

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

The Central Bureau of Statistics of Indonesia's data shows the Republic of Indonesia has 1,331 ethnic groups, including Chinese (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2015). By data, Chinese population is 2,832,510 people, which contribute 1.2% of the overall population of Indonesia (Indonesia.go.id, 2020). Chinese as one of minorities in Indonesia get more “special attention” from the government than other minorities such as, Arab and India (Hapsari, 2016). Sakdiyah Ma'ruf, a comedian, winner of the 2015 Vaclav Havel international prize for creative dissent, and Arab descendant in Indonesia stated, “We have long lived as part of the Indonesian nation. That is, we as a minority, we are fortunate to be in a place that is it is not oppressed by the state.” Sakdiyah also stated about an unfortunate condition for Chinese, “It is different for the Chinese community where the citizens’ rights are explicitly taken. For example, they cannot practice their religion and must convert to any religion. There are still markers for them. While we do not experience them.” (Affan, 2015). Another statement from Dev Anand, an Indian descendant in Indonesia, “Indians rarely say ‘this is good or that is bad’. Everything is good. That is why Indians are respected by people, everywhere, they are received friendly, there is no hatred because we never protest” (Main, 2018). Dev statement as proof that India do not get sentiment from the society or the government unlike Chinese.

These two statements as proof both Arab and India do not get sentiment from the society or the government unlike Chinese (Utama, 2018). Sadly, sentiment towards Chinese produced the Anti-Chinese sentiment in Indonesia, which according to W.F. Wertheim, the root of this sentiment is an economic competition between Chinese and Pribumi (Darini, 2011).

The Anti-Chinese sentiment started from the 18th century when Dutch/the VOC made a colonial system with color-line to classifies the population into three population groups based on race also to isolate one group from another. The top layer is for the European group, the second layer is for Foreign Eastern group or *Vreemde Oosterlingen* in Dutch for people who are Chinese, Arab, India, etc. The third layer is for Bumiputera or Pribumi group. This classification of the population was part of the divisive politics of the colonial government, which had reinforced the feelings of the class. Also, this policy also gave rise to feelings of racism among Pribumi especially, to Chinese. Dutch used Chinese people as economic intermediaries or intermediary traders between Dutch and Pribumi people (Darini, 2011).

The Anti-Chinese sentiment running on Java before World War II was centered on the “alienation” of Chinese people because of their status in the economic field (Suryadinata, 1999). As it is written in history, the Anti-Chinese sentiment happened in 1911-1912 in Surakarta and of 1918 in Kudus, which were about tension between Pribumi and Chinese because of business competition in batik and kretek (cigarette) (Alfirdaus, 2015). Another sentiment in 1912, 1918, and 1930 which Sarekat Islam was established in Java

by Javanese traders and batik traders in an attempt to weaken the economic influence of the Chinese (Suryadinata, 1999).

In Old Order Government, the policies that used are policies left by the colonial government. Sukarno's government allowed ethnic Chinese to express their culture and practice their religion or beliefs but limiting Chinese existence as officials in the bureaucrat field. In the era of guided democratic government, Chinese people got discrimination in the economic field namely, PP no. 10 / November 1959 which forbade Chinese people from trading in rural areas and gave birth to a number of incidents. Even in 1959-1960, there was an eviction campaign took place with the support of the Army or TNI-AD for Chinese people. Data shows 136,000 Chinese people left Indonesia, while 100,000 of them returned to their ancestral lands or China. Riots made by Anti-Chinese sentiment in 1963 occurred in West Java (Cirebon, Bandung, Sumedang, Bogor, Cipayang, Tasikmalaya, Garut, Singaparna, and Sukabumi) also in Solo, Surabaya, Malang and Medan (Darini, 2011).

In New Order government, the government ran a policy that prohibits all expression of Chinese culture, except Chinese films, and abolishing all Chinese schools for children in the 1960s. The government also isolated the Chinese group from the wider community as "asing" or "foreign" (Muntholib, 2008). On 7 October 1965, there was a spate of Anti-Communist also Anti-Chinese rallies in East Java (Alfirdaus, 2015). Riots happened again in 1980 in Semarang, where the Anti-Chinese sentiment did violence such as, destruction of cars, shops, home, and so on. As the top of the Anti-Chinese sentiment was

in May 1998, riots proved that without tendency of political power, however, the position of the Chinese in Indonesia as a very prominent group in the economic field in Indonesia and very vulnerable to conflict (Wigarani et al., 2019).

Despite a lot of pressure that has been through by Chinese people but Chinese especially Totok Chinese is successfully maintaining their Chinese culture, traditions, and language in Indonesia (Setijadi, 2016). The very reason for the existence of Totok Chinese in Indonesia is by family, for Chinese see family is very important just as the Chinese proverb says, “To forget one’s ancestors is to be a brook without a source, a tree without a root.” Also, the perception of collectivism of Chinese people is deeply rooted in Confucianism quoted, “family interests are placed above those of society and other groups within it.” Because of the importance of family, Chinese children will listen to their parents where Chinese parents gave children knowledge about their historical backgrounds and detailed information of Chinese culture, including traditions, behaviors, customs, and language through communication (Samovar et al., 2013, p.71, 82, 88). Eddy Sadeli who is Totok Chinese and part of Paguyuban Sosial Marga Tionghoa Indonesia (PSMTI) on an interview with Susan Giblin on May 2001 said, “If you have no culture then you have no identity, if no identity then no dignity.”(Giblin, 2003).

The purpose of this research is to know how Totok Chinese is successfully maintaining their cultural values amidst the Anti-Chinese sentiment in Indonesia.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

Taking a step further from the issue of how Totok Chinese is successfully maintaining their cultural values amidst the Anti-Chinese sentiment in Indonesia. Culture is something that passed on from one generation to the next through interpersonal communication. Culture consists of what the group has and produced, which are values, artifacts, beliefs, and language passed through communication (DeVito, 2017, p.30). The group (includes Totok Chinese) could pass and learn their culture from their family through intercultural communication (Samovar et al., 2013, p.71).

Totok Chinese is a newcomer who arrived in Indonesia in the 19th century and early 20th century and mostly Hokkian tribe working as merchants and employees (Lisminingsih, 2012). Totok Chinese usually get sentiments from Pribumi for being superior wealth, different in religion, consumption of pork, the existence of “Chinatown” areas, and using Chinese language in public instead of Bahasa Indonesia (Sai & Hoon, 2013). According to W.F. Wertheim, the root of this sentiment is an economic competition between Chinese and Pribumi. There are four bold events of The Anti-Chinese sentiment, which are the 18th century with the VOC, on Java Island before World War II, Old Order Government, and New Order government (Darini, 2011). As the peak event of The Anti-Chinese sentiment, which happened during New Order government, hold a programme called “the assimilation program”. This is a programme which banned Chinese’s religion, cultural customs, and language (Setijadi,

2016). This program could break the ties of passing Chinese culture to the next generation for Totok Chinese. Instead of doing nothing, Totok Chinese still passing their culture in secret from the government through communication.

As the form of obligation of previous generation to the next, the Elders of Totok Chinese passing their culture through communication by naming and calling their children secretly in Chinese names when with family (Widjaja et al., 2014). Luckily after President Soeharto and President B.J. Habibie, President Abdurrahman Wahid giving permission for Totok Chinese to pass their culture freely in which allowing Chinese to run their religion, cultural customs, and language in public (Setijadi, 2016).

As a conclusion, both interpersonal communication and intercultural communication as a way of passing and maintaining culture for Totok Chinese in amidst of the Anti-Chinese sentiment even in the peak event of The Anti-Chinese sentiment.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

With the research background, it can be concluded that this thesis paper has the research question, which is:

How Totok Chinese family maintaining their cultural values amidst the Anti-Chinese sentiment in Indonesia using Identity Negotiation Theory?

1.4 Purpose of the Study

Researcher on this paper has the ultimate purpose of the study which is:

1. Understand how Totok Chinese is successfully maintaining their cultural values with family through the Anti-Chinese sentiment.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Every research initiative needs a firm argument about how significant they are in their field of study and toward the world, in this thesis, divided into several points.

1.5.1 Significance on Academic Field

Under the context of this point, the significance of this research can be sorted into:

1. Enriching the studies regarding Intercultural Communication and Interpersonal Communication as factor of Totok Chinese maintaining their cultural values.
2. Offers a comprehensive analysis and knowledge regarding maintaining culture through Identity Negotiation Theory, especially for Totok Chinese through the Anti-Chinese sentiment.
3. Provides a detailed description about how Totok Chinese is successfully maintaining their culture with family through the Anti-Chinese sentiment.

1.5.2 Significance on Practical Field

Through this research, it is hoped that it can give deeper insight about how Totok Chinese is successfully maintaining their cultural values with family through the Anti-Chinese sentiment.

1.6 Organization of the Study

I Introduction

This chapter consist of the brief explanation about the issue being discussed in this paper, so that the reader can be well familiar with the topic. Important points such as research background, problem identification, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of study, and organization of the study.

II Research Object

This chapter consists of the target for this research, including object and subject for this research. All about object and subject of this research explain in details in this chapter.

III Literature Review

This chapter consist of explanation relating for this research, which is communication, culture, Identity Negotiation theory, the history of Chinese in Indonesia, Totok Chinese, Chinese cultural values, The Anti-Chinese Sentiment, and frame of thought.

IV Research Method

This chapter briefly explain about research approach in this research, research method, data collection techniques, unit of analysis, Key Informant dan Informants (criteria for Key Informant dan Informants and profiles of Key Informant dan Informants), data analysis method, Technique for checking the validity of the data, and research constraint.

V Research Findings and Disscusion

This chapter consists of the in-depth analysis over data that has been collected from interviews with all six informants and one key informant. All the data interpreted and sorted into sub-points, in the purpose that is can be easily read and understand. This chapter also explain the relation between this paper collection of data related to the scientific theoretical understanding that is being used, which also lead to the conclusion.

VI Conclusion and Suggestion

The chapter consists of the conclusion for this entire thesis paper and suggestions for further research of similar topic.