but not so for a greater part of young Indonesian Chinese. And the uncomfortable feeling towards the term “Cina” in a small number of young Indonesian Chinese will finally disappear if the government treats all the Indonesian citizens fairly.

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