

## Examining The Indonesian Chinese Portrait: Ethnic Chinese Minority in a Muslim-majority Country

Wening Purbatin Palupi Soenjoto<sup>1\*</sup>, Siti Nur Mahmudah<sup>2</sup>

Istikom Jombang<sup>1\*</sup>, UIN Ponorogo<sup>2</sup>

[weningblackberry@gmail.com](mailto:weningblackberry@gmail.com)<sup>1\*</sup>, [sitinurmahmudah@uinponorogo.ac.id](mailto:sitinurmahmudah@uinponorogo.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract.** In 1998, Indonesian students demonstrated reforms that demanded every aspect of Indonesian life. By such moral strength, they succeeded in changing every basis of freedom for the people; Democracy. During the recovery of the Indonesian economic crisis and reforms, in May 1998, the most tragic riots occurred and the recovery that occurred against Indonesians was raised by Chinese. After the economic crisis in 1998, it couldn't be denied that Indonesia's economic and political problems were in poor condition. This research uses qualitative research with a case study approach. The results of the study stated that since May 1998, the Indonesian Government has given Indonesians more freedom to speak openly, to gather in political parties. Most importantly, one of the laws states that no one is against Chinese descent. Those who value Indonesia automatically become Indonesian citizens without native (non-indigenous) recognition. The minority of citizens of Chinese descent after the 1998 riots slowly began to be recognized and became a force in the economic movement carried out by citizens of Chinese descent in Indonesia. The political relationship between Indonesia and China has become a force recognized by the world in a symbiotic relationship of mutualism in the economic and political fields.

**Keywords:** *Chinese, Racial Riots, Politics*

**Abstrak.** Peristiwa reformasi tahun 1998 merupakan momentum penting dalam sejarah Indonesia yang menandai

perubahan mendasar dalam tatanan sosial, politik, dan ekonomi bangsa. Gerakan mahasiswa pada masa tersebut menjadi katalis bagi lahirnya demokrasi yang lebih terbuka serta kebebasan rakyat dalam berbagai aspek kehidupan. Namun, di tengah euforia reformasi dan pemulihan krisis ekonomi, terjadi kerusuhan besar pada Mei 1998 yang menimbulkan dampak sosial dan politik yang mendalam, khususnya terhadap masyarakat keturunan Tionghoa di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus untuk menganalisis dinamika pascareformasi terhadap relasi sosial, politik, dan ekonomi antara masyarakat pribumi dan keturunan Tionghoa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sejak reformasi 1998, pemerintah Indonesia memberikan ruang kebebasan yang lebih luas kepada warga negara untuk menyampaikan pendapat dan berpartisipasi dalam politik melalui pembentukan partai-partai politik. Lebih jauh, kebijakan antidiskriminasi mulai ditegakkan, termasuk penghapusan perbedaan antara warga negara keturunan Tionghoa dan pribumi. Proses ini mendorong pengakuan sosial dan integrasi ekonomi yang lebih baik bagi warga keturunan Tionghoa. Hubungan politik dan ekonomi antara Indonesia dan Tiongkok pun berkembang menjadi kemitraan strategis yang bersifat simbiotik, memberikan kontribusi signifikan terhadap stabilitas dan kemajuan nasional.

**Kata Kunci:** *Cina, Kerusuhan Sosial, Politik*

## BACKGROUND

The May 1998 riots were racial riots against ethnic Chinese that occurred in Indonesia on May 13–15, 1998, which occurred in almost all regions of Indonesia. Chinese citizens or who are known as ethnic Chinese, experienced anti-Chinese events in Indonesia. Chinese ethnicity in Indonesia is an ethnic minority group that is in a Muslim-majority country. Indonesia is a developing country and is the 4th most populous country in the world. The historical cooperation between Indonesia and China, particularly in trade along the maritime Silk Road. However, in 1998, Indonesia experienced a period of unrest and chaos following student protests the longstanding presidency. The following riots resulted in significant loss of life and

property, particularly affecting the Chinese-Indonesian community<sup>1</sup>. The text parallels these events and Kristallnacht in Germany in 1938. It highlights the need for a recovery process to rebuild trust in Indonesia as a diverse and peace-loving country. This study analyzes descriptively the impact of the riots in 1998, which brought psychological trauma. In the 1998 riots, ethnic Chinese were the target of riots for several reasons which were also influenced by political issues in the overthrow of President Suharto. In thousands of tribes and 5 recognized religions. But the 98 riots brought distrust to the Muslim community. The Chinese ethnic tribes made an exodus to avoid the 98 riots.

The diversity of ethnicities, languages and tribes that are spread evenly across thousands of islands is a natural and cultural splendor that is not shared by other countries. The uniqueness that Indonesia has is the existence of 6 recognized religions. legally, namely: Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism can live in harmony with mutual tolerance. Islam is the majority religion in Indonesia based on data for June 2022, the Directorate General of Population and Civil Registration (Dukcapil) of the Ministry of Home Affairs records the population in 6 provinces in Java Island reached 154.34 million people. Of this number, 148.19 million people (96.02%) of the population on the island of Java embrace Islam, the majority of Muslims come from residents on the island of Java and Indonesia will again become the country with the largest Muslim population in the world in 2022. According to the report The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Center (RISSC), the Muslim population in Indonesia is estimated at 237.56 million people. The Muslim population is equivalent to 86.7% of the population in the country.

Historically, it was agreed that Indonesia had established cooperation with China<sup>2</sup>. The relationship between the ancient Chinese and Indonesian empires began through major kingdoms in Indonesia and dated back to the 7th century and possibly before. Indonesia is part of the maritime route of the Silk Road, which connects China with India and the Arab world, which makes this collaboration known as the silk lane trade.

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<sup>1</sup> Anggia, "Hubungan Asimteris Tiongkok dan Korea Utara dalam Isu Nuklir Korea Utara Tahun 2013."

<sup>2</sup> D. Waluyo and Risman, "Indonesia Defense Diplomacy in Enhancing Indonesia-China Defense Cooperation."

Traditionally, the Indonesian archipelago was translated by ancient Chinese geographers as *Nanyang* (*Southern Ocean*), which contained sources of spices such as cloves, steamed and nutmeg, raw materials such as sandalwood, gold and tin, as well as exotic, dangerous items such as ivory, rhino horn, tiger skin, and bones, exotic birds, and colourful feathers. While fine silk and ceramics from China were exchanged and sought after by the ancient kingdom of Indonesia, this collaboration was well known for the Silk Road trade. Currently, cooperation is still not only in trade but in all fields, including political cooperation.

But the new history in 1998 was the phase that transformed Indonesia into a country of multi-cultural conflict in which the state of chaos in May began with student movements protesting the presidency of more than 30 years. The student movement was characterized by riots and massive looting needed by victims of physical and material. The fall of the rupiah and haste consisted of taking funds from large banks to gain the trust of the people of Indonesia and the world.

The descendants became the victims who suffered the most losses, and even the events of May 1998<sup>3</sup> claimed the majority of the victims were the colour of their descendants, so after the riots in May 1998, many descendants chose to leave Indonesia to get security and comfort. The rebellious masses frightened the shop owners of the descendants and wrote the face of their shop with "Native" or "Pro-reform" writing because the attackers only focused on Chinese<sup>4</sup>. Some of them were not found, but there were also those who were found not to be native. This event was almost like the events of *Kristallnacht* in Germany on November 9, 1938, which became the starting point for the persecution of Jews and the culmination of the mass killings of almost all European continents by the Nazi German government. It took time and a process of recovery after the 1998 riots to build the world's trust that Indonesia is a peace-loving country that respects diversity, including ethnic diversity.

## METHODS

This research uses a descriptive qualitative research method, namely a research approach that aims to gain an in-depth understanding and

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<sup>3</sup> Sin, *ETNIS TIONGHOA KRISTEN PASKA KERUSUHAN MEI 1998*.

<sup>4</sup> Laksmana, *How Indonesia Manages Its Great Power Relations*.

interpretation of the phenomenon being studied<sup>5</sup>. This research was conducted by collecting data from relevant sources such as interviews, observations, and documents, then analyzing, and interpreting the data to describe the phenomenon. The main objective of this study is to understand the characteristics and social context of the phenomenon being studied.<sup>6</sup> Research with a single respondent can be conducted using qualitative methods such as case studies, observations, or case studies, or using single-subject quantitative methods (such as "n-of-1 trials" or "time-series design"), where data is analyzed over a period of time to see changes after an intervention. An open interview was conducted with 1 respondent as a living witness during the 1998 riots in Padang City, West Sumatra.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *The Effects of Foreign Political Policy on Indonesian Freedom of Action Against International Relations Indonesia and China*

According to the theory of conformity, conformity is a tendency to follow the wishes and norms of groups<sup>7</sup>, so that cooperation between Indonesia and China can be regarded as a form of conformity that must occur based on previous histories and collective agreements that realize desires based on norms recognized by both parties<sup>8</sup>. Both countries try to provide useful contributions in the form of mutual symbiotic interactions in all fields. In international relations, an essence forms a relationship, namely actors, interests, and power. These three essences will form an interaction in unity and carry out a system of international relations. The interaction process is how the international relations system can establish cooperation between relevant parties to reach a decision. The interaction process is so dynamic that it raises many problems, like interactions that occur in everyday life<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Bisnis: Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Kombinasi Dan R&D*.

<sup>7</sup> Abd El-Hay, "Social Psychology."

<sup>8</sup> Reid, "Religious Pluralism or Conformity in Southeast Asia's Cultural Legacy."

<sup>9</sup> Silvius, "China's Belt and Road Initiative as Nascent World Order Structure and Concept?"

The interaction process can be said to be good if the parties concerned achieve similar mutually beneficial goals. Conversely, the interaction process does not end well if it does not reach the meeting point (max demands) in an interaction. The link between Indonesia's non-active foreign policy will form an identity in the international relations system. Indonesia will use this identity as a character and identity of the country and as a differentiator between Indonesia and other actors, namely China<sup>10</sup>. Indonesia's free-active foreign policy will make Indonesia independent of the nature of dependence on just one actor. So that Indonesia can be more flexible in carrying out its role in international relations by implementing it in a systematic, structured, and massive manner<sup>11</sup>.

Indonesia and China in international relations are actors. Actors are actors in international relations, divided into two types: state (state) and non-state (non-state). Indonesia and China are the main actors in the interaction of international relations that are woven because they have the power to determine policies to maintain their national interests. In addition, the state is an entity that is recognized as a sovereign state. The sovereignty of the world recognizes Indonesia and China, so cooperation will also affect other countries involved<sup>12</sup>.

In its development, actors emerge with deep roles, like the state, namely non-state. Three things in the implementation must be fulfilled by the offender recognized as non-state, that is, must have interaction, influence, and capacity. Included in non-countries are Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Multinational Corporations (MNCs), Intrastate Governmental Organizations, Intrastate Non-Governmental Organizations, and individuals or the world community. Although the non-state is a "supporting actor" towards the main actors (state), the practice of the non-state has a role in influencing the state in determining attitudes and decision-making.

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<sup>10</sup> Laksmana, *How Indonesia Manages Its Great Power Relations*.

<sup>11</sup> Wertheim, *The Temporary Hegemony of Western European Civilization [over Asia] Has Distorted Our View of the Past and Made Our Interest One-Sided. Because the World Has Been Dominated by the West for a Hundred Twenty Years—a Short Span of Time yet, in Retrospect, an Eternity—the West Came to Consider Itself as the Focus of World History and the Measure of All Things*.

<sup>12</sup> Thao, "Middle Powers in the Indo-Pacific."

In international relations, the second essence is Interest. Interests are the necessities that actors must fight for to meet their needs. No interaction without interests, or there will be no interaction if there is no interest. Interests in the form of goals to be achieved in connection with the demands of each actor, Indonesia, and China, to meet their needs. This is because no actors can fulfil their own needs, so they need interaction with other actors to meet their needs. In political cooperation, Indonesia and China became important strategies in developing their respective countries because the descendants who had become permanent citizens in Indonesia not only played an active role in the economic movement but the recognition of the law to become people's representatives was acceptable to indigenous people. This indicates that the acceptance of ethnic diversity has begun to be understood. In its implementation, Indonesia carried out a free-and-active foreign policy based on the *Pancasila* ideology and the constitutional basis of the 1945 Constitution, which was the highest legal basis of the Indonesian state.

*Pancasila* is the foundation of Indonesian ideology which reflects the values contained in *Pancasila* as Indonesia's guideline in fighting for its national interests in international relations. Meanwhile, Indonesia's national interests, in general, have been stated in the 1945 Constitution. In the constitution, Indonesia's national interests are as follows: protecting the entire Indonesian nation and all bloodshed; in this case, there are no indigenous people, but all citizens who live in Indonesia respect their rights and obligations, promote general welfare, regardless of race, ethnicity, and class. Educating the nation's life, as stated in Article 31 of the 1945 Constitution. Participate in a world order based on freedom, eternal peace, and social justice.

Post-May 1998 Indonesian-Chinese relations have been marked by deep tension, trauma, and prejudice, but also by efforts at reconciliation and rebuilding. Despite healing efforts, such as the protection of local residents in some areas and the recognition of racial issues, negative sentiments and discrimination persist, fueled by past events and sometimes resurfacing in new contexts. The relationship between Indonesia-China in essence 3, is power. An example of the business power that China carries out is China is known as a developed country with a body of innovation based on advanced

technology<sup>13</sup>. In fact, it is not ashamed to be called a plagiarizing country that is able to copy products, but there are still countries that import these products from China. The rise of China is not something to be taken lightly. Power is the power actors have in international relations. The forms of power actors possess military power, politics, economy, population, and natural resources. Each actor will always strive to maximize the position of strength (power) relative to other actors to create a balance of power or balance power in establishing cooperation without the intention to destroy each other against the weaknesses of each country<sup>14</sup>. In principle, these three essences are interrelated and cannot omit one of them in international relations.

However, power has an important role in international relations from these three essences. Because power is a form of bargaining value for actors to maintain interests to meet their needs. In international relations, Indonesia and China are actors who carry out their roles based on non-active foreign policy that has power or power, which Indonesia and China can then interpret as actors who have the right to determine the direction of policies, attitudes, and desires as sovereign states to meet their needs. In this case, Indonesia and China cannot be influenced by the foreign policy of other countries<sup>15</sup>. Although other countries as non-state also influences it, the full strength of the cooperation between Indonesia and China is an absolute right for these two countries, which is stated in a common agreement and recognized by Indonesia and China.

### *The Economic Strengths of Indonesia and China as the Silk Road in the Global Era*

If each country tries to gather resources, the relative power level will determine relations between countries. This level of power will impact and determine the country's military, economic and political capabilities. Indonesia, as a developing country, feels it does not yet have sufficient capacity in the field of industrialization and adequate technology to build its own infrastructure, so it needs assistance from other already advanced countries, like China. With the development of its industry, which is also

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<sup>13</sup> Ren et al., "Innovation-Oriented, Dynamic Capabilities and Evolution of the Informal Shanzhai Firms in China."

<sup>14</sup> Kusumadewi and Wiswayana, "MULTILEVEL HEDGING FOR MIDDLE-REGIONAL POWER."

<sup>15</sup> Ross and Zhu, *China's Ascent*.



accompanied by technological developments, China can compete with other developed countries in sustainable and mutually beneficial development.

Indonesia and China are geographically large countries with populations in the top 5 in the world. China has a population of around 1.4 billion people, and Indonesia has a population of 297 million. Both countries have large areas, the main attraction for industry and trade. China is a big hope to boost the turnover of industrial trade. After one year of agreement on the ACFTA free trade, the Indonesia-China trade balance showed a surplus value for China. However, Indonesia can still surplus provided there are real efforts from the government to boost finished goods exports to China. China, as a big industry that is very aggressive in its industry, will be a great opportunity to easily enter Indonesia to conduct trade transactions as well as during the historical era of the Silk Road. Still, in this global era, the policies taken by Indonesia and China greatly affect the economic conditions of each country.

China is one of the countries in the Asian region that has good economic conditions. China's economic condition strengthened, accompanied by dynamic Chinese development, such as the existence of fast trains and increasing industry in China, which began to be able to compete with the global market by presenting several products that had high specifications but with low prices, which became China's strategy to dominate the global market can be seen as evidence of China's economic progress<sup>16</sup>. Therefore, China is one of the countries that has had a major impact on its collaboration with Indonesia, especially in the economic sector. Based on the Economic Diplomacy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, bilateral cooperation in the economic field can be divided into several sectors, namely trade, investment, tourism, and development<sup>17</sup>.

China's economic growth in 2017 ranked second in the world after the United States. The trade sector can be in the form of goods or services. China is Indonesia's largest export destination; according to data from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Economic Diplomacy in 2013, total exports to China reached 21,281.6 million USD. In 2019 Indonesia targeted to increase

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<sup>16</sup> Abb et al., *The Belt and Road Initiative in Southeast Asia*.

<sup>17</sup> Shambaugh, *International Relations of Asia*.

the export market to China to 55,156.6 million USD. Meanwhile, imports of goods from China can be seen in many goods around us made by China<sup>18</sup>.

Based on data from the Central Statistics Agency, the results of Indonesia experiencing economic growth in the first quarter of 2018 were 5.06 per cent. This figure grew higher than the economic growth in the first quarter of 2017 (year on year) of 5.01 per cent. Tourism is an important sector, with 9.5% of Indonesia's GDP coming from the tourism sector. Compared to other countries, Indonesia still has not been able to maximize its tourism potential because it has not attracted so many foreign tourists. In 2014, from a total of 1,138 billion global tourists, Indonesia could only attract 25 million tourists.

During the first quarter of 2018, the inflation rate remained at 3.40 per cent (year on year) compared to March 2017. There was also an increase in the realization of the state budget, including government spending of Rp 419.06 trillion or 18.87 per cent of the ceiling. 2018 amounting to Rp 2,220.70 trillion. Compared with the first quarter of 2017, the realization of government spending was only Rp. 400.4 trillion or 18.75 per cent of the 2017 ceiling of Rp. 2,133.30 trillion. In terms of economic growth, Indonesia is far behind China, so what happens as a developing country with many citizens in the lower middle class is dependent on products from China that provide goods at low prices and are considered to have good quality. Both have mutually needed relations; Indonesia is a good target market for China and a target for Indonesian exports, while China can expand their trade as a provider of cheap goods for Indonesia.

In the Theory of International Politics, Kenneth Waltz states that structural impacts must be considered when assessing the behaviour of a country. The structure is defined as the principle of an anarchist international governance system and equal distribution of capabilities in all state units. Power is a combination of the ability of a country. They were standing on the concept of sovereignty and autonomy. So, the resident who lives in Indonesia has the same autonomy and sovereignty as the indigenous people. Still, autonomy can be a problematic concept and changes from the concept of freedom, self-determination, and institutions to a concept full of responsibility and burden.

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<sup>18</sup> Papatheologo, *Interregional and EU–ASEAN Relations*.

This is where the influence of cooperation between Indonesia and China is very influential in the continuity of the descendants who have received equal sovereignty with the natives in all fields and even given convenience to migrants from China who work or trade to have an economic impact in Indonesia. The role of Indonesia and China that have autonomy related to the capacity or ability to shape good governance will also have an impact on cooperation that is woven. Sovereignty also changes from rights to tasks because each country agrees upon and recognizes the results of the agreement. In the global economy, international organizations give responsibility to sovereign states so that conditions arise when sovereignty is created by some "sovereign" countries.<sup>19</sup>

This concept is another version of good governance and can no longer be recognized as an absolute (absolute) right. To maintain stability and global security and resolve the issue of the anarchist world system in international relations, there must be no sovereign, global, and excessive authority. The state collectively ignores its rights to full autonomy and sovereignty. It refers to goals, threats, fears, identities, and other perceptions of reality that affect the state and non-state in the international system so that it has a greater impact, even beyond material power.

The crisis that occurred in the South China Sea. It is in a disputed area involving China and ASEAN countries directly adjacent to the South Sumatra region. Indonesia, which is also in dispute, took decisive steps to defend the territorial sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia by changing the name of the waters of the South Sumatra Sea to the North Natuna Sea in July 2017. In addition, Indonesia placed its military power on Natuna Island and around the Natuna waters. This aggressive step continues to be carried out by Indonesia, despite calls from China for Indonesia to cancel the plan to rename the watershed of the South Sumatra Sea Region and reduce military confrontation in the region. Based on this simple example, Indonesia played its role in fighting for its national interests, and mobilizing power in this matter was its military strength to defend the territorial sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia. And not affected by Chinese foreign policy, one of the world powers<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Baylis, John, et al. (eds.), 2007. *Strategy in the Contemporary World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

<sup>20</sup> Lai and Idris, "Under the Belt and Road Initiative."

*Analysis of Chinese ethnic minorities in Muslim-majority Countries*

This study highlights the Chinese minority in Indonesia in terms of numbers, even though the Chinese belief in Indonesia, namely Confucianism, has been recognized as a legal religion in Indonesia. Despite the smaller number difference compared to the native population of Indonesia, this does not discourage citizens of Chinese descent from being able to survive and interact and do business. They are even recognized as a group of business people who are skilled in trading. The May 1998 riots that occurred in almost all regions of Indonesia did show an anti-Chinese attitude as an ethnic minority, but conglomerates in Indonesia controlled about 2% of the economy. mobilized indigenous people to riot. Indigenous people, who are predominantly Muslim, ultimately damaged the image of Islam in the eyes of Chinese citizens. Indonesia and China as actors will become a country obsessed with security and national survival with the existence of Interest and power so that forming bargaining value can lead to a security dilemma, increasing the security of a country can trigger greater instability because other countries participate in developing the military security has also turned into a win-lose game that only allows relative excellence to create a balance of power or balance of power in cooperating without the intention to destroy each other's weaknesses in Indonesia. Indigenous people acknowledge the business strength of Chinese citizens, which is hereditary and is a characteristic of the Chinese people. The role of Indonesia in international relations cannot be separated from the foreign policy of Indonesia, namely non-active foreign politics. "Free" means that Indonesia does not side with the forces which are not by the national personality, as reflected in the *Pancasila*. While "active" means that in carrying out foreign policy, Indonesia is not passive-reactive in its international events; on the contrary, it is active. China's power in developing the economic movement in Indonesia cannot be denied. The spirit of hard work is above the average Indonesian society. In the formation of Chinese ethnicity to work hard has been trained from an early age. Parents apply the involvement of children to work with parents in earning a living. As explained by Mr. Abun Hwa, a cloth trader at the Medan Fish Market. rice and side dishes are obtained from hard work"

Mr. Abun Hwa was born in Hong Kong and began to settle in Medan when he was 10 years old after his parents married in Medan, it took a long time to adapt. Abun Hwa had difficulty speaking Indonesian even though the average Chinese in Medan spoke Medanese Chinese. At that time, Confucianism was not yet a religion. which is recognized as the official religion in Indonesia. So he feels he can't get along with people who are Muslim. in Padang had a psychological impact on the family of Mr. Jumin, a plantation entrepreneur in Padang, who stated that the riots in 98, his whole family was moved to Singapore, living with several of his siblings. in the bank immediately taken all of it for the provision of moving to Singapore.

The emergence of negative prejudice formed an anti-Chinese attitude which triggered the 1998 riots. Indigenous people felt that their rights were being taken away by the Chinese who took a larger business area than the natives. Sentiment towards ethnic Chinese began to form when President Suharto became president of Indonesia. This opinion as if strengthening to overthrow President Suharto who had served as president for 3 periods. The freedom of ethnic Chinese citizenship is not like it is today, although it is felt that there is still sentiment towards Chinese citizens, a form of adaptation of ethnic Chinese citizens so that they can be accepted by the natives, namely ethnic residents get used to making names adapted to Indonesian names. There is still a sense of fear if you still use your original name.

When President Abdurrahman Wahid began to open up freedom for ethnic Chinese citizens to be able to live in togetherness with indigenous people by allowing Chinese New Year as a national holiday, there was Barongsay art and many ethnic Chinese citizens began to enter politics in Indonesia, ethnic residents sold holiday needs Idul Fitri and other Islamic holidays are a positive sign of synergized adaptation between indigenous people and ethnic Chinese in Indonesia. Even though it is undeniable that the development of business opportunities in the economy in Indonesia is still dominated by ethnic Chinese. acknowledged by the indigenous people, namely Mr. Masduki, a trader and also a mosque takmir; "the trading power of the Chinese is still difficult to match, the trading strategy of the Chinese is indeed different from that of the natives. doing business to develop the family business. It is very different from the indigenous people who are

easily satisfied with the results of their work and very few involve their children in trading."

The May 98 riots left a deep impression on ethnic Chinese in Indonesia, especially those who knew the real and traumatized. It took a long process to rebuild trust in indigenous people so they could enjoy life in a Muslim-majority country. Several areas in Jakarta, Tangerang and other areas - other areas were built by elite Chinese community settlements for reasons of ease of socializing among fellow ethnic groups and the existence of business interests that showed striking differences from the settlements of indigenous people. coming. Even though it can be admitted that the hard work of ethnic Chinese people is very much different from most indigenous people. Other factors when it comes to group and political interests will always be prone to conflict.

## CONCLUSION

The results show, the effects of foreign political policy on Indonesian freedom of action against international relations Indonesia and China, the economic strengths of Indonesia, and China as the Silk Road in the global era. The impact that occurred after the 1998 riots did affect the communication and interaction of indigenous people and people of Chinese descent, but slowly changed because of the interaction of mutual need. The business interactions that were established faded the anti-ethnic memories of the descendants and indigenous people. The occurrence of mutualistic symbiosis became the strength of interaction and communication until now, ethnic differences are not something to be afraid of. Ethnic Chinese can mix freely without being influenced by the bad memories of 1998.

Besides that, national power must also be a concern of Indonesia to become a bargaining value to meet its national interests. Indonesia needs to consider several factors to be used as national strengths, including military power, politics, geographical location, population size and quality, state economy and resources, and state ideology. Indonesia's national strength will later help the process of international relations; because of this essence, especially power, it can be seen whether the interaction is successful or not.

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