

contributed to the regression of Indonesian democracy (p. 243). It will also be important to observe post-2024 election developments to see if the management patterns of coalitional presidentialism will be replicated by the new president, or if there will be an even stronger dominance of presidential power. This raises concerns about the future of Indonesian democracy, as the issue of stabilising presidential power could further weaken the checks and balances essential to a democratic system. This will likely be a significant topic for future studies on presidentialism.

*The Coalitions Presidents Make* is recommended as an essential reference for diplomats, journalists, academics and consultants seeking a comprehensive understanding of an important phenomenon of presidentialism in many countries, especially the unique case of contemporary Indonesia.

*Aditya Perdana*

CHARLOTTE SETIJADI, *Memories of Unbelonging: Ethnic Chinese Identity Politics in Post-Suharto Indonesia*. Honolulu: Hawai'i University Press, 2023. 322 pages, \$68.00. ISBN 9780824894054

In Indonesia in May 1998 amidst a severe economic crisis and political turmoil, anti-Chinese riots erupted, mainly in Jakarta, Medan and Surakarta, marked by intense violence, looting and arson targeting the ethnic Chinese communities. Over a thousand people were killed, and countless Chinese-owned businesses and properties were destroyed. Reports of severe human rights abuses further highlighted the brutality of the events. *Memories of Unbelonging* is based on field research conducted primarily in Jakarta from 2007 to 2019 and discusses the politics of ethnic identity construction following the discrimination that peaked during the anti-Chinese riots. Guided by Maurice Halbwachs's theory of collective memory and Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the *habitus*, the book provides insight into how collective memory plays a role in shaping identity. The author, Charlotte Setijadi, states that the collective trauma of anti-Chinese discrimination is still firmly entrenched even after the end of Suharto's New Order era (1966–1998), with the analysis focusing on the ways Chinese Indonesians “remember their collective past, negotiate their identities, establish boundaries, and inform their political participation” (p. 6).

Setijadi starts her book with a concise history of Chinese Indonesians from the colonial period to the much-publicised rise and fall of Ahok, the first ethnic Chinese governor of Jakarta, whose tenure lasted from 2014 to 2017. Opening with an interview with an ethnic Chinese woman who maintains distrust of the “non-Chinese” (indigenous Indonesians), this foreshadowing of continuing

ethnic tensions sets the tone of the following chapters. The author then examines the politics of commemorating the riots' victims alongside the narratives of collective trauma in Jakarta, the epicentre of the riots. Noting that accounts of anti-Chinese attacks relayed by the respondents cannot be officially verified, the author underlines that "the truth is almost irrelevant for the processes of remembering" (p. 45) and concludes that wariness still lurks in the capital's Chinatown districts, which were badly looted during the unrest.

The next two chapters centre on middle-to-upper-class ethnic Chinese families and their *habitus*. First, the author delves into the link between collective memory and the construction of ethnic boundaries by observing an upper-middle-class family in Kelapa Gading, an area with upscale gated communities. She argues that families in these enclaves, which remained unscathed during the riots, have nevertheless segregated themselves behind steel gates as a precaution against possible racial attacks from non-Chinese lower classes, but still recruit the latter as hired help. Observing complex dynamics of racialised inclusion and exclusion exercised by affluent families, she concludes that these dynamics, fuelled by the collective memory of racial trauma, maintain the gap between the Chinese and non-Chinese. Setijadi then examines educational institutions and presents interviews with families who are wary of getting too close to non-Chinese. Echoing the findings in the previous chapter, she observes that middle-to-upper-class parents send their children to private Christian schools, gated like their houses, for the same reasons and argues that "[t]his segregation has also had the effect of perpetuating mutually negative stereotypes between the Chinese and non-Chinese" (pp. 97–98).

The author proceeds to discuss how Chinese Indonesian artists, most of whom were teenagers or young adults in 1998 and in some cases went on to study abroad (thus representing the middle-to-upper classes discussed earlier), express their ethnic identity through the arts. Their artworks strengthen the findings of the preceding chapters that revolve around trauma. For example, Tintin Wulia's 2008 *Great Wallpaper* mural series in Brisbane focuses on bureaucratic discrimination by depicting the SBKRI (Certificate of Citizenship), a document that complements the national ID card and that, under Suharto's regime, was required only from ethnic Chinese citizens. Meanwhile, Edita Atmaja's artwork consists of a gate-like studio that offers visitors a tattoo of a steel gate that is supposed to offer protection for the bearer, with the artist commenting that "a very common symbol of protection that most Chinese Indonesians could relate to is the common steel gate" (p. 152).

The last two chapters centre on the persistent ethnic tensions that still lurk below the surface. The author begins Chapter 5 by discussing the increasing political participation of Chinese Indonesians. She points out, however, how alarming it is that anti-Chinese sentiments can be mobilised at any time, as shown in the case of the first ethnic Chinese governor of Jakarta, Ahok, whose

fall from governorship and incarceration could be attributed to the mobilisation of non-Chinese Muslims against him. Chapter 6 examines the position of Chinese Indonesian business elites toward China. According to the author, the old dynamics still persist, with suspicions regarding the loyalties of ethnic Chinese tycoons with strong connections to China, while at the same time other Chinese continue to worry about being targets of angry mobs. Setijadi accordingly concludes that “collective trauma and victimhood will continue to be central elements in how Chinese Indonesians define themselves” (p. 227).

A notable strength of the book is that, through detailed interviews with Chinese Indonesians, readers can intimately explore the collective trauma resulting from decades-long discrimination. The in-depth historical background provided in every chapter is commendable and useful for orienting readers. Most of the points the author makes in the case study are valid, though the conclusion tends towards generalisation. Setijadi, while pointing out that there are different kinds of *habitus* among different ethnic Chinese communities, deems them beyond the scope of the study and maintains that “the centrality of Jakarta in Indonesia’s national politics means that the Chinese political agenda that is negotiated and played out in the capital also has impacts on the lives of the Chinese in many other parts of the country” (p. 35). It should be noted, however, that of the group’s national population of 2.8 million people (according to the 2010 census), nearly half are spread across Java. Except for those living in Surakarta, they were not affected in the same way by the 1998 riots as those in Jakarta. Lower-to-middle-class Chinese Indonesians who live outside gated communities also account for a considerable portion of the ethnic group. Nevertheless, this book is a highly detailed study of Chinese Indonesians in the selected *habitus*, namely middle-to-upper-class ethnic Chinese communities in the capital. It represents a pivotal first step in the memory study of Chinese Indonesians and can become a valuable addition to the scholarly literature on this demographic.

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