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Dear Editor,

My name is Setefanus Suprajitno, a lecturer at Petra Christian University, Surabaya, Indonesia.

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Various Petals of Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

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Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965-1998) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into the Buddhism made more Indonesian by eliminating its Chinese traditional influence. This found support among Chinese Indonesians Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism from its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the comeback of these rituals to Buddhism should be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they dislike blending Buddhism with them. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use for coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity construction. The finding shows that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness for coming to terms with these tensions, and for innovating, transforming and recasting their religious practices.

Keywords: Buddhism, Chinese community, Chinese religion, Identity, Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important changes, what Indonesians call as *Reformasi* (The Reform), is changes in policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. The Chinese Indonesians have regained the space in public life, after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965-1998), Chinese Indonesians were considered as perpetual foreigners whose existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination culminated in 1965, when the New Order Regime came to power.[1] As a result of the ascendancy of the regime, cultural change was demanded. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese was heavily impacted by this change.

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion.

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[3] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or the blending of all of them, known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw*

[1] For a detailed account of the discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996-1999* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006).
[2] Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam, that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1976).
[3] Confucianism has been in Indonesia long before the 20th century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation

Hwee or *Tri Dharma*.[4] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese tradition in it, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the state. In this way, they could become ideologically-correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese was supported by the worship of various gods in Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[5] There were concerted efforts from the State, as well as from *pribumi*[6] Buddhists, who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent,[7] to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia where the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

This situation led Chinese Indonesian Buddhists to the pressure to conform to the new socio-political reality.[8] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and to detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. Theravāda's modernist idea even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism from its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[9]

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of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," *Archipel* 38, (1989): 125-135; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*] (Singapore, Chinese Heritage Center, 2010).

[4] *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." See Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish International, 2004) for further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee*.

[5] See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," in *Southeast Asian Chinese and China: Sociocultural Dimension*, ed. Leo Suryadinata (Singapore, Times Academic Press, 1995), 139-165, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

[6] *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued a Presidential Decree No. 26/1998, on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines that indigenous Indonesians are people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

[7] Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

[8] Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the provinces of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed on September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya – the capital of East Java province and the 2nd largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted, is quite high, 31,166, which constitute more than half of the Buddhist population in the province, namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed on September 9, 2018).

[9] Buddhism's social stigma of Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architectures and façade. However, unlike mosques and churches, with the exception of some Buddhist temples – especially those which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees – and old Chinese temples, most Buddhist temples are originally profane commercial buildings or houses converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the exteriors. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. Even there are temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image can be some indication of the challenges that Buddhism – a state-sanctioned religion – faces, despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brings openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temple through their architectural designs.

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge in Buddhism. For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Buddhists, the comeback of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism should be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between the religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I am exploring in this paper. In so doing, through a fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

Contextual Framework of Religion and Ethnicity

My investigation on the Chinese Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to a more rationalized religious practices.[10] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization, namely, one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may develop social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[11] These tensions, I believe, could occur because different religious orientations as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribed and what religious organizations taught. These tensions may warrant the pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the socio-political reality.

In conforming to socio-political reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[12]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[13]

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[10] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.
[11] Max Weber, *The sociology of Religion*, 223.
[12] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[13] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individual together and provide a social context for maintaining ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and development of identity through religious beliefs and practices creates a process through which boundaries appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[14]

Grounded on the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as "Chinese religion." Then, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. Next, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

The origin of "Chinese Religion"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. However, the fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the 15th century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered the demise of Buddhism.[15] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[16] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive in even as Java becomes more Islamic.[17]

Buddhism started to resurface in the 17th century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism, thanks to the influx of Chinese immigrants in Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) – known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in Glodok area of Jakarta.[18] Since then, Buddhism – mixed with Chinese traditional belief – had grown in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of the religious life, but the center for Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Dhurkeim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[19] I contend that the temples preserved the Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity of the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of Chinese religion.

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in the colonial Indonesia in the early 20th century, such as Josias van Dienst and E.E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring the esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups like the Dutch, the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[20] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese

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[14] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[15] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.
[16] Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.
[17] Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.
[18] Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.
[19] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[20] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.

was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elite, Eastern esotericism referred to the Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[21] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress held on April 1-2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors – "*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[22] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published a bulletin *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*) in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934.

Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma

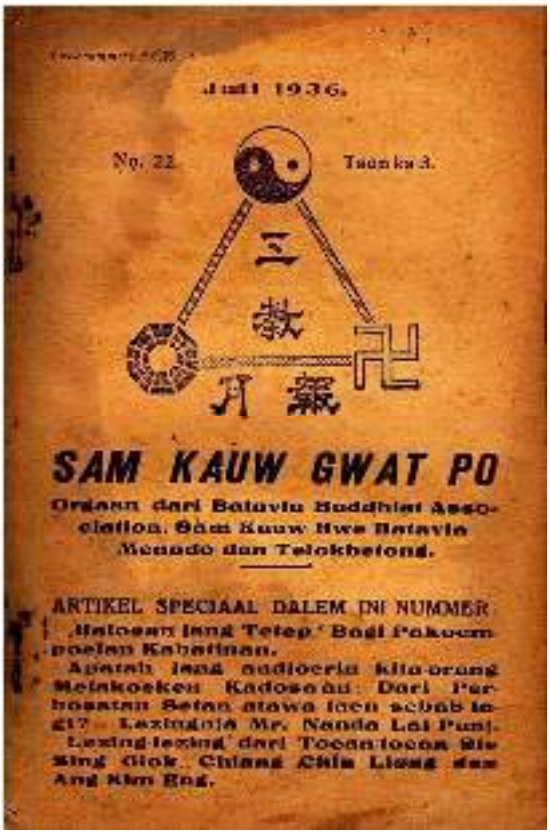

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po

In the mid-20th century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an occultism, which was a syncretistic belief of various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks – among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita (of Chinese descent, whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante Girirakkhito (the son of a Balinese royal

[21] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27-28.
[22] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.

family whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri) – in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[23] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

Although there were natives who embrace Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[24] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem with Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese – an ethnic minority, and hence often labeled as Chinese religion. Being labeled as Chinese religion might not be a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[25] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported the colonial rule, and many joined Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they should dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion, and promote it as a religion that transcends ethnic boundaries.

Doctrinal Intervention

Because of the nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism. However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture was deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into what so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

The anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication, among others, the ban of Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of the non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This effort was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[26] This Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and the prohibition of building new Chinese temples.[27] However, because of being perceived as Chinese religions, pure Buddhist viharas were also affected by this law. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or

[23] For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Girirakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*] (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995).

[24] Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.

[25] Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.

[26] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.

[27] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bahkti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.

The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairing existing Buddhist temples needed permit, which was often difficult to get.[28]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence through classifying all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism, that is, emphasizing on the teaching in the scriptures. So, in the regime's opinion, Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and detach themselves from the Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and more often than not, having no relation with the religion itself.[29] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space the regime defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered as Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals are in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists should return to the "true" Dharma, that is, the Buddha's teaching, and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtra chanting could be done in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged.

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could also be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. As communism was associated with China, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist – the enemy of the state. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Oder regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion, that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and holy book.

The position of the belief in God is very central in the Indonesian political landscape, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, the Indonesia's state ideology, that is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[30] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who

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[28] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera" *Tempo* (Jakarta), October 25-31, 1999.

[29] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs the Buddhist in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular on the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temple.

[30] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles, namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structure. This importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to get people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.

wanted an Islamic state by emphasizing the importance of religion and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, the word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion) – not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam – is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive, that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on that principle, the state only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic, namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[31] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected, Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they face. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptation.

Political Rituals

Ritual is closely related to identity as the earlier can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment could produce a sense of belonging among the participants. Ritual can draw attention to their shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[32] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the means by which individuals are brought together as a collective group."[33] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[34]

As the Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and it was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could strengthen the Sino-Buddhist identity. However, the Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building, that is, the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new socio-political landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification.

An example of adaptation is appropriating Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall in the first or the fifteenth day of the month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebration.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese a legitimate space for culturally-Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted and then followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, the Chinese Buddhists showed resistance as well as accommodation to the pressure of the "nationalization" of Buddhism. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebration and the use of Chinese language served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used in expressing their ethnic identity. However, they had to make accommodation because

[31] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.
[32] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.
[33] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
[34] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.

the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal, not an ethnic religion, by placing an emphasis on the religious aspects of the celebration, that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also accommodated. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit, was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation – that is, expressing their Indonesianness – and resistance – that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy showed that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[35] were political because they could "construct, display, and promote … political interests" of a certain group.[36] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to changing social and political climate.

Interpreting God-head

Besides in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in the Buddhist theology. Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The state regarded Buddhism as or standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The theological debate over whether Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God or not was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape propelled Buddhism to accommodate its doctrine in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (for referring to a concept of God in Buddhism),[37] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the 8th or 9th century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[38]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[39] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[40] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, he is different from Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world, that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a God-head, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia – Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[41] His personal experience may also contribute to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

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[35] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[36] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.
[37] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 18, no. 1, (1987): 108-117.
[38] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation in western languages was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.
[39] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.
[40] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.
[41] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda." *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* 9, (1981): 10-21.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, … , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic inquiry as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[42]

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, in Buddhayāna the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to its teaching. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*) written by Dhamaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism, namely, believing in one supreme God – Ādi-Buddha, having prophets – Buddha Gautama and others Bodhisattvas, and having holy books – *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is put into the Islamic context, from which the state defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The state and other religious groups accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence it had communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely, Ādi-Buddha, and it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under the political condition as such, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God, as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. However, the Theravādins understood the importance of God in Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God.[43] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[44]

Despite differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' attempt to conform to Indonesian state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism, namely, the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually has continuity with the past,[45] and they are invented to cope with the new condition and situation.[46] Hobsbawm's and Ranger's idea on the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea, that is, giving it a new meaning suitable with the present conditions they faced.

Post - New Order Buddhism

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the coming of Theravāda Buddhism to Indonesia, which was brought by Buddhist monks who were sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious

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[42] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59-60.
[43] Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).
[44] Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with, that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.
[45] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[46] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 8.

training.[47] In 1970, some of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of Tipitaka, and emphasizing on the philosophical teachings of Buddha, instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result, the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both the Chinese and the non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the changing of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease on life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese tradition openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public was now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, the modernist and scripturalist Theravādins questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temple and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals, just like what the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

How the Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of friction between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings. The latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

An example of the friction between the traditionalists and the modernists was food offering (the Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term of *ehipasiko*.[48] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with the Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of rituals according to their religious orientation. Those with a modernist leaning viewed rituals as religiously improper; others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals and thus viewed them as appropriate if not mandatory.

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[47] A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work and ordination may be a factor for Buddhism in Indonesia to send its monk to Theravāda school for religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," in *Buddhist Studies in Honour of Hammalava Saddhātissa*, ed. Gatare Dhammapala, Richard gombrich, and K. R. Norman (Nugegoda: University of Sri Jayewardenepura, 1984), 108-115.

[48] Literally *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes on the empirical verification of the Buddhsit teachings.

Another example of the friction was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[49] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred to the Pāli text of Tipittaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God, which in Indonesian context was manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha. Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In the latter's opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they are "contaminated" Buddhists.[50] They emphasized on the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology, that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the ideas of god-head, lead Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The rituals are separated from the religious, but those rituals are still practiced as cultural or traditional elements. In celebrating Chinese New Year, for example, Chinese traditional rituals are conducted as private affairs, whereas the religious rituals for celebrating it (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs. As far as the ideas of god-head are concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have a sizable modernist devotees.

Through transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices, traditionalist Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate demands that they stay away from their traditional ritual practices. The transformation and recast also enable those who believe in the existence of God, as manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism also shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with the religious belief and tradition. All these led to the diversity among the Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a *Romo Pandito*[51] said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors. Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha."[52]

Conclusion

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of the ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism after it was dormant for a few hundred years. Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence, Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of the Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

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[49] Interview, December 7, 2014

[50] In an informal discussion with seven Buddhists on April 26, 2015, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not contaminate their Buddhist belief.

[51] A Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who was appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk.

[52] Interview, February 12, 2015.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project, it started to Indonesianize its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural tradition in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals become a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism, which has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. As result, this version of Buddhism now dominates Buddhism in Indonesia.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate on the existence of God in Buddhism came up. This situation triggered tensions among the Chinese community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between the religious and the traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness to separate the religious and the cultural while allowing them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere. In so doing, they allow the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used for giving the freedom to those to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus, they innovate, transform, and recast their belief to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of lotus.

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Bukti 2

Email dari Executive Editor yang mengkonfirmasi bahwa artikel tersebut telah diterima dan akan diberitahu lebih lanjut apakah bisa diproses untuk direview atau tidak.

Tanggal 17 September 2018

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Manuscript submission for Archiv Orientalni

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To: Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id>

Dear Professor,

thank you very much for your submission, we will let you know within 2 weeks whether it is accepted for a review process.

Best Wishes

Anna Krivankova

executive editor

Dne 11.9.2018 v 15:12 Setefanus Suprajitno napsal(a):

[Quoted text hidden]

Bukti 3

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Dear Professor Suprajitno,

thank you for your message and please accept my apology for the delay.
I am pleased to say your manuscript was accepted for a review process. We will let you know within 2 months, or sooner in case our reviewers hand in their opinion early.

Best Wishes

Anna Krivankova

Setefanus Suprajitno napsal:

> [Quoted text hidden]

Bukti 4

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Tanggal 25 Juni 2019

UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN PETRA

Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id>

Manuscript submission for Archiv Orientalni

Anna Křivánková <krivankova@orient.cas.cz> Tue, Jun 25, 2019 at 5:14 PM
To: Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id>

Dear Steph,

yes, yes, yes!
Finally!

Very extremely sorry for this unprecedented long wait, but finally everything is confirmed and your article is accepted for publication!
We hope to publish it in the September issue, so if you are all right with that, we will send you the reviewers' suggestions sometimes next week and if you manage to work them in before August 5th, there is nothing standing in the way.

Again, sorry for keeping you waiting so SO long and congratulations!

Best Wishes
Anna
[Quoted text hidden]

> [Quoted text hidden]

UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN PETRA

Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id>

Manuscript submission for Archiv Orientalni

Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id> Tue, Jun 25, 2019 at 5:21 PM
To: Anna Křivánková <krivankova@orient.cas.cz>

Dear Anna,

Thank you so much for your kind attention and help.

Definitely, I am all right with the arrangement. I will do my best to revise my draft aand send it to you by August 5.

Best,
Steph
[Quoted text hidden]

Bukti 5

Email dari Executive Editor yang berisi file review dari dua reviewers, beserta beserta dengan kedua file tersebut.

Tanggal 22 Juli 2019

Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Fwd: Re: Manuscript submission for Archiv Orientalni

Anna Křivánková <krivankova@orient.cas.cz> Mon, Jul 22, 2019 at 9:34 PM
To: Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id>

Dear Steph,

thank you very much for waiting and sorry for taking so long.

Attached you will find two files – one contents a summarized view of reviewer 1, the other one is your manuscript with comments from both reviewer 1 and 2. Mostly they complement each other, but if you disagree with some of their suggestions, you do not need to implement them, just please write down your reasonsfor refusal and send them to me along with the finished manuscript.

(Also, reviewer 1 mentions he deleted an unnecessary kanji in one footnotes – see his comments. We encourage our reviewers not to do this, sorry about that. Please have a look at it and check if you agree with his revision.)

If you agree, I will set the deadline on August 10th and if you find you need more time, we will extend it.
Is that all right with you?

Best Wishes and Good Luck!

Anna

--
Anna Křivánková, Ph.D.
executive editor
Archiv Orientalni

Setefanus Suprajitno napsal:

> Dear Anna,
>
> Thanks you so much for your concern and help. Hopefully I can receive the feedback before the en of July so that I have ample time to revise my manuscript.
>
> Best,
> Steph
>
> On Tue, Jul 9, 2019 at 6:42 PM Anna Křivánková <krivankova@orient.cas.cz> wrote:
> > Dear Steph,
> >
> > indeed, very sorry about that – the process in lingering, but hopefully we will get there within days.
> > If necessary, I will push the deadline for you to the end of August.
> >
> > Best Wishes
> > Anna
> >
> > --
> > Anna Křivánková, Ph.D.
> > *executive editor*
> > Archiv Orientalni
> >
> > Setefanus Suprajitno napsal:
> >
> > > Dear Anna,
> > >
> > > I am sorry to bother you. I haven't received the reviewers' suggestions for my manuscript. Could you send them to me so that I can revise my manuscript in a timely fashion for September publication?
> > >
> > > Thanks a bunch.
> > >
> > > Best,
> > > Setefanus
> > >
> > > On Tue, Jun 25, 2019 at 5:14 PM Anna Křivánková <krivankova@orient.cas.cz> wrote:
> > > > Dear Steph,
> > > >
> > > > yes, yes, yes!
> > > > Finally!
> > > >
> > > > Very extremely sorry for this unprecedented long wait, but finally everything is confirmed and your article is accepted for publication!
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> > > > Again, sorry for keeping you waiting so SO long and congratulations!
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> > > > Best Wishes
> > > > Anna
> > > >
> > > > --
> > > > Anna Křivánková, Ph.D.
> > > > *executive editor*
> > > > Archiv Orientalni
> > > >
> > > > Setefanus Suprajitno napsal:

Comments to the manuscript

'**Various Petals of Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia**'

I have read the manuscript with great interest. I believe that the manuscript has the potential to be a relevant contribution to its field, but only after the text has been improved –the editors shall have the last word on the extent of this re-working. See my comments below:

1. **Is the scholarship of the work sound and innovative? Is the work a relevant contribution to the field? How does the work compare with other publications on the same subject?**

   I am not an expert on Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia, but my impression is that work on this particular topic is scarce. In that sense, it does have the potential to be a relevant contribution to the field.

2. **Does the work satisfy the expectations raised by the title and the introduction?**

   Mostly yes, but see point 4.

3. **Do you think that the author has made sufficient use of sources, be it primary or secondary literature? Did you notice any serious omissions in this respect?**

   I did not notice any serious ommissions, but I was a bit bothered by the use of such old theory as Durkheim's to back some very general points. Even Hobsbawm and Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition* is more than 35 years old. Some other, more contemporary social science conceptual apparatus could be brought in to back the more theoretical parts of the paper.

4. **Is the work well organized and the writing clear? Is any rewriting, rearrangement, expansion, or condensation desirable?**

Basically the argument of the paper is clear and well organized. However, and this is my main concern with it, the specificities are obscure. The process by which Chinese Indonesians were first forced to abandon their idiosyncratic Buddhist practices under the New Order regime, and the tensions that the recovery of a Buddhism 'with Chinese characteristics' after the fall of Suharto in 1998, are all presented in a very abstract fashion. Some names are named, and some legislation is offered as proof (especially for the New Order period), but there is an overall lack of detail and concreteness of these particular processes. I believe this could be solved by adding some more (a few would be enough) ethnographic examples of actual individuals or groups and their experiences. This in turn would make the argument much tighter –which in my opinion is not, at present.

5. **Are there obvious and systematic flaws to be found in translations and transcriptions? If so, please send us a specimen of the flaws you found.**

   No. The manuscript shows the usual typos, but I have only seen one minor error in transcribing a Chinese character into pinyin –I have deleted an extra letter in footnote 3.

Various Petals of Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965-1998) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into the Buddhism made more Indonesian by eliminating its Chinese traditional influence. This found support among Chinese Indonesians Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism from its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the comeback of these rituals to Buddhism should be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they dislike blending Buddhism with them. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use for coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity construction. The finding shows that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness for coming to terms with these tensions, and for innovating, transforming and recasting their religious practices.

Keywords: Buddhism, Chinese community, Chinese religion, Identity, Indonesia

Commented [A1]: As well as Confucianism

Commented [A2]: Constructions, I do not think, that they all share the same identity as Chinese Buddhists

INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important changes, what Indonesians call as *Reformasi* (The Reform), is changes in policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. The Chinese Indonesians have regained the space in public life, after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965-1998), Chinese Indonesians were considered as perpetual foreigners whose existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination culminated in 1965, when the New Order Regime came to power.[1] As a result of the ascendancy of the regime, cultural change was demanded. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese was heavily impacted by this change.

Commented [A3]: by whom?

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion.

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[3] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or the blending of all of them, known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw*

Commented [A4]: See also Ramstedt, Martin. 2018. Hinduism and Buddhism. In Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia, ed. by Robert W. Hefner, 267-283. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

[1] For a detailed account of the discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996-1999* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006).
[2] Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam, that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1976).
[3] Confucianism has been in Indonesia long before the 20th century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," *Archipel* 38, (1989): 125-135; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*] (Singapore, Chinese Heritage Center, 2010).

Hwee or *Tri Dharma*.[4] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese tradition in it, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the state. In this way, they could become ideologically-correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese was supported by the worship of various gods in Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[5] There were concerted efforts from the State, as well as from *pribumi*[6] Buddhists, who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent,[7] to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia where the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

Commented [A5]: What are the terms in Bahasa?

This situation led Chinese Indonesian Buddhists to the pressure to conform to the new socio-political reality.[8] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and to detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. Theravāda's modernist idea even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism from its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[9]

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge in Buddhism. For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Buddhists, the comeback of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism should be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can

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[4] *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." See Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish International, 2004) for further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee*.

[5] See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," in *Southeast Asian Chinese and China: Sociocultural Dimension*, ed. Leo Suryadinata (Singapore, Times Academic Press, 1995), 139-165, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

[6] *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued a Presidential Decree No. 26/1998, on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines that indigenous Indonesians are people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

[7] Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

[8] Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the provinces of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed on September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya – the capital of East Java province and the 2nd largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted, is quite high, 31,166, which constitute more than half of the Buddhist population in the province, namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed on September 9, 2018).

[9] Buddhism's social stigma of Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architectures and façade. However, unlike mosques and churches, with the exception of some Buddhist temples – especially those which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees – and old Chinese temples, most Buddhist temples are originally profane commercial buildings or houses converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the exteriors. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. Even there are temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image can be some indication of the challenges that Buddhism – a state-sanctioned religion – faces, despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brings openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temple through their architectural designs.

accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between the religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I am exploring in this paper. In so doing, through a fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

Commented [A6]: This paragraph would profit of being linked to the discussion in Suryadinata, Leo (ed.). 2008. Ethnic Chinese in Contemporary Indonesia. Singapore: ISEAS.

Contextual Framework of Religion and Ethnicity

My investigation on the Chinese Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to a more rationalized religious practices.[10] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization, namely, one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may develop social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[11] These tensions, I believe, could occur because different religious orientations as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribed and what religious organizations taught. These tensions may warrant the pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the socio-political reality.

Commented [A7]: I do not deem reference to Weber necessary here. The argument in this article does not need it, particularly because it does not develop support for Weber's thesis out of the material. And for the points made, reference to Weber is really not necessary.

In conforming to socio-political reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[12]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[13]

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individual together and provide a social context for maintaining ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and

[10] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.
[11] Max Weber, *The sociology of Religion*, 223.
[12] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[13] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.

development of identity through religious beliefs and practices creates a process through which boundaries appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[14]

Grounded on the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as "Chinese religion." Then, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. Next, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

The origin of "Chinese Religion"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. However, the fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the 15th century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered the demise of Buddhism.[15] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[16] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive in even as Java becomes more Islamic.[17]

Buddhism started to resurface in the 17th century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism, thanks to the influx of Chinese immigrants in Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) – known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in Glodok area of Jakarta.[18] Since then, Buddhism – mixed with Chinese traditional belief – had grown in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of the religious life, but the center for Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Dhurkeim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[19] I contend that the temples preserved the Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity of the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of Chinese religion.

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in the colonial Indonesia in the early 20th century, such as Josias van Dienst and E.E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring the esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups like the Dutch, the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[20] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elite, Eastern esotericism referred to the Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[21] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress

[14] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[15] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.
[16] Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.
[17] Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.
[18] Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.
[19] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[20] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.
[21] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27-28.

held on April 1-2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors – "*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[22] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published a bulletin *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*) in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934.

Commented [A8]: It may be interesting to connect explicitly these 'three doctrines' or 'religions' to the mixing of Buddhism with Daoism and Confucianism just mentioned.

Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po

In the mid-20th century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an occultism, which was a syncretistic belief of various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks – among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita (of Chinese descent, whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante Girirakkhito (the son of a Balinese royal family whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri) – in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[23] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

[22] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.
[23] For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Girirakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*] (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995).

Although there were natives who embrace Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[24] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem with Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese – an ethnic minority, and hence often labeled as Chinese religion. Being labeled as Chinese religion might not be a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[25] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported the colonial rule, and many joined Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they should dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion, and promote it as a religion that transcends ethnic boundaries.

Commented [A9]: A bit more specificity and detail when referring to these 'Chinese traditions' would be welcome.

Commented [A10]: Need to mention references here, as in many other parts of the manuscript.

Doctrinal Intervention

Because of the nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism. However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture was deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into what so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

Commented [A11]: What does this mean?

The anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication, among others, the ban of Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of the non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This effort was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[26] This Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and the prohibition of building new Chinese temples.[27] However, because of being perceived as Chinese religions, pure Buddhist viharas were also affected by this law. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairing existing Buddhist temples needed permit, which was often difficult to get.[28]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom

[24] Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.
[25] Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.
[26] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.
[27] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bahkti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.
[28] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera" *Tempo* (Jakarta), October 25-31, 1999.

of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence through classifying all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism, that is, emphasizing on the teaching in the scriptures. So, in the regime's opinion, Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and detach themselves from the Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and more often than not, having no relation with the religion itself.[29] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space the regime defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered as Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals are in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists should return to the "true" Dharma, that is, the Buddha's teaching, and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

Commented [A12]: Reference to Vincent L. Wimbush's concept of scripturalization should be made here, e.g., Wimbush, Vincent L. 2015. It's Scripturalization., Colleagues! Journal of Africana Religions 3(2): 193-200.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtra chanting could be done in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged.

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could also be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. As communism was associated with China, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist – the enemy of the state. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Oder regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion, that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and holy book.

Commented [A13]: This could be formulated in a better way.

The position of the belief in God is very central in the Indonesian political landscape, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, the Indonesia's state ideology, that is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[30] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who wanted an Islamic state by emphasizing the importance of religion and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, the word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion) – not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam – is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive, that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on that principle, the state only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a

[29] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs the Buddhist in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular on the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temple.

[30] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles, namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structure. This importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to get people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.

result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic, namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[31] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected, Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they face. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptation.

Political Rituals

Ritual is closely related to identity as the earlier can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment could produce a sense of belonging among the participants. Ritual can draw attention to their shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[32] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the means by which individuals are brought together as a collective group."[33] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[34]

As the Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and it was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could strengthen the Sino-Buddhist identity. However, the Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building, that is, the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new socio-political landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification.

Commented [A14]: How was this done? Is it possible to give more details?

An example of adaptation is appropriating Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall in the first or the fifteenth day of the month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebration.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese a legitimate space for culturally-Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted and then followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, the Chinese Buddhists showed resistance as well as accommodation to the pressure of the "nationalization" of Buddhism. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebration and the use of Chinese language served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used in expressing their ethnic identity. However, they had to make accommodation because the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal, not an ethnic religion, by placing an emphasis on the religious aspects of the celebration, that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also accommodated. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit,

[31] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.
[32] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.
[33] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
[34] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.

was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation – that is, expressing their Indonesianness – and resistance – that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy showed that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[35] were political because they could "construct, display, and promote … political interests" of a certain group.[36] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to changing social and political climate.

Interpreting God-head

Besides in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in the Buddhist theology. Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The state regarded Buddhism as or standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The theological debate over whether Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God or not was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape propelled Buddhism to accommodate its doctrine in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (for referring to a concept of God in Buddhism),[37] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the 8th or 9th century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[38]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[39] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[40] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, he is different from Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world, that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a God-head, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia – Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[41] His personal experience may also contribute to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, … , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic inquiry as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him

Commented [A15]: The term 'theology' may be ,misleading here, as Buddhism has been portrayed elsewhere in the text as a 'religion without god'.

[35] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[36] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.
[37] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 18, no. 1, (1987): 108-117.
[38] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation in western languages was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.
[39] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.
[40] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.
[41] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda." *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* 9, (1981): 10-21.

to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[42]

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, in Buddhayāna the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to its teaching. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*) written by Dhamaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism, namely, believing in one supreme God – Ādi-Buddha, having prophets – Buddha Gautama and others Bodhisattvas, and having holy books – *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is put into the Islamic context, from which the state defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The state and other religious groups accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence it had communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely, Ādi-Buddha, and it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under the political condition as such, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God, as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. However, the Theravādins understood the importance of God in Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God.[43] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[44]

Despite differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' attempt to conform to Indonesian state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism, namely, the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually has continuity with the past,[45] and they are invented to cope with the new condition and situation.[46] Hobsbawm's and Ranger's idea on the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea, that is, giving it a new meaning suitable with the present conditions they faced.

Commented [A16]: Who are the people composing this group? Non-Chinese Indonesian groups? I would be good to make it clear.

Commented [A17]: This reference to Hobsbawm and Ranger's work is unnecessary. And the notion of 'invention' could be questioned as well –no 'invented tradition' is totally 'invented'.

Post - New Order Buddhism

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the coming of Theravāda Buddhism to Indonesia, which was brought by Buddhist monks who were sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious training.[47] In 1970, some of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return

[42] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59-60.
[43] Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).
[44] Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with, that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.
[45] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[46] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 8.
[47] A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work and ordination may be a factor for Buddhism in Indonesia to send its monk to Theravāda school for

to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of Tipitaka, and emphasizing on the philosophical teachings of Buddha, instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result, the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both the Chinese and the non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the changing of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease on life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese tradition openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public was now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, the modernist and scripturalist Theravādins questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temple and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals, just like what the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

How the Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of friction between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings. The latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

An example of the friction between the traditionalists and the modernists was food offering (the Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term of *ehipasiko*.[48] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with the Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of rituals according to their religious orientation. Those with a modernist leaning viewed rituals as religiously improper; others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals and thus viewed them as appropriate if not mandatory.

Another example of the friction was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[49] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred

Commented [A18]: Who are the people composing this group? Non-Chinese Indonesian groups? I would be good to make it clear.

Commented [A19]: These groups should be mentioned earlier in the text, if only to compare their situation to that of Chinese Buddhists.

Commented [A20]: Tension and conflict are often brought up, but the reador does not get a clear idea of how these tensions are articulated –again, in terms of actual institutions and individuals.

Commented [A21]: Who are they?

Commented [A22]: Who are they?

religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," in *Buddhist Studies in Honour of Hammalava Saddhātissa*, ed. Gatare Dhammapala, Richard gombrich, and K. R. Norman (Nugegoda: University of Sri Jayewardenepura, 1984), 108-115.

[48] Literally *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes on the empirical verification of the Buddhsit teachings.

[49] Interview, December 7, 2014

to the Pāli text of Tipittaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God, which in Indonesian context was manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha. Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In the latter's opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they are "contaminated" Buddhists.[50] They emphasized on the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology, that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the ideas of god-head, lead Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The rituals are separated from the religious, but those rituals are still practiced as cultural or traditional elements. In celebrating Chinese New Year, for example, Chinese traditional rituals are conducted as private affairs, whereas the religious rituals for celebrating it (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs. As far as the ideas of god-head are concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have a sizable modernist devotees.

Through transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices, traditionalist Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate demands that they stay away from their traditional ritual practices. The transformation and recast also enable those who believe in the existence of God, as manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism also shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with the religious belief and tradition. All these led to the diversity among the Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a *Romo Pandito*[51] said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors. Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha."[52]

Conclusion

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of the ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism after it was dormant for a few hundred years. Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence, Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of the Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project, it started to Indonesianize its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural tradition in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist

[50] In an informal discussion with seven Buddhists on April 26, 2015, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not contaminate their Buddhist belief.
[51] A Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who was appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk.
[52] Interview, February 12, 2015.

Commented [A23]: Could you give a bit more information about the seven Buddhists mentioned in the footnote? Are they part of any group, or temple congregation maybe?

Commented [A24]: When did this happen? More precision is needed.

Commented [A25]: Is this the case in all occasions and in every location?

Commented [A26]: How this did happen is still unclear.

Commented [A27]: Still, it is not clear where do these demands come from.

Commented [A28]: When did this happen?

Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals become a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism, which has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. As result, this version of Buddhism now dominates Buddhism in Indonesia.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate on the existence of God in Buddhism came up. This situation triggered tensions among the Chinese community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between the religious and the traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness to separate the religious and the cultural while allowing them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere. In so doing, they allow the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used for giving the freedom to those to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus, they innovate, transform, and recast their belief to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of lotus.

Commented [A29]: Not all Theravada Buddhism has a scripturalist leaning… What about the influence of scripturalist interpretations of Islam in Indonesia?

Commented [A30]: As I already mentioned, some details about how these tensions unfold would be

Commented [A31]: How this happens is still unclear.

Commented [A32]: A paragraph on diverse Chinese Buddhist identities in Surabaya would be welcome here. They remain rather lifeless in the accounbt.

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About the author:
Setefanus Suprajitno is a lecturer in the Graduate Program, Faculty of Letters, Petra Christian University, Surabaya, Indonesia. He received his doctorate degree in sociocultural anthropology at Cornell University. His research interests lie in the area of ethnicity, identity, and cultural memory.

Bukti 6

Bukti pengiriman revisi pertama.

Tanggal 10 Agustus 2019

UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN PETRA

Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id>

My revised manuscript

Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id> Sat, Aug 10, 2019 at 2:45 PM
To: Anna Křivánková <krivankova@orient.cas.cz>
Bcc: suprajitno@gmail.com

Dear Anna,

I have revised my manuscript based on the comments from the reviewers. I highlight the revised parts in yellow background so that the editor can track the changes I have made.

I have also corrected some typo I found in the manuscript.

I have also responded to each reviewers' comments in the manuscript.

I accepted all reviewers' suggestion except two points, that is, their comment on the use of Weber's theory and the concept of "invented tradition." I stated the reason why I disagree with them in my response to their comments.

I am also resending the summarized view of reviewer 1, because I also responded to his/her suggestion, that is, point 3, 4 and 5.

In responding to point 3, I wrote the reason why I still use Durkheim's and Hobsbawm and Ranger's work, which he think were a bit old.

In responding to point 4, I wrote that I accepted his/her suggestion, and I have revised my manuscript[t accordingly.

In responding to point 5, I wrote that I agreed on his/her deletion of an extra Chinese character.

Once again thank you so much for your attention and help.

Looking forward to your favorable reply.

Sincerely,
Steph

Comments to the manuscript

'**Various Petals of Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia**'

I have read the manuscript with great interest. I believe that the manuscript has the potential to be a relevant contribution to its field, but only after the text has been improved –the editors shall have the last word on the extent of this re-working. See my comments below:

1. **Is the scholarship of the work sound and innovative? Is the work a relevant contribution to the field? How does the work compare with other publications on the same subject?**

   I am not an expert on Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia, but my impression is that work on this particular topic is scarce. In that sense, it does have the potential to be a relevant contribution to the field.

2. **Does the work satisfy the expectations raised by the title and the introduction?**

   Mostly yes, but see point 4.

3. **Do you think that the author has made sufficient use of sources, be it primary or secondary literature? Did you notice any serious omissions in this respect?**

   I did not notice any serious ommissions, but I was a bit bothered by the use of such old theory as Durkheim's to back some very general points. Even Hobsbawm and Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition* is more than 35 years old. Some other, more contemporary social science conceptual apparatus could be brought in to back the more theoretical parts of the paper.

   My reponse:

   I agree that both Durkheim's and Hobsbawm and Ranger's works are quite old. However, they are considered as classics. Their theories back up my argument well. Because of this reason, I use their theories in my article. In fact, some recent articles use the same theories. Those articles are, among other:

   1. Using Emile Durkheim's theory proposed in his *book Elementary Forms of Religious Life*:

      a. Lynn Badia, "Theorizing the Social: Émile Durkheim's Theory of Force and Energy," *Cultural Studies* 30, no. 6 (2016): 969–1000.
      b. George Liagouras, "Economic Growth, Happiness and Socialism: Durkheim's Critique of Economic Reason and Beyond," *New Political Economy* 24, no. 5 (2019): 659-677.

2. Using Hobsbawm and Ranger's Invention of tradition:
    a. Emma O'Donnell, "Theorising sacred place in Jerusalem: identity, yearning, and the invention of tradition," *Journal of Beliefs & Values* 38, no. 3 (2017): 276–285.
    b. A number of articles in a book, *Invention of Tradition and Syncretism in Contemporary Religions: Sacred Creativity* (2017), edited by Stefania Palmisano and Nicola Pannolno (Cham, Switzerland: Springer).

4. Is the work well organized and the writing clear? Is any rewriting, rearrangement, expansion, or condensation desirable?

Basically the argument of the paper is clear and well organized. However, and this is my main concern with it, the specificities are obscure. The process by which Chinese Indonesians were first forced to abandon their idiosyncratic Buddhist practices under the New Order regime, and the tensions that the recovery of a Buddhism 'with Chinese characteristics' after the fall of Suharto in 1998, are all presented in a very abstract fashion. Some names are named, and some legislation is offered as proof (especially for the New Order period), but there is an overall lack of detail and concreteness of these particular processes. I believe this could be solved by adding some more (a few would be enough) ethnographic examples of actual individuals or groups and their experiences. This in turn would make the argument much tighter –which in my opinion is not, at present.

My response:

I would like to thank the first reviewer for his/her comment and suggestion. I have added and some details in my article to address his/her concern.

5. Are there obvious and systematic flaws to be found in translations and transcriptions? If so, please send us a specimen of the flaws you found.

No. The manuscript shows the usual typos, but I have only seen one minor error in transcribing a Chinese character into pinyin –I have deleted an extra letter in footnote 3.

My Response:

I accepted the omission that the reviewer 1 did.

Various Petals of Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965-1998) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into the Buddhism made more Indonesian by eliminating its Chinese traditional influence. This found support among Chinese Indonesians Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism from its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the comeback of these rituals to Buddhism should be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they dislike blending Buddhism with them. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use for coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity constructions. The finding shows that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness for coming to terms with these tensions, and for innovating, transforming and recasting their religious practices.

Keywords: Buddhism, Chinese community, Chinese religion, Identity, Indonesia

Commented [A1]: As well as Confucianism

Commented [A2R1]: I agree with the reviewers. Chinese rituals also re-emerged in Confucianism. However, since the topic of my article is Buddhism, I did not put Confucianism in the abstract. Nevertheless, to address the reviewers' concerns, I also included Confucianim as one of the religious beliefs in which Chinese rituals re-emerged. I wrote this in the last paragraph of the introduction, which I highlighted in yellow background. It is in p. 3 paragraph 1, lines 2-3.

Commented [A3]: Constructions, I do not think, that they all share the same identity as Chinese Buddhists

Commented [A4R3]: I accepted the reviewers' suggestion because in my paper I argue that there are various identities among Chinese Indonesians Buddhists.

INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important changes, what Indonesians call as *Reformasi* (The Reform), is changes in policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. The Chinese Indonesians have regained the space in public life, after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965-1998), Chinese Indonesians were considered as perpetual foreigners whose existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination culminated in 1965, when the New Order Regime came to power.[1] As a result, the regime demanded cultural change. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese was heavily impacted by this change.

Commented [A5]: by whom?

Commented [A6R5]: I changed the structure of this sentence to answer the reviewers' question

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "Indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This Indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion, as the expressions of Chineseness, including Chinese religious and cultural traditions were forbidden.[3]

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[4] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or the blending of all of them, known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw*

Commented [A7]: See also Ramstedt, Martin. 2018. Hinduism and Buddhism. In Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia, ed. by Robert W. Hefner, 267-283. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

Commented [A8R7]: I would like to thank the reviewers for bringing this book chapter to my attention. It does support my argument.

[1] For a detailed account of the discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996-1999* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006).
[2] *Abangans* are Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam, that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1976).
[3] Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.
[4] Confucianism has been in Indonesia long before the 20th century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a

Hwee or *Tri Dharma*.[5] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese tradition in it, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the State. In this way, they could become ideologically-correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese was supported by the worship of various gods in Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[6] There were concerted efforts from the State, as well as from *pribumi*[7] Buddhists, who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent,[8] to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia where the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism, namely, Buddhism which is not influenced by what so-called Chinese traditional rituals, and Buddhism which is in line with the state ideology.[9]

This situation led Chinese Indonesian Buddhists to the pressure to conform to the new socio-political reality.[10] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and to detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. Theravāda's modernist idea even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism from its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[11]

Commented [A9]: What are the terms in Bahasa?

Commented [A10R9]: The Indonesian words for those terms are "modern," "sesuai," and "nasionalis." I do not write the Indonesian terms in the manuscript because I think it is not necessary to do so. However, I added a short explanation of what Buddhism the New Order wanted. Martin Ramstedt's article the reviewers suggest is really helpful.

Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," *Archipel* 38, (1989): 125-135; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*] (Singapore, Chinese Heritage Center, 2010).

[5] *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." See Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish International, 2004) for further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee*.

[6] See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," in *Southeast Asian Chinese and China: Sociocultural Dimension*, ed. Leo Suryadinata (Singapore, Times Academic Press, 1995), 139-165, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

[7] *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued a Presidential Decree No. 26/1998, on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines that indigenous Indonesians are people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

[8] Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

[9] For further reference see Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahasthavira," *Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism: Saṃbhāṣā* 23 (2003): 53-72; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," in *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (New York, Routledge, 2018), 267-283; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 20, no. 1 (2013): 1-34.

[10] Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the provinces of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed on September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya – the capital of East Java province and the 2nd largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted, is quite high, 31,166, which constitute more than half of the Buddhist population in the province, namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed on September 9, 2018).

[11] Buddhism's social stigma of Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architectures and façade. However, unlike mosques and churches, with the exception of some Buddhist temples – especially those which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees – and old Chinese temples, most Buddhist temples are originally profane commercial buildings or houses converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the exteriors. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. Even there are temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image can be some indication of the challenges that Buddhism – a state-sanctioned religion – faces,

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. "Chinese Indonesians are no longer forced to be assimilated; they are able to retain their ethnic culture and identity".[12] Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge especially in the religious beliefs traditionally associated with the Chinese, such as Buddhism, Daosim, and Confucianism. Chinese Buddhism started to develop again.[13] For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Indonesian Buddhists, the comeback of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism should be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between the religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I am exploring in this paper. In so doing, through a fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

Commented [A11]: This paragraph would profit of being linked to the discussion in Suryadinata, Leo (ed.). 2008. Ethnic Chinese in Contemporary Indonesia. Singapore: ISEAS.

Commented [A12R11]: I added some supports taken for the book the reviewers suggested.

Contextual Framework of Religion and Ethnicity

My investigation on the Chinese Indonesian Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to a more rationalized religious practices.[14] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization, namely, one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may develop social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[15] These tensions, I believe, could occur because different religious orientations as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribed and what religious organizations taught. These tensions may warrant the pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the socio-political reality.

Commented [A13]: I do not deem reference to Weber necessary here. The argument in this article does not need it, particularly because it does not develop support for Weber's thesis out of the material. And for the points made, reference to Weber is really not necessary.

Commented [A14R13]: Thank you for the comment. The reviewers' comment has a merit. However, I decided to put Weberian idea of the rationalization of religion because in my article, I wrote that Chinese Indonesian Buddhists did rationalize their version of Buddhism (like what I wrote in the last paragraphs of p. 7 and p. 13). In so doing, I needed a reference for claiming that what they did was a kind of religious rationalization.

In conforming to socio-political reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[16]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

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despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brings openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temple through their architectural designs.

[12] Eddie Lembong, "Indonesian Government Policies and the Ethnic Chinese: Some Recent Development." 55.

[13] Leo Suryadinata, "Chinese Indonesians in an Era of Globalization: Some Major Characteristics," 10.

[14] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.

[15] Max Weber, *The sociology of Religion*, 223.

[16] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[17]

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individual together and provide a social context for maintaining ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and development of identity through religious beliefs and practices creates a process through which boundaries appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[18]

Grounded on the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as "Chinese religion." Then, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. Next, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

The origin of "Chinese Religion"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. However, the fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the 15th century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered the demise of Buddhism.[19] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[20] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive in even as Java becomes more Islamic.[21]

Buddhism started to resurface in the 17th century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism, thanks to the influx of Chinese immigrants in Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) – known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in Glodok area of Jakarta.[22] Since then, Buddhism – mixed with Chinese traditional belief – had grown in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of the religious life, but the center for Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Dhurkeim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[23] I contend that the temples preserved the Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity of the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of Chinese religion.

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[17] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[18] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[19] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.
[20] Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.
[21] Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.
[22] Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.
[23] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in the colonial Indonesia in the early 20th century, such as Josias van Dienst and E.E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring the esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups like the Dutch, the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[24] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elite, Eastern esotericism referred to the Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[25] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress held on April 1-2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors – "*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[26] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published a bulletin *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*) in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934. These publications, which used the term *Sam Kauw*, clearly emphasized the blending of the three teachings, namely, Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.

Commented [A15]: It may be interesting to connect explicitly these 'three doctrines' or 'religions' to the mixing of Buddhism with Daoism and Confucianism just mentioned.

Commented [A16R15]: I have added a sentence that addresses the reviewers' concern.

Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po

[24] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.
[25] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27-28.
[26] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.

In the mid-20th century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an occultism, which was a syncretistic belief of various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks – among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita (of Chinese descent, whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante Girirakkhito (the son of a Balinese royal family whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri) – in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[27] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

Although there were natives who embrace Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[28] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Traditions such as venerating ancestors and observing *Qingming Jie*[29] became parts of Buddhist practices. Besides that, Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem with Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese – an ethnic minority, and hence often labeled as Chinese religion. Being labeled as Chinese religion might not be a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[30] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported the colonial rule, and many joined Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they should dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion due to "its 'overly' Chinese cultural form,"[31] and promote it as "an autochthonous religion and not a foreign or alien import."[32] By so doing, they could make Buddhism as a religion that transcends ethnic boundaries in Indonesia.

Doctrinal Intervention

Because of the nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism, namely, Buddhism with distinct Indonesian characteristics.[33] However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture was deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into what so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

The anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication, among others, the ban of

Commented [A17]: A bit more specificity and detail when referring to these 'Chinese traditions' would be welcome.

Commented [A18R17]: I accepted that reviewers' suggestion. I added two examples of Chinese traditions, and rephrased the next sentence so that the sentence stated that worshipping Chinese Buddhist deities was also a part of this Chinese tradition.

Commented [A19]: Need to mention references here, as in many other parts of the manuscript.

Commented [A20R19]: I have revised this part and added the reference.

Commented [A21]: What does this mean?

Commented [A22R21]: I have added an explanation to address the reviewers' question, and another one in the next paragraph with footnote no. 34 (p. 7, lines 3-5).

[27] For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Girirakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*] (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995).
[28] Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.
[29] *Qingming Jie* (清明節), also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day, is the time when people of Chinese descent visit the graves of their departed ones, and making ritual offerings.
[30] Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.
[31] Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.
[32] Iem Brown, "The Revival of Buddhism in Modern Indonesia," 53.
[33] See Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 20, no. 1 (2013): 1-34, for further discussion on Indonesian Buddhism.

Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of the non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This was one reason why in its congress in May 1970, *Perhimpunan Buddhis Indonesia* (Indonesian Buddhists Association) issued a resolution stating that "Indonesia Buddhism in Indonesia should have more Indonesian characteristics, not Chinese ones."[34] The effort of separating Buddhism from the social stigma of Chinese religion was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[35] This Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and the prohibition of building new Chinese temples.[36] Experiencing the conversion of Chinese temples into Buddhist ones, a temple caretaker lamented, "We had to convert our temple into *vihara*. If not, we would be in trouble. … This was the most difficult moment for us. We had to change our place of worship as if it was the place of abomination. It did pain us."[37] This law also affected pure Buddhist *viharas*. Because of being perceived as Chinese religions, places of worship of Buddhism faced problems. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairing existing Buddhist temples needed a special permit, which was often difficult to get.[38]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence through classifying all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism, that is, emphasizing on the teaching in the scriptures. The regime opined that Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and to detach themselves from the Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and more often than not, having no relation with the religion itself.[39] By so doing, the regime borrowed the authority of holy scriptures to justify its policy, an act that Wimbush describes as scripturalization.[40] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space the regime defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered as Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals are in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists should return to the "true" Dharma, that is, the Buddha's teaching, and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

Commented [A23]: This is my response to the comment of reviewer 1 (comment no. 4). I inserted my informant's comment.

Commented [A24]: Reference to Vincent L. Wimbush's concept of scripturalization should be made here, e.g., Wimbush, Vincent L. 2015. It's Scripturalization., Colleagues! Journal of Africana Religions 3(2): 193-200.

Commented [A25R24]: I accept the reviewers' suggestion, which is really helpful.

[34] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 71

[35] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.

[36] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bhakti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.

[37] Interview, March 1, 2015

[38] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera" *Tempo* (Jakarta), October 25-31, 1999.

[39] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs the Buddhist in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular on the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temple.

[40] See Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," *Journal of Africana Religions* 3, no. 2 (2015): 193-200.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtra chanting could be done in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged. Describing this situation, an elder in a Buddhist temple said, "We started using Sanskrit sūtras when the New Order regime banned Chinese language and culture. … Chanting in Chinese was not totally forbidden, but you know …. when the government said that it was recommended, it was not just a recommendation. It was an order. Then we used both Chinese and Sanskrit sūtras. However, Sanskrit sūtras were chanted in our Sunday school."[41]

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could also be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. Because China associated with communism, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist – the enemy of the State. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Oder regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion, that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and holy book.

The position of the belief in God is very central in the Indonesian political landscape, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, the Indonesia's state ideology, that is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[42] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who wanted an Islamic state by emphasizing the importance of religion and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, the word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion) – not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam – is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive, that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on that principle, the State only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic, namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[43] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected, Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they face. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptation.

Political Rituals

Ritual is closely related to identity as the earlier can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment could produce a sense of belonging among the participants. Ritual can draw attention to their shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[44] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the means by which individuals

Commented [A26]: This is my response to the comment of reviewer 1 (comment no. 4). I inserted my informant's comment.

Commented [A27]: This could be formulated in a better way.

Commented [A28R27]: I changed the original phrases "As communism was associated with China" into "Because China associated with communism."

[41] Interview, March 1, 2015.
[42] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles, namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structure. This importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to get people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.
[43] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.
[44] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.

are brought together as a collective group."[45] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[46]

As the Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and it was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could strengthen the Sino-Buddhist identity. However, the Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building, that is, the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new socio-political landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification. Those who made adaptation in their religious rituals believed that the notion of impermanence, that is, "no element of physical matter or any concept remain unchanged,"[47] gave them an authority[48] to do so, as what a *Romo Pandito*[49] in a Buddhayāna temple said, "It is stated in Buddhist scripture that nothing is permanent. So, making some adjustments as long as the changes are still in line with Buddhist teachings is definitely not a big deal."[50]

Commented [A29]: How was this done? Is it possible to give more details?

Commented [A30R29]: I added the detail, which was also my response to the comment of reviewer 1 (comment no. 4).

An example of adaptation is appropriating Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall in the first or the fifteenth day of the month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebration.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese a legitimate space for culturally-Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted and then followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, the Chinese Buddhists showed resistance as well as accommodation to the pressure of the "nationalization" of Buddhism. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebration and the use of Chinese language served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used in expressing their ethnic identity. However, they had to make accommodation because the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal, not an ethnic religion, by placing an emphasis on the religious aspects of the celebration, that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also accommodated. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit, was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation – that is, expressing their Indonesianness – and resistance – that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy showed that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[51] were political because they could "construct, display, and promote … political interests" of a

[45] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
[46] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.
[47] Carol S. Anderson, "Anitya (Impermanence)," 23
[48] For further discussion on how scriptures function as the source of authoritative power, see Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," *Journal of Africana Religions* 3, no. 2 (2015): 193-200.
[49] *Romo Pandito* is a Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who is appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk
[50] Interview, December 10, 2014.
[51] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

certain group.[52] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to changing social and political climate.

Interpreting God-head

Besides in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in the Buddhist theology. Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The State regarded Buddhism as or standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The theological debate over whether Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God or not was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape propelled Buddhism to accommodate its doctrine in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (for referring to a concept of God in Buddhism),[53] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the 8th or 9th century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[54]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[55] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[56] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, he is different from Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world, that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a God-head, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia – Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[57] His personal experience may also contribute to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, … , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic inquiry as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[58]

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, in Buddhayāna the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to its teaching. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*) written by Dhammaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism, namely, believing in one supreme God – Ādi-Buddha, having prophets – Buddha Gautama and others Bodhisattvas, and having

Commented [A31]: The term 'theology' may be ,misleading here, as Buddhism has been portrayed elsewhere in the text as a 'religion without god'.

Commented [A32R31]: The reviewers are right. I wrote in this manuscript that Buddhism was a religion without God. However, I use the term theology to refer to "the study of religion". In fact there are some scholars who use the term Buddhist theology, although they also believe that there is no God in Buddhism. See for example:
1. Jackson, Roger, and John Makransky (ed.) 2000. *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars*. Cornwall: Curzon.
2. Obuse, Kieko. 2015. "Finding God in Buddhism: A New Trend in Contemporary Buddhist Approaches to Islam." *Numen* 62, no. 4, pp. 408-430.

[52] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.
[53] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 18, no. 1, (1987): 108-117.
[54] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation in western languages was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.
[55] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.
[56] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.
[57] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda." *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* 9, (1981): 10-21.
[58] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59-60.

holy books – *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is put into the Islamic context, from which the State defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The State and other religious groups accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence it had communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely, Ādi-Buddha, and it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under the political condition as such, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God, as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. Criticizing Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's concept of Ādi-Buddha, Bhante Naradha Thera, a Sri Lankan Theravādin monk who once visited Indonesia, sent a letter to Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's English translator in which he wrote that there was no God in Buddhism.[59] Another monk from Thailand, who was invited for the ordination of five Indonesian Buddhist monks in 1970 also questioned the concept of Ādi-Buddha. He wrote whether this concept was "a wise compromise".[60] However, the Indonesian Theravādins understood the importance of God in Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God.[61] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[62]

Despite the differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' (both the Chinese and the non-Chinese Indonesians) attempt to conform to the state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism, namely, the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually has continuity with the past,[63] and they are invented to cope with the new condition and situation.[64] Hobsbawm's and Ranger's idea on the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea, that is, giving it a new meaning suitable with the present conditions they faced.

Post - New Order Buddhism

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the coming of Theravāda Buddhism to Indonesia, which was brought by Buddhist monks who were sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious training.[65] In 1970, some of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return

Commented [A33]: I wrote additional information here to show the frictions among the Buddhists as a result of the compromise made by some of them in order to respond to political changes that happened in Indonesia during the New Order.

Commented [A34]: Who are the people composing this group? Non-Chinese Indonesian groups? I would be good to make it clear.

Commented [A35R34]: I make it clearer that this group of people are both the Chinese and the non-Chinese.

Commented [A36]: This reference to Hobsbawm and Ranger's work is unnecessary. And the notion of 'invention' could be questioned as well –no 'invented tradition' is totally 'invented'.

Commented [A37R36]: I agree with the reviewers that the notion of invention could be questioned. However, their definition of "invented tradition" is "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past" (Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p. 1). Based on that definition, I contend that Chinese Indonesian Buddhists invented the notion of God, which is found in "their historic past," namely, the notion of Ādi-Buddha, by giving Ādi-Buddha a new meaning. And for this reason, I decide to put Hobsbawm and Ranger's concept of invented tradition in here.

[59] Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*], 145.
[60] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 5
[61] Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).
[62] Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with, that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.
[63] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[64] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 8.
[65] A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work and ordination may be a factor for Buddhism in Indonesia to send its monk to Theravāda school for religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," in *Buddhist*

to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of Tipitaka, and emphasizing on the philosophical teachings of Buddha, instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result, the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both the Chinese and the non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the changing of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease on life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese tradition openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public was now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, the modernist and scripturalist Theravādins questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temple and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals, just like what the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

How the Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of contentions between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings. The latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

An example of the contention between the traditionalists and the modernists was food offering (the Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term of *ehipasiko*.[66] Venerating ancestors was also an example of the contention. All agreed that showing respect to ancestors and the departed ones was commendable. However, the modernists believed that it should not have done to the extent that an ancestral altar was specially made. "We are allowed and even encouraged to show respect to our ancestors and those who have departed before us. However, there are no merits in having ancestral altars. There are no such things in Buddhism," said a man in his thirties.[67] On the other hand, the traditionalists believed that having an ancestral altar at home was also a way of practicing Buddhism, as it was the Chinese way of showing respect. "According to our tradition, it [having an ancestral altar] is the correct way of showing our respect."[68] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with the Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be

Commented [A38]: Who are the people composing this group? Non-Chinese Indonesian groups? I would be good to make it clear.

Commented [A39R38]: Like in the previous page, I make it clear that this group of people are the Chinese and the non-Chinese.

Commented [A40]: These groups should be mentioned earlier in the text, if only to compare their situation to that of Chinese Buddhists.

Commented [A41R40]: I mentioned it here because I compared their situation to that of Chinese Buddhist in Post-New Order era only. Only after the revival of Chinese culture and tradition after the fall of the New Order did they show their interest in Chinese culture.

Commented [A42]: Tension and conflict are often brought up, but the reador does not get a clear idea of how these tensions are articulated –again, in terms of actual institutions and individuals.

Commented [A43R42]: I think I have written and given the examples of theses tensions and conflicts, as result of the "Indonesianization" of Buddhist practices during the New Order Era (for example, the creation of the concept of God in Buddhism, adaptation in rituals) and the revival of Chinese culture in Buddhism (such as food offering and Chinese traditional practices). I also wrote in paragraph 1 on this section that the "Indonesianization" process received support from the Theravādins. However, I understand the reviewers' concerns. I added further clarification on these tensions and conflicts in some parts of this articles. Further clarification, revision, and additional information is highlighted in yellow background.

Commented [A44]: This is an example of Indonesianization, and it is also my response to the comment of reviewer 1 (comment no. 4).

Studies in Honour of Hammalava Saddhātissa, ed. by Gatārē Dhammapāla, Richard F. Gombrich, and Kenneth R. Norman (Nugegoda: University of Sri Jayewardenepura, 1984), 108-115.

[66] Literally *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes on the empirical verification of the Buddhist teachings.

[67] Interview, March 1, 2015

[68] Interview, February 8, 2015

accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of the rituals according to their religious orientations. Those with a modernist leaning viewed those rituals as religiously improper, which implied that they prioritized "orthodoxy (correct belief);" others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals and thus viewed them as appropriate if not mandatory, which showed that they prioritized "orthopraxy (correct practice)."[69]

Another example of the contention was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[70] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred to the Pāli text of Tipitaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God, which in Indonesian context was manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha. Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In the latter's opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they are "contaminated" Buddhists.[71] They emphasized on the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology, that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the ideas of god-head, lead Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The Chinese traditional rituals are usually practiced at home as cultural elements, and the religious rituals are practiced in the temple. In this way, the former is privatized and separated from the latter. During Chinese New Year celebration, for example, Chinese traditional rituals, such as venerating ancestors, is conducted as private affairs at home, whereas the religious rituals for celebrating it (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs, in a temple. As far as the ideas of god-head are concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have a sizable modernist devotees.

Through transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices by, for example, separating the traditional/cultural from the religious and adjusting some of their Buddhist practices, Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate the demands from the State and the modernists dominating Indonesian Buddhist society to stay away from their traditional ritual practices. The transformation and recast also enable those who believe in the existence of God, as manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism also shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with the religious belief and tradition. All these led to the diversity among the Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a Theravādin *Romo Pandito* said, "Although personally we disagree with their [Chinese Buddhists'] practices, we could accept those diverse practices. Being open-minded is a Buddhist virtue".[72] Another from a Buddhayāna temple said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors.

Commented [A45]: Who are they?

Commented [A46R45]: They are the modernist and scripturalist Theravādins (I wrote this in the paragraph 2 of this section).

Commented [A47]: Who are they?

Commented [A48R47]: I called them as the traditionalists, namely, the ones who blend Buddhist teaching with Chinese traditions (paragraph 2 of this section)

Commented [A49]: Could you give a bit more information about the seven Buddhists mentioned in the footnote? Are they part of any group, or temple congregation maybe?

Commented [A50R49]: I have added more information about these people in the footnote.

Commented [A51]: When did this happen? More precision is needed.

Commented [A52R51]: I have addressed the reviewers' concerns.

Commented [A53]: Is this the case in all occasions and in every location?

Commented [A54R53]: I wrote my answer in the texts.

Commented [A55]: How this did happen is still unclear.

Commented [A56R55]: I have written my responses in this article.

Commented [A57]: Still, it is not clear where do these demands come from.

Commented [A58R57]: I have written my response in the article

[69] See Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* (University park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999) for a detail discussion on religions and Chinese cultural traditions.
[70] Interview, December 7, 2014
[71] On April 26, 2015, in an informal discussion with seven Buddhists who are members of a Buddhayāna temple congregation, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not "contaminate" their Buddhist belief.
[72] Interview, April 5, 2015.

Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha".[73]

Conclusion

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of the ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism in the early 20th century, after it was dormant for a few hundred years.[74] Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence, Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of the Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project, it started to Indonesianize its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural tradition in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals become a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism, which has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. As result, this version of Buddhism now dominates Buddhism in Indonesia.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate on the existence of God in Buddhism came up. Fueled by different religious orientations and interpretations, this situation triggered tensions among the Chinese Buddhist community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between the religious and the traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness as a justification to accept differences in their rites and practices. They separate the religious and the cultural while allowing them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere. In so doing, they allow the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used for giving the freedom to those to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus, they innovate, transform, and recast their belief to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of lotus.

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[73] Interview, February 12, 2015.

[74] For a detailed account of the role of the Chinese in reviving Buddhism in Indonesia, see Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*] (Jakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2001); Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," in *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Indonesia*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (New York, Routledge, 2018), 267-283; Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*] (Jakarta: Yayasan Cipta Loka Caraka, 2003); and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," *Studia Islamika* 20, no. 1 (2013): 1-34;

Commented [A59]: When did this happen?

Commented [A60R59]: I addressed the reviewers' question, and added some references.

Commented [A61]: Not all Theravada Buddhism has a scripturalist leaning… What about the influence of scripturalist interpretations of Islam in Indonesia?

Commented [A62R61]: I agree that not all Theravādins have a scripturalist leaning. But, based on my observation, Theravāda Buddhism in Indonesia has a scripturalist tendency. For example, the Indonesian translations of the Pāli texts of the Theravāda are presented next to the Pāli original without commentary or interpretation. In so doing it claims the scripturalist authority. Another example is that the Theravāda regularly holds paritta (Theravāda holy texts) recital contests among the Buddhists in Indonesia. The winner are awarded Presidents Cup. The focus of this contest is not on the ability to understand the text because the Indonesian translations of the Pāli text provide the literal meaning of the Pāli originals, but rather on the spectacle of reciting them. Through this kind of scripturalist performance, the Theravādins in Indonesia show their appreciation for the "true" Buddhist texts. This reminds people of the well-known Quranic reading contest. The reviewers' guess that scripturalist interpretations of Islam in Indonesia may affect the scripturalist leaning of Theravada Buddhism could be right. However, in this article, I do not make such a claim because further analysis is needed.

Commented [A63]: As I already mentioned, some details about how these tensions unfold would be

Commented [A64R63]: I have written in the section before the conclusion that the tensions occured because of different religious orientation and interpretation as a result of the re-emergence of Chinese traditions and culture, which were banned during the New Order era. Nevertheless, I concur with the reviewers that I need to make it clear.

Commented [A65]: How this happens is still unclear.

Commented [A66R65]: The Buddhist idea of open-mindedness is used for a justification to accept difference. I have revised the sentence.

Commented [A67]: A paragraph on diverse Chinese Buddhist identities in Surabaya would be welcome here. They remain rather lifeless in the accounbt.

Commented [A68R67]: In my opinion, I have written the diversity of Buddhist Identities of Chinese Indonesians living in Surabaya, especially in the section "Post- new Order Buddhism." However, to address the reviewers' concern, I have added some examples in sections of this articles. The additional examples and explanations are highlighted in yellow.

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Bukti 7

Email dari Executive Editor untuk merevisi lagi artikel tersebut beserta file review kedua.

Tanggal 19 Agustus 2019

UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN PETRA

Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id>

submission of revised manuscript

Anna Křivánková <krivankova@orient.cas.cz> Mon, Aug 19, 2019 at 5:30 PM
To: Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id>

Dear Steph,

late, but finally – here it comes!
The article is fine, only Dr. Hons would like you to incorporate the three comments (ie. your answers to the reviewers) directly into the text. For example: While it can be said that such and such theories are old, they are considered a classic and vital part of the discourse etc.
Simply to include your answers to the reviewers into the text.
Once it is done, we will send the paper for proofreading to a native speaker.

Also, please let us have the pictures in separate files, preferably jpeg or tiff.

Thank you and have a nice start of the week!

Best Wishes
Anna

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Various Petals of Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

Setefanus Suprajitno

INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important changes, what Indonesians call as *Reformasi* (The Reform), is changes in policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. The Chinese Indonesians have regained the space in public life, after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965–98), Chinese Indonesians were considered as perpetual foreigners whose existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination culminated in 1965, when the New Order Regime came to power.[1] As a result, the regime demanded cultural change. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese was heavily impacted by this change.

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "Indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This Indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion, as the expressions of Chineseness, including Chinese religious and cultural traditions were forbidden.[3]

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[4] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or the blending of all of them, known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw Hwee* or *Tri Dharma*.[5] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese tradition in it, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the State. In this way, they could become ideologically-correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese was supported by the worship of various gods in Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[6] There were concerted efforts from the State, as well as from

[1] For a detailed account of the discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996-1999*.

[2] *Abangans* are Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam, that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*.

[3] Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

[4] Confucianism has been in Indonesia long before the 20th century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," 125–35; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*].

[5] *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." For further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee* see Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia.*

[6] See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," 139–65, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

pribumi[7] Buddhists, who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent,[8] to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia where the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism, namely, Buddhism which is not influenced by what so-called Chinese traditional rituals, and Buddhism which is in line with the state ideology.[9]

This situation led Chinese Indonesian Buddhists to the pressure to conform to the new socio-political reality.[10] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and to detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. Theravāda's modernist idea even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism from its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[11]

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. "Chinese Indonesians are no longer forced to be assimilated; they are able to retain their ethnic culture and identity."[12] Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge especially in the religious beliefs traditionally associated with the Chinese, such as Buddhism, Daosim, and Confucianism. Chinese Buddhism started to develop again.[13] For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Indonesian Buddhists, the comeback of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism should be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between the religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I am exploring in this paper. In so doing,

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[7] *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued a Presidential Decree No. 26/1998, on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines that indigenous Indonesians are people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

[8] Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

[9] For further reference see Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahasthavira," 53–72; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

[10] Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the provinces of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed on September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya – the capital of East Java province and the 2nd largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted, is quite high, 31,166, which constitute more than half of the Buddhist population in the province, namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed on September 9, 2018).

[11] Buddhism's social stigma of Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architectures and façade. However, unlike mosques and churches, with the exception of some Buddhist temples – especially those which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees – and old Chinese temples, most Buddhist temples are originally profane commercial buildings or houses converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the exteriors. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. Even there are temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image can be some indication of the challenges that Buddhism – a state-sanctioned religion – faces, despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brings openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temple through their architectural designs.

[12] Eddie Lembong, "Indonesian Government Policies and the Ethnic Chinese: Some Recent Development." 55.

[13] Leo Suryadinata, "Chinese Indonesians in an Era of Globalization: Some Major Characteristics," 10.

through a fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

My investigation on the Chinese Indonesian Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to a more rationalized religious practices.[14] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization, namely, one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may develop social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[15] These tensions, I believe, could occur because different religious orientations as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribed and what religious organizations taught. These tensions may warrant the pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the socio-political reality.

In conforming to socio-political reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[16]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[17]

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individual together and provide a social context for maintaining ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and

[14] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.
[15] Max Weber, *The sociology of Religion*, 223.
[16] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[17] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.

development of identity through religious beliefs and practices creates a process through which boundaries appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[18]

Grounded on the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as "Chinese religion." Then, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. Next, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

THE ORIGIN OF "CHINESE RELIGION"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. However, the fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the 15th century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered the demise of Buddhism.[19] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[20] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive in even as Java becomes more Islamic.[21]

Buddhism started to resurface in the 17th century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism, thanks to the influx of Chinese immigrants in Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) – known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in Glodok area of Jakarta.[22] Since then, Buddhism – mixed with Chinese traditional belief – had grown in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of the religious life, but the center for Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Dhurkeim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[23] I contend that the temples preserved the Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity of the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of Chinese religion.

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in the colonial Indonesia in the early 20th century, such as Josias van Dienst and E.E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring the esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups like the Dutch, the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[24] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elite, Eastern esotericism referred to the Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[25] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress held on April

[18] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[19] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.
[20] Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.
[21] Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.
[22] Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.
[23] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[24] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.
[25] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27–28.

1-2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors – "*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[26] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published a bulletin *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*) in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934. These publications, which used the term *Sam Kauw*, clearly emphasized the blending of the three teachings, namely, Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.

Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma

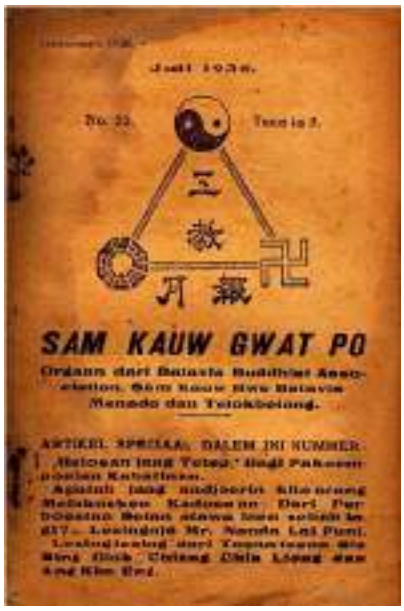

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po

In the mid-20th century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an occultism, which was a syncretistic belief of various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks – among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita (of Chinese descent, whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante Girirakkhito (the son of a Balinese royal family whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri) – in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[27] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

[26] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.

[27] For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Girirakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*] (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995).

Although there were natives who embrace Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[28] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Traditions such as venerating ancestors and observing *Qingming Jie*[29] became parts of Buddhist practices. Besides that, Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem with Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese – an ethnic minority, and hence often labeled as Chinese religion. Being labeled as Chinese religion might not be a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[30] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported the colonial rule, and many joined Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they should dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion due to "its 'overly' Chinese cultural form,"[31] and promote it as "an autochthonous religion and not a foreign or alien import."[32] By so doing, they could make Buddhism as a religion that transcends ethnic boundaries in Indonesia.

DOCTRINAL INTERVENTION

Because of the nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism, namely, Buddhism with distinct Indonesian characteristics.[33] However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture was deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into what so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

The anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication, among others, the ban of Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of the non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This was one reason why in its congress in May 1970, *Perhimpunan Buddhis Indonesia* (Indonesian Buddhists Association) issued a resolution stating that "Indonesia Buddhism in Indonesia should have more Indonesian characteristics, not Chinese ones."[34] The effort of separating Buddhism from the social stigma of Chinese religion was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[35] This Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian

[28] Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.
[29] *Qingming Jie* (清明節), also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day, is the time when people of Chinese descent visit the graves of their departed ones, and making ritual offerings.
[30] Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.
[31] Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.
[32] Iem Brown, "The Revival of Buddhism in Modern Indonesia," 53.
[33] For further discussion on Indonesian Buddhism see Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia."
[34] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 71.
[35] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.

term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and the prohibition of building new Chinese temples.[36] Experiencing the conversion of Chinese temples into Buddhist ones, a temple caretaker lamented, "We had to convert our temple into *vihara*. If not, we would be in trouble. … This was the most difficult moment for us. We had to change our place of worship as if it was the place of abomination. It did pain us."[37] This law also affected pure Buddhist *viharas*. Because of being perceived as Chinese religions, places of worship of Buddhism faced problems. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairing existing Buddhist temples needed a special permit, which was often difficult to get.[38]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence through classifying all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism, that is, emphasizing on the teaching in the scriptures. The regime opined that Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and to detach themselves from the Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and more often than not, having no relation with the religion itself.[39] By so doing, the regime borrowed the authority of holy scriptures to justify its policy, an act that Wimbush describes as scripturalization.[40] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space the regime defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered as Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals are in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists should return to the "true" Dharma, that is, the Buddha's teaching, and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtra chanting could be done in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged. Describing this situation, an elder in a Buddhist temple said, "We started using Sanskrit sūtras when the New Order regime banned Chinese language and culture. … Chanting in Chinese was not totally forbidden, but you know …. when the government said that

[36] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bhakti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.

[37] Interview, March 1, 2015

[38] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera."

[39] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs the Buddhist in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular on the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temple.

[40] See Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.

it was recommended, it was not just a recommendation. It was an order. Then we used both Chinese and Sanskrit sūtras. However, Sanskrit sūtras were chanted in our Sunday school."[41]

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could also be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. Because China associated with communism, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist – the enemy of the State. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Oder regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion, that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and holy book.

The position of the belief in God is very central in the Indonesian political landscape, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, the Indonesia's state ideology, that is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[42] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who wanted an Islamic state by emphasizing the importance of religion and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, the word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion) – not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam – is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive, that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on that principle, the State only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic, namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[43] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected, Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they face. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptation.

POLITICAL RITUALS

Ritual is closely related to identity as the earlier can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment could produce a sense of belonging among the participants. Ritual can draw attention to their shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[44] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the means by which individuals are brought together as a collective group."[45] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[46]

As the Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and it was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could strengthen the Sino-Buddhist identity. However, the Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building, that is, the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new socio-political landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification. Those who made adaptation in their religious rituals believed that the notion

[41] Interview, March 1, 2015.
[42] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles, namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structure. This importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to get people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.
[43] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.
[44] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.
[45] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
[46] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.

of impermanence, that is, "no element of physical matter or any concept remain unchanged,"[47] gave them an authority[48] to do so, as what a *Romo Pandito*[49] in a Buddhayāna temple said, "It is stated in Buddhist scripture that nothing is permanent. So, making some adjustments as long as the changes are still in line with Buddhist teachings is definitely not a big deal."[50]

An example of adaptation is appropriating Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall in the first or the fifteenth day of the month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebration.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese a legitimate space for culturally-Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted and then followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, the Chinese Buddhists showed resistance as well as accommodation to the pressure of the "nationalization" of Buddhism. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebration and the use of Chinese language served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used in expressing their ethnic identity. However, they had to make accommodation because the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal, not an ethnic religion, by placing an emphasis on the religious aspects of the celebration, that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also accommodated. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit, was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation – that is, expressing their Indonesianness – and resistance – that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy showed that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[51] were political because they could "construct, display, and promote … political interests" of a certain group.[52] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to changing social and political climate.

INTERPRETING GOD-HEAD

Besides in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in the Buddhist theology. Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The State regarded Buddhism as or standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The theological debate over whether Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God or not was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape propelled Buddhism to accommodate its doctrine

Commented [A1]: The term 'theology' may be ,misleading here, as Buddhism has been portrayed elsewhere in the text as a 'religion without god'.

Commented [A2R1]: The reviewers are right. I wrote in this manuscript that Buddhism was a religion without God. However, I use the term theology to refer to "the study of religion". In fact there are some scholars who use the term Buddhist theology, although they also believe that there is no God in Buddhism. See for example:
1. Jackson, Roger, and John Makransky (ed.) 2000. *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars*. Cornwall: Curzon.
2. Obuse, Kieko. 2015. "Finding God in Buddhism: A New Trend in Contemporary Buddhist Approaches to Islam." *Numen* 62, no. 4, pp. 408-430.

[47] Carol S. Anderson, "Anitya (Impermanence)," 23
[48] For further discussion on how scriptures function as the source of authoritative power, see Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
[49] *Romo Pandito* is a Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who is appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk
[50] Interview, December 10, 2014.
[51] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[52] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.

in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (for referring to a concept of God in Buddhism),[53] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the 8th or 9th century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[54]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[55] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[56] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, he is different from Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world, that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a God-head, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia – Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[57] His personal experience may also contribute to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, … , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic inquiry as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[58]

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, in Buddhayāna the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to its teaching. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*) written by Dhammaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism, namely, believing in one supreme God – Ādi-Buddha, having prophets – Buddha Gautama and others Bodhisattvas, and having holy books – *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is put into the Islamic context, from which the State defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The State and other religious groups accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence it had communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely, Ādi-Buddha, and it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under the political condition as such, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

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[53] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism," 108–17.

[54] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation in western languages was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.

[55] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.

[56] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.

[57] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda," 10–21.

[58] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59–60.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God, as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. Criticizing Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's concept of Ādi-Buddha, Bhante Naradha Thera, a Sri Lankan Theravādin monk who once visited Indonesia, sent a letter to Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's English translator in which he wrote that there was no God in Buddhism.[59] Another monk from Thailand, who was invited for the ordination of five Indonesian Buddhist monks in 1970 also questioned the concept of Ādi-Buddha. He wrote whether this concept was "a wise compromise".[60] However, the Indonesian Theravādins understood the importance of God in Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God.[61] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[62]

Despite the differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' (both the Chinese and the non-Chinese Indonesians) attempt to conform to the state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism, namely, the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually has continuity with the past,[63] and they are invented to cope with the new condition and situation.[64] Hobsbawm's and Ranger's idea on the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea, that is, giving it a new meaning suitable with the present conditions they faced.

Commented [A3]: This reference to Hobsbawm and Ranger's work is unnecessary. And the notion of 'invention' could be questioned as well –no 'invented tradition' is totally 'invented'.

Commented [A4R3]: I agree with the reviewers that the notion of invention could be questioned. However, their definition of "invented tradition" is "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past" (Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p. 1). Based on that definition, I contend that Chinese Indonesian Buddhists invented the notion of God, which is found in "their historic past," namely, the notion of Ādi-Buddha, by giving Ādi-Buddha a new meaning. And for this reason, I decide to put Hobsbawm and Ranger's concept of invented tradition in here.

POST – NEW ORDER BUDDHISM

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the coming of Theravāda Buddhism to Indonesia, which was brought by Buddhist monks who were sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious training.[65] In 1970, some of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of Tipitaka, and emphasizing on the philosophical teachings of Buddha, instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result, the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both the Chinese and the non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the changing of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease on life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims

[59] Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*], 145.
[60] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 5.
[61] Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).
[62] Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with, that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.
[63] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[64] Ibid., 8.
[65] A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work and ordination may be a factor for Buddhism in Indonesia to send its monk to Theravāda school for religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," 108–15.

started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese tradition openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public was now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, the modernist and scripturalist Theravādins questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temple and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals, just like what the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

How the Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of contentions between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings. The latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

An example of the contention between the traditionalists and the modernists was food offering (the Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term of *ehipasiko*.[66] Venerating ancestors was also an example of the contention. All agreed that showing respect to ancestors and the departed ones was commendable. However, the modernists believed that it should not have done to the extent that an ancestral altar was specially made. "We are allowed and even encouraged to show respect to our ancestors and those who have departed before us. However, there are no merits in having ancestral altars. There are no such things in Buddhism," said a man in his thirties.[67] On the other hand, the traditionalists believed that having an ancestral altar at home was also a way of practicing Buddhism, as it was the Chinese way of showing respect. "According to our tradition, it [having an ancestral altar] is the correct way of showing our respect."[68] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with the Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of the rituals according to their religious orientations. Those with a modernist leaning viewed those rituals as religiously improper, which implied that they prioritized "orthodoxy (correct belief);" others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals and thus viewed them as appropriate if not mandatory, which showed that they prioritized "orthopraxy (correct practice)."[69]

Another example of the contention was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[70] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred to the Pāli

[66] Literally *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes on the empirical verification of the Buddhist teachings.
[67] Interview, March 1, 2015.
[68] Interview, February 8, 2015.
[69] See Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* (University park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999) for a detail discussion on religions and Chinese cultural traditions.
[70] Interview, December 7, 2014.

text of Tipitaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God, which in Indonesian context was manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha. Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In the latter's opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they are "contaminated" Buddhists.[71] They emphasized on the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology, that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the ideas of god-head, lead Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The Chinese traditional rituals are usually practiced at home as cultural elements, and the religious rituals are practiced in the temple. In this way, the former is privatized and separated from the latter. During Chinese New Year celebration, for example, Chinese traditional rituals, such as venerating ancestors, is conducted as private affairs at home, whereas the religious rituals for celebrating it (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs, in a temple. As far as the ideas of god-head are concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have a sizable modernist devotees.

Through transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices by, for example, separating the traditional/cultural from the religious and adjusting some of their Buddhist practices, Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate the demands from the State and the modernists dominating Indonesian Buddhist society to stay away from their traditional ritual practices. The transformation and recast also enable those who believe in the existence of God, as manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism also shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with the religious belief and tradition. All these led to the diversity among the Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a Theravādin *Romo Pandito* said, "Although personally we disagree with their [Chinese Buddhists'] practices, we could accept those diverse practices. Being open-minded is a Buddhist virtue".[72] Another from a Buddhayāna temple said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors. Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha."[73]

CONCLUSION

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of the ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism in the early 20th century, after it was dormant for a few hundred years.[74] Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence,

[71] On April 26, 2015, in an informal discussion with seven Buddhists who are members of a Buddhayāna temple congregation, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not "contaminate" their Buddhist belief.
[72] Interview, April 5, 2015.
[73] Interview, February 12, 2015.
[74] For a detailed account of the role of the Chinese in reviving Buddhism in Indonesia, see Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*]; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267−83; Claudine Salmon

Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of the Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project, it started to Indonesianize its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural tradition in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals become a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism, which has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. As result, this version of Buddhism now dominates Buddhism in Indonesia.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate on the existence of God in Buddhism came up. Fueled by different religious orientations and interpretations, this situation triggered tensions among the Chinese Buddhist community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between the religious and the traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness as a justification to accept differences in their rites and practices. They separate the religious and the cultural while allowing them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere. In so doing, they allow the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used for giving the freedom to those to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus, they innovate, transform, and recast their belief to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of lotus.

Commented [A5]: Not all Theravada Buddhism has a scripturalist leaning… What about the influence of scripturalist interpretations of Islam in Indonesia?

Commented [A6R5]: I agree that not all Theravādins have a scripturalist leaning. But, based on my observation, Theravāda Buddhism in Indonesia has a scripturalist tendency. For example, the Indonesian translations of the Pāli texts of the Theravāda are presented next to the Pāli original without commentary or interpretation. In so doing it claims the scripturalist authority. Another example is that the Theravāda regularly holds paritta (Theravāda holy texts) recital contests among the Buddhists in Indonesia. The winner are awarded Presidents Cup. The focus of this contest is not on the ability to understand the text because the Indonesian translations of the Pāli text provide the literal meaning of the Pāli originals, but rather on the spectacle of reciting them. Through this kind of scripturalist performance, the Theravādins in Indonesia show their appreciation for the "true" Buddhist texts. This reminds people of the well-known Quranic reading contest. The reviewers' guess that scripturalist interpretations of Islam in Indonesia may affect the scripturalist leaning of Theravada Buddhism could be right. However, in this article, I do not make such a claim because further analysis is needed.

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and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*]; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

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Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965–98) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into the Buddhism made more Indonesian by eliminating its Chinese traditional influence. This found support among Chinese Indonesians Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism from its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the comeback of these rituals to Buddhism should be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they dislike blending Buddhism with them. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use for coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity constructions. The finding shows that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness for coming to terms with these tensions, and for innovating, transforming and recasting their religious practices.

Keywords: Buddhism, Chinese community, Chinese religion, Identity, Indonesia

Bukti 8

Bukti pengiriman revisi kedua.

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submission of revised manuscript

Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id> Tue, Aug 20, 2019 at 4:06 PM
To: Anna Křivánková <krivankova@orient.cas.cz>

Dear Anna,

Thank you for the file.

I have revised it as Dr. Hons suggested. I highlighted the revision in yellow background.

Attached please kindly find the revision and the two pictures I use in the artikel.
Figure 1 is Moestika Dharma.jpg
Figure 2 is SamKaum GwatPo.job

Best,
Steph

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3 attachments

Moestika Dharma.jpg
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SamKauw GwatPo.jpg
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Various Petals of Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

Setefanus Suprajitno

INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important changes, what Indonesians call as *Reformasi* (The Reform), is changes in policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. The Chinese Indonesians have regained the space in public life, after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965–98), Chinese Indonesians were considered as perpetual foreigners whose existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination culminated in 1965, when the New Order Regime came to power.[1] As a result, the regime demanded cultural change. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese was heavily impacted by this change.

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "Indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This Indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion, as the expressions of Chineseness, including Chinese religious and cultural traditions were forbidden.[3]

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[4] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or the blending of all of them, known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw Hwee* or *Tri Dharma*.[5] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese tradition in it, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the State. In this way, they could become ideologically-correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese was supported by the worship of various gods in Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[6] There were concerted efforts from the State, as well as from

[1] For a detailed account of the discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996-1999*.

[2] *Abangans* are Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam, that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*.

[3] Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

[4] Confucianism has been in Indonesia long before the 20th century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," 125–35; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*].

[5] *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." For further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee* see Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia.*

[6] See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," 139–65, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

pribumi[7] Buddhists, who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent,[8] to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia where the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism, namely, Buddhism which is not influenced by what so-called Chinese traditional rituals, and Buddhism which is in line with the state ideology.[9]

This situation led Chinese Indonesian Buddhists to the pressure to conform to the new socio-political reality.[10] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and to detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. Theravāda's modernist idea even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism from its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[11]

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. "Chinese Indonesians are no longer forced to be assimilated; they are able to retain their ethnic culture and identity."[12] Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge especially in the religious beliefs traditionally associated with the Chinese, such as Buddhism, Daosim, and Confucianism. Chinese Buddhism started to develop again.[13] For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Indonesian Buddhists, the comeback of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism should be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between the religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I am exploring in this paper. In so doing,

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[7] *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued a Presidential Decree No. 26/1998, on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines that indigenous Indonesians are people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

[8] Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

[9] For further reference see Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahasthavira," 53–72; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

[10] Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the provinces of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed on September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya – the capital of East Java province and the 2nd largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted, is quite high, 31,166, which constitute more than half of the Buddhist population in the province, namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed on September 9, 2018).

[11] Buddhism's social stigma of Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architectures and façade. However, unlike mosques and churches, with the exception of some Buddhist temples – especially those which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees – and old Chinese temples, most Buddhist temples are originally profane commercial buildings or houses converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the exteriors. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. Even there are temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image can be some indication of the challenges that Buddhism – a state-sanctioned religion – faces, despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brings openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temple through their architectural designs.

[12] Eddie Lembong, "Indonesian Government Policies and the Ethnic Chinese: Some Recent Development." 55.

[13] Leo Suryadinata, "Chinese Indonesians in an Era of Globalization: Some Major Characteristics," 10.

through a fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

My investigation on the Chinese Indonesian Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to a more rationalized religious practices.[14] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization, namely, one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may develop social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[15] These tensions, I believe, could occur because different religious orientations as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribed and what religious organizations taught. These tensions may warrant the pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the socio-political reality.

In conforming to socio-political reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[16]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[17]

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individual together and provide a social context for maintaining ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and

[14] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.
[15] Max Weber, *The sociology of Religion*, 223.
[16] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[17] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.

development of identity through religious beliefs and practices creates a process through which boundaries appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[18]

Grounded on the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as "Chinese religion." Then, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. Next, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

THE ORIGIN OF "CHINESE RELIGION"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. However, the fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the 15th century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered the demise of Buddhism.[19] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[20] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive in even as Java becomes more Islamic.[21]

Buddhism started to resurface in the 17th century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism, thanks to the influx of Chinese immigrants in Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) – known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in Glodok area of Jakarta.[22] Since then, Buddhism – mixed with Chinese traditional belief – had grown in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of the religious life, but the center for Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Dhurkeim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[23] I contend that the temples preserved the Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity of the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of Chinese religion.

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in the colonial Indonesia in the early 20th century, such as Josias van Dienst and E.E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring the esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups like the Dutch, the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[24] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elite, Eastern esotericism referred to the Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[25] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress held on April

[18] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[19] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.
[20] Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.
[21] Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.
[22] Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.
[23] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[24] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.
[25] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27–28.

1-2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors – "*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[26] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published a bulletin *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*) in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934. These publications, which used the term *Sam Kauw*, clearly emphasized the blending of the three teachings, namely, Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.

Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma

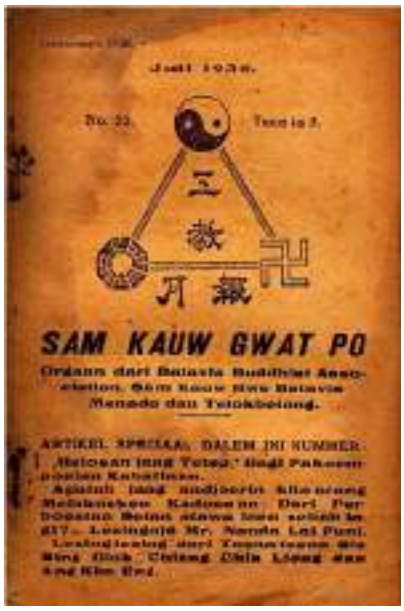

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po

In the mid-20th century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an occultism, which was a syncretistic belief of various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks – among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita (of Chinese descent, whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante Girirakkhito (the son of a Balinese royal family whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri) – in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[27] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

[26] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.

[27] For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Girirakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*] (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995).

Although there were natives who embrace Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[28] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Traditions such as venerating ancestors and observing *Qingming Jie*[29] became parts of Buddhist practices. Besides that, Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem with Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese – an ethnic minority, and hence often labeled as Chinese religion. Being labeled as Chinese religion might not be a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[30] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported the colonial rule, and many joined Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they should dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion due to "its 'overly' Chinese cultural form,"[31] and promote it as "an autochthonous religion and not a foreign or alien import."[32] By so doing, they could make Buddhism as a religion that transcends ethnic boundaries in Indonesia.

DOCTRINAL INTERVENTION

Because of the nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism, namely, Buddhism with distinct Indonesian characteristics.[33] However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture was deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into what so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

The anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication, among others, the ban of Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of the non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This was one reason why in its congress in May 1970, *Perhimpunan Buddhis Indonesia* (Indonesian Buddhists Association) issued a resolution stating that "Indonesia Buddhism in Indonesia should have more Indonesian characteristics, not Chinese ones."[34] The effort of separating Buddhism from the social stigma of Chinese religion was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[35] This Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian

[28] Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.
[29] *Qingming Jie* (清明節), also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day, is the time when people of Chinese descent visit the graves of their departed ones, and making ritual offerings.
[30] Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.
[31] Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.
[32] Iem Brown, "The Revival of Buddhism in Modern Indonesia," 53.
[33] For further discussion on Indonesian Buddhism see Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia."
[34] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 71.
[35] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.

term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and the prohibition of building new Chinese temples.[36] Experiencing the conversion of Chinese temples into Buddhist ones, a temple caretaker lamented, "We had to convert our temple into *vihara*. If not, we would be in trouble. … This was the most difficult moment for us. We had to change our place of worship as if it was the place of abomination. It did pain us."[37] This law also affected pure Buddhist *viharas*. Because of being perceived as Chinese religions, places of worship of Buddhism faced problems. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairing existing Buddhist temples needed a special permit, which was often difficult to get.[38]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence through classifying all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism, that is, emphasizing on the teaching in the scriptures. The regime opined that Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and to detach themselves from the Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and more often than not, having no relation with the religion itself.[39] By so doing, the regime borrowed the authority of holy scriptures to justify its policy, an act that Wimbush describes as scripturalization.[40] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space the regime defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered as Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals are in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists should return to the "true" Dharma, that is, the Buddha's teaching, and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtra chanting could be done in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged. Describing this situation, an elder in a Buddhist temple said, "We started using Sanskrit sūtras when the New Order regime banned Chinese language and culture. … Chanting in Chinese was not totally forbidden, but you know …. when the government said that

[36] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bhakti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.

[37] Interview, March 1, 2015

[38] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera."

[39] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs the Buddhist in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular on the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temple.

[40] See Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.

it was recommended, it was not just a recommendation. It was an order. Then we used both Chinese and Sanskrit sūtras. However, Sanskrit sūtras were chanted in our Sunday school."[41]

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could also be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. Because China associated with communism, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist – the enemy of the State. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Oder regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion, that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and holy book.

The position of the belief in God is very central in the Indonesian political landscape, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, the Indonesia's state ideology, that is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[42] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who wanted an Islamic state by emphasizing the importance of religion and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, the word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion) – not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam – is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive, that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on that principle, the State only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic, namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[43] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected, Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they face. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptation.

POLITICAL RITUALS

Ritual is closely related to identity as the earlier can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment could produce a sense of belonging among the participants. Ritual can draw attention to their shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[44] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the means by which individuals are brought together as a collective group."[45] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[46]

As the Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and it was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could strengthen the Sino-Buddhist identity. However, the Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building, that is, the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new socio-political landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification. Those who made adaptation in their religious rituals believed that the notion

[41] Interview, March 1, 2015.
[42] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles, namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structure. This importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to get people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.
[43] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.
[44] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.
[45] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
[46] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.

of impermanence, that is, "no element of physical matter or any concept remain unchanged,"[47] gave them an authority[48] to do so, as what a *Romo Pandito*[49] in a Buddhayāna temple said, "It is stated in Buddhist scripture that nothing is permanent. So, making some adjustments as long as the changes are still in line with Buddhist teachings is definitely not a big deal."[50]

An example of adaptation is appropriating Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall in the first or the fifteenth day of the month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebration.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese a legitimate space for culturally-Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted and then followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, the Chinese Buddhists showed resistance as well as accommodation to the pressure of the "nationalization" of Buddhism. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebration and the use of Chinese language served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used in expressing their ethnic identity. However, they had to make accommodation because the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal, not an ethnic religion, by placing an emphasis on the religious aspects of the celebration, that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also accommodated. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit, was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation – that is, expressing their Indonesianness – and resistance – that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy showed that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[51] were political because they could "construct, display, and promote … political interests" of a certain group.[52] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to changing social and political climate.

INTERPRETING GOD-HEAD

Besides in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in the Buddhist theology.[53] Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The State regarded Buddhism

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[47] Carol S. Anderson, "Anitya (Impermanence)," 23
[48] For further discussion on how scriptures function as the source of authoritative power, see Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
[49] *Romo Pandito* is a Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who is appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk
[50] Interview, December 10, 2014.
[51] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[52] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.
[53] While the term theology may not fit with the nature of Buddhism because it is portrayed as a religion without God, a number of scholars use the term theology to refer to the study of Buddhism as a religion. Hence, the term Buddhist theology came up. See for example, Roger Jackson and John Makransky, ed., *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars*

as or standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The theological debate over whether Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God or not was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape propelled Buddhism to accommodate its doctrine in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (for referring to a concept of God in Buddhism),[54] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the 8th or 9th century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[55]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[56] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[57] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, he is different from Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world, that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a God-head, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia – Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[58] His personal experience may also contribute to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, … , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic inquiry as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[59]

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, in Buddhayāna the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to its teaching. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*) written by Dhammaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism, namely, believing in one supreme God – Ādi-Buddha, having prophets – Buddha Gautama and others Bodhisattvas, and having holy books – *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is put into the Islamic context, from which the State defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The State and other religious groups

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(Cornwall: Curzon, 2000), and Kieko Obuse, "Finding God in Buddhism: A New Trend in Contemporary Buddhist Approaches to Islam" *Numen* 62, no. 4 (2015): 408-430.

[54] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism," 108–17.

[55] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation in western languages was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.

[56] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.

[57] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.

[58] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda," 10–21.

[59] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59–60.

accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence it had communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely, Ādi-Buddha, and it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under the political condition as such, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God, as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. Criticizing Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's concept of Ādi-Buddha, Bhante Naradha Thera, a Sri Lankan Theravādin monk who once visited Indonesia, sent a letter to Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's English translator in which he wrote that there was no God in Buddhism.[60] Another monk from Thailand, who was invited for the ordination of five Indonesian Buddhist monks in 1970 also questioned the concept of Ādi-Buddha. He wrote whether this concept was "a wise compromise".[61] However, the Indonesian Theravādins understood the importance of God in Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God.[62] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[63]

Despite the differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' (both the Chinese and the non-Chinese Indonesians) attempt to conform to the state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism, namely, the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually has continuity with the past,[64] and they are invented to cope with the new condition and situation.[65] Hobsbawm's and Ranger's idea on the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea, that is, giving it a new meaning suitable with the present conditions they faced. The concept of God they invented is found in "their historic past," namely, the notion of Ādi-Buddha, which is given a new meaning and reinterpreted "God."

Commented [A2]: I incoporporated my answer to the reviewers into the text in two part. The first part, the definition of invented tradition which is a direct quotation, is put in the "conceptual framework" section (footnote 16 on p. 3). The second part, how I use the definition to support my argument (and two quotations), is put here.

POST – NEW ORDER BUDDHISM

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the coming of Theravāda Buddhism to Indonesia, which was brought by Buddhist monks who were sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious training.[66] In 1970, some of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of Tipitaka, and emphasizing on the philosophical teachings of Buddha, instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result,

[60] Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*], 145.
[61] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 5.
[62] Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).
[63] Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with, that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.
[64] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[65] Ibid., 8.
[66] A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work and ordination may be a factor for Buddhism in Indonesia to send its monk to Theravāda school for religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," 108–15.

the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both the Chinese and the non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the changing of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease on life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese tradition openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public was now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, the modernist and scripturalist Theravādins questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temple and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals, just like what the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

How the Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of contentions between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings. The latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

An example of the contention between the traditionalists and the modernists was food offering (the Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term of *ehipasiko*.[67] Venerating ancestors was also an example of the contention. All agreed that showing respect to ancestors and the departed ones was commendable. However, the modernists believed that it should not have done to the extent that an ancestral altar was specially made. "We are allowed and even encouraged to show respect to our ancestors and those who have departed before us. However, there are no merits in having ancestral altars. There are no such things in Buddhism," said a man in his thirties.[68] On the other hand, the traditionalists believed that having an ancestral altar at home was also a way of practicing Buddhism, as it was the Chinese way of showing respect. "According to our tradition, it [having an ancestral altar] is the correct way of showing our respect."[69] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with the Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of the rituals according to their religious orientations. Those with a modernist leaning viewed those rituals as religiously improper, which implied that they prioritized "orthodoxy (correct belief);" others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals

[67] Literally *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes on the empirical verification of the Buddhist teachings.
[68] Interview, March 1, 2015.
[69] Interview, February 8, 2015.

and thus viewed them as appropriate if not mandatory, which showed that they prioritized "orthopraxy (correct practice)."[70]

Another example of the contention was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[71] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred to the Pāli text of Tipitaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God, which in Indonesian context was manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha. Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In the latter's opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they are "contaminated" Buddhists.[72] They emphasized on the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology, that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the ideas of god-head, lead Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The Chinese traditional rituals are usually practiced at home as cultural elements, and the religious rituals are practiced in the temple. In this way, the former is privatized and separated from the latter. During Chinese New Year celebration, for example, Chinese traditional rituals, such as venerating ancestors, is conducted as private affairs at home, whereas the religious rituals for celebrating it (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs, in a temple. As far as the ideas of god-head are concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have a sizable modernist devotees.

Through transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices by, for example, separating the traditional/cultural from the religious and adjusting some of their Buddhist practices, Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate the demands from the State and the modernists dominating Indonesian Buddhist society to stay away from their traditional ritual practices. The transformation and recast also enable those who believe in the existence of God, as manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism also shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with the religious belief and tradition. All these led to the diversity among the Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a Theravādin *Romo Pandito* said, "Although personally we disagree with their [Chinese Buddhists'] practices, we could accept those diverse practices. Being open-minded is a Buddhist virtue".[73] Another from a Buddhayāna temple said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors. Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha."[74]

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[70] See Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* (University park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999) for a detail discussion on religions and Chinese cultural traditions.
[71] Interview, December 7, 2014.
[72] On April 26, 2015, in an informal discussion with seven Buddhists who are members of a Buddhayāna temple congregation, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not "contaminate" their Buddhist belief.
[73] Interview, April 5, 2015.
[74] Interview, February 12, 2015.

CONCLUSION

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of the ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism in the early 20th century, after it was dormant for a few hundred years.[75] Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence, Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of the Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project, it started to Indonesianize its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural tradition in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals become a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism that has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. Not all Theravādins have a scripturalist leaning. However, the Theravāda Buddhism in Indonesia does have a scripturalist tendency. For example, the Indonesian translations of the Pāli texts of the Theravāda are presented next to the Pāli original without commentary or interpretation. In so doing, it claims the scripturalist authority. Another example is that the Theravāda regularly holds paritta (Theravāda holy texts) recital contests among the Buddhists in Indonesia. The winners are awarded Presidents Cup at Vesak Day. The focus of this contest is not on the ability to understand the text because the Indonesian translations of the Pāli text provide the literal meaning of the Pāli originals, but rather on the spectacle of reciting them in Pāli, the religious language of Buddhism. Through this kind of scripturalist performance, the Theravādins in Indonesia show their appreciation for the "true" Buddhist texts. This is the version of Buddhism that now dominates Buddhism in Indonesia.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate on the existence of God in Buddhism came up. Fueled by different religious orientations and interpretations, this situation triggered tensions among the Chinese Buddhist community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between the religious and the traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness as a justification to accept differences in their rites and practices. They separate the religious and the cultural while allowing them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere. In so doing, they allow the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used for giving the freedom to those to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus, they innovate, transform, and recast their belief to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of lotus.

Commented [A3]: I have incorporated my answer to the reviewers into the text.

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Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965–98) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into the Buddhism made more Indonesian by eliminating its Chinese traditional influence. This found support among Chinese Indonesians Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism from its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the comeback of these rituals to Buddhism should be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they dislike blending Buddhism with them. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use for coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity constructions. The finding shows that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness for coming to terms with these tensions, and for innovating, transforming and recasting their religious practices.

Keywords: Buddhism, Chinese community, Chinese religion, Identity, Indonesia

Bukti 9

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Various Petals of the Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

Setefanus Suprajitno

INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important changes, whichat Indonesians call as *Reformasi* (The Reform), related tois changes indealt with policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. The It allowed Chinese Indonesians have to regained a the space in public life, after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and having been culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965–98), Chinese Indonesians were considered as perpetual foreigners and theirwhose existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination culminated peaked in 1965, when the New Order Regime came to power.[1] As a result, the regime demandinged cultural change. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*,[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese werecas heavily impacted by theis change.

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "Indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This Indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion, as the expressions of Chineseness, including Chinese religious and cultural traditions, were forbidden.[3]

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[4] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or athe blending of all of them, known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw Hwee* or *Tri Dharma*.[5] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese tradition in it, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the State. In this way, they could become ideologically correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was also considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese was supported by the worship of various gods fromin the Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[6] There were concerted efforts from the State,

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[1] For a detailed account of the discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996–1999*.

[2] *Abangans* are Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam, that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*.

[3] Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

[4] Confucianism has been in Indonesia since long before the twentie20th century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," 125–35; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*].

[5] *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." For further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee* see Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia.*

[6] See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," 139–65, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

as well as from *pribumi*[7] Buddhists, who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent,[8] to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia, where during which the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism, namely, Buddhism which is not influenced by what so-called Chinese traditional rituals, and Buddhism which is in line with the state ideology.[9]

This situation led put Chinese Indonesian Buddhists to theunder pressure to conform to the new socio-political reality.[10] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and to detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. The idea of modernist Theravāda's modernist ideaBuddhism even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism offfrom its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[11]

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. "Chinese Indonesians are no longer forced to be assimilated; they are able to retain their ethnic culture and identity."[12] Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge, especially in the religious beliefs traditionally associated with the Chinese, such as Buddhism, Daosim, and Confucianism. Chinese Buddhism started to develop again.[13] For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Indonesian Buddhists, the returncomeback of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism should needs to be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between the religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most of the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate

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[7] *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued a Presidential Decree No. 26/1998, on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines that indigenous Indonesians asre people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

[8] Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

[9] For further reference see Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahasthavira," 53–72; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

[10] Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the provinces of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed on September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya, the capital of East Java province and the second2nd largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted, is quite high: 31,166, which constitutes more than half of the Buddhist population in the province, namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed on September 9, 2018).

[11] Buddhism's social stigma as aof Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architectures and facesades. However, unlike mosques and churches, with somethe exceptions of some Buddhist temples, especially those temples which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees, and old Chinese temples, most Buddhist temples wcare originally profane commercial buildings or houses thatand were only later have been converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the exterioroutsides. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. TEven there are even temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image can begives some indication of the challenges that Buddhism, a state-sanctioned religion, faces, despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brings has brought openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temples through their architectural designs.

[12] Eddie Lembong, "Indonesian Government Policies and the Ethnic Chinese: Some Recent Development," 55.

[13] Leo Suryadinata, "Chinese Indonesians in an Era of Globalization: Some Major Characteristics," 10.

these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I ~~am~~ explor~~e~~ing in this paper. In so doing, and by ~~through a~~referring to fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

My investigation into~~on~~ the Chinese Indonesian Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to ~~a~~ more rationalized religious practices.[14] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization~~—~~, ~~namely,~~: one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may develop social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[15] These tensions, I believe, could occur ~~because different religious orientations~~ as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribe~~d~~ and what religious organizations ~~taught~~teach. The~~yse tensions~~ may ~~warrant the~~put pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the socio-political reality.

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In conforming to socio-political reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[16]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[17]

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individual~~s~~ together and provide a social context for the maint~~e~~enance of~~aining~~ ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance

[14] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.
[15] Max Weber, *The S~~s~~ociology of Religion*, 223.
[16] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[17] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.

could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and development of identity through religious beliefs and practices creates a process through which boundaries appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted by selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[18]

Grounding my argumented in the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as a "Chinese religion." ThenSubsequently, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. NextFinally, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

THE ORIGIN OF "CHINESE RELIGION"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. THowever, the fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the fifteen15th century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered in the demise of Buddhism.[19] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[20] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive in even as Java becomes more Islamic.[21]

Buddhism started to resurface in the seventeen17th century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism, thanks toas a result of the influx of Chinese immigrants into Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) and —known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in the Glodok area of Jakarta.[22] Since thenFrom that time, Buddhism——mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs——had growngrew in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of the religious life, but the center for of Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Dhurkheim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[23] I contend that the temples preserved the Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity amongof the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of "Chinese religion."

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in the colonial Indonesia in the early twentiethth20th century, such as Josias van Dienst and E.E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created the Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring the esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups, like the Dutch and, the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[24] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elites, Eastern esotericism referred to the

[18] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[19] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.
[20] Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.
[21] Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.
[22] Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.
[23] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[24] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.

Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[25] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress held on April 1–2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors—"*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[26] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published the bulletin, *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*), in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934. These publications, which used the term *Sam Kauw*, clearly emphasized the blending of the three teachings, namely, Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.

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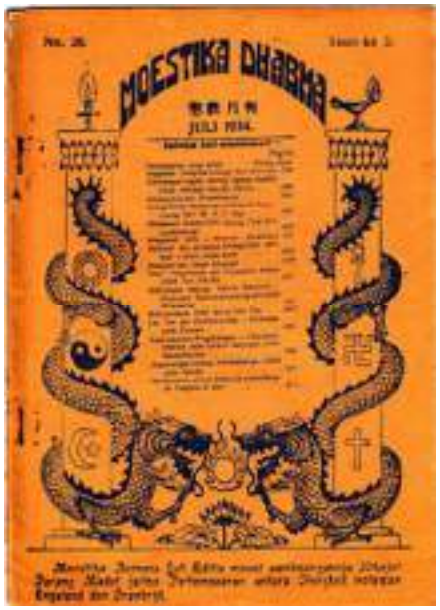

Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma

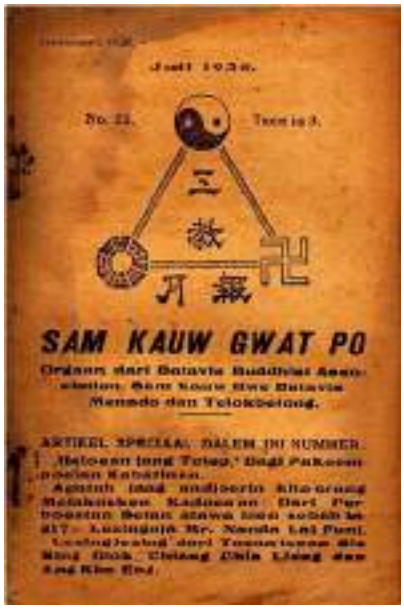

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po

In the mid-20th twentieth century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims, and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an example of occultism, which was a syncretistic belief in of various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks—among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita, who was (of Chinese descent and, whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante

[25] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27–28.
[26] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.

Girirakkhito, (the son of a Balinese royal family, whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri) — in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[27] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

Although there were natives who embraceddd Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[28] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Traditions such as venerating ancestors and observing *Qingming Jie*[29] became parts of Buddhist practices. MoreoverBesides that, Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem with for Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese — an ethnic minority —, and hence often labeled as a Chinese religion. Being labeled as a Chinese religion might not have been a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[30] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported the colonial rule, and many joined the Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they should had to dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion due to "its 'overly' Chinese cultural form,"[31] and promote it as "an autochthonous religion and not a foreign or alien import."[32] InBy so doing, they could turnmake Buddhism into as a religion that transcendeds ethnic boundaries in Indonesia.

DOCTRINAL INTERVENTION

Because of the nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into a form of Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism —, namely, Buddhism with distinct Indonesian characteristics.[33] However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture was had deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesianizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into what so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

AThe anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication —, among others, the ban on theof Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of the non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This was one reason why, in its congress in May 1970, *Perhimpunan Buddhis Indonesia* (the Indonesian Buddhists Association) issued a resolution stating that

[27] For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Girirakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*] (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995).
[28] Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.
[29] *Qingming Jie* (清明節), also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day, is the time when people of Chinese descent visit the graves of their departed ones, and making ritual offerings.
[30] Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.
[31] Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.
[32] Iem Brown, "The Revival of Buddhism in Modern Indonesia," 53.
[33] For further discussion on Indonesian Buddhism see Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia."

"Indonesia Buddhism in Indonesia should have more Indonesian characteristics, not Chinese ones."[34] The effort of separating Buddhism from the social stigma of Chinese religion was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[35] This Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and the prohibitedion theof building of new Chinese temples.[36] Experiencing the conversion of Chinese temples into Buddhist ones, a temple caretaker lamented, "We had to convert our temple into *vihara*. If not, we would be in trouble. … This was the most difficult moment for us. We had to change our place of worship as if it was the place of abomination. It did pain us."[37] This law also affected pure Buddhist *viharas*. Because of beingthey were perceived as being associated with Chinese religions, Buddhist places of worship of Buddhism faced problems. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairs ofing existing Buddhist temples needed required a special permit, which was often difficult to get.[38]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence through by the classification ofying all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism—,that is, emphasiszing on the teaching in the scriptures. The regime opined that Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and to detach themselves from the Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and, more often than not, hadving no relation with to the religion itself.[39] InBy so doing, the regime borrowed the authority of holy scriptures to justify its policy—,an act that Wimbush describes as scripturalization.[40] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space the regimeit had defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered to beas Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals wea re in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists should had to return to the "true" Dharma—,that is, the Buddha's teaching—,and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally

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[34] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 71.

[35] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.

[36] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bhakti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.

[37] Interview, March 1, 2015

[38] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera."

[39] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public ofn the restriction onf Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs the Buddhists in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular ien the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temples.

[40] See Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.

banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtras ~~chanting~~ could be ~~done~~ chanted in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged. Describing this situation, an elder in a Buddhist temple said, "We started using Sanskrit sūtras when the New Order regime banned Chinese language and culture. … Chanting in Chinese was not totally forbidden, but you know …. when the government said that it was recommended, it was not just a recommendation. It was an order. Then we used both Chinese and Sanskrit sūtras. However, Sanskrit sūtras were chanted in our Sunday school."[41]

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could ~~also~~ be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. Because China was associated with communism, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist—an~~the~~ enemy of the State. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Order regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion—that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and a holy book.

The position of the belief in God ~~is very central~~ in the Indonesian political landscape is very central, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, ~~the~~ Indonesia's state ideology, which~~that~~ is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[42] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who wanted an Islamic state (by emphasizing the importance of religion) and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, ~~the~~ a word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion), and – not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam, – is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive—that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on this~~eat~~ principle, the State only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic—namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[43] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected~~,~~ Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they faced. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptations.

POLITICAL RITUALS

Ritual is closely related to identity as the ~~earlier~~ former can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment ~~could~~ can produce a sense of belonging among the participants and r~~. R~~itual can draw attention to the~~ir~~ shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[44] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the means by which individuals are brought together

[41] Interview, March 1, 2015.
[42] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles—namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact that the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structures. The~~ir~~ importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to persuade ~~get~~ people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.
[43] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.
[44] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.

as a collective group."[45] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[46]

As ~~the~~ Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and ~~it~~ was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could thus strengthen ~~the~~ Sino-Buddhist identity. However, ~~the~~ Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building~~, that is,~~ and the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new socio-political landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification. Those who ~~made~~ adapted~~ation in~~ their religious rituals believed that the notion of impermanence, that is, "no element of physical matter or any concept remain unchanged~~,~~,"[47] gave them the~~an~~ authority[48] to do so. A~~,~~ as ~~what~~ a *Romo Pandito*[49] in a Buddhayāna temple said~~:~~, "It is stated in Buddhist scripture that nothing is permanent. So, making some adjustments as long as the changes are still in line with Buddhist teachings is definitely not a big deal."[50]

An example of adaptation is the appropriation of~~ng~~ Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall o~~i~~n the first or the fifteenth day of a~~the~~ month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of the Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebrations.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of the Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese with a legitimate space for culturally ~~-~~Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted, ~~and then~~ followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, ~~the~~ Chinese Buddhists ~~showed resistance~~ resisted ~~as well as accommodation to the~~ pressure ~~of for the~~to "nationalization" ~~of~~ Buddhism as well as accommodating it. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebrations and the use of Chinese ~~language~~ served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used to~~in~~ express~~ing~~ their ethnic identity. However, they had to make ~~accommodation~~ concessions because the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal and less of~~, not~~ an ethnic religion~~,~~ by ~~placing an emphasis on~~emphasizing the religious aspects of the celebration, that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet, at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also ~~accommodated~~preserved. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit, was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation, that is, expressing their Indonesianness, and resistance, that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy show~~ed~~ that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[51]

Commented [A7]: Please check this change is consistent with the intended meaning. The words 'accommodation' and 'accommodated' were doing a bit too much work in this paragraph so I've tried to suggest a couple of alternatives.

[45] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
[46] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.
[47] Carol S. Anderson, "Anitya (Impermanence)," 23
[48] For further discussion on how scriptures function as the source of authoritative power, see Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
[49] *Romo Pandito* is a Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who is appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk
[50] Interview, December 10, 2014.
[51] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

were political because they could "construct, display, and promote … political interests" of a certain group.[52] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to a changing social and political climate.

INTERPRETING GOD-HEAD

Besides As well as being visible in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in the Buddhist theology.[53] Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The State regarded Buddhism as or either standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The theological debate over whether or not Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God or not was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape propelled compelled Buddhists therem to accommodate itsadapt Buddhist doctrine in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (tofor referring to a concept of God in Buddhism),[54] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the eighth or ninth century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[55]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[56] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[57] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, he is different from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world—that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a God-head, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia: Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[58] His personal experience may also have contributed to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, … , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic inquiry as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[59]

Commented [A8]: I incorporated my answer to the reviewers into the text here. However, since it is not directly related to topic, I put it in a footnote.

Commented [A9]: 'it'?

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[52] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.

[53] While the wordterm "theology" may not fit in with the nature of Buddhism because it is portrayed as a religion without God, a number of scholars use the term theologyword to refer to the study of Buddhism as a religion. Hence, the term "Buddhist theology" came up." See, for example, Roger Jackson and John Makransky, ed., *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars* (Cornwall: Curzon, 2000), and Kieko Obuse, "Finding God in Buddhism: A New Trend in Contemporary Buddhist Approaches to Islam" *Numen* 62, no. 4 (2015): 408–430.

[54] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism," 108–17.

[55] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation into a western languages was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.

[56] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.

[57] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.

[58] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda," 10–21.

[59] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59–60.

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus of the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, ~~in Buddhayāna~~ the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to the~~its~~ teaching of Buddhayāna. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*), written by Dhammaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism: ~~,~~ ~~namely,~~ believing in one supreme God~~,~~— Ādi-Buddha~~,~~ having prophets such as~~–~~ Buddha Gautama and other~~s~~ Bodhisattvas~~,~~ and having holy books, including the— *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is ~~put into~~ thereby adapted for the Islamic context, ~~from~~ in which the State defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The State and other religious groups accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence ~~it had~~ having communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely~~,~~ Ādi-Buddha, and that it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under these political condition~~s as such~~, therefore, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God~~,~~ as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. Criticizing Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's concept of Ādi-Buddha, Bhante Naradha Thera, a Sri Lankan Theravādin monk who once visited Indonesia, sent a letter to Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's English translator in which he wrote that there was no God in Buddhism.[60] Another monk from Thailand, who was invited for the ordination of five Indonesian Buddhist monks in 1970, also questioned the concept of Ādi-Buddha. He ~~wrote~~ questioned whether this concept was "a wise compromise."~~,~~[61] However, the Indonesian Theravādins understood the importance of God in the Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God~~,~~[62] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[63]

Despite the differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' (both ~~the~~ Chinese and ~~the~~ non-Chinese ~~Indonesians~~) attempt to conform to the state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism~~, namely,~~ inclu~~d~~orporating the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually have~~s~~ continuity with the past,[64] and they are invented to cope with ~~the~~ new condition~~s~~ and situation~~s~~.[65] Hobsbawm~~'s~~ and Ranger's idea regarding~~on~~ the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea—~~,~~ that is, giving it a new meaning suitable ~~with~~ for the ~~present~~ conditions they faced. The concept of God they invented is found in "their historic past~~,~~"—specifically, in ~~namely,~~ the notion of Ādi-Buddha—~~,~~ which wa~~i~~s given a new meaning and reinterpreted as "God."

Commented [A10]: I incorporated my answer to the reviewers into the text in two part. The first part, the definition of invented tradition which is a direct quotation, is put in the "conceptual framework" section (footnote 16 on p. 3). The second part, how I use the definition to support my argument (and two quotations), is put here.

[60] Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*], 145.
[61] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 5.
[62] Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).
[63] Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with—, that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.
[64] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[65] Ibid., 8.

POST-—NEW ORDER BUDDHISM

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the ~~coming~~ arrival in Indonesia of Theravāda Buddhism ~~to Indonesia~~, which was brought by Buddhist monks who had been~~were~~ sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious training.[66] In 1970, some of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of the Tipitaka, and emphasizing ~~on~~ the philosophical teachings of Buddha~~,~~ instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result, the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both ~~the~~ Chinese and ~~the~~ non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the chang~~e~~ing of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease o~~f~~n life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims have started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese traditions openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public ~~i~~was now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples have started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, ~~the~~ modernist and scripturalist Theravādins have questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temples and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals~~, just like what~~as the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

The way in which~~How the~~ Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and, for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of contention~~s~~ between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings;~~.~~ ~~t~~The latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

An example of the contention between the traditionalists and the modernists was the~~food~~ offering of food (~~the~~ Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term ~~of~~ *ehipasiko*.[67] Venerating ancestors was also ~~an example~~a source of ~~the~~ contention. All agreed that showing respect to ancestors and the departed ones was commendable. However, the modernists believed that ~~specially it should not have be done to the extent that~~ making an ancestral altar was going too far ~~specially made~~. "We are allowed and even encouraged to show respect to our ancestors and those who have departed before us. However, there are no merits in having ancestral altars. There are no such things in Buddhism,"

Commented [A11]: Please check the change in this footnote is consistent with your intended meaning. Consider also 'may be a factor behind the tendency among Indonesian Buddhists to send…'.

[66] A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work and ordination may be a factor behind the tendency in~~for~~ Buddhism in Indonesia to send ~~its~~ monks to a Theravāda school for religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," 108–15.

[67] Literally, *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes ~~on~~ the empirical verification of ~~the~~ Buddhist teachings.

said a man in his thirties.[68] On the other hand, the traditionalists believed that having an ancestral altar at home was also a way of practicing Buddhism, as it was the Chinese way of showing respect. "According to our tradition, it [having an ancestral altar] is the correct way of showing our respect."[69] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with ~~the~~ Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of the rituals according to their religious orientations. Those with a modernist leaning viewed those rituals as religiously improper, which implied that they prioritized "orthodoxy (correct belief)~~,~~"; others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals and thus viewed them as appropriate, if not mandatory, which showed that they prioritized "orthopraxy (correct practice)."[70]

Another ~~example of the contention~~source of disagreement was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[71] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred to the Pāli text of the Tipitaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God~~, which in an Indonesian context was~~ (manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha in an Indonesian context). Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In their ~~latter's~~ opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they were "contaminated" Buddhists.[72] They emphasized ~~on~~ the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology—~~,~~ that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the idea~~s~~ of Gg~~o~~d-head, have~~s~~ le~~a~~d Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The Chinese traditional rituals are usually practiced at home as cultural elements, and the religious rituals are practiced in the temple. In this way, the former are~~is~~ privatized and separated from the latter. During Chinese New Year celebrations, for example, Chinese traditional rituals, such as venerating ancestors, are~~is~~ conducted as private affairs at home, whereas ~~the~~ religious rituals ~~for celebrating it~~ (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs, in a temple. As far as the idea~~s~~ of Gg~~o~~d-head is ~~are~~ concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have ~~a sizable~~ many modernist devotees.

~~Through~~ By transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices—~~,~~ by, for example, separating the traditional/cultural from the religious and adjusting some of their Buddhist practices—~~,~~ Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate the demands from the State and the modernists dominating Indonesian Buddhist society that they~~to~~ stay away from their traditional ritual practices. Thi~~s~~e transformation and recasting ~~also~~ enable~~s~~ those who believe in the existence of God, as manifested ~~by~~ in the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, to practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found a religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-

Commented [A12]: Capitalized for consistency with previous usage in the article.

[68] Interview, March 1, 2015.
[69] Interview, February 8, 2015.
[70] See Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* (University P~~p~~ark: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999) for a detailed discussion on religions and Chinese cultural traditions.
[71] Interview, December 7, 2014.
[72] On April 26, 2015, in an informal discussion with seven Buddhists who are members of a Buddhayāna temple congregation, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not "contaminate" their Buddhist belief.

mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism ~~also~~ shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with ~~the~~ religious belief and tradition. All these processes led to substantial~~the~~ diversity among ~~the~~ Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a Theravādin *Romo Pandito* said, "Although personally we disagree with their [Chinese Buddhists'] practices, we could accept those diverse practices. Being open-minded is a Buddhist virtue.",~~.~~[73] Another from a Buddhayāna temple said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors. Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha."[74]

CONCLUSION

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of ~~the~~ ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism in the early twentie20th century, after it ~~was~~ had been dormant for a few hundred years.[75] Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence, Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of ~~the~~ Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project~~,~~ it started to Indonesianize its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural traditions in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals bec~~a~~me a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism, that has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. Not all Theravādins have a scripturalist leaning. However, the Theravāda Buddhism in Indonesia does have a scripturalist tendency. For example, the Indonesian translations of the Pāli texts of the Theravāda are presented next to the Pāli original without commentary or interpretation. In so doing, they~~it~~ claim~~s the~~ scripturalist authority. Another example is that the Theravāda regularly holds paritta (Theravāda holy texts) recital contests among ~~the~~ Buddhists in Indonesia. The winners are awarded the Presidents Cup at Vesak Day. The focus of this contest is not on the ability to understand the text because the Indonesian translations of the Pāli text provide the literal meaning of the Pāli originals, but rather on the spectacle of reciting them in Pāli, the religious language of Buddhism. Through this kind of scripturalist performance, the Theravādins in Indonesia show their appreciation for the "true" Buddhist texts. This is the version of Buddhism that now dominates ~~Buddhism~~ in Indonesia.

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[73] Interview, April 5, 2015.
[74] Interview, February 12, 2015.
[75] For a detailed account of the role of the Chinese in reviving Buddhism in Indonesia, see Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*]; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*]; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate regardingon the existence of God in Buddhism became importantcame up. Fueled by different religious orientations and interpretations, this situation triggered tensions among the Chinese Buddhist community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between the religious and the traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they have come to now use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness as a justification to accept differences in their rites and practices. They separate the religious and the cultural, while enableallowing them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere. In so doing, they, allowing the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used tofor givcing the Buddhists the freedom to those to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus, they innovate, transform, and recast their beliefs to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of the lotus.

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Setefanus Suprajitno is a lecturer in the Graduate Program, Faculty of Letters, Petra Christian University, Surabaya, Indonesia. He received his doctorate ~~degree~~ in sociocultural anthropology at Cornell University. His research interests lie in the area of ethnicity, identity, and cultural memory.

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Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965–98) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into a ~~the~~ Buddhism made more Indonesian ~~through~~by means of the~~by~~ elimination of~~ing~~ its Chinese traditional influences. This found support among Chinese Indonesian~~s~~ Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism ~~from~~ of its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the ~~comeback~~ return of these rituals to Buddhism ~~should~~ needs to be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not ~~is~~like ~~blending Buddhism with~~ them to be blended with Buddhism. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate ~~the~~ discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use to~~for~~ com~~e~~ing to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity construction~~s~~. My~~The~~ finding~~s~~ show~~s~~ that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness to~~for~~ com~~e~~ing to terms with these tensions, and to~~for~~ innovat~~e~~ing, transform~~ing~~ and recast~~ing~~ their religious practices.

Keywords: Buddhism, Chinese community, Chinese religion, Identity, Indonesia

Bukti 10

Bukti pengiriman revisi ketiga (revisi bahasa).

Tanggal 7 September 2019

UNIVERSITAS KRISTEN PETRA

Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id>

submission of revised manuscript

Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id> Sat, Sep 7, 2019 at 1:26 PM
To: Anna Křivánková <krivankova@orient.cas.cz>

Dear Anna,

Thank you for the email.

I also thank the proofreader who makes the English in my article better. I accepted all the changes the proofreader made, both the insertion and deletion.

The proofreader also wrote some comments, in which:

1. s/he asked whether his/her revisions were consistent with the intended meaning or not (comments on page, 1, 3, 9, and 11). I agree with all his/her revisions because they did not change the intended meaning.
2. s/he informed me the reason why s/he made some changes (comment on page 5 and 13). I accepted the changes s/he made.
3. s/he did not change the word/phrase I used in my article, s/he just asked for my confirmation (comment on page 1). I reread what I wrote, and responded to his/her comment accordingly.
4. s/he suggested some alternatives. If I agree, I should change the word or the grammatical structure that I used in my article (page 2, 3, 10, and 16). I accepted all his/her suggestions and revised the word and the grammatical structure by using his/her alternative word/structure. I highlighted the revision in yellow background, where it is needed so that the editor can see the changes.
5. s/he asked the reason why I wrote “seventeenth century” in page 4 and “twentieth century in page 14 (comment on page 14). I responded to his/her question accordingly.

So, basically I accepted all his/her suggestion and revision.

Once again thank you for kind attention and help so that Archiv Orientalni agrees to publish my article.

Best,
Steph

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Various Petals of the Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

Setefanus Suprajitno

INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important, which Indonesians call *Reformasi* (The Reform), dealt with policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. It allowed Chinese Indonesians to regain a space in public life after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and having been culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965–98) Chinese Indonesians were considered perpetual foreigners and their existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination peaked in 1965, when the New Order Regime came to power[1] demanding cultural change. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*,[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese were heavily impacted by the change.

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "Indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This Indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion, as expressions of Chineseness, including Chinese religious and cultural traditions, were forbidden.[3]

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[4] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or a blend of all of them known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw Hwee* or *Tri Dharma*.[5] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese tradition, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the State. In this way, they could become ideologically correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was also considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese was supported by the worship of various gods from the Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[6] There were concerted efforts from the State,

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[1] For a detailed account of discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996–1999*.

[2] *Abangans* are Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam—that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*.

[3] Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

[4] Confucianism has been in Indonesia since long before the twentieth century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," 125–35; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*].

[5] *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." For further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee* see Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia.*

[6] See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," 139–65, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

as well as from *pribumi*[7] Buddhists—who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent[8]—to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia, during which the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism—namely, Buddhism which is not influenced by so-called Chinese traditional rituals, and Buddhism which is in line with state ideology.[9]

This situation put Chinese Indonesian Buddhists under pressure to conform to the new sociopolitical reality.[10] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. The idea of modernist Theravāda Buddhism even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism of its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[11]

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. ~~One scholar noted that~~ "Chinese Indonesians are no longer forced to be assimilated; they are able to retain their ethnic culture and identity."[12] Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge—especially in the religious beliefs traditionally associated with the Chinese, such as Buddhism, Daosim, and Confucianism. Chinese Buddhism started to develop again.[13] For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Indonesian Buddhists, the return of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism needs to be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most of the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I explore in this

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[7] *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued Presidential Decree No. 26/1998 on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines indigenous Indonesians as people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

[8] Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

[9] For further reference see Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahasthavira," 53–72; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

[10] Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the province of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed on September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya—the capital of East Java province and the second largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted—is quite high: 31,166, which constitutes more than half of the Buddhist population in the province—namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed on September 9, 2018).

[11] Buddhism's social stigma as a Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architecture and facades. However, unlike mosques and churches, with some exceptions—especially temples which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees and old Chinese temples—most Buddhist temples were originally profane commercial buildings or houses and were only later converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the outside. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. There are even temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image gives some indication of the challenges that Buddhism—a state-sanctioned religion—faces, despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brought openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temples through their architectural designs.

[12] Eddie Lembong, "Indonesian Government Policies and the Ethnic Chinese: Some Recent Development," 55.

[13] Leo Suryadinata, "Chinese Indonesians in an Era of Globalization: Some Major Characteristics," 10.

paper. In so doing, and by referring to fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

My investigation into the Chinese Indonesian Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to more rationalized religious practices.[14] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization: one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may ~~lead to~~ ~~develop~~ social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[15] These tensions, I believe, could occur as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribe and what religious organizations teach. They may put pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the sociopolitical reality.

In conforming to sociopolitical reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[16]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[17]

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individuals together and provide a social context for the maintenance of ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and development of identity through religious beliefs and practices creates a process through which boundaries

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[14] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.
[15] Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, 223.
[16] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.
[17] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.

appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted by selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[18]

Grounding my argument in the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as a "Chinese religion." Subsequently, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. Finally, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

THE ORIGIN OF "CHINESE RELIGION"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. The fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the fifteenth century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered in the demise of Buddhism.[19] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[20] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive even as Java becomes more Islamic.[21]

Buddhism started to resurface in the seventeenth century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism as a result of the influx of Chinese immigrants into Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) and known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in the Glodok area of Jakarta.[22] From that time, Buddhism—mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs—grew in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of religious life, but the center of Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Durkheim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[23] I contend that the temples preserved Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity among the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of "Chinese religion."

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in colonial Indonesia in the early twentieth century, such as Josias van Dienst and E.E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created the Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups, like the Dutch and the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[24] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elites, Eastern esotericism referred to the Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[25] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress held on April

[18] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[19] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.
[20] Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.
[21] Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.
[22] Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.
[23] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[24] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.
[25] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27–28.

1–2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors—"*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[26] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published the bulletin *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*) in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934. These publications, which used the term *Sam Kauw*, clearly emphasized the blending of the three teachings, namely Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.

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Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma

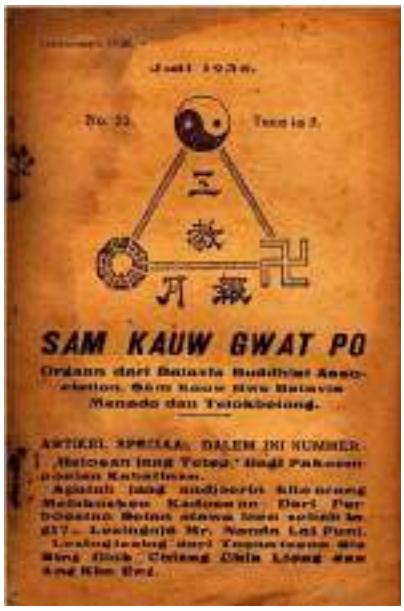

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po

In the mid-twentieth century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims, and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an example of occultism, which was a syncretistic belief in various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks—among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita, who was of Chinese descent and whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante Giririrakkhito, the son of a Balinese royal family, whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri—in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[27] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

[26] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.

[27] For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Giririrakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*] (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995).

Although there were natives who embraced Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[28] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Traditions such as venerating ancestors and observing *Qingming Jie*[29] became part of Buddhist practice. Moreover, Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem for Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese—an ethnic minority—and hence often labeled as Chinese religion. Being labeled as Chinese religion might not have been a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[30] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported colonial rule, and many joined the Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they had to dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion due to "its 'overly' Chinese cultural form,"[31] and promote it as "an autochthonous religion and not a foreign or alien import."[32] In so doing, they could turn Buddhism into a religion that transcended ethnic boundaries in Indonesia.

DOCTRINAL INTERVENTION

Because of nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into a form of Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism—namely, Buddhism with distinct Indonesian characteristics.[33] However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture had deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesianizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

Anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication—among others, the ban on the Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This was one reason why, in its congress in May 1970, *Perhimpunan Buddhis Indonesia* (the Indonesian Buddhists Association) issued a resolution stating that "Indonesia Buddhism in Indonesia should have more Indonesian characteristics, not Chinese ones."[34] The effort of separating Buddhism from the social stigma of Chinese religion was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[35]

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[28] Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.

[29] *Qingming Jie* (清明節), also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day, is the time when people of Chinese descent visit the graves of their departed ones and make ritual offerings.

[30] Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.

[31] Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

[32] Iem Brown, "The Revival of Buddhism in Modern Indonesia," 53.

[33] For further discussion on Indonesian Buddhism see Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia."

[34] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 71.

[35] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.

This Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and prohibited the building of new Chinese temples.[36] Experiencing the conversion of Chinese temples into Buddhist ones, a temple caretaker lamented, "We had to convert our temple into *vihara*. If not, we would be in trouble. … This was the most difficult moment for us. We had to change our place of worship as if it was the place of abomination. It did pain us."[37] This law also affected pure Buddhist *viharas*. Because they were perceived as being associated with Chinese religion, Buddhist places of worship faced problems. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairs of existing Buddhist temples required a special permit, which was often difficult to get.[38]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence by the classification of all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism—that is, emphasis on the teaching in the scriptures. The regime opined that Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and detach themselves from Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and, more often than not, had no relation to the religion itself.[39] In so doing, the regime borrowed the authority of holy scriptures to justify its policy—an act that Wimbush describes as scripturalization.[40] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space it had defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered to be Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals were in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists had to return to the "true" Dharma—that is, the Buddha's teaching—and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtras could be chanted in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged. Describing this situation, an elder in a Buddhist temple said, "We started using Sanskrit sūtras when the New Order regime banned Chinese language and

[36] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bhakti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.

[37] Interview, March 1, 2015

[38] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera."

[39] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public of the restriction on Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs Buddhists in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular in the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temples.

[40] See Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.

culture. … Chanting in Chinese was not totally forbidden, but you know …. when the government said that it was recommended, it was not just a recommendation. It was an order. Then we used both Chinese and Sanskrit sūtras. However, Sanskrit sūtras were chanted in our Sunday school."[41]

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. Because China was associated with communism, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist—an enemy of the State. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Order regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion—that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and a holy book.

The position of the belief in God in the Indonesian political landscape is very central, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, Indonesia's state ideology, which is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[42] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who wanted an Islamic state (by emphasizing the importance of religion) and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, a word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion), and not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam, is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive—that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on this principle, the State only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic—namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[43] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they faced. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptations.

POLITICAL RITUALS

Ritual is closely related to identity as the former can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment can produce a sense of belonging among the participants and ritual can draw attention to the shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[44] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the means by which individuals are brought together as a collective group."[45] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[46]

As Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could thus strengthen Sino-Buddhist identity. However, Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building and the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new sociopolitical landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification. Those who adapted their religious rituals believed that the notion of

[41] Interview, March 1, 2015.
[42] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles—namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact that the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structures. The importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to persuade people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.
[43] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.
[44] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.
[45] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
[46] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.

impermanence—that is, "no element of physical matter or any concept remain unchanged"[47]—gave them the authority[48] to do so. As a *Romo Pandito*[49] in a Buddhayāna temple said: "It is stated in Buddhist scripture that nothing is permanent. So, making some adjustments as long as the changes are still in line with Buddhist teachings is definitely not a big deal."[50]

An example of adaptation is the appropriation of Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall on the first or the fifteenth day of a month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of the Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebrations.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of the Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese with a legitimate space for culturally Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted, followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, Chinese Buddhists resisted pressure to "nationalize" Buddhism as well as accommodating it. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebrations and the use of Chinese served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used to express their ethnic identity. However, they had to make concessions because the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal and less of an ethnic religion by emphasizing the religious aspects of the celebration—that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet, at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also preserved. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit, was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation—that is, expressing their Indonesianness—and resistance—that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

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The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy show that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[51] were political because they could "construct, display, and promote … political interests" of a certain group.[52] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to a changing social and political climate.

INTERPRETING GODHEAD

As well as being visible in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in Buddhist theology.[53] Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The State regarded

[47] Carol S. Anderson, "Anitya (Impermanence)," 23

[48] For further discussion on how scriptures function as the source of authoritative power, see Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.

[49] *Romo Pandito* is a Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who is appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk

[50] Interview, December 10, 2014.

[51] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

[52] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.

[53] While the word "theology" may not fit in with the nature of Buddhism because it is portrayed as a religion without God, a number of scholars use the word to refer to the study of Buddhism as a religion—hence the term "Buddhist theology." See, for example, Roger Jackson and John Makransky, ed., *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars* (Cornwall:

Buddhism as either standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The theological debate over whether or not Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape compelled Buddhists to adapt Buddhist doctrine in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (to refer to a concept of God in Buddhism),[54] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the eighth or ninth century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[55]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[56] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[57] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, ~~he~~ is different from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world—that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a Godhead, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia: Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[58] His personal experience may also have contributed to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, … , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic inquiry as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[59]

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus of the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to the teaching of Buddhayāna. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*), written by Dhammaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism: believing in one supreme God, Ādi-Buddha; having prophets such as Buddha Gautama and other Bodhisattvas; and having holy books, including the *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is thereby adapted for the Islamic context, in which the State defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The State and other religious groups

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Curzon, 2000), and Kieko Obuse, "Finding God in Buddhism: A New Trend in Contemporary Buddhist Approaches to Islam" *Numen* 62, no. 4 (2015): 408–430.

[54] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism," 108–17.

[55] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation into a western language was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.

[56] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.

[57] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.

[58] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda," 10–21.

[59] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59–60.

accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence having communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely Ādi-Buddha, and that it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under these political conditions, therefore, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. Criticizing Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's concept of Ādi-Buddha, Bhante Naradha Thera, a Sri Lankan Theravādin monk who once visited Indonesia, sent a letter to Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's English translator in which he wrote that there was no God in Buddhism.[60] Another monk from Thailand, who was invited for the ordination of five Indonesian Buddhist monks in 1970, also questioned the concept of Ādi-Buddha. He questioned whether this concept was "a wise compromise."[61] However, the Indonesian Theravādins understood the importance of God in the Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God[62] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[63]

Despite the differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' (both Chinese and non-Chinese) attempt to conform to the state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism incorporating the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually have continuity with the past,[64] and they are invented to cope with new conditions and situations.[65] Hobsbawm and Ranger's idea regarding the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea—that is, giving it a new meaning suitable for the conditions they faced. The concept of God they invented is found in "their historic past"—specifically, in the notion of Ādi-Buddha—which was given a new meaning and reinterpreted as "God."

POST-NEW ORDER BUDDHISM

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the arrival in Indonesia of Theravāda Buddhism, which was brought by Buddhist monks who had been sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious training.[66] In 1970, some of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of the Tipitaka, and emphasizing the

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[60] Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*], 145.

[61] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 5.

[62] Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).

[63] Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with—that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.

[64] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

[65] Ibid., 8.

[66] A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work and ordination may be a factor behind the tendency in Buddhism in Indonesia to send monks to a Theravāda school for religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," 108–15.

philosophical teachings of Buddha instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result, the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both Chinese and non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the change of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease of life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims have started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese traditions openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public is now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples have started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, modernist and scripturalist Theravādins have questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temples and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals as the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

The way in which Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and, for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of contention between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings; the latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

An example of the contention between the traditionalists and the modernists was the offering of food (Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term *ehipasiko*.[67] Venerating ancestors was also a source of contention. All agreed that showing respect to ancestors and the departed ones was commendable. However, the modernists believed that making an ancestral altar was going too far. "We are allowed and even encouraged to show respect to our ancestors and those who have departed before us. However, there are no merits in having ancestral altars. There are no such things in Buddhism," said a man in his thirties.[68] On the other hand, the traditionalists believed that having an ancestral altar at home was also a way of practicing Buddhism, as it was the Chinese way of showing respect. "According to our tradition, it [having an ancestral altar] is the correct way of showing our respect."[69] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of the rituals according to their religious orientations. Those with a modernist leaning viewed those rituals as religiously improper, which implied that they prioritized "orthodoxy (correct belief)"; others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals

[67] Literally, *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes the empirical verification of Buddhist teachings.
[68] Interview, March 1, 2015.
[69] Interview, February 8, 2015.

and thus viewed them as appropriate, if not mandatory, which showed that they prioritized "orthopraxy (correct practice)."[70]

Another source of disagreement was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[71] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred to the Pāli text of the Tipitaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God (manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha in an Indonesian context). Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In their opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they were "contaminated" Buddhists.[72] They emphasized the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology—that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the idea of Godhead, have led Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The Chinese traditional rituals are usually practiced at home as cultural elements, and the religious rituals are practiced in the temple. In this way, the former are privatized and separated from the latter. During Chinese New Year celebrations, for example, Chinese traditional rituals, such as venerating ancestors, are conducted as private affairs at home, whereas religious rituals (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs, in a temple. As far as the idea of Godhead is concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have many modernist devotees.

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By transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices—by, for example, separating the traditional/cultural from the religious and adjusting some of their Buddhist practices—Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate the demands from the State and the modernists dominating Indonesian Buddhist society that they stay away from their traditional ritual practices. This transformation and recasting also enables those who believe in the existence of God, as manifested in the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, to practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found a religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with religious belief and tradition. All these processes led to substantial diversity among Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a Theravādin *Romo Pandito* said, "Although personally we disagree with their [Chinese Buddhists'] practices, we could accept those diverse practices. Being open-minded is a Buddhist virtue."[73] Another from a Buddhayāna temple said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors. Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha."[74]

CONCLUSION

[70] See Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999) for a detailed discussion on religions and Chinese cultural traditions.
[71] Interview, December 7, 2014.
[72] On April 26, 2015, in an informal discussion with seven Buddhists who are members of a Buddhayāna temple congregation, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not "contaminate" their Buddhist belief.
[73] Interview, April 5, 2015.
[74] Interview, February 12, 2015.

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism in the early twentieth century, after it had been dormant for a few hundred years.[75] Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence, Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project it started to Indonesianize its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural traditions in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals became a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism, that has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. Not all Theravādins have a scripturalist leaning. However, the Theravāda Buddhism in Indonesia does have a scripturalist tendency. For example, the Indonesian translations of the Pāli texts of the Theravāda are presented next to the Pāli original without commentary or interpretation. In so doing, they claim scripturalist authority. Another example is that the Theravāda regularly holds paritta (Theravāda holy texts) recital contests among Buddhists in Indonesia. The winners are awarded the Presidents Cup at Vesak Day. The focus of this contest is not on the ability to understand the text because the Indonesian translations of the Pāli text provide the literal meaning of the Pāli originals, but rather on the spectacle of reciting them in Pāli, the religious language of Buddhism. Through this kind of scripturalist performance, the Theravādins in Indonesia show their appreciation for the "true" Buddhist texts. This is the version of Buddhism that now dominates in Indonesia.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate regarding the existence of God in Buddhism became important. Fueled by different religious orientations and interpretations, this situation triggered tensions among the Chinese Buddhist community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between religious and traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they have come to use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness as a justification to accept differences in their rites and practices. They separate the religious and the cultural, enabling them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere, allowing the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used to give Buddhists the freedom to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus, they innovate, transform, and recast their beliefs to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of the lotus.

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Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965–98) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into a Buddhism made more Indonesian by means of the elimination of its Chinese traditional influences. This found support among Chinese Indonesian Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism of its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the return of these rituals to Buddhism needs to be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not like them to be blended with Buddhism. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use to come to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity construction. My findings show that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness to come to terms with these tensions, and to innovate, transform and recast their religious practices.

Keywords: Buddhism, Chinese community, Chinese religion, Identity, Indonesia

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Various Petals of the Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

Setefanus Suprajitno

Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965-1998) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into the Buddhism made more Indonesian by eliminating its Chinese traditional influence. This found support among Chinese Indonesians Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism from its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the comeback of these rituals to Buddhism should be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they dislike blending Buddhism with them. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use for coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity construction. The finding shows that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness for coming to terms with these tensions, and for innovating, transforming and recasting their religious practices.

Keywords
Buddhism | Chinese community | Chinese religion | Identity | Indonesia

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INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important, which Indonesians call *Reformasi* (The Reform), dealt with policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. It allowed Chinese Indonesians to regain a space in public life after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and having been culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965–98) Chinese Indonesians

were considered perpetual foreigners and their existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination peaked in 1965, when the New Order Regime came to power[1] demanding cultural change. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*,[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese were heavily impacted by the change.

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "Indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This Indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion, as expressions of Chineseness, including Chinese religious and cultural traditions, were forbidden.[3]

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[4] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or a blend of all of them known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw Hwee* or *Tri Dharma*.[5] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese tradition, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the State. In this way, they could become ideologically correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was also considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese

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1 For a detailed account of discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996–1999*.

2 *Abangans* are Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam—that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*.

3 Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

4 Confucianism has been in Indonesia since long before the twentieth century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," 125–35; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*].

5 *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." For further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee* see Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia.*

was supported by the worship of various gods from the Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[6] There were concerted efforts from the State, as well as from *pribumi*[7] Buddhists – who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent[8] – to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia, during which the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism–namely, Buddhism which is not influenced by so-called Chinese traditional rituals, and Buddhism which is in line with state ideology.[9]

This situation put Chinese Indonesian Buddhists under pressure to conform to the new sociopolitical reality.[10] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. The idea of modernist Theravāda Buddhism even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism of its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus

6 See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," 139–65, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

7 *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued Presidential Decree No. 26/1998 on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines indigenous Indonesians as people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

8 Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

9 For further reference see Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahasthavira," 53–72; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

10 Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the province of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed on September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya – the capital of East Java province and the second largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted – is quite high: 31,166, which constitutes more than half of the Buddhist population in the province – namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed on September 9, 2018).

to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[11]

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. One scholar noted that "Chinese Indonesians are no longer forced to be assimilated; they are able to retain their ethnic culture and identity."[12] Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge–especially in the religious beliefs traditionally associated with the Chinese, such as Buddhism, Daosim, and Confucianism. Chinese Buddhism started to develop again.[13] For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Indonesian Buddhists, the return of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism needs to be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most of the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I explore in this paper. In so doing, and by referring to fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

[11] Buddhism's social stigma as a Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architecture and facades. However, unlike mosques and churches, with some exceptions – especially temples which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees and old Chinese temples – most Buddhist temples were originally profane commercial buildings or houses and were only later converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the outside. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. There are even temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image gives some indication of the challenges that Buddhism – a state-sanctioned religion – faces, despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brought openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temples through their architectural designs.

[12] Eddie Lembong, "Indonesian Government Policies and the Ethnic Chinese: Some Recent Development," 55.

[13] Leo Suryadinata, "Chinese Indonesians in an Era of Globalization: Some Major Characteristics," 10.

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

My investigation into the Chinese Indonesian Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to more rationalized religious practices.[14] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization: one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may lead to social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[15] These tensions, I believe, could occur as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribe and what religious organizations teach. They may put pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the sociopolitical reality.

In conforming to sociopolitical reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[16]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

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14 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.
15 Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, 223.
16 Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[17]

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individuals together and provide a social context for the maintenance of ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and development of identity through religious beliefs and practices creates a process through which boundaries appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted by selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[18]

Grounding my argument in the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as a "Chinese religion." Subsequently, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. Finally, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

THE ORIGIN OF "CHINESE RELIGION"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. The fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the fifteenth century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered in the demise of Buddhism.[19] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence

[17] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[18] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[19] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.

still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[20] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive even as Java becomes more Islamic.[21]

Buddhism started to resurface in the seventeenth century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism as a result of the influx of Chinese immigrants into Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) and known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in the Glodok area of Jakarta.[22] From that time, Buddhism – mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs – grew in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of religious life, but the center of Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Durkheim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[23] I contend that the temples preserved Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity among the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of "Chinese religion."

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in colonial Indonesia in the early twentieth century, such as Josias van Dienst and E. E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created the Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups, like the Dutch and the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[24] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elites, Eastern esotericism referred to the Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This

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20 Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.

21 Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.

22 Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.

23 Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.

24 Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.

philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[25] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress held on April 1–2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors – "*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[26] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published the bulletin *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*) in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934. These publications, which used the term *Sam Kauw*, clearly emphasized the blending of the three teachings, namely Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.

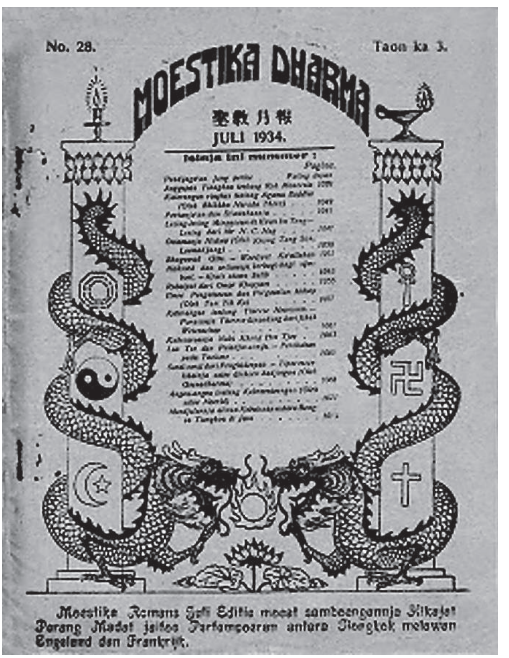

Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma.

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po.

[25] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27–28.

[26] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.

In the mid-twentieth century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims, and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an example of occultism, which was a syncretistic belief in various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks – among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita, who was of Chinese descent and whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante Girirakkhito, the son of a Balinese royal family, whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri – in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[27] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

Although there were natives who embraced Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[28] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Traditions such as venerating ancestors and observing *Qingming Jie*[29] became part of Buddhist practice. Moreover, Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem for Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese – an ethnic minority – and hence often labeled as Chinese religion. Being labeled as Chinese religion might not have been a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[30] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported colonial rule, and many joined the Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they had to dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion due to "its 'overly' Chinese cultural form,"[31] and promote it as "an autochthonous religion

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27 For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Girirakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*] (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995).

28 Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.

29 *Qingming Jie* (清明節), also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day, is the time when people of Chinese descent visit the graves of their departed ones and make ritual offerings.

30 Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.

31 Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

and not a foreign or alien import."[32] In so doing, they could turn Buddhism into a religion that transcended ethnic boundaries in Indonesia.

DOCTRINAL INTERVENTION

Because of nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into a form of Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism – namely, Buddhism with distinct Indonesian characteristics.[33] However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture had deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesianizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

Anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication – among others, the ban on the Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This was one reason why, in its congress in May 1970, *Perhimpunan Buddhis Indonesia* (the Indonesian Buddhists Association) issued a resolution stating that "Indonesia Buddhism in Indonesia should have more Indonesian characteristics, not Chinese ones."[34] The effort of separating Buddhism from the social stigma of Chinese religion was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[35] This

[32] Iem Brown, "The Revival of Buddhism in Modern Indonesia," 53.

[33] For further discussion on Indonesian Buddhism see Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia."

[34] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 71.

[35] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.

Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and prohibited the building of new Chinese temples.[36] Experiencing the conversion of Chinese temples into Buddhist ones, a temple caretaker lamented, "We had to convert our temple into *vihara*. If not, we would be in trouble. … This was the most difficult moment for us. We had to change our place of worship as if it was the place of abomination. It did pain us."[37] This law also affected pure Buddhist *viharas*. Because they were perceived as being associated with Chinese religion, Buddhist places of worship faced problems. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairs of existing Buddhist temples required a special permit, which was often difficult to get.[38]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence by the classification of all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism – that is, emphasis on the teaching in the scriptures. The regime opined that Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and detach themselves from Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and, more often than not, had no relation to the religion itself.[39] In so doing, the regime borrowed the authority of holy scriptures to

[36] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bhakti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.

[37] Interview, March 1, 2015

[38] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera."

[39] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public of the restriction on Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs Buddhists in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular in the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temples.

justify its policy – an act that Wimbush describes as scripturalization.[40] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space it had defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered to be Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals were in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists had to return to the "true" Dharma – that is, the Buddha's teaching – and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtras could be chanted in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged. Describing this situation, an elder in a Buddhist temple said, "We started using Sanskrit sūtras when the New Order regime banned Chinese language and culture. ... Chanting in Chinese was not totally forbidden, but you know .... when the government said that it was recommended, it was not just a recommendation. It was an order. Then we used both Chinese and Sanskrit sūtras. However, Sanskrit sūtras were chanted in our Sunday school."[41]

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. Because China was associated with communism, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist – an enemy of the State. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Order regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion – that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and a holy book.

40 See Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
41 Interview, March 1, 2015.

The position of the belief in God in the Indonesian political landscape is very central, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, Indonesia's state ideology, which is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[42] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who wanted an Islamic state (by emphasizing the importance of religion) and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, a word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion), and not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam, is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive – that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on this principle, the State only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic – namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[43] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they faced. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptations.

POLITICAL RITUALS

Ritual is closely related to identity as the former can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment can produce a sense of belonging among the participants and ritual can draw attention to the shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[44] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the

[42] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles – namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact that the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structures. The importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to persuade people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.

[43] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.

[44] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.

means by which individuals are brought together as a collective group."[45] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[46]

As Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could thus strengthen Sino-Buddhist identity. However, Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building and the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new sociopolitical landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification. Those who adapted their religious rituals believed that the notion of impermanence – that is, "no element of physical matter or any concept remain unchanged"[47] – gave them the authority[48] to do so. As a *Romo Pandito*[49] in a Buddhayāna temple said: "It is stated in Buddhist scripture that nothing is permanent. So, making some adjustments as long as the changes are still in line with Buddhist teachings is definitely not a big deal."[50]

An example of adaptation is the appropriation of Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall on the first or the fifteenth day of a month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of the Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebrations.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of the Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese with a legitimate space for culturally Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were

45 Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
46 Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.
47 Carol S. Anderson, "Anitya (Impermanence)," 23
48 For further discussion on how scriptures function as the source of authoritative power, see Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
49 *Romo Pandito* is a Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who is appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk
50 Interview, December 10, 2014.

also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted, followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, Chinese Buddhists resisted pressure to "nationalize" Buddhism as well as accommodating it. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebrations and the use of Chinese served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used to express their ethnic identity. However, they had to make concessions because the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal and less of an ethnic religion by emphasizing the religious aspects of the celebration – that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet, at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also preserved. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit, was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation – that is, expressing their Indonesianness – and resistance – that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy show that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[51] were political because they could "construct, display, and promote ... political interests" of a certain group.[52] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to a changing social and political climate.

INTERPRETING GODHEAD

As well as being visible in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in Buddhist theology.[53] Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The State regarded Buddhism as either standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The

[51] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

[52] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.

[53] While the word "theology" may not fit in with the nature of Buddhism because it is portrayed as a religion without God, a number of scholars use the word to refer to the study of Buddhism as a religion—hence the term "Buddhist theology." See, for example, Roger Jackson and John Makransky, ed., *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars* (Cornwall: Curzon, 2000), and Kieko Obuse, "Finding God in Buddhism: A New Trend in Contemporary Buddhist Approaches to Islam" *Numen* 62, no. 4 (2015): 408–30.

theological debate over whether or not Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape compelled Buddhists to adapt Buddhist doctrine in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (to refer to a concept of God in Buddhism),[54] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the eighth or ninth century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[55]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[56] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[57] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, he is different from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world – that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a Godhead, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia: Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[58] His personal experience may also have contributed to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, ... , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic

[54] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism," 108–17.

[55] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation into a western language was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.

[56] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.

[57] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.

[58] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda," 10–21.

> inquiry as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[59]

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus of the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to the teaching of Buddhayāna. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*), written by Dhammaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism: believing in one supreme God, Ādi-Buddha; having prophets such as Buddha Gautama and other Bodhisattvas; and having holy books, including the *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is thereby adapted for the Islamic context, in which the State defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The State and other religious groups accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence having communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely Ādi-Buddha, and that it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under these political conditions, therefore, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. Criticizing Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's concept of Ādi-Buddha, Bhante Naradha Thera, a Sri Lankan Theravādin monk who once visited Indonesia, sent a letter to Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's English translator in which he wrote that there was no God in Buddhism.[60] Another monk from Thailand, who was invited for the ordination of five Indonesian Buddhist monks in 1970, also questioned the concept of Ādi-Buddha. He questioned whether this concept

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[59] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59–60.

[60] Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*], 145.

was "a wise compromise."[61] However, the Indonesian Theravādins understood the importance of God in the Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God[62] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[63]

Despite the differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' (both Chinese and non-Chinese) attempt to conform to the state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism incorporating the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually have continuity with the past,[64] and they are invented to cope with new conditions and situations.[65] Hobsbawm and Ranger's idea regarding the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea – that is, giving it a new meaning suitable for the conditions they faced. The concept of God they invented is found in "their historic past" – specifically, in the notion of Ādi-Buddha – which was given a new meaning and reinterpreted as "God."

POST-NEW ORDER BUDDHISM

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the arrival in Indonesia of Theravāda Buddhism, which was brought by Buddhist monks who had been sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious training.[66] In 1970, some

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61 Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 5.

62 Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).

63 Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with—that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.

64 Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

65 Ibid., 8.

66 A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work

of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of the Tipitaka, and emphasizing the philosophical teachings of Buddha instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result, the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both Chinese and non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the change of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease of life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims have started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese traditions openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public is now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples have started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, modernist and scripturalist Theravādins have questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temples and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals as the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

The way in which Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and, for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of contention between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings; the latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

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and ordination may be a factor behind the tendency in Buddhism in Indonesia to send monks to a Theravāda school for religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," 108–15.

An example of the contention between the traditionalists and the modernists was the offering of food (Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term *ehipasiko*.[67] Venerating ancestors was also a source of contention. All agreed that showing respect to ancestors and the departed ones was commendable. However, the modernists believed that making an ancestral altar was going too far. "We are allowed and even encouraged to show respect to our ancestors and those who have departed before us. However, there are no merits in having ancestral altars. There are no such things in Buddhism," said a man in his thirties.[68] On the other hand, the traditionalists believed that having an ancestral altar at home was also a way of practicing Buddhism, as it was the Chinese way of showing respect. "According to our tradition, it [having an ancestral altar] is the correct way of showing our respect."[69] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of the rituals according to their religious orientations. Those with a modernist leaning viewed those rituals as religiously improper, which implied that they prioritized "orthodoxy (correct belief)"; others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals and thus viewed them as appropriate, if not mandatory, which showed that they prioritized "orthopraxy (correct practice)."[70]

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67 Literally, *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes the empirical verification of Buddhist teachings.

68 Interview, March 1, 2015.

69 Interview, February 8, 2015.

70 See Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999) for a detailed discussion on religions and Chinese cultural traditions.

Another source of disagreement was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[71] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred to the Pāli text of the Tipitaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God (manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha in an Indonesian context). Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In their opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they were "contaminated" Buddhists.[72] They emphasized the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology – that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the idea of Godhead, have led Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The Chinese traditional rituals are usually practiced at home as cultural elements, and the religious rituals are practiced in the temple. In this way, the former are privatized and separated from the latter. During Chinese New Year celebrations, for example, Chinese traditional rituals, such as venerating ancestors, are conducted as private affairs at home, whereas religious rituals (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs, in a temple. As far as the idea of Godhead is concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have many modernist devotees.

By transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices – by, for example, separating the traditional/cultural from the religious and adjusting some of their Buddhist practices – Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate the demands from the State and the modernists dominating Indonesian Buddhist society that they stay away from their traditional ritual practices. This transformation and recasting also enables those who believe in the existence of

[71] Interview, December 7, 2014.

[72] On April 26, 2015, in an informal discussion with seven Buddhists who are members of a Buddhayāna temple congregation, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not "contaminate" their Buddhist belief.

God, as manifested in the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, to practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found a religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with religious belief and tradition. All these processes led to substantial diversity among Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a Theravādin *Romo Pandito* said, "Although personally we disagree with their [Chinese Buddhists'] practices, we could accept those diverse practices. Being open-minded is a Buddhist virtue."[73] Another from a Buddhayāna temple said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors. Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha."[74]

CONCLUSION

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism in the early twentieth century, after it had been dormant for a few hundred years.[75] Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence, Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project it started to Indonesianize

[73] Interview, April 5, 2015.

[74] Interview, February 12, 2015.

[75] For a detailed account of the role of the Chinese in reviving Buddhism in Indonesia, see Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*]; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*]; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34

its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural traditions in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals became a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism, that has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. Not all Theravādins have a scripturalist leaning. However, the Theravāda Buddhism in Indonesia does have a scripturalist tendency. For example, the Indonesian translations of the Pāli texts of the Theravāda are presented next to the Pāli original without commentary or interpretation. In so doing, they claim scripturalist authority. Another example is that the Theravāda regularly holds paritta (Theravāda holy texts) recital contests among Buddhists in Indonesia. The winners are awarded the Presidents Cup at Vesak Day. The focus of this contest is not on the ability to understand the text because the Indonesian translations of the Pāli text provide the literal meaning of the Pāli originals, but rather on the spectacle of reciting them in Pāli, the religious language of Buddhism. Through this kind of scripturalist performance, the Theravādins in Indonesia show their appreciation for the "true" Buddhist texts. This is the version of Buddhism that now dominates in Indonesia.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate regarding the existence of God in Buddhism became important. Fueled by different religious orientations and interpretations, this situation triggered tensions among the Chinese Buddhist community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between religious and traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they have come to use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness as a justification to accept differences in their rites and practices. They separate the religious and the cultural, enabling them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere, allowing the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used to give Buddhists the freedom to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus,

they innovate, transform, and recast their beliefs to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of the lotus.

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Bukti 12

Email dari saya tentang kesalahan yang ada di file hasil akhir typset.

Tanggal 29 September 2019

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submission of revised manuscript

Setefanus Suprajitno <steph@petra.ac.id> Sun, Sep 29, 2019 at 1:46 PM
To: Anna Křivánková <krivankova@orient.cas.cz>

Dear Anna,

Thank you for the file. I found nine mistakes in my draft, six mistakes in the body and three mistakes in the references. My apology. I have highlighted the mistakes in light green color and wrote my suggested correction there.

Best,
Steph

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Various Petals of the Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

Setefanus Suprajitno

Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965-1998) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into the Buddhism made more Indonesian by eliminating its Chinese traditional influence. This found support among Chinese Indonesians Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism from its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the comeback of these rituals to Buddhism should be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they dislike blending Buddhism with them. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use for coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity construction. The finding shows that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness for coming to terms with these tensions, and for innovating, transforming and recasting their religious practices.

Keywords
Buddhism | Chinese community | Chinese religion | Identity | Indonesia

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INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important, which Indonesians call *Reformasi* (The Reform), dealt with policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. It allowed Chinese Indonesians to regain a space in public life after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and having been culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965–98) Chinese Indonesians

were considered perpetual foreigners and their existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination peaked in 1965, when the New Order Regime came to power[1] demanding cultural change. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*,[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese were heavily impacted by the change.

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "Indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This Indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion, as expressions of Chineseness, including Chinese religious and cultural traditions, were forbidden.[3]

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[4] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or a blend of all of them known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw Hwee* or *Tri Dharma*.[5] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese tradition, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the State. In this way, they could become ideologically correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was also considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese

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1 For a detailed account of discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996–1999*.

2 *Abangans* are Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam—that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*.

3 Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

4 Confucianism has been in Indonesia since long before the twentieth century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," 125–35; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*].

5 *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." For further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee* see Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia.*

was supported by the worship of various gods from the Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[6] There were concerted efforts from the State, as well as from *pribumi*[7] Buddhists – who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent[8] – to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia, during which the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism–namely, Buddhism which is not influenced by so-called Chinese traditional rituals, and Buddhism which is in line with state ideology.[9]

This situation put Chinese Indonesian Buddhists under pressure to conform to the new sociopolitical reality.[10] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. The idea of modernist Theravāda Buddhism even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism of its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus

6 See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," 139–65, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

7 *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued Presidential Decree No. 26/1998 on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines indigenous Indonesians as people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

8 Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

9 For further reference see Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahasthavira," 53–72; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

10 Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the province of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed on September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya – the capital of East Java province and the second largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted – is quite high: 31,166, which constitutes more than half of the Buddhist population in the province – namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed on September 9, 2018).

to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[11]

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. One scholar noted that "Chinese Indonesians are no longer forced to be assimilated; they are able to retain their ethnic culture and identity."[12] Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge–especially in the religious beliefs traditionally associated with the Chinese, such as Buddhism, Daosim, and Confucianism. Chinese Buddhism started to develop again.[13] For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Indonesian Buddhists, the return of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism needs to be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most of the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I explore in this paper. In so doing, and by referring to fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

[11] Buddhism's social stigma as a Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architecture and facades. However, unlike mosques and churches, with some exceptions – especially temples which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees and old Chinese temples – most Buddhist temples were originally profane commercial buildings or houses and were only later converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the outside. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. There are even temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image gives some indication of the challenges that Buddhism – a state-sanctioned religion – faces, despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brought openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temples through their architectural designs.

[12] Eddie Lembong, "Indonesian Government Policies and the Ethnic Chinese: Some Recent Development," 55.

[13] Leo Suryadinata, "Chinese Indonesians in an Era of Globalization: Some Major Characteristics," 10.

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

My investigation into the Chinese Indonesian Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to more rationalized religious practices.[14] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization: one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may lead to social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[15] These tensions, I believe, could occur as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribe and what religious organizations teach. They may put pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the sociopolitical reality.

In conforming to sociopolitical reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[16]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

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14 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.
15 Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, 223.
16 Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[17]

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individuals together and provide a social context for the maintenance of ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and development of identity through religious beliefs and practices creates a process through which boundaries appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted by selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[18]

Grounding my argument in the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as a "Chinese religion." Subsequently, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. Finally, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

THE ORIGIN OF "CHINESE RELIGION"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. The fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the fifteenth century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered in the demise of Buddhism.[19] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence

[17] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[18] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[19] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.

still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[20] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive even as Java becomes more Islamic.[21]

Buddhism started to resurface in the seventeenth century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism as a result of the influx of Chinese immigrants into Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) and known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in the Glodok area of Jakarta.[22] From that time, Buddhism – mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs – grew in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of religious life, but the center of Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Durkheim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[23] I contend that the temples preserved Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity among the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of "Chinese religion."

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in colonial Indonesia in the early twentieth century, such as Josias van Dienst and E. E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created the Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups, like the Dutch and the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[24] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elites, Eastern esotericism referred to the Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This

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20 Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.

21 Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.

22 Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.

23 Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.

24 Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.

philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[25] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress held on April 1–2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors – "*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[26] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published the bulletin *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*) in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934. These publications, which used the term *Sam Kauw*, clearly emphasized the blending of the three teachings, namely Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.

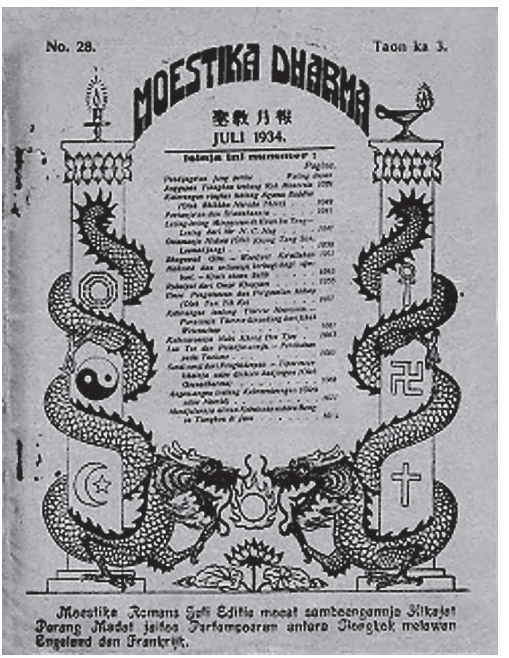

Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma.

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po.

[25] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27–28.

[26] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.

In the mid-twentieth century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims, and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an example of occultism, which was a syncretistic belief in various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks – among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita, who was of Chinese descent and whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante Girirakkhito, the son of a Balinese royal family, whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri – in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[27] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

Although there were natives who embraced Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[28] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Traditions such as venerating ancestors and observing *Qingming Jie*[29] became part of Buddhist practice. Moreover, Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem for Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese – an ethnic minority – and hence often labeled as Chinese religion. Being labeled as Chinese religion might not have been a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[30] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported colonial rule, and many joined the Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they had to dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion due to "its 'overly' Chinese cultural form,"[31] and promote it as "an autochthonous religion

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27 For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Girirakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*] (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995).

28 Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.

29 *Qingming Jie* (清明節), also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day, is the time when people of Chinese descent visit the graves of their departed ones and make ritual offerings.

30 Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.

31 Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

and not a foreign or alien import."[32] In so doing, they could turn Buddhism into a religion that transcended ethnic boundaries in Indonesia.

DOCTRINAL INTERVENTION

Because of nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into a form of Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism – namely, Buddhism with distinct Indonesian characteristics.[33] However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture had deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesianizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

Anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication – among others, the ban on the Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This was one reason why, in its congress in May 1970, *Perhimpunan Buddhis Indonesia* (the Indonesian Buddhists Association) issued a resolution stating that "Indonesia Buddhism in Indonesia should have more Indonesian characteristics, not Chinese ones."[34] The effort of separating Buddhism from the social stigma of Chinese religion was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[35] This

[32] Iem Brown, "The Revival of Buddhism in Modern Indonesia," 53.

[33] For further discussion on Indonesian Buddhism see Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia."

[34] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 71.

[35] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.

Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and prohibited the building of new Chinese temples.[36] Experiencing the conversion of Chinese temples into Buddhist ones, a temple caretaker lamented, "We had to convert our temple into *vihara*. If not, we would be in trouble. … This was the most difficult moment for us. We had to change our place of worship as if it was the place of abomination. It did pain us."[37] This law also affected pure Buddhist *viharas*. Because they were perceived as being associated with Chinese religion, Buddhist places of worship faced problems. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairs of existing Buddhist temples required a special permit, which was often difficult to get.[38]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence by the classification of all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism – that is, emphasis on the teaching in the scriptures. The regime opined that Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and detach themselves from Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and, more often than not, had no relation to the religion itself.[39] In so doing, the regime borrowed the authority of holy scriptures to

[36] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bhakti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.

[37] Interview, March 1, 2015

[38] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera."

[39] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public of the restriction on Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs Buddhists in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular in the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temples.

justify its policy – an act that Wimbush describes as scripturalization.[40] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space it had defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered to be Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals were in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists had to return to the "true" Dharma – that is, the Buddha's teaching – and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtras could be chanted in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged. Describing this situation, an elder in a Buddhist temple said, "We started using Sanskrit sūtras when the New Order regime banned Chinese language and culture. ... Chanting in Chinese was not totally forbidden, but you know .... when the government said that it was recommended, it was not just a recommendation. It was an order. Then we used both Chinese and Sanskrit sūtras. However, Sanskrit sūtras were chanted in our Sunday school."[41]

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. Because China was associated with communism, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist – an enemy of the State. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Order regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion – that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and a holy book.

40 See Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
41 Interview, March 1, 2015.

The position of the belief in God in the Indonesian political landscape is very central, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, Indonesia's state ideology, which is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[42] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who wanted an Islamic state (by emphasizing the importance of religion) and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, a word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion), and not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam, is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive – that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on this principle, the State only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic – namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[43] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they faced. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptations.

POLITICAL RITUALS

Ritual is closely related to identity as the former can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment can produce a sense of belonging among the participants and ritual can draw attention to the shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[44] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the

[42] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles – namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact that the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structures. The importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to persuade people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.

[43] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.

[44] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.

means by which individuals are brought together as a collective group."[45] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[46]

As Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could thus strengthen Sino-Buddhist identity. However, Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building and the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new sociopolitical landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification. Those who adapted their religious rituals believed that the notion of impermanence – that is, "no element of physical matter or any concept remain unchanged"[47] – gave them the authority[48] to do so. As a *Romo Pandito*[49] in a Buddhayāna temple said: "It is stated in Buddhist scripture that nothing is permanent. So, making some adjustments as long as the changes are still in line with Buddhist teachings is definitely not a big deal."[50]

An example of adaptation is the appropriation of Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall on the first or the fifteenth day of a month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of the Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebrations.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of the Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese with a legitimate space for culturally Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were

45 Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
46 Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.
47 Carol S. Anderson, "Anitya (Impermanence)," 23
48 For further discussion on how scriptures function as the source of authoritative power, see Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
49 *Romo Pandito* is a Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who is appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk
50 Interview, December 10, 2014.

also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted, followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, Chinese Buddhists resisted pressure to "nationalize" Buddhism as well as accommodating it. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebrations and the use of Chinese served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used to express their ethnic identity. However, they had to make concessions because the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal and less of an ethnic religion by emphasizing the religious aspects of the celebration – that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet, at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also preserved. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit, was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation – that is, expressing their Indonesianness – and resistance – that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy show that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[51] were political because they could "construct, display, and promote ... political interests" of a certain group.[52] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to a changing social and political climate.

INTERPRETING GODHEAD

As well as being visible in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in Buddhist theology.[53] Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The State regarded Buddhism as either standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The

[51] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

[52] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.

[53] While the word "theology" may not fit in with the nature of Buddhism because it is portrayed as a religion without God, a number of scholars use the word to refer to the study of Buddhism as a religion—hence the term "Buddhist theology." See, for example, Roger Jackson and John Makransky, ed., *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars* (Cornwall: Curzon, 2000), and Kieko Obuse, "Finding God in Buddhism: A New Trend in Contemporary Buddhist Approaches to Islam" *Numen* 62, no. 4 (2015): 408–30.

theological debate over whether or not Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape compelled Buddhists to adapt Buddhist doctrine in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (to refer to a concept of God in Buddhism),[54] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the eighth or ninth century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[55]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[56] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[57] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, he is different from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world – that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a Godhead, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia: Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[58] His personal experience may also have contributed to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, ... , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic

[54] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism," 108–17.

[55] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation into a western language was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.

[56] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.

[57] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.

[58] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda," 10–21.

> inquiry as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[59]

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus of the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to the teaching of Buddhayāna. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*), written by Dhammaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism: believing in one supreme God, Ādi-Buddha; having prophets such as Buddha Gautama and other Bodhisattvas; and having holy books, including the *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is thereby adapted for the Islamic context, in which the State defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The State and other religious groups accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence having communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely Ādi-Buddha, and that it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under these political conditions, therefore, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. Criticizing Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's concept of Ādi-Buddha, Bhante Naradha Thera, a Sri Lankan Theravādin monk who once visited Indonesia, sent a letter to Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's English translator in which he wrote that there was no God in Buddhism.[60] Another monk from Thailand, who was invited for the ordination of five Indonesian Buddhist monks in 1970, also questioned the concept of Ādi-Buddha. He questioned whether this concept

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[59] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59–60.

[60] Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*], 145.

was "a wise compromise."[61] However, the Indonesian Theravādins understood the importance of God in the Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God[62] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[63]

Despite the differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' (both Chinese and non-Chinese) attempt to conform to the state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism incorporating the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually have continuity with the past,[64] and they are invented to cope with new conditions and situations.[65] Hobsbawm and Ranger's idea regarding the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea – that is, giving it a new meaning suitable for the conditions they faced. The concept of God they invented is found in "their historic past" – specifically, in the notion of Ādi-Buddha – which was given a new meaning and reinterpreted as "God."

POST-NEW ORDER BUDDHISM

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the arrival in Indonesia of Theravāda Buddhism, which was brought by Buddhist monks who had been sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious training.[66] In 1970, some

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61 Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 5.

62 Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).

63 Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with—that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.

64 Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

65 Ibid., 8.

66 A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work

of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of the Tipitaka, and emphasizing the philosophical teachings of Buddha instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result, the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both Chinese and non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the change of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease of life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims have started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese traditions openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public is now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples have started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, modernist and scripturalist Theravādins have questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temples and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals as the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

The way in which Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and, for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of contention between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings; the latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

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and ordination may be a factor behind the tendency in Buddhism in Indonesia to send monks to a Theravāda school for religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," 108–15.

An example of the contention between the traditionalists and the modernists was the offering of food (Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term *ehipasiko*.[67] Venerating ancestors was also a source of contention. All agreed that showing respect to ancestors and the departed ones was commendable. However, the modernists believed that making an ancestral altar was going too far. "We are allowed and even encouraged to show respect to our ancestors and those who have departed before us. However, there are no merits in having ancestral altars. There are no such things in Buddhism," said a man in his thirties.[68] On the other hand, the traditionalists believed that having an ancestral altar at home was also a way of practicing Buddhism, as it was the Chinese way of showing respect. "According to our tradition, it [having an ancestral altar] is the correct way of showing our respect."[69] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of the rituals according to their religious orientations. Those with a modernist leaning viewed those rituals as religiously improper, which implied that they prioritized "orthodoxy (correct belief)"; others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals and thus viewed them as appropriate, if not mandatory, which showed that they prioritized "orthopraxy (correct practice)."[70]

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67 Literally, *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes the empirical verification of Buddhist teachings.

68 Interview, March 1, 2015.

69 Interview, February 8, 2015.

70 See Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999) for a detailed discussion on religions and Chinese cultural traditions.

Another source of disagreement was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[71] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred to the Pāli text of the Tipitaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God (manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha in an Indonesian context). Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In their opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they were "contaminated" Buddhists.[72] They emphasized the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology – that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the idea of Godhead, have led Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The Chinese traditional rituals are usually practiced at home as cultural elements, and the religious rituals are practiced in the temple. In this way, the former are privatized and separated from the latter. During Chinese New Year celebrations, for example, Chinese traditional rituals, such as venerating ancestors, are conducted as private affairs at home, whereas religious rituals (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs, in a temple. As far as the idea of Godhead is concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have many modernist devotees.

By transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices – by, for example, separating the traditional/cultural from the religious and adjusting some of their Buddhist practices – Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate the demands from the State and the modernists dominating Indonesian Buddhist society that they stay away from their traditional ritual practices. This transformation and recasting also enables those who believe in the existence of

[71] Interview, December 7, 2014.

[72] On April 26, 2015, in an informal discussion with seven Buddhists who are members of a Buddhayāna temple congregation, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not "contaminate" their Buddhist belief.

God, as manifested in the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, to practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found a religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with religious belief and tradition. All these processes led to substantial diversity among Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a Theravādin *Romo Pandito* said, "Although personally we disagree with their [Chinese Buddhists'] practices, we could accept those diverse practices. Being open-minded is a Buddhist virtue."[73] Another from a Buddhayāna temple said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors. Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha."[74]

CONCLUSION

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism in the early twentieth century, after it had been dormant for a few hundred years.[75] Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence, Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project it started to Indonesianize

[73] Interview, April 5, 2015.

[74] Interview, February 12, 2015.

[75] For a detailed account of the role of the Chinese in reviving Buddhism in Indonesia, see Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*]; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*]; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34

its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural traditions in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals became a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism, that has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. Not all Theravādins have a scripturalist leaning. However, the Theravāda Buddhism in Indonesia does have a scripturalist tendency. For example, the Indonesian translations of the Pāli texts of the Theravāda are presented next to the Pāli original without commentary or interpretation. In so doing, they claim scripturalist authority. Another example is that the Theravāda regularly holds paritta (Theravāda holy texts) recital contests among Buddhists in Indonesia. The winners are awarded the Presidents Cup at Vesak Day. The focus of this contest is not on the ability to understand the text because the Indonesian translations of the Pāli text provide the literal meaning of the Pāli originals, but rather on the spectacle of reciting them in Pāli, the religious language of Buddhism. Through this kind of scripturalist performance, the Theravādins in Indonesia show their appreciation for the "true" Buddhist texts. This is the version of Buddhism that now dominates in Indonesia.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate regarding the existence of God in Buddhism became important. Fueled by different religious orientations and interpretations, this situation triggered tensions among the Chinese Buddhist community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between religious and traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they have come to use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness as a justification to accept differences in their rites and practices. They separate the religious and the cultural, enabling them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere, allowing the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used to give Buddhists the freedom to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus,

they innovate, transform, and recast their beliefs to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of the lotus.

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Bukti 13

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Various Petals of the Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

Setefanus Suprajitno

Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965-1998) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into the Buddhism made more Indonesian by eliminating its Chinese traditional influence. This found support among Chinese Indonesian Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism from its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the comeback of these rituals to Buddhism should be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they dislike blending Buddhism with them. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use for coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity construction. The finding shows that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness for coming to terms with these tensions, and for innovating, transforming and recasting their religious practices.

Keywords
Buddhism | Chinese community | Chinese religion | Identity | Indonesia

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INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important, which Indonesians call *Reformasi* (The Reform), dealt with policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. It allowed Chinese Indonesians to regain a space in public life after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and having been culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965–98) Chinese Indonesians

were considered perpetual foreigners and their existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination peaked in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power[1] demanding cultural change. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*,[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese were heavily impacted by the change.

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "Indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This Indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion, as expressions of Chineseness, including Chinese religious and cultural traditions, were forbidden.[3]

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[4] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or a blend of all of them known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw Hwee* or *Tri Dharma*.[5] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese traditions, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the State. In this way, they could become ideologically correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was also considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese

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1 For a detailed account of discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996–1999*.

2 *Abangans* are Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam—that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*.

3 Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

4 Confucianism has been in Indonesia since long before the twentieth century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," 125–35; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*].

5 *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." For further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee* see Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia.*

was supported by the worship of various gods from the Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[6] There were concerted efforts from the State, as well as from *pribumi*[7] Buddhists – who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent[8] – to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia, during which the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism–namely, Buddhism which is not influenced by so-called Chinese traditional rituals, and Buddhism which is in line with state ideology.[9]

This situation put Chinese Indonesian Buddhists under pressure to conform to the new sociopolitical reality.[10] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. The idea of modernist Theravāda Buddhism even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism of its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus

6 See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," 139–65, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

7 *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued Presidential Decree No. 26/1998 on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines indigenous Indonesians as people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

8 Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

9 For further reference see Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahasthavira," 53–72; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

10 Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the province of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed on September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya – the capital of East Java province and the second largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted – is quite high: 31,166, which constitutes more than half of the Buddhist population in the province – namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed on September 9, 2018).

to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[11]

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. One scholar noted that "Chinese Indonesians are no longer forced to be assimilated; they are able to retain their ethnic culture and identity."[12] Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge–especially in the religious beliefs traditionally associated with the Chinese, such as Buddhism, Daosim, and Confucianism. Chinese Buddhism started to develop again.[13] For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Indonesian Buddhists, the return of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism needs to be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most of the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I explore in this paper. In so doing, and by referring to fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

[11] Buddhism's social stigma as a Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architecture and facades. However, unlike mosques and churches, with some exceptions – especially temples which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees and old Chinese temples – most Buddhist temples were originally profane commercial buildings or houses and were only later converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the outside. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. There are even temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image gives some indication of the challenges that Buddhism – a state-sanctioned religion – faces, despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brought openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temples through their architectural designs.

[12] Eddie Lembong, "Indonesian Government Policies and the Ethnic Chinese: Some Recent Development," 55.

[13] Leo Suryadinata, "Chinese Indonesians in an Era of Globalization: Some Major Characteristics," 10.

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

My investigation into the Chinese Indonesian Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to more rationalized religious practices.[14] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization: one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may lead to social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[15] These tensions, I believe, could occur as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribe and what religious organizations teach. They may put pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the sociopolitical reality.

In conforming to sociopolitical reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[16]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

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14 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.
15 Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, 223.
16 Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious beliefs and practices can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[17]

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individuals together and provide a social context for the maintenance of ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and development of identity through religious beliefs and practices create a process through which boundaries appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted by selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[18]

Grounding my argument in the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as a "Chinese religion." Subsequently, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. Finally, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

THE ORIGIN OF "CHINESE RELIGION"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. The fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the fifteenth century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered in the demise of Buddhism.[19] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence

[17] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[18] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[19] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.

still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[20] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive even as Java becomes more Islamic.[21]

Buddhism started to resurface in the seventeenth century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism as a result of the influx of Chinese immigrants into Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) and known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in the Glodok area of Jakarta.[22] From that time, Buddhism – mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs – grew in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of religious life, but the center of Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Durkheim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[23] I contend that the temples preserved Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity among the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of "Chinese religion."

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in colonial Indonesia in the early twentieth century, such as Josias van Dienst and E. E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created the Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups, like the Dutch and the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[24] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elites, Eastern esotericism referred to the Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This

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20 Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.

21 Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.

22 Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.

23 Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.

24 Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.

philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[25] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress held on April 1–2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors – "*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[26] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published the bulletin *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*) in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934. These publications, which used the term *Sam Kauw*, clearly emphasized the blending of the three teachings, namely Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.

Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma.

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po.

[25] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27–28.

[26] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.

In the mid-twentieth century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims, and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an example of occultism, which was a syncretistic belief in various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks – among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita, who was of Chinese descent and whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante Girirakkhito, the son of a Balinese royal family, whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri – in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[27] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

Although there were natives who embraced Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[28] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Traditions such as venerating ancestors and observing *Qingming Jie*[29] became part of Buddhist practice. Moreover, Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem for Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese – an ethnic minority – and hence often labeled as Chinese religion. Being labeled as Chinese religion might not have been a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[30] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported colonial rule, and many joined the Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they had to dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion due to "its 'overly' Chinese cultural form,"[31] and promote it as "an autochthonous religion

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27 For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Girirakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*] (Bandung: Yayasan Penerbit Karaniya, 1995).

28 Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.

29 *Qingming Jie* (清明節), also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day, is the time when people of Chinese descent visit the graves of their departed ones and make ritual offerings.

30 Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.

31 Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

and not a foreign or alien import."[32] In so doing, they could turn Buddhism into a religion that transcended ethnic boundaries in Indonesia.

DOCTRINAL INTERVENTION

Because of nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into a form of Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism – namely, Buddhism with distinct Indonesian characteristics.[33] However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture had deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesianizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

Anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication – among others, the ban on the Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This was one reason why, in its congress in May 1970, *Perhimpunan Buddhis Indonesia* (the Indonesian Buddhists Association) issued a resolution stating that "Indonesia Buddhism in Indonesia should have more Indonesian characteristics, not Chinese ones."[34] The effort of separating Buddhism from the social stigma of Chinese religion was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[35] This

[32] Iem Brown, "The Revival of Buddhism in Modern Indonesia," 53.

[33] For further discussion on Indonesian Buddhism see Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia."

[34] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 71.

[35] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.

Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and prohibited the building of new Chinese temples.[36] Experiencing the conversion of Chinese temples into Buddhist ones, a temple caretaker lamented, "We had to convert our temple into *vihara*. If not, we would be in trouble. ... This was the most difficult moment for us. We had to change our place of worship as if it was the place of abomination. It did pain us."[37] This law also affected pure Buddhist *viharas*. Because they were perceived as being associated with Chinese religion, Buddhist places of worship faced problems. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairs of existing Buddhist temples required a special permit, which was often difficult to get.[38]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence by the classification of all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism – that is, emphasis on the teaching in the scriptures. The regime opined that Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and detach themselves from Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and, more often than not, had no relation to the religion itself.[39] In so doing, the regime borrowed the authority of holy scriptures to

[36] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bhakti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.

[37] Interview, March 1, 2015

[38] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera."

[39] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public of the restriction on Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs Buddhists in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular in the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temples.

justify its policy – an act that Wimbush describes as scripturalization.[40] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space it had defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered to be Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals were in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists had to return to the "true" Dharma – that is, the Buddha's teaching – and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtras could be chanted in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged. Describing this situation, an elder in a Buddhist temple said, "We started using Sanskrit sūtras when the New Order regime banned Chinese language and culture. ... Chanting in Chinese was not totally forbidden, but you know .... when the government said that it was recommended, it was not just a recommendation. It was an order. Then we used both Chinese and Sanskrit sūtras. However, Sanskrit sūtras were chanted in our Sunday school."[41]

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. Because China was associated with communism, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist – an enemy of the State. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Order regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion – that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and a holy book.

40 See Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
41 Interview, March 1, 2015.

The position of the belief in God in the Indonesian political landscape is very central, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, Indonesia's state ideology, which is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[42] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who wanted an Islamic state (by emphasizing the importance of religion) and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, a word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion), and not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam, is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive – that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on this principle, the State only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic – namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[43] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they faced. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptations.

POLITICAL RITUALS

Ritual is closely related to identity as the former can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment can produce a sense of belonging among the participants and ritual can draw attention to the shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[44] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the

[42] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles – namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact that the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structures. The importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to persuade people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.

[43] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.

[44] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.

means by which individuals are brought together as a collective group."[45] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[46]

As Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could thus strengthen Sino-Buddhist identity. However, Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building and the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new sociopolitical landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification. Those who adapted their religious rituals believed that the notion of impermanence – that is, "no element of physical matter or any concept remain unchanged"[47] – gave them the authority[48] to do so. As a *Romo Pandito*[49] in a Buddhayāna temple said: "It is stated in Buddhist scripture that nothing is permanent. So, making some adjustments as long as the changes are still in line with Buddhist teachings is definitely not a big deal."[50]

An example of adaptation is the appropriation of Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall on the first or the fifteenth day of a month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of the Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebrations.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of the Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese with a legitimate space for culturally Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were

45 Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
46 Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.
47 Carol S. Anderson, "Anitya (Impermanence)," 23
48 For further discussion on how scriptures function as the source of authoritative power, see Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
49 *Romo Pandito* is a Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who is appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk
50 Interview, December 10, 2014.

also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted, followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, Chinese Buddhists resisted pressure to "nationalize" Buddhism as well as accommodating it. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebrations and the use of Chinese served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used to express their ethnic identity. However, they had to make concessions because the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal and less of an ethnic religion by emphasizing the religious aspects of the celebration – that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet, at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also preserved. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit, was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation – that is, expressing their Indonesianness – and resistance – that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy show that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[51] were political because they could "construct, display, and promote ... political interests" of a certain group.[52] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to a changing social and political climate.

INTERPRETING GODHEAD

As well as being visible in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in Buddhist theology.[53] Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The State regarded Buddhism as either standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The

[51] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

[52] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.

[53] While the word "theology" may not fit in with the nature of Buddhism because it is portrayed as a religion without God, a number of scholars use the word to refer to the study of Buddhism as a religion – hence the term "Buddhist theology." See, for example, Roger Jackson and John Makransky, ed., *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars* and Kieko Obuse, "Finding God in Buddhism: A New Trend in Contemporary Buddhist Approaches to Islam."

theological debate over whether or not Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape compelled Buddhists to adapt Buddhist doctrine in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (to refer to a concept of God in Buddhism),[54] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the eighth or ninth century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[55]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[56] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[57] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, he is different from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world – that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a Godhead, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia: Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[58] His personal experience may also have contributed to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, ... , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic

[54] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism," 108–17.

[55] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation into a western language was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.

[56] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.

[57] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.

[58] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda," 10–21.

> inquiry as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[59]

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus of the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to the teaching of Buddhayāna. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*), written by Dhammaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism: believing in one supreme God, Ādi-Buddha; having prophets such as Buddha Gautama and other Bodhisattvas; and having holy books, including the *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is thereby adapted for the Islamic context, in which the State defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The State and other religious groups accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence having communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely Ādi-Buddha, and that it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under these political conditions, therefore, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. Criticizing Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's concept of Ādi-Buddha, Bhante Naradha Thera, a Sri Lankan Theravādin monk who once visited Indonesia, sent a letter to Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's English translator in which he wrote that there was no God in Buddhism.[60] Another monk from Thailand, who was invited for the ordination of five Indonesian Buddhist monks in 1970, also questioned the concept of Ādi-Buddha. He questioned whether this concept

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[59] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59–60.

[60] Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*], 145.

was "a wise compromise."[61] However, the Indonesian Theravādins understood the importance of God in the Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God[62] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[63]

Despite the differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' (both Chinese and non-Chinese) attempt to conform to the state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism incorporating the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually have continuity with the past,[64] and they are invented to cope with new conditions and situations.[65] Hobsbawm and Ranger's idea regarding the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea – that is, giving it a new meaning suitable for the conditions they faced. The concept of God they invented is found in "their historic past" – specifically, in the notion of Ādi-Buddha – which was given a new meaning and reinterpreted as "God."

POST-NEW ORDER BUDDHISM

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the arrival in Indonesia of Theravāda Buddhism, which was brought by Buddhist monks who had been sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious training.[66] In 1970, some

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61 Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 5.

62 Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).

63 Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with—that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.

64 Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

65 Ibid., 8.

66 A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work

of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of the Tipitaka, and emphasizing the philosophical teachings of Buddha instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result, the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both Chinese and non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the change of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease of life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims have started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese traditions openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public is now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples have started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, modernist and scripturalist Theravādins have questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temples and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals as the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

The way in which Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and, for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of contention between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings; the latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

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and ordination may be a factor behind the tendency in Buddhism in Indonesia to send monks to a Theravāda school for religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," 108–15.

An example of the contention between the traditionalists and the modernists was the offering of food (Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term *ehipasiko*.[67] Venerating ancestors was also a source of contention. All agreed that showing respect to ancestors and the departed ones was commendable. However, the modernists believed that making an ancestral altar was going too far. "We are allowed and even encouraged to show respect to our ancestors and those who have departed before us. However, there are no merits in having ancestral altars. There are no such things in Buddhism," said a man in his thirties.[68] On the other hand, the traditionalists believed that having an ancestral altar at home was also a way of practicing Buddhism, as it was the Chinese way of showing respect. "According to our tradition, it [having an ancestral altar] is the correct way of showing our respect."[69] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of the rituals according to their religious orientations. Those with a modernist leaning viewed those rituals as religiously improper, which implied that they prioritized "orthodoxy (correct belief)"; others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals and thus viewed them as appropriate, if not mandatory, which showed that they prioritized "orthopraxy (correct practice)."[70]

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67 Literally, *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes the empirical verification of Buddhist teachings.

68 Interview, March 1, 2015.

69 Interview, February 8, 2015.

70 See Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* for a detailed discussion on religions and Chinese cultural traditions.

Another source of disagreement was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[71] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred to the Pāli text of the Tipitaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God (manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha in an Indonesian context). Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In their opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they were "contaminated" Buddhists.[72] They emphasized the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology – that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the idea of Godhead, have led Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The Chinese traditional rituals are usually practiced at home as cultural elements, and the religious rituals are practiced in the temple. In this way, the former are privatized and separated from the latter. During Chinese New Year celebrations, for example, Chinese traditional rituals, such as venerating ancestors, are conducted as private affairs at home, whereas religious rituals (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs, in a temple. As far as the idea of Godhead is concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have many modernist devotees.

By transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices – by, for example, separating the traditional/cultural from the religious and adjusting some of their Buddhist practices – Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate the demands from the State and the modernists dominating Indonesian Buddhist society that they stay away from their traditional ritual practices. This transformation and recasting also enables those who believe in the existence of

[71] Interview, December 7, 2014.

[72] On April 26, 2015, in an informal discussion with seven Buddhists who are members of a Buddhayāna temple congregation, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not "contaminate" their Buddhist belief.

God, as manifested in the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, to practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found a religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with religious belief and tradition. All these processes led to substantial diversity among Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a Theravādin *Romo Pandito* said, "Although personally we disagree with their [Chinese Buddhists'] practices, we could accept those diverse practices. Being open-minded is a Buddhist virtue."[73] Another from a Buddhayāna temple said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors. Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha."[74]

CONCLUSION

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism in the early twentieth century, after it had been dormant for a few hundred years.[75] Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence, Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project it started to Indonesianize

[73] Interview, April 5, 2015.

[74] Interview, February 12, 2015.

[75] For a detailed account of the role of the Chinese in reviving Buddhism in Indonesia, see Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*]; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*]; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34

its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural traditions in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals became a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism, that has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. Not all Theravādins have a scripturalist leaning. However, the Theravāda Buddhism in Indonesia does have a scripturalist tendency. For example, the Indonesian translations of the Pāli texts of the Theravāda are presented next to the Pāli original without commentary or interpretation. In so doing, they claim scripturalist authority. Another example is that the Theravāda regularly holds paritta (Theravāda holy texts) recital contests among Buddhists in Indonesia. The winners are awarded the Presidents Cup at Vesak Day. The focus of this contest is not on the ability to understand the text because the Indonesian translations of the Pāli text provide the literal meaning of the Pāli originals, but rather on the spectacle of reciting them in Pāli, the religious language of Buddhism. Through this kind of scripturalist performance, the Theravādins in Indonesia show their appreciation for the "true" Buddhist texts. This is the version of Buddhism that now dominates in Indonesia.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate regarding the existence of God in Buddhism became important. Fueled by different religious orientations and interpretations, this situation triggered tensions among the Chinese Buddhist community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between religious and traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they have come to use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness as a justification to accept differences in their rites and practices. They separate the religious and the cultural, enabling them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere, allowing the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used to give Buddhists the freedom to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus,

they innovate, transform, and recast their beliefs to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of the lotus.

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Various Petals of the Lotus: The Identities of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia

Setefanus Suprajitno

Abstract
When Indonesia's New Order regime (1965-1998) was in power, Chinese Indonesians were asked to abandon their traditional religions, such as Confucianism, Daoism, and Chinese Buddhism, or to merge into the Buddhism made more Indonesian by eliminating its Chinese traditional influence. This found support among Chinese Indonesian Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Buddhism from its "non-religious elements," and to separate it from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." However, the fall of the regime triggered the re-emergence of Chinese rituals in Buddhism. For some, the comeback of these rituals to Buddhism should be carefully examined. While they accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they dislike blending Buddhism with them. This creates tensions between the religious and the cultural elements in Chinese Indonesians' Buddhism because their Buddhism has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. Through ethnographic study in Surabaya, I investigate discursive practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use for coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape their ethno-religious identity construction. The finding shows that they use the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness for coming to terms with these tensions, and for innovating, transforming and recasting their religious practices.

Keywords
Buddhism | Chinese community | Chinese religion | identity | Indonesia

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INTRODUCTION

The year 1998 was a watershed in Indonesia's history, which started a new chapter in its political and social life. The fall of the New Order regime in that year resulted in drastic changes. One of the most important, which Indonesians call *Reformasi* (The Reform), dealt with policies concerning the ethnic Chinese. It allowed Chinese Indonesians to regain a space in public life after more than thirty years of being marginalized and discriminated against.

Despite having been in Indonesia for such a long time and having been culturally localized, during the New Order era (1965–1998) Chinese Indonesians

were considered perpetual foreigners and their existence in Indonesia was often characterized by ethnic discrimination. This discrimination peaked in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power[1] demanding cultural change. Although this situation also affected other ethnic groups, such as *Abangans*,[2] who were forced to become more religious, the Chinese were heavily impacted by the change.

After the purge of communism in 1965, the authoritarian New Order regime implemented a policy of assimilation. The Chinese in Indonesia were forced to abandon their Chinese culture, which was depicted as having destructive influences and as being inappropriate for Indonesians. They were also expected to "Indonesianize" and to blend themselves into the Indonesian nationality. This Indonesianization process also affected the domain of religion, as expressions of Chineseness, including Chinese religious and cultural traditions, were forbidden.[3]

Most Chinese Indonesians embraced Chinese traditional religions such as Confucianism,[4] Daoism, and Mahāyāna Buddhism, or a blend of all of them known in Indonesia as *Sam Kauw Hwee* or *Tri Dharma*.[5] However, during the New Order era, as one way of Indonesianizing the Chinese living in Indonesia, the regime asked them to abandon Confucianism and Daoism. They were asked either to merge into the version of Buddhism that the regime tried to make more Indonesian and less Chinese by eliminating the influence of Chinese traditions, or to adopt one of the religions officially sanctioned by the State. In this way, they could become ideologically correct citizens.

Although it was spared from the outright ban, Mahāyāna Buddhism was also considered too Chinese. The opinion that Mahāyāna Buddhism was too Chinese

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1 For a detailed account of discrimination against the Chinese in Indonesia, see Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996–1999*.

2 *Abangans* are Javanese Muslims who practice syncretistic Islam – that is, Islam which is influenced by Hindu Javanese traditions and beliefs. For a detailed account of *Abangans*' religious practices, see Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java*.

3 Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

4 Confucianism has been in Indonesia since long before the twentieth century. Only after the establishment of the Confucian Association, known as *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Kongjiao Hui*, 孔教會), in various cities in Indonesia in around 1918 and the formation of the General Organization of *Khong Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese *Kongjiao Zhonghui*, 孔教總會) by Confucian organizations in various cities in 1923, did it become an organized religion. See, for reference, Charles A. Coppel, "'Is Confucianism a Religion?': A 1923 Debate in Java," 125–35; and Liao Jianyu 廖建裕, *Yinni Kongjiao Chutan* 印尼孔教初探 [*A Preliminary Study of Confucian Religion in Indonesia*].

5 *Sam Kauw Hwee* (in Chinese: *Sanjiao Hui*, 三教會), also known as *Tri Dharma*, literally means "the Association of Three Religions." For further discussion on the history and development of *Sam Kauw Hwee* see Leo Suryadinata, *The Culture of Chinese Minority in Indonesia.*

was supported by the worship of various gods from the Chinese pantheon in this school of Buddhism.[6] There were concerted efforts from the State, as well as from *pribumi*[7] Buddhists – who form the minority in Buddhism as almost 90% of Indonesians embracing Buddhism are of Chinese descent[8] – to eliminate the influence and the growth of Mahāyāna Buddhism. This effort was also reinforced by the new theological debates in Buddhism in Indonesia, during which the New Order regime introduced what it called "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism–namely, Buddhism which is not influenced by so-called Chinese traditional rituals, and Buddhism which is in line with state ideology.[9]

This situation put Chinese Indonesian Buddhists under pressure to conform to the new sociopolitical reality.[10] They had to separate themselves from their Chinese ancestral traditions and detach themselves from the "non-religious" and "traditional" elements in their Buddhism. This was also propelled by the idea of modernist/scripturalist Theravāda Buddhism brought to Indonesia by Indonesian Buddhist monks who underwent religious training in Sri Lanka and Thailand. The idea of modernist Theravāda Buddhism even gained currency among the new generation of Chinese Buddhists who wanted to "purify" Mahāyāna Buddhism of its "non-religious traditional" elements, and thus

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6 See Tan Chee Beng, "The Study of Chinese Religions in Southeast Asia: Some Views," 139–65, for an anthropological account of the adoption of the concept of multiple deities in Chinese Buddhism.

7 *Pribumi* refers to the indigenous ethnic group in Indonesia. *Non-pribumi* refers to the non-indigenous group, but it is used exclusively to refer to the Chinese. However, the use of this term is not encouraged anymore, especially since President Habibie issued Presidential Decree No. 26/1998 on September 16, 1998, which abolished the terms *pribumi* and *non-pribumi*. The new citizenship law, which was issued on August 1, 2006, defines indigenous Indonesians as people who are born Indonesians, and never have other citizenships.

8 Aris Ananta, Evi N. Arifin and Kusnadi Bakhtiar, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis," 30.

9 For further reference see Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahasthavira," 53–72; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

10 Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. Out of 237,641,326 people, 1,703,254 or 0.72% are Buddhists. Based on the latest population census (2010), the largest concentration of Buddhists is in the province of Kepulauan Riau (6.65%), followed by West Kalimantan (5.41%) and Bangka Belitung (3.25%). The percentage of Buddhists in East Java province is only 0.16% of the total population of East Java (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321, accessed September 9, 2018). Yet, the number of Buddhists living in Surabaya – the capital of East Java province and the second largest city in Indonesia, where the fieldwork for this project was conducted – is quite high: 31,166, which constitutes more than half of the Buddhist population in the province – namely, 60,760 people (http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=3578000000, accessed September 9, 2018).

to separate Buddhist religious identity from the social stigma of "Chinese religion."[11]

However, the fall of the regime in 1998 brought winds of change. One scholar noted that "Chinese Indonesians are no longer forced to be assimilated; they are able to retain their ethnic culture and identity."[12] Chinese tradition and culture got a new lease of life. Rituals and practices of Chinese traditions started to re-emerge–especially in the religious beliefs traditionally associated with the Chinese, such as Buddhism, Daosim, and Confucianism. Chinese Buddhism started to develop again.[13] For some modernist and scripturalist Chinese Indonesian Buddhists, the return of Chinese traditions and rituals to Buddhism needs to be examined carefully. While they do not reject Chinese traditions and rituals and can accept the celebration of Chinese traditions, they do not want to blend Buddhism with Chinese traditions. There are tensions between religious and Chinese cultural elements in the belief of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia as the Buddhism most of the Chinese in Indonesia embrace has been so ingrained in Chinese culture that separating the religious from the cultural is not easy. How do the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia negotiate these tensions? How do they separate the religious from the cultural? These are the issues I explore in this paper. In so doing, and by referring to fieldwork conducted in Surabaya, I investigate the practices Chinese Indonesian Buddhists use in coming to terms with these tensions. I also examine how these practices shape the way they construct their ethno-religious identity.

[11] Buddhism's social stigma as a Chinese religion can be seen from Buddhist temples, known as *vihara* in Indonesia. Mosques and churches in Indonesia can be discerned from their architecture and facades. However, unlike mosques and churches, with some exceptions – especially temples which have a large number of non-Chinese devotees and old Chinese temples – most Buddhist temples were originally profane commercial buildings or houses and were only later converted into temples. For this reason, they do not resemble Buddhist temples from the outside. The indicators that they are Buddhist temples are usually small Buddhist icons such as stupas. There are even temples that do not display outward signs that they are Buddhist temples, except in their names. This low-profile image gives some indication of the challenges that Buddhism – a state-sanctioned religion – faces, despite the Indonesian constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion. However, the administration that replaced the New Order brought openness. New Buddhist temples built after the fall of the New Order regime display that they are Buddhist temples through their architectural designs.

[12] Eddie Lembong, "Indonesian Government Policies and the Ethnic Chinese: Some Recent Development," 55.

[13] Leo Suryadinata, "Chinese Indonesians in an Era of Globalization: Some Major Characteristics," 10.

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RELIGION AND ETHNICITY

My investigation into the Chinese Indonesian Buddhists in Surabaya is informed by Weberian sociological theory of religion. According to Weber, the development of religion shows that it undergoes a rationalization process whereby it moves away from a magical orientation to more rationalized religious practices.[14] This means that it modernizes and detaches itself from the magical content. The rationalization of religion also shows that religion is systematized to make it more systematic and coherent. In other words, there are two kinds of religious rationalization: one that emphasizes modernization and another that emphasizes coherence.

In his discussion on religion, Weber also emphasizes the relationship between religion and society. Through the example of the role that Protestant ethics played in the development of capitalism, he explains that religion may lead to social change and shape society and culture. However, because of the dialectical relation between religion on the one hand and society and culture on the other, society and culture may also generate specific religious beliefs. This, according to Weber, may produce tensions between religion and political institutions.[15] These tensions, I believe, could occur as a result of the differences between what political institutions prescribe and what religious organizations teach. They may put pressure on an ethno-religious group to conform to the sociopolitical reality.

In conforming to sociopolitical reality, an ethno-religious group could resort to accommodation and adaptation. In so doing, this group may invent a tradition of religious practices. Invented tradition is defined as:

> a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.[16]

Tradition is invented as an attempt to cope with changes that happen. It is a response to the changes, and at the same time it structures some parts of social life as unchanging or seemingly stable.

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14 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, 61.
15 Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, 223.
16 Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

My study is also informed by Durkheim's functionalist theory of religion, which focuses on the capacity of religion to socially organize groups of individuals. He argues that religious beliefs and practices can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith. He says,

> Religious beliefs proper are always shared by a definite group that professes them and that practices the corresponding rites. Not only are they individually accepted by all members of that group, but they also belong to the group and unify it. The individuals who comprise the group feel joined to one another by the fact of common faith.[17]

These communal bonds are created and strengthened through religious rites and practices transmitting cultural values and tradition. Thus, religious beliefs, practices, and rituals can bind individuals together and provide a social context for the maintenance of ethnic traditions, norms, and values. This maintenance could contribute to the preservation and development of ethnic identity. However, the preservation and development of identity through religious beliefs and practices create a process through which boundaries appear reflecting differences and interests among members of ethno-religious group. These boundaries are elastic as they are, according to Roosens, constituted by selected cultural features which members of the group ascribe to themselves and consider relevant.[18]

Grounding my argument in the conceptual framework of religion and ethnicity, I try to delineate the discursive practices of the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia in negotiating and constructing their ethno-religious identity. First of all, I explain how Buddhism was labeled as a "Chinese religion." Subsequently, I elucidate how it was Indonesianized and how the Chinese Buddhists responded to the process of Indonesianization. Finally, I examine the situation Buddhism faced after the fall of the New Order regime.

THE ORIGIN OF "CHINESE RELIGION"

Historical records show that Buddhism has been in Indonesia for centuries. The fall of the last Hindu-Buddhist kingdom in Java in the fifteenth century and the spread of Islam changed the religious landscape in the archipelago and ushered in the demise of Buddhism.[19] Nevertheless, Hindu-Buddhist influence

[17] Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
[18] Eugene E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis*, 12.
[19] Gina L. Barnes, "An Introduction to Buddhist Archaeology," 171.

still remains, at least in the form of traditional belief and rituals, known as *kejawen* (Javanese mysticism). An anthropologist, Niels Mulder, writes that many aspects of Javanese mysticism inform Javanese "ethics, customs, and style" and "are generally thought to hark back to the Hindu-Buddhist period of Javanese history."[20] Another scholar, Robert W. Hefner, writes that Hindu-Buddhist traditions still survive even as Java becomes more Islamic.[21]

Buddhism started to resurface in the seventeenth century, although it was mixed with Daoism and Confucianism as a result of the influx of Chinese immigrants into Indonesia. They brought their beliefs and established places of worship. The first Chinese Buddhist temple, named Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan 金德院) and known today as Dharma Bhakti Vihara, was built in 1650 in the Glodok area of Jakarta.[22] From that time, Buddhism – mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs – grew in tandem with the Chinese community in Indonesia. In order to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, more Chinese Buddhist temples were built. The temples became not only the center of religious life, but the center of Chinese cultural life as well. Through rituals and practices, such as wedding rituals, mourning customs, funeral ceremonies, and the observation of Chinese Buddhist holidays, following Durkheim's argument that religious belief and practice can create and strengthen communal bonds among members of the same faith,[23] I contend that the temples preserved Chinese ethnic culture and identity. In so doing, they maintained a sense of ethnicity among the Chinese community. In this way, Buddhism earned the label of "Chinese religion."

The arrival of Dutch theosophists in colonial Indonesia in the early twentieth century, such as Josias van Dienst and E. E. Powers, contributed to the revival of interest in Buddhism. They created the Theosophical Society, an avenue for exploring esoteric Eastern mysticism. This society became so popular that in a short time it attracted many new members from a variety of ethnic groups, like the Dutch and the Chinese, as well as local native elites. It also established branches in many parts of Java and other islands.[24] The popularity of the theosophical movement in attracting the Javanese elites and the Chinese was due to its leaning on Eastern esotericism. For the Javanese elites, Eastern esotericism referred to the Saivite and Buddhist philosophy of old Java. This

20 Niels Mulders, *Mysticism in Java: Ideology in Indonesia*, 16.
21 Robert W. Hefner, "Ritual and Cultural Reproduction in Non-Islamic Java," 666.
22 Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*], 18.
23 Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 41.
24 Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 19.

philosophy also attracted many educated Dutch colonial administrators.[25] For the Chinese, it was related to Chinese traditional beliefs. In the congress held on April 1–2, 1923, the Theosophical society encouraged the Chinese to return to the teachings of their ancestors – "*kembali ke ajaran-ajaran leluhur mereka*."[26] An increasing number of wealthy Chinese joined the Theosophical Society, and many became important members because they supported the Society financially. Some Chinese theosophists who had a deep interest in Buddhism began to revive it, although it was still mixed with Daoism and Confucianism. One of them was Kwee Tek Hoay (in Chinese: Guo Dehuai 郭德懷), who published the bulletin *Moestika Dharma* (*The Jewel of Dharma*) in 1931, and *Sam Kauw Gwat Po* (in Chinese *San Jiao Yuebao* 三教月報, *Sam Kauw Monthly*) in 1933. Tan Khoen Swie (in Chinese: Chen Kunru 陳坤瑞) published *Soeara Sam Kauw Hwee* (*Voice of Sam Kauw Hwee*) in 1934. These publications, which used the term *Sam Kauw*, clearly emphasized the blending of the three teachings, namely Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism.

Fig. 1. Cover page of Moestika Dharma.

Fig. 2. Cover page of Sam Kauw Gwat Po.

[25] Nancy Florida, *Writing the Past, Inscribing the Future: History as Prophecy in Colonial Java*, 27–28.

[26] Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*], 32.

In the mid-twentieth century, the Theosophical Society started to lose its luster. It became the target of ideological attacks from the indigenous community, Muslims, and Christians alike. They considered theosophy an example of occultism, which was a syncretistic belief in various religions, and hence unsuitable for Muslims and Christians. However, Buddhism still grew due to the relentless efforts of some prominent Buddhist monks – among others, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita, who was of Chinese descent and whose birth name was Tee Boan An (in Chinese: Zheng Man'an 鄭滿安) and Bhante Giririrakkhito, the son of a Balinese royal family, whose birth name was Ida Bagus Giri – in spreading the Dharma in Indonesia.[27] There were more and more people interested in and converting to Buddhism.

Although there were natives who embraced Buddhism, "the vast majority of the Buddhists are indeed ethnic Chinese."[28] This affected the nature of rituals and practices in Buddhism; that is to say, they were influenced by Chinese traditions. Traditions such as venerating ancestors and observing *Qingming Jie*[29] became part of Buddhist practice. Moreover, Chinese Buddhist deities were also found in many temples. This caused a problem for Buddhism in Indonesia. It was not only a minority religion, but also associated with the Chinese – an ethnic minority – and hence often labeled as Chinese religion. Being labeled as Chinese religion might not have been a problem during the colonial era because the Dutch colonial administration made the Chinese an ethnic minority on whose support the colonial administration relied.[30] However, after independence, the Chinese were considered a problem because they were seen as allies of the colonialists, although only a handful of them supported colonial rule, and many joined the Indonesian nationalist movement. In this political environment, being associated with the Chinese was definitely bad for Buddhism. Besides, in order to survive and grow in postcolonial Indonesia, Buddhism had to be able to attract other ethnic groups. In facing this problem, Buddhists in postcolonial Indonesia realized that they had to dissociate the religion from the label of Chinese religion due to "its 'overly' Chinese cultural form,"[31] and promote it as "an autochthonous religion

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27 For a detailed account of Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita and Bhante Giririrakkhito, see Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*].

28 Leo Suryadinata, Evi N. Arifin and Aris Ananta, *Indonesia's Population: Ethnicity and Religion in a Changing Political Landscape*, 124.

29 *Qingming Jie* (清明節), also known as Tomb-Sweeping Day, is the time when people of Chinese descent visit the graves of their departed ones and make ritual offerings.

30 Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World*, 321.

31 Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 270.

and not a foreign or alien import."[32] In so doing, they could turn Buddhism into a religion that transcended ethnic boundaries in Indonesia.

DOCTRINAL INTERVENTION

Because of nationalist sentiment after Indonesian independence was proclaimed, the Buddhists in Indonesia tried to reconfigure their religion into a form of Buddhism that could carry nationalist content. In independent Indonesia, this meant a more Indonesian and less Chinese Buddhism – namely, Buddhism with distinct Indonesian characteristics.[33] However, although there were indigenous Buddhists, Indonesianizing Buddhism was not easy because the majority of the Buddhists were Chinese, and Chinese culture had deeply penetrated the version of Buddhism in Indonesia. Even the existence of nationalist sentiment and the political will of Indonesianizing Buddhism were not able to transform Buddhism into so-called Indonesianized Buddhism. As a result, the Indonesianization of Buddhism was minimal. But the situation changed after the abortive Communist coup and the army counter-coup in 1965, when the New Order regime came to power.

Anti-Chinese feeling, spurred by the regime's belief that the coup was backed by China and that the Chinese in Indonesia were sympathetic to the Communist Party of Indonesia, resulted in the eradication of Chinese cultural influence in Indonesian society at large, and particularly in Buddhism. The New Order regime issued several laws as the legal basis for this eradication – among others, the ban on the Chinese language and the regulation that restricted the practice of Chinese religiosity and customs. The presence of non-Chinese Buddhists also encouraged Buddhist clergy to separate the religion from the social stigma of "Chinese religion." This was one reason why, in its congress in May 1970, *Perhimpunan Buddhis Indonesia* (the Indonesian Buddhists Association) issued a resolution stating that "Indonesia Buddhism in Indonesia should have more Indonesian characteristics, not Chinese ones."[34] The effort of separating Buddhism from the social stigma of Chinese religion was reinforced by the implementation of Presidential Instruction No. 14, issued on December 6, 1967, on the restriction of Chinese religions, beliefs, and traditional customs.[35] This

[32] Iem Brown, "The Revival of Buddhism in Modern Indonesia," 53.

[33] For further discussion on Indonesian Buddhism see Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia."

[34] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 71.

[35] This Presidential Instruction was annulled by Presidential Decree No. 6 of 2000.

Presidential Instruction became the law that instructed *klenteng* (Indonesian term for Chinese temple in general) to be converted to *vihara* (Buddhist temple) and prohibited the building of new Chinese temples.[36] Experiencing the conversion of Chinese temples into Buddhist ones, a temple caretaker lamented, "We had to convert our temple into *vihara*. If not, we would be in trouble. … This was the most difficult moment for us. We had to change our place of worship as if it was the place of abomination. It did pain us."[37] This law also affected pure Buddhist *viharas*. Because they were perceived as being associated with Chinese religion, Buddhist places of worship faced problems. In an interview with *Tempo* magazine, Oka Diputhera, the chair of the Information and Education Division of WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, or The Indonesian Buddhist Council), said that repairs of existing Buddhist temples required a special permit, which was often difficult to get.[38]

Although discriminatory laws were issued, the government did not declare that Chinese religions were illegal because such a declaration was against the Indonesian state ideology that guaranteed freedom of religion. Therefore, it resorted to a gradual eradication of Chinese cultural influence by the classification of all Chinese traditional religions as Buddhism. In a way, it promoted Buddhism. However, the version of Buddhism it wanted was "modern," "proper," and "nationalist" Buddhism.

The New Order's idea of modernist religion was characterized by scripturalism – that is, emphasis on the teaching in the scriptures. The regime opined that Buddhism should encourage its adherents to go back to their holy books and detach themselves from Chinese ritual elements, as these elements were actually cultural, and, more often than not, had no relation to the religion itself.[39] In so doing, the regime borrowed the authority of holy scriptures to

[36] Because of this law, many Chinese temples changed their Chinese names into Sanskrit Buddhist or Indonesian names. For example, Kim Tek Ie (in Chinese: Jin De Yuan, 金德院) in Jakarta became Dharma Bhakti Vihara, Hok An Kiong (Fu An Gong, 福安宫) in Surabaya became Sukhaloka Vihara, and Liong Tjwan Bio (Long Quan Miao, 龍泉廟) in Probolinggo became Sumber Naga Vihara, the Indonesian translation of the temple's Chinese name.

[37] Interview, March 1, 2015

[38] "Wawancara Oka Diputhera."

[39] A circular issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1978 (No. 477/74054/1978) reminds the public of the restriction on Chinese religions, beliefs, and customs, as stated in Presidential Instruction No. 14/1967. A circular issued by the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, in January 1993 (No. H/BA.00/29/1/1993) instructs Buddhists in Indonesia not to celebrate Chinese traditional celebrations and Chinese New Year in Buddhist temples on the grounds that they are not Buddhist celebrations. Even a national-level Buddhist organization, WALUBI (*Perwalian Umat Buddha Indonesia*, The Indonesian Buddhist council), issued a circular in the same month, January 1993, supporting the circular of the Directorate General of Hinduism and Buddhism. It reiterated that Chinese New Year was not related to Buddhism. Hence, it could not be celebrated in Buddhist temples.

justify its policy – an act that Wimbush describes as scripturalization.[40] Based on this fact, I argue that with this modernist idea in mind, as well as the desire to make Buddhism "proper" and "Indonesian," the regime wanted the popular version of Buddhism to transform itself in order to fit the Buddhist space it had defined. The religious practices of the Buddhists were considered to be Chinese ritualism. Therefore, it also asked them to "rehabilitate" their rituals so that the rituals were in line with Buddha Gautama's teaching. The Chinese Buddhists had to return to the "true" Dharma – that is, the Buddha's teaching – and not the spirit of worship, as practiced by many Chinese in Chinese temples. In other words, the regime tried to rationalize popular Buddhism by urging the Buddhists to hold more rationalized religious practices.

This doctrinal intervention resulted in the restriction of Chinese cultural influence. Chinese traditional holidays, which were often celebrated as ethno-religious holidays in many Chinese Buddhist temples, were discouraged as they were seen as non-Buddhist celebrations, although they were not totally banned. The restriction of Chinese cultural influence was also spurred by a circular of the Directorate General for Press and Graphics (No. 02/SE/Ditjen-PPGK/1988) that prohibited any publications and printings in Chinese. This posed a problem for Buddhist temples which used sūtras in Chinese. They could not print new books of sūtras, and importing them was not possible either. While the sūtras could be chanted in Chinese, the Sanskrit version was encouraged. Describing this situation, an elder in a Buddhist temple said, "We started using Sanskrit sūtras when the New Order regime banned Chinese language and culture. ... Chanting in Chinese was not totally forbidden, but you know ... when the government said that it was recommended, it was not just a recommendation. It was an order. Then we used both Chinese and Sanskrit sūtras. However, Sanskrit sūtras were chanted in our Sunday school."[41]

Another kind of doctrinal intervention could be seen in the New Order regime's long war with communism. The regime used communism as a common enemy of the people and anything associated with that enemy was repressed. Because China was associated with communism, the Chinese had to cut their ties with China and Chinese culture in order not to be regarded as a communist – an enemy of the State. Because communism was also seen as atheism, they were also expected to embrace a religion, which the New Order regime defined based on Islam's conception of religion – that is, believing in God, besides having prophets and a holy book.

[40] See Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
[41] Interview, March 1, 2015.

The position of the belief in God in the Indonesian political landscape is very central, as seen in the first principle of Pancasila, Indonesia's state ideology, which is, *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa*, the belief in one supreme God.[42] This principle is a product for accommodating both the Muslims who wanted an Islamic state (by emphasizing the importance of religion) and those who wanted a secular state. Thus, the word *Tuhan*, a neutral word for God (that is, a word that does not refer to the god of any specific religion), and not Allah, which specifically refers to Islam, is used. This principle was meant to be inclusive – that is, a principle that transcended religious differences in the nation. However, this inclusivity turned out to be exclusive. Based on this principle, the State only recognized a monotheistic religion. As a result, it excluded non-theistic and polytheistic religions. This situation created a problem for Buddhism, as Buddhism is non-theistic – namely, the existence of God is not clearly acknowledged.[43] Surely, the belief in one Supreme God, as the personification of a divine being, was not in line with Buddhist teachings, but in order to be politically respected Buddhism had to conform to the principle of the belief in one supreme God.

Entangled in this doctrinal intervention, the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia had to reposition their religion. They had to respond to the new situation they faced. Social forces and the search for meaning propelled them to make religious and ethnic adaptations.

POLITICAL RITUALS

Ritual is closely related to identity as the former can function as the expression of the latter. Ritual can provide a space in which individuals of various backgrounds demonstrate their attachment to the ritual in which they participate. This attachment can produce a sense of belonging among the participants and ritual can draw attention to the shared culture that binds them into an "imagined community."[44] In this way, ritual is essential in fostering identity, as it is "the

[42] The Indonesian state ideology, *Pancasila*, consists of five principles – namely, (1) Belief in one supreme God, (2) Just and civilized humanity, (3) The unity of Indonesia, (4) Democracy under the wise guidance of representative consultation, and (5) Social justice for all Indonesians. The fact that the first principle is the belief in one God implies the importance of this belief in Indonesian social and political structures. The importance of this belief is legally supported by Presidential Decree No. 1/PNPS of 1965, issued on January 27, 1965, which stipulates that it is against the law to persuade people not to believe in any religion which is based on the belief in one supreme God.

[43] Shangharakshita. *A Survey of Buddhism: Its Doctrine and Methods through the Ages*, 3.

[44] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 32.

means by which individuals are brought together as a collective group."[45] It functions to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member."[46]

As Buddhism in Indonesia was predominantly Chinese and was also rooted in Chinese culture, Chinese traditional holidays were celebrated as ethno-religious holidays. The celebration of those holidays could thus strengthen Sino-Buddhist identity. However, Sino-Buddhist identity was seen as a threat to the process of nation-building and the creation of Indonesian identity. Thus, in order to conform to the new sociopolitical landscape, adaptation was needed. The Buddhist teaching of impermanence was often used as religious justification. Those who adapted their religious rituals believed that the notion of impermanence – that is, "no element of physical matter or any concept remain unchanged"[47] – gave them the authority[48] to do so. As a *Romo Pandito*[49] in a Buddhayāna temple said: "It is stated in Buddhist scripture that nothing is permanent. So, making some adjustments as long as the changes are still in line with Buddhist teachings is definitely not a big deal."[50]

An example of adaptation is the appropriation of Chinese traditional celebrations as Buddhist celebrations. Many Chinese traditional celebrations fall on the first or the fifteenth day of a month of the lunar calendar. This calendrical cycle fits with the calendrical cycle of the Buddhist day of uposatha (a Buddhist day of observance). Thus, these Chinese traditional celebrations were now celebrated as uposatha days. They were not celebrated as just Chinese traditional rituals per se. In other words, ethno-religious celebrations were changed into religious celebrations.

Accommodation was also made in the liturgy. Although the New Order outlawed the use of the Chinese language and the public display of Chinese culture, Buddhism provided the Chinese with a legitimate space for culturally Chinese rituals and practices. The liturgy was allowed to be conducted in Chinese. Sūtras could be chanted in Chinese. However, in order to accommodate the political situation, Sanskrit sūtras were introduced and used in the liturgy. And to make the liturgy more "Indonesian," Indonesian translations were

45 Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 25.
46 Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, 36.
47 Carol S. Anderson, "Anitya (Impermanence)," 23
48 For further discussion on how scriptures function as the source of authoritative power, see Vincent L. Wimbush, "It's Scripturalization, Colleagues!," 193–200.
49 *Romo Pandito* is a Javanese honorific term for addressing a lay person who is appointed as an "elder" in a Buddhist temple. *Romo Pandita* usually leads the liturgy in a temple, in the absence of a monk
50 Interview, December 10, 2014.

also provided. Furthermore, the Indonesian translation was also read after the Sanskrit sūtras were chanted. In Theravāda temples, the Pāli suttas were chanted, followed by their Indonesian translation.

In the process of adaptation, Chinese Buddhists resisted pressure to "nationalize" Buddhism as well as accommodating it. In my opinion, the preservation of Chinese traditional celebrations and the use of Chinese served as a strategy of resistance that Chinese Buddhists used to express their ethnic identity. However, they had to make concessions because the process of "nationalization" would make Buddhism more universal and less of an ethnic religion by emphasizing the religious aspects of the celebration – that is, uposatha. The emphasis on uposatha could create a sense of Buddhist identity, yet, at the same time, the ethnic nuances of the celebration were also preserved. In order to highlight the "nationalist" content of Buddhism practiced by the Chinese, the Indonesian language, together with other languages important in Buddhism such as Chinese and Sanskrit, was also used. Here, one can see the interplay between accommodation and resistance. Because being more "universal" actually means being more "Indonesian" and devoid of Chineseness, the Chinese felt the need to find the balance between accommodation – that is, expressing their Indonesianness – and resistance – that is, maintaining their Chineseness.

The appropriation of Chinese celebration as a Buddhist tradition and the accommodation in liturgy show that the Buddhists invented a tradition in the form of rituals. These rituals, as "invented" traditions,[51] were political because they could "construct, display, and promote ... political interests" of a certain group.[52] The enactment of political rituals functions as a tool for identity expression when tensions arise due to a changing social and political climate.

INTERPRETING GODHEAD

As well as being visible in rituals and practices, doctrinal intervention can also be seen in Buddhist theology.[53] Buddhism became the target of criticism because of its non-theistic doctrine. The State regarded Buddhism as either standing in passive violation of or against *Pancasila*, the Indonesian state ideology. The

[51] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

[52] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Perspectives and Dimensions*, 128.

[53] While the word "theology" may not fit in with the nature of Buddhism because it is portrayed as a religion without God, a number of scholars use the word to refer to the study of Buddhism as a religion – hence the term "Buddhist theology." See, for example, Roger Jackson and John Makransky, ed., *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars* and Kieko Obuse, "Finding God in Buddhism: A New Trend in Contemporary Buddhist Approaches to Islam."

theological debate over whether or not Buddhism acknowledged the existence of God was not important in Indonesia before independence. However, the changing political landscape compelled Buddhists to adapt Buddhist doctrine in order to survive in Indonesia. It is with the interest of surviving in Indonesia that Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized the term Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha (to refer to a concept of God in Buddhism),[54] found in the old Javanese text *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, a Buddhist catechism written by an unknown author in the era of Mpu Sendok, a king of Kadiri in the eighth or ninth century, nowadays known as Kediri, a city in East Java.[55]

Ādi-Buddha is "the primordial Buddha," which is "found in the late Mahāyāna and Tibetan traditions of tantric Buddhism."[56] The primordial Buddha, also known as the original Buddha, or the eternal Buddha, is mentioned in the later part of the Lotus Sūtra as "the cosmic Buddha pervading everywhere, whose form is all things, whose voice is all sounds, and whose mind is all thoughts."[57] Ādi-Buddha is the Buddha without beginning. Hence, it is different from Siddharta Gautama, the historical Buddha. Ādi-Buddha is the creator of everything. However, he is different from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God as the Creator, who is personified as a divine being. Ādi-Buddha is the embodiment of *sūnyatā*, nothingness.

With the concept of Ādi-Buddha as such in mind, as well as the idea of making a political accommodation, Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita argued that Indonesian Buddhism had a tradition which was different from other forms of Buddhism around the world – that is, Indonesian Buddhism worshipped a Godhead, *Tuhan yang Maha Esa*. He founded Buddhayāna, an ecumenical school of Indonesian Buddhism, incorporating three major schools of Buddhism found in Indonesia: Mahāyāna, Tantrayāna, and Theravāda.[58] His personal experience may also have contributed to his effort to establish Buddhayāna.

> He [Bhante Ashin Jinarakkitha] was, … , a monk of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna. He studied the thoughts of original Buddhism based on the academic inquiry

[54] For a reference on how Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita popularized this term, see Iem Brown, "Contemporary Indonesian Buddhism and Monotheism," 108–17.

[55] The book *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*, written in Old Javanese, has been translated into several languages. The first translation into a western language was translated by J. Kats and published in 1910. The Indonesian version was translated by I Gusti Sugriwa and published by a Denpasar-based publisher, Pustaka Balimas in 1956. A team from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reprinted the book in 1973.

[56] Damien Keown, *A Dictionary of Buddhism*, 5.

[57] Jacqualine I. Stone, "Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-Sūtra)," 473.

[58] For a detailed discussion on Buddhayāna, see Heinz Bechert, "The Buddhayāna of Indonesia: A Syncretistic Form of Theravāda," 10–21.

as a Theosophist, while growing up in the circumstance of syncretistic Chinese Buddhism. These experiences caused him to have the idea that there is no "pure" Buddhism and that it is most important to be a disciple of Buddha.[59]

Although Ādi-Buddha can be found in Mahāyāna and Tibetan Tantric Buddhism, the concept of Ādi-Buddha is not the focus of the philosophical teaching of those schools. However, the concept of Shang Hyang Ādi-Buddha was central to the teaching of Buddhayāna. Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's idea of Ādi-Buddha was well supported by other Buddhist monks and leaders. The Indonesian Buddhist Association published a booklet, *Ketuhanan dalam Agama Buddha* (*The Deity in Buddhism*), written by Dhammaviriya in 1965, which mentioned three tenets of Indonesian Buddhism: believing in one supreme God, Ādi-Buddha; having prophets such as Buddha Gautama and other Bodhisattvas; and having holy books, including the *Tipitaka*, *Dhammapada*, and *Sang Hyang Kamahāyānikan*. Obviously, one can see how Buddhism is thereby adapted for the Islamic context, in which the State defines religion.

The concept of Ādi-Buddha gained greater importance for Buddhism in Indonesia after 1965, when the State forbade communism and atheism and promoted monotheism. The State and other religious groups accused Buddhism of being equal to atheism, and hence having communist characteristics. Many Buddhist leaders countered this accusation. They said that Buddhism was a religion based on the belief in one supreme God, namely Ādi-Buddha, and that it was rooted in ancient Indonesia. Under these political conditions, therefore, the concept of Ādi-Buddha gained a prominent position in Indonesian Buddhist theology.

Not all schools of Buddhism in Indonesia accepted the concept of Ādi-Buddha. The reformist Theravāda rejected the idea of God as personified in Ādi-Buddha, because this school believed that in Buddhism there was no God as a divine being. Criticizing Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's concept of Ādi-Buddha, Bhante Naradha Thera, a Sri Lankan Theravādin monk who once visited Indonesia, sent a letter to Bhante Ashin Jinarakkhita's English translator in which he wrote that there was no God in Buddhism.[60] Another monk from Thailand, who was invited for the ordination of five Indonesian Buddhist monks in 1970, also questioned the concept of Ādi-Buddha. He questioned whether this concept

[59] Bunki Kimura, "Present Situation of Indonesian Buddhism: in Memory of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita Mahāsthavira," 59–60.

[60] Edij Juangari, *Menabur Benih Dharma di Nusantara: Riwayat Singkat Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita* [*Spreading the Seed of Dharma in the Archipelago: A Short Biography of Bikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita*], 145.

was "a wise compromise."[61] However, the Indonesian Theravādins understood the importance of God in the Indonesian social and political landscape. They also stressed that the Buddhists in Indonesia believed in God[62] (Girirakkhito 1968). Based on the Pāli canon of *Khuddaka Nikaya*, *Udana VIII* (*Nibbana Sutta*) describing that Buddha taught a group of monks about "the absolute," which has the characteristics of *ajata* (unborn), *abhuta* (unoriginated), *akata* (uncreated), and *asankatha* (unconditioned), the Indonesian Theravādins interpreted the absolute as the Supreme God in Buddhism.[63]

Despite the differences in the idea of God, Indonesian Buddhists' (both Chinese and non-Chinese) attempt to conform to the state ideology led to the invention of an Indonesian tradition of Buddhism incorporating the concept of a supreme God. Yet this tradition was not totally new because it is derived from the past. Invented traditions usually have continuity with the past,[64] and they are invented to cope with new conditions and situations.[65] Hobsbawm and Ranger's idea regarding the invention of tradition explains very well how Indonesian Buddhists invented the concept of God by reinterpreting an old idea – that is, giving it a new meaning suitable for the conditions they faced. The concept of God they invented is found in "their historic past" – specifically, in the notion of Ādi-Buddha – which was given a new meaning and reinterpreted as "God."

POST-NEW ORDER BUDDHISM

During the New Order era, the eradication of Chinese cultural influences on Buddhism and the Indonesianization of Buddhism were reinforced by the arrival in Indonesia of Theravāda Buddhism, which was brought by Buddhist monks who had been sent to Sri Lanka and Thailand to undergo religious training.[66] In 1970, some

[61] Laurence-Kantipalo Mills, *A Record of Journeys in Indonesia: for the Ordination of Five Bhikkhus at the Great Stupa of Borobudur by Phra Sāsana Sobhana from the 6th of May to the 13th May 2513*, 5.

[62] Girirakkhito, "Ketuhanan jang Maha Esa Sendi Mutlak dalam Agama Buddha [Belief in One Supreme God, the Absolute basis in Buddhism]" (unpublished manuscript, presented in *Course for Teachers of Buddhism*, organized by Yayasana Buddhayana in Malang in 1968).

[63] Despite the political openness after the fall of the authoritarian regime, the Theravādins in Indonesia still adhere to the belief in God. However, they insist that the Buddhist concept of God is different from the concept of God Indonesians are familiar with—that is, the concept derived from the Christian and Islamic understanding of God, where God is described as a personified divine being and the creator of the world and human beings.

[64] Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, 1.

[65] Ibid., 8.

[66] A number of studies on Buddhism attribute the revival of Buddhism in Indonesia to the missionary work of the Theravāda Buddhist monks. The first few Buddhist monks in modern Indonesia were ordained according to Theravāda tradition. The Theravāda missionary work

of them established a movement which aimed at reforming Buddhism to return to the original Pāli teachings as written in the Theravāda canon of the Tipitaka, and emphasizing the philosophical teachings of Buddha instead of the performance of rituals. It found support in the regime's policy on religious modernization of Buddhism and among the Chinese who wanted to purify Buddhism. As a result, the Theravāda tradition dominated Indonesian Buddhist society, both Chinese and non-Chinese. However, the fall of the regime brought winds of change.

The downfall of Suharto and the change of national leadership in 1998 opened a new chapter in the life of the Chinese Indonesians. Since then, they have regained a place in public life. Chinese cultural celebrations have got a new lease of life in Indonesia. The new situation, which shows openness to Chinese culture, has also influenced the religious life of the Chinese community. Chinese Christians and Muslims have started to show interest in their ethnicity's traditional celebrations. For example, Chinese New Year is also celebrated in some churches and mosques where there are a substantial number of Chinese in the congregation. Chinese Buddhists started celebrating Chinese traditions openly, as well as practicing the rituals of Chinese traditional religion in their Buddhism. Since the use of Chinese language in public is now permitted, many Chinese Buddhist temples have started to chant sūtras in Chinese. However, modernist and scripturalist Theravādins have questioned these practices. While they did not reject Chinese traditions and rituals, and could accept the chanting of Chinese sūtras in Chinese Buddhist temples and the celebration of Chinese traditions, they did not want to blend Buddhism as a religion with Chinese traditional religions and rituals as the Chinese who embraced other religions did. This created a conflict between the religious elements and the Chinese non-religious elements among the Chinese Buddhists in Indonesia.

The way in which Chinese Buddhists negotiated Buddhism and Chinese traditional rituals could be seen in their interpretation of the rituals. Both the traditionalist and the modernist Buddhists saw that the Chinese traditions were often used as a way of accumulating and generating merit, and, for some, as a way of worshipping gods and asking for divine blessings. However, in my opinion, this was the point of contention between the traditionalists and the modernists. The former emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals, which they thought was in line with Buddhist teachings; the latter believed that rituals as such were not part of the Buddhist religious tradition and thus could not be used for generating merit.

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and ordination may be a factor behind the tendency in Buddhism in Indonesia to send monks to a Theravāda school for religious training. For a detailed discussion on this subject, see Yoneo Ishii, "Modern Buddhism in Indonesia," 108–15.

An example of the contention between the traditionalists and the modernists was the offering of food (Buddhists in Indonesia usually use fruit as an offering) to the image of Buddha. The traditionalists said that in Chinese culture food offerings were a part of the traditional ritual used as a way of showing devotion and respect. Thus, it was acceptable to do that in Buddhism. The modernists, however, thought differently. For them, such an offering was improper as it might deviate from the teachings of Buddha, which emphasized logics and reasoning in search of truth, as seen in the Buddhist term *ehipasiko*.[67] Venerating ancestors was also a source of contention. All agreed that showing respect to ancestors and the departed ones was commendable. However, the modernists believed that making an ancestral altar was going too far. "We are allowed and even encouraged to show respect to our ancestors and those who have departed before us. However, there are no merits in having ancestral altars. There are no such things in Buddhism," said a man in his thirties.[68] On the other hand, the traditionalists believed that having an ancestral altar at home was also a way of practicing Buddhism, as it was the Chinese way of showing respect. "According to our tradition, it [having an ancestral altar] is the correct way of showing our respect."[69] Other things that triggered controversies were rituals such as religious holidays and funerals. According to the modernists, there were many aspects of the rituals that might not be appropriate because they were not in line with Buddhist teachings. But, in the traditionalists' view, Buddhism was open to local tradition and culture. A Chinese Buddhist could be a Buddhist and Chinese at the same time. When a Chinese converted to Buddhism, it did not mean that he had to detach from his cultural background. The influences of Chinese cultural traditions could be accepted, as long as those rituals did no harm. This situation showed that the Chinese interpreted the importance of the rituals according to their religious orientations. Those with a modernist leaning viewed those rituals as religiously improper, which implied that they prioritized "orthodoxy (correct belief)"; others emphasized the symbolic meaning of the rituals and thus viewed them as appropriate, if not mandatory, which showed that they prioritized "orthopraxy (correct practice)."[70]

[67] Literally, *ehipasiko* means "come and see," a term that emphasizes the empirical verification of Buddhist teachings.

[68] Interview, March 1, 2015.

[69] Interview, February 8, 2015.

[70] See Fenggang Yang, *Chinese Christians in America: Conversion, Assimilation, and Adhesive Identities* for a detailed discussion on religions and Chinese cultural traditions.

Another source of disagreement was the interpretation of Godhead. In a more relaxed political environment, some "purist" modernist Buddhists wanted to go back to the scripture, in which, the existence of God as a divine being was non-existent. In the words of one informant, "The pure teachings are the ones found in the holy scripture."[71] In her opinion, the Buddhist holy scripture exclusively referred to the Pāli text of the Tipitaka, which did not acknowledge the existence of God (manifested by the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha in an Indonesian context). Her exclusive view may resonate well with other modernists, but it was rejected by those who accepted other Buddhist texts as the sources of Buddhist teachings as well. In their opinion, accepting other Buddhist texts did not mean that they were "contaminated" Buddhists.[72] They emphasized the idea that Buddhism could accept other traditions and cultures so long as those traditions and cultures were not harmful. Some of them even cited the sociopolitical context in Indonesia, referring to the first principle of the Indonesian state ideology – that is, the belief in one supreme God.

The controversies surrounding the influence of Chinese traditional rituals in Buddhism, as well as the idea of Godhead, have led Chinese Buddhists to transform and recast their ritual and religious practices. As far as the influence of Chinese traditional rituals is concerned, they privatize the rituals that trigger tensions. The Chinese traditional rituals are usually practiced at home as cultural elements, and the religious rituals are practiced in the temple. In this way, the former are privatized and separated from the latter. During Chinese New Year celebrations, for example, Chinese traditional rituals, such as venerating ancestors, are conducted as private affairs at home, whereas religious rituals (sūtra chanting for invoking blessings) are conducted as public affairs, in a temple. As far as the idea of Godhead is concerned, there are temples where Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is found in their liturgical texts and rituals practices, and there are also temples in which the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha is not found. Generally these temples have many modernist devotees.

By transforming and recasting their ritual and religious practices – by, for example, separating the traditional/cultural from the religious and adjusting some of their Buddhist practices – Chinese Buddhists are able to negotiate the demands from the State and the modernists dominating Indonesian Buddhist society that they stay away from their traditional ritual practices. This transformation and recasting also enables those who believe in the existence of

[71] Interview, December 7, 2014.

[72] On April 26, 2015, in an informal discussion with seven Buddhists who are members of a Buddhayāna temple congregation, one of them said that accepting other Buddhist texts would not "contaminate" their Buddhist belief.

God, as manifested in the concept of Sang Hyang Ādi-Buddha, to practice their religious belief in their ritual and liturgy. Like others who justified their stance from a religious point of view, these people also found a religious justification for recasting and transforming ritual and religious practices: the Buddhist teaching of open-mindedness was often cited as their religious justification. The process of transformation and recasting of Buddhism shows that Chinese Buddhists also adopted religious rationalization. However, their religious rationalization was different from the New Order's, which eradicated the ritual magical content and stressed modernization. Chinese Buddhists rationalized the rituals by making them coherent with religious belief and tradition. All these processes led to substantial diversity among Buddhists in Indonesia. Describing this diversity, a Theravādin *Romo Pandito* said, "Although personally we disagree with their [Chinese Buddhists'] practices, we could accept those diverse practices. Being open-minded is a Buddhist virtue."[73] Another from a Buddhayāna temple said, "The Buddhists [in Indonesia] are like various Lotus flowers, red, white, and other colors. Despite differences in color, they are still Lotus. And, so are the Buddhists. Although they have differences in Buddhist practices, they are still the disciples of Buddha."[74]

CONCLUSION

The trajectory of Buddhism in contemporary Indonesia cannot be separated from the Chinese factor. Although it was the religion of ancient Indonesia, Buddhism is often seen as a Chinese religion. This is because it was the Chinese who reintroduced Buddhism in the early twentieth century, after it had been dormant for a few hundred years.[75] Buddhist temples were built to cater to the spiritual needs of the Chinese, and, hence, Buddhism was mixed with Chinese traditional beliefs. The arrival of Dutch theosophists in Indonesia revived interest in Buddhism. Still, the majority of Buddhists were ethnic Chinese, and Buddhism was heavily influenced by Chinese culture.

At first this did not create any problems. However, when Indonesia became independent, as a part of its nation-building project it started to Indonesianize

[73] Interview, April 5, 2015.

[74] Interview, February 12, 2015.

[75] For a detailed account of the role of the Chinese in reviving Buddhism in Indonesia, see Iskandar Nugraha, *Mengikis Batas Timur dan Barat: Gerakan Theosofi dan Nasionalisme Indonesia* [*Eradicating the Boundaries between the East and the West: Theosophical Movement and Nationalism in Indonesia*]; Martin Ramstedt, "Hinduism and Buddhism," 267–83; Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *Klenteng-Klenteng dan Masyarakat Tionghoa di Jakarta* [*Chinese Temples and Chinese Society in Jakarta*]; and Karel Steenbrink, "Buddhism in Muslim Indonesia," 1–34.

its Chinese citizens. The Indonesianization covered the political, social, cultural, and religious spheres. It became more and more intense after the New Order regime came to power. The regime tried to eliminate the influence of Chinese cultural traditions in Buddhism by rationalizing the religion and introducing modern, proper, and nationalist Buddhism. These efforts were manifested in the regime's doctrinal intervention. Chinese Buddhists had to conform to the new social and political reality. Believing in the Buddhist teaching of impermanence, they made accommodations and adapted their rituals and practices, as well as inventing a tradition in order to fit into the official version of Buddhism. Rituals became a political tool for expressing their religious and ethnic identity, and invented tradition was used to claim authenticity. The process of Buddhist modernization was also reinforced by the fact that many Buddhist religious figures were sent to study Theravāda Buddhism, that has a modernist and scripturalist leaning. Not all Theravādins have a scripturalist leaning. However, the Theravāda Buddhism in Indonesia does have a scripturalist tendency. For example, the Indonesian translations of the Pāli texts of the Theravāda are presented next to the Pāli original without commentary or interpretation. In so doing, they claim scripturalist authority. Another example is that the Theravāda regularly holds paritta (Theravāda holy texts) recital contests among Buddhists in Indonesia. The winners are awarded the Presidents Cup at Vesak Day. The focus of this contest is not on the ability to understand the text because the Indonesian translations of the Pāli text provide the literal meaning of the Pāli originals, but rather on the spectacle of reciting them in Pāli, the religious language of Buddhism. Through this kind of scripturalist performance, the Theravādins in Indonesia show their appreciation for the "true" Buddhist texts. This is the version of Buddhism that now dominates in Indonesia.

The fall of the New Order in 1998 changed the Buddhist landscape in Indonesia. Buddhism imbued with Chinese tradition started to re-emerge. The theological debate regarding the existence of God in Buddhism became important. Fueled by different religious orientations and interpretations, this situation triggered tensions among the Chinese Buddhist community. Once again, the Chinese Buddhists had to negotiate between religious and traditional cultural elements in their religion, and to navigate the theological debate on God. In their efforts to do so, they have come to use the Buddhist idea of open-mindedness as a justification to accept differences in their rites and practices. They separate the religious and the cultural, enabling them to practice both. The cultural elements are practiced "offstage" in the private sphere, allowing the religious elements to be the "public transcript." The idea of open-mindedness is also used to give Buddhists the freedom to believe or not to believe in the existence of God. Thus,

they innovate, transform, and recast their beliefs to come to terms with the problems they face. In this way, they express their diverse religious and ethnic identities, just like the various petals of the lotus.

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