

# TOLERANCE TOURISM: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON CULTURAL INTEGRATION IN GLODOK CHINATOWN JAKARTA

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## ABSTRACT

*This research examines the multifaceted history of tolerance tourism in Glodok Chinatown, Jakarta, Indonesia, with a focus on the Peranakan Chinese community and its unique cultural heritage. Glodok's development as a tourism destination is examined through the lens of "tolerance tourism", with the region's diverse ethnic and religious groups serving as the primary element in the development of heritage tourism. To understand the impact of events, policies, and social dynamics on tourism growth, the study employs a qualitative thematic approach to analyze historical literature spanning from colonial times to the present. The analysis examines the efforts by government bodies and local stakeholders, including the cultural ambassadors, to promote Glodok Chinatown's cultural heritage while ensuring inclusivity and community empowerment. The study also critically assesses the challenges faced, such as maintaining cultural authenticity amidst commodification and the need for balanced development that empowers local communities alongside economic growth. The research concludes by emphasizing the importance of inclusive tourism policies, effective communication strategies, and sustained stakeholder involvement to achieve truly successful and sustainable tolerance tourism in Glodok Chinatown. By understanding the historical context and the dynamic interactions between various stakeholders in Glodok Chinatown, the study provides valuable insights for the development of culturally sensitive and community-empowering tourism models in similar multicultural settings.*

**Keywords:** *tourism tolerance, heritage tourism, peranakan Chinese Indonesia, historical, cultural integration*

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has a rich cultural heritage, encompassing its history, geography, and diverse cultural aspects, as well as a strong sense of identity, ideology, and lifestyle. This diversity is a significant strength and a unique characteristic of Indonesia as a plural nation. Therefore, its development should be based on its diversity and local characteristics, aligned with national ideologies like Pancasila and "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" (BPS-Statistic Indonesia, 2021). This diversity is particularly evident in the context of tourism, which seeks to harmonize and

unite multicultural communities in tourism activities (Baycar, 2023; Bond, 1998). This concept is influenced by cultural history and stakeholder involvement in preserving its culture (Prasetyo et al., 2024; Viljoen & Henama, 2017).

As a multicultural metropolis, Jakarta has become home to a mestizo culture, characterized by its diverse ethnicities, cultures, religions, and backgrounds. This diversity was influenced by trading activities at Sunda Kelapa Harbor during the Dutch Colonial era, where ships from China, Japan, South India, and the Middle East docked (Blackburn, 2024). These activities encouraged cultural exchange

between traders and various ethnic groups, resulting in a diverse cultural landscape in Jakarta (Niemeijer, 2012).

The Glodok Chinatown area, built by the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC) in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, is a prime example of this cultural diversity. Chinese traders who arrived in Indonesia after the Silk Road married local Indonesian women, resulting in the birth of the Peranakan Chinese-Indonesian community (Onghokham, 2017b). These Peranakan Chinese-Indonesians incorporated local customs, language, food, clothing, and beliefs into their culture. Marriages between immigrants and locals further facilitated cultural assimilation, leading to the development of architectural styles, ancestral worship traditions, financial management practices, and celebratory customs.

Political, cultural, and economic factors led to social disputes among Peranakan Chinese-Indonesians in Indonesia. The first bloodshed happened in 1740, during the Dutch East Indies' reign (Onghokham, 2017a). In 1967, the government announced a policy encouraging cultural integration by restricting art performances, religious activities, and the use of Peranakan Chinese characters and language. This approach led Peranakan Chinese-Indonesians to become less familiar with their ancestral culture, as evidenced by their limited ability to communicate in the Peranakan Chinese language. Although the policy was repealed in 2000, it is difficult to find the cultural foundations that have been hidden for 33 years. In 1998, economic and political turbulence, as well as prejudice, resulted in Peranakan Chinese-Indonesian victims of looting and violence, causing dread and anguish (Himawan et al., 2022).

In 2021, the Department of Tourism and Creative Economy in Jakarta established the Glodok Chinatown Tourism Village as one of the city's tourism villages. The village's potential as a cultural tourism village was highlighted by the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy in 2022, who emphasized the village's strong storynomics based on the acculturation of Peranakan Chinese, Sundanese, Betawi, and Javanese cultures. Differences in culture, beliefs, faiths, and backgrounds, which are seen as multicultural, are considered opportunities for tourism development to foster community tolerance through positive intergroup relations. This concept is the root of tolerance tourism (Bond, 1998).

The decision to make Glodok a heritage tourism destination has shifted the development focus. This shift led to the formation of the Glodok Chinatown Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS) in 2022, which manages the village as a cultural acculturation tourism destination. POKDARWIS identifies acculturation tourism products, such as cultural arts performances, martial arts, traditional clothing, architectural structures, languages, and traditions associated with traditional celebrations. To attract tourists and showcase the unity and diversity of culture in the Special Region (DKI) of Jakarta, Glodok Chinatown

Tourism Village POKDARWIS hosts annual festivals, such as the Peranakan Chinese New Year Festival and the Mooncake Festival in September. These festivals are inclusive, involving people from various ethnic, tribal, and cultural backgrounds in DKI Jakarta. They highlight Peranakan Chinese-Indonesian culture, as well as the cultures of the Betawi, Sundanese, and Javanese ethnic groups.

Studies on the Glodok Area have highlighted its potential for urban tourism, ethnic identity, heritage tourism, and community empowerment (Alfandy & Krisnadi, 2023; Andiani & Ekomadyo, 2021; Andini & Nugraha, 2023; Blackburn, 2024; Christalyn & Sarudin, 2024; Christina et al., 2024; Febriana et al., 2024; Hoon, 2021; Kuntjara & Hoon, 2020; Oktarina et al., 2021; Perdana & Woerjantari, 2022). However, research on the influence of Peranakan history in Indonesia on their heritage in Jakarta has not been conducted yet. Various research stated that local community involvement is an essential factor in developing heritage tourism (Christian & Kasimun, 2023; Dias et al., 2019; Garau et al., 2021; Getz & Timur, 2016; Hardy & Pearson, 2018; Indrajaya et al., 2021; Iskandar, 2022; Ostrowska-Tryzno & Pawlikowska-Piechotka, 2021; Qin et al., 2021; Roxas et al., 2020).

This study aims to provide a literature review of the historical and cultural backgrounds that have shaped the inclusive characteristics of cultural tourism activities and products in Glodok Chinatown. Understanding the cultural and historical background of the Peranakan community in Glodok Chinatown can serve as a starting point for various research endeavors in tourism, stakeholder engagement, and tourism management.

## METHODS

This study uses a historical literature review design with a qualitative thematic approach. Historical literature review is a specialized review in which the author traces an issue over time in addition to identifying and synthesizing past events. Also connects these events with events that occur in the present and the future (Neuman, 2014).

Thematic analysis is a qualitative research method that identifies, analyzes, and interprets patterns in data. It provides a systematic yet flexible approach to examining complex data sets (interview transcripts, focus group discussions, or visual materials) to uncover meaningful insights related to the research question (Ahmed et al., 2025; Naeem et al., 2023). This research use the six step analysis process in thematic analysis, which are: familiarization with data; generating initial codes/keyword selection (Glodok Chinatown, Chinatown, Commodification, Tolerance Tourism, Jakarta Tourism, Heritage Tourism, Peranakan Indonesia History, etc.); coding; theme development; reviewing, defining, and naming themes; writing the report. The themes in this research are: Tolerance

Tourism, Jakarta and Tourism, Peranakan History in Jakarta, Peranakan Culture After Independence, and the Commodification of Glodok Chinatown.

This study uses non-numerical secondary data to explore the Peranakan Chinese historical and cultural heritage in Jakarta, including the 1998 Riot and the commodification of Glodok Chinatown. Data sources include literature, news articles, policy documents, videos, and photos. Triangulation, which involves incorporating multiple researchers, was employed to reduce bias and ensure data validity and reliability. The data is analyzed to understand how historical and cultural backgrounds have shaped the inclusive characteristics of cultural tourism activities and products in Glodok Chinatown.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Tolerance tourism is an active endeavour to encourage and promote multiculturalism through tourism activities (Bond, 1998). Differences in culture, beliefs, faiths, and backgrounds are viewed as opportunities for tourist development, which is supposed to foster community tolerance through beneficial intergroup relations. Tolerance tourism can be achieved by promoting mutual respect, understanding, and appreciation of cultures among tourists and host communities, ensuring the equitable distribution of resources and opportunities, developing policies and practices that integrate various groups, and involving local communities in tourism planning and development.

According to Bacsi's (2017) research, socio-cultural and religious diversity have different effects on tourist performance. While multicultural cultures appeal to tourists, their economic performance and stability remain a matter of debate. The study also found no significant link between socio-cultural diversity and tourism success. However, Qin et al. (2021) argue that encouraging tolerance, considering cultural nuances, historical context, and dispute resolution is a complex social dynamic. Amin (2020) emphasized the potential of international tourism to enhance understanding and cooperation between nations and communities, while also acknowledging the potential for problems to arise due to cultural misunderstandings.

Viljoen and Henama's (2017) study on cultural heritage tourism in South Africa found that it is underrepresented, primarily due to apartheid, resulting in a lack of representation of various cultural heritages, a lack of understanding of its importance in social cohesion, and insufficient information dissemination. Increased awareness, skill development, effective communication, and inclusive policy making are all potential solutions. According to Baycar's (2023) case study on cultural tolerance and multiculturalism in the United Arab Emirates, traditions, national events, and strategic foreign policy decisions can be leveraged to create an inclusive national identity while balancing diversity, preserving cultural heritage, and addressing

political priorities.

Another study on multiculturalism and tolerance reveals a correlation between cultural tourism motivation, tourism assessment, the intensity of activities, the acquisition of cultural experiences, and tourist satisfaction. Tourism motivation fosters tolerance, cross-cultural understanding, and respect, enabling tourists to achieve greater satisfaction (Marlina et al., 2024). High satisfaction generates a positive tourism image, loyalty, and repeat visits.

Sudarwani et al. (2022) study identifies three key survival factors for Lasem Chinatown: tolerance, adaptation, and physical character. These are bolstered by local powers such as history, economics, tradition, religion, kinship, and social community. The unique values of Lasem's people are the core of these survival elements, forming a distinctive Chinatown.

Booming tourism in diverse environments relies heavily on the development of tolerance and understanding between different cultural groups. Multicultural tourism areas must recognize the importance of tolerance in their development to foster social capital and ensure the success and sustainability of tourism growth. This growth requires proactive measures such as inclusive policies, effective communication, and promotion of intercultural dialogue. A lack of tolerance, stemming from prejudice and negative stereotypes, can easily lead to conflict and harm the tourism industry.

Tolerance tourism serves as a powerful catalyst for promoting multiculturalism, social cohesion, and mutual understanding across diverse societies. While the appeal of multicultural destinations is evident, the relationship between diversity and tourism success is complex and influenced by economic, social, and political factors. This study highlights six factors in tolerance tourism (Table 1).

Table 1 Factors in Tolerance Tourism

Factors	Values/Importance
Mutual respect and cultural appreciation between the tourist and host communities	essential in fostering tolerance and minimizing conflict.
Inclusive policies, equitable resource distribution, and community involvement	Critical for sustainable and harmonious development
Challenges (underrepresentation, lack of awareness, and social polarization)	Potentially hinder the benefits of tolerance tourism, but can be addressed through increased awareness, skill development, effective communication, and strategic policymaking.
Government support and collaboration among stakeholders	are vital for promoting tolerance and leveraging tourism as a tool for national unity and stability.



Table 1 Factors in Tolerance Tourism (Continued)

Factors	Values/Importance
Tourist motivation and satisfaction	Closely linked to cross-cultural understanding and respect, which in turn enhances destination image, loyalty, and repeat visitation.
Local values and adaptive strategies	The case studies (Lasem Chinatown and Kampung Bhinneka) demonstrate the importance of community-driven efforts in sustaining multicultural environments.

Tolerance tourism not only enriches the visitor experience but also strengthens the social fabric of host communities. Its success depends on proactive, inclusive approaches that embrace diversity, facilitate intercultural dialogue, and address underlying prejudices. Without such efforts, the potential for conflict increases, undermining both tourism development and broader societal harmony.

DKI Jakarta Province is a renowned tourist destination, providing entertainment and recreation that reflects Indonesian culture. The Thousand Islands, a natural attraction, are a popular destination with a diverse range of islands, including Bidadari, Harapan, Tidung, and Pari. Fatahillah Museum, Sunda Kelapa Harbor, and the Fine Arts Museum are among the historical attractions of Jakarta's Old Town. The natural beauty and distinctiveness of DKI Jakarta's culture have made it a popular tourist destination, with the sector being the primary source of foreign exchange income and driving other Indonesian cities to increase their tourism potential. The tourism industry has great potential, with three entry ports for both domestic and foreign tourists (Alyani, 2021): Soekarno-Hatta, Tanjung Priok, and Halim Perdanakusumah.

The DKI Jakarta administration has regenerated Glodok Chinatown, a cultural heritage site, into an urban tourism attraction. However, this accomplishment must be matched with local community empowerment (Setiawati, 2020). According to Krisnadi et al. (2022), urban tourism in DKI Jakarta is challenging to classify due to its characteristics, including city size, history, morphology, environment, location, and city symbolism. Balancing these characteristics is critical for maximizing the benefits to local communities. Tourist attractions in Glodok Chinatown had a considerable influence on visitor interest, both partially and concurrently (Alfandy & Krisnadi, 2023).

Budianto et al. (2023) explore Glodok's unique blend of Peranakan Chinese cultural elements and local urban practices, highlighting the interactions between residents and shops in alleys (Figure 1). The research reveals that Peranakan Chinese elements remain visible while local cultural elements blend, creating a nostalgic atmosphere. The community's economic and social activities contribute to the interiority,

with residents, traders, and customers fostering rich experiences.



Figure 1 Petak 9 Market in Glodok Alley

Glodok, an ethnic Peranakan Chinese community established during the colonial era, has evolved into an economic center and a historical and cultural tourism destination (Alfandy & Krisnadi, 2023; Jingga & Lukito, 2021). The ethnic identity in Glodok was influenced by Dutch colonial policies, community segregation, modernization of building materials, and the 1998 tragedy (Jingga & Lukito, 2021). The community's cultural identity evolved due to urbanization and social factors, and sustainability encourages the use of durable materials, such as concrete. The modernization of buildings and the reduction of oriental ornaments contribute to the unique character of Glodok.

Glodok Chinatown's rich Peranakan Chinese cuisine and cultural acculturation contribute to its positive image as a destination. Christalyn and Sarudin's (2024) research suggests revitalizing the area, increasing culinary promotion, and developing targeted marketing strategies to maximize the potential of Peranakan Chinese culinary tourism. Glodok Chinatown, a historic enclave of Peranakan Chinese heritage in West Jakarta, is a dynamic culinary hub with a unique blend of architecture, traditions, and cuisine. Despite its potential as a significant tourism asset, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited promotional strategies, and balancing modernization with authenticity persist (Marlina et al., 2024; Situmeang et al., 2024; Sulistyo, 2019).

Julianto and Ridaryanthi's (2023) research explores intercultural interactions in Petak Sembilan Market, Chinatown. The study reveals that communication is a two-way linear process,

with traders and buyers using Indonesian to avoid misunderstandings. Mandarin/Hokkien is sometimes used if both master it. Nonverbal cues such as head shakes are also observed. The study emphasizes the importance of mutual understanding and adjustment in market interactions.

The tourism landscape of DKI Jakarta, particularly in areas like the Thousand Islands and Glodok Chinatown, showcases a rich blend of natural beauty, historical heritage, and multicultural urban life. Glodok Chinatown, with its unique Peranakan Chinese cultural identity, culinary richness, and historical significance, represents a vibrant example of cultural diversity within an urban setting. The area's ongoing efforts to balance modernization with cultural preservation, empower local communities, and enhance tourism infrastructure highlight both the opportunities and challenges faced by multicultural tourism destinations. This illustrates how tourism can serve as a platform for fostering intercultural understanding and respect.

The coexistence and interaction between diverse cultural groups in Glodok—evident in shared languages, market communication, and blended cultural practices—reflect the core principles of tolerance tourism. By promoting cultural heritage, encouraging community participation, and facilitating positive intercultural exchanges, DKI Jakarta's tourism sector can advance social cohesion and mutual appreciation among tourists and residents alike. The development of tourism in DKI Jakarta, particularly in culturally rich areas such as Glodok Chinatown, underscores the importance of tolerance tourism. This approach celebrates diversity, empowers local communities, and promotes inclusive and sustainable tourism experiences. Such initiatives contribute to national unity and cultural harmony.

The ethnic Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia were historically a small community of assimilated Indonesian and Chinese traders from the Silk Route, dating back to the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. Marriages had been a means of assimilation into the local culture, customs, and traditions. Despite their efforts and contributions to the country's growth and economy, Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia frequently face discrimination, particularly during the Dutch colonial period and the Suharto era. The state-imposed assimilation forced Peranakan Chinese to give up their ethnic and cultural identity and stigmatized them (Niemeijer, 2012; Onghokham, 2017a, 2017b).

In the seventeenth century, Peranakan Chinese could no longer fully integrate into local society. The VOC divided the peoples of the Indonesian archipelago into Christian and non-Christian groups, as well as by race: Western (European) and non-Western (non-European). Each non-Western ethnic group was governed by a regional leader nominated by the VOC. All Peranakan Chinese languages, from various linguistic families (for example, Hokkien, Hakka, and Hainanese), were classified as Peranakan. The leader of each region's Peranakan Chinese community

was known as the 'Kapitan Cina' (Chinese captain) (Blackburn, 2024; Niemeijer, 2012; Onghokham, 2017b). Khaw Kim An is one of the "Kapitan Cina" whose home serves as a cultural heritage tourist attraction in Glodok Chinatown.

During the Dutch administration, Peranakan Chinese merchants played a significant role in the Indonesian economy by selling opium, managing gambling dens, and harvesting bird nests for Peranakan Chinese cuisine (Blackburn, 2024; Onghokham, 2017a, 2017b). However, in 1835 and 1863, Dutch officials developed a zoning and permission system to discourage cooperation with indigenous people and to limit interaction between Peranakan Chinese and other ethnic groups. This system prohibited Peranakan Chinese from interacting with indigenous people and limited their interaction with different ethnicities. Despite their considerable contribution to the colony's economic prosperity, the Peranakan Chinese became the "Other" in Indonesian society, causing suspicion and hatred among most of the indigenous people.

In the 1890s, Dutch humanitarians urged the colonial administration to dismantle the income farming system, which they viewed as detrimental to the well-being of the indigenous people (Blackburn, 2024; Onghokham, 2017b). This decision weakened a key aspect of China's economic strength. Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia were outraged when the Dutch government consented to the Japanese government's proposal to designate Japanese in the Dutch East Indies as Europeans in 1899. Although the Peranakan Chinese requested equal status with Europeans, the Dutch refused, as such a concession would have had a significant influence on the rise of nationalist movements among Indonesia's indigenous people (Niemeijer, 2012; Onghokham, 2017a).

Political developments in China sparked a nationalist sense among Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia, leading to the emergence of the Pan-Chinese movement. Peranakan Chinese formed a variety of groups to safeguard their identity while also protecting their commercial and political interests. To address this, the Dutch colonial administration enacted a citizenship statute in 1910, recognizing all persons born in the Dutch East Indies and whose parents resided there as Dutch citizens (Onghokham, 2017a). In 1917, the Dutch abolished the despised zoning and permission systems, allowing Peranakan Chinese to form ethnic groups, establish Chinese-language printing presses, and operate secondary schools. However, many natives questioned the devotion of Peranakan Chinese to the Dutch, resulting in anti-Peranakan Chinese violence during the Revolution (1945-1946), which included assaults and rioting (Niemeijer, 2012; Onghokham, 2017b).

Indonesian indigenous leaders believed that Peranakan Chinese people were more oriented towards China than Indonesia after independence. The communist victory in 1949 sparked Peranakan Chinese nationalism among Indonesians, leading some to return to China for education and to reclaim their

ancestral homeland (Onghokham, 2017a). Indonesian indigenous leaders were uncomfortable with the dual citizenship of Peranakan Chinese people, which arose from the 1946 Citizenship Law and the 1949 Round Table Agreement on Citizenship between Indonesia and the Netherlands. In 1950, President Sukarno introduced the Benteng Program, which prioritized indigenous entrepreneurs in export-import businesses and prohibited the involvement of Peranakan Chinese. However, this policy led to the emergence of the 'Ali Baba' system, where Peranakan Chinese Indonesians used native Indonesians as sleeping partners. In 1959, the government issued Presidential Decree No. 10 to reduce the economic role of ethnic Peranakan Chinese, banning "alien" retail trade in rural areas.

The Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia have faced cultural assimilation, economic marginalization, and systemic discrimination. Despite early integration, they faced increasing marginalization under Dutch colonial rule and post-independence policies. Addressing historical ethnic tensions is crucial when developing tolerance tourism strategies, as unresolved past conflicts and prejudices have a profound impact on present-day social relations and perceptions. Tourism, as a powerful tool for intercultural exchange, can either reinforce stereotypes and divisions or foster mutual understanding and reconciliation, depending on how these histories are acknowledged and presented. Tolerance tourism strategies that thoughtfully incorporate and address historical ethnic tensions are more likely to succeed in promoting intercultural understanding, reducing prejudice, and contributing to peaceful coexistence. Ignoring these histories risks perpetuating divisions and undermining the transformative potential of tourism as a force for social harmony.

During Sukarno's administration, ethnic Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia were permitted to form ethnic-based organizations, establish a Peranakan Chinese-language press, open Chinese-language secondary schools, and participate in politics. In the 1955 elections, nine designated seats were reserved for ethnic Peranakan Chinese, and several cabinet ministers were of Peranakan Chinese origin. However, from 1965 to 1968, anti-Communist violence led by Suharto's military turned against the anti-Peranakan Chinese, resulting in at least two thousand deaths. The last major anti-Peranakan Chinese violence occurred in West Kalimantan in 1967 and early 1968, resulting in the deaths of two to five thousand Peranakan Chinese and the relocation of nearly 100,000 to coastal cities. In 1967, the Suharto government implemented an assimilation policy, which restricted Peranakan Chinese culture and control, banned public displays of Peranakan Chinese characters, and prohibited organizations related to health, religion, funeral services, sports, and recreation (Onghokham, 2017a).

Although many Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia became more Peranakan, or even 'Indonesianized', under Suharto's assimilation policies, local Peranakan Chinese generally still speak Mandarin and particular

Peranakan Chinese dialects. Many older Peranakan Chinese can read and write Mandarin as they learned in Mandarin secondary schools before the New Order. The younger generation, however, generally cannot read and write Mandarin but can still speak Mandarin and particular Mandarin dialects (Kuntjara & Hoon, 2020; Onghokham, 2017a, 2017b).

The political transition that followed Suharto's resignation in 1998 presented new opportunities for Chinese Indonesians to reclaim their ethnic identity and cultural heritage. The traditional distinction between *totok* (a Chinese person born in mainland China) and peranakan Chinese has dissolved, yet cultural diversity persists. This challenge to the media's production of a definitive Chinese identity is noteworthy since Chinese Indonesians have actively negotiated and opposed stereotypes, generating more complex self-representations in the post-Reformasi era (Kuntjara & Hoon, 2020; Suprajitno, 2020).

During the New Order Era in Indonesia, the Soeharto regime marginalized and stigmatized Peranakan Chinese people, making them vulnerable to prejudice and exploitation by the bureaucracy, police, and military. Peranakan Chinese Indonesian citizens had to show a Citizenship Letter (SBKRI) to obtain documents, and unwritten barriers limited their participation in politics, public service, the military, and state universities. New Order policies excluded Peranakan Chinese people from politics, leading to their involvement in economic activities. The corrupt relationship between Peranakan Chinese tycoons and the power elite influenced indigenous Indonesians' perception of them as more decadent and more corrupt, leading to anti-Peranakan Chinese riots during economic crises and labor strikes (Onghokham, 2017a, 2017b).

In May 1998, Suharto's authoritarian rule in Indonesia came to an end amid the Asian financial crisis. Social unrest in Indonesia intensified, peaking in Jakarta, Solo, and other regions, as Peranakan Chinese-owned shops and properties were looted and set on fire. Many Peranakan Chinese women were allegedly brutally tortured, raped, and killed (Ahmadi, 2021; Febriana et al., 2024; Himawan et al., 2022; Salman et al., 2023). The Joint Fact-Finding Team (Tim Gabungan), appointed by the Habibie administration to investigate the unrest, indicated that someone at the highest levels of state decision-making might have instigated the violence. This was allegedly done to create critical unrest, which would justify the imposition of martial law. However, there is still no conclusive evidence available, making it difficult to prove this involvement.

Salman et al. (2023) explained that the stereotype drove attacks and looting against the Peranakan Chinese because they should be despised due to their wealth and proximity to the authorities. This stereotype stems from the fact that Peranakan Chinese individuals are significantly involved in the business sector, leading to increased wealth. (Febriana et al., 2024; Himawan et al., 2022). At that time, the



stereotype of closeness to the authorities was attributed to Soeharto's close relationship with Liem Sioe Liong, one of the largest investors in Indonesia.

Negative prejudice against Peranakan Chinese citizens was formed since the New Order government (Ahmadi, 2021; Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020; Himawan et al., 2022). During his leadership, Suharto tried to diminish the influence of Sukarno, the previous president who had close ties with China, by reducing the rights of Peranakan Chinese citizens and eradicating their cultural influences. Since the New Order, Peranakan Chinese citizens have been required to abandon all Peranakan Chinese attributes, including changing their names to native ones. This categorization creates striking differences and leads to negative prejudice.

Hoon's (2020) study found that the fall of Suharto in Indonesia led to a period of democratization and institutional reforms, resulting in a decline in anti-Peranakan Chinese violence after May 1998. The alleged mass rapes and involvement of armed groups in the riots shocked the political elite and Islamic politicians who had been critical of Suharto's collusion with Peranakan Chinese conglomerates (Febriana et al., 2024; Kuntjara & Hoon, 2020). They began to sympathize with the Peranakan Chinese minority and acknowledged that citizens had not been treated fairly. Capital flight and the 'exodus' of Peranakan Chinese contributed to the change in attitudes towards the Chinese.

These changes in perception led to the active participation of Peranakan Chinese in the socio-political scene. The Indonesian Peranakan Chinese Social Association (PSMTI) and the Indonesian Peranakan Chinese Association (INTI) are two major mass organizations of ethnic Peranakan Chinese in post-Suharto Indonesia. Their primary objectives include advocating for the interests of Peranakan Chinese Indonesians, fostering solidarity between them and indigenous Indonesians, addressing social and cultural issues, and promoting their participation in electoral politics. Himawan (2022) noted that although this incident has been part of the dark history of the Peranakan Chinese community in Jakarta for over two decades, prejudices and hatred against them persist today. The COVID-19 pandemic, which originated in Wuhan, China, has provided new ammunition for targeting the Peranakan Chinese people in Indonesia once again.

Under the influence of the more sympathetic views of Indonesia's political elites, the Peranakan Chinese community in Indonesia began to benefit from the reforms carried out by subsequent governments (Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020; Hoon, 2021; Kuntjara & Hoon, 2020; Lee, 2024; Mubah & Anabarja, 2020; Onghokham, 2017a; Suprajitno, 2020). Many biased measures against the Peranakan Chinese were abolished, most significantly the abandonment of Suharto's forced assimilation policy. In 2000, President Abdurrahman Wahid approved the publication of Peranakan Chinese-language print media by issuing

Presidential Decree No. 6, which revoked a law that had banned local publication of Peranakan Chinese characters in Indonesia during Suharto's presidency. Many schools were permitted to offer Peranakan Chinese language courses, and ethnic Peranakan Chinese were allowed to celebrate Peranakan Chinese festivals openly.

Despite the cancellation of formal assimilation policies, Chinese Indonesians continue to experience a sense of "unbelonging" due to their historical ties to Indonesia and the collective memory of 1998 violence and discrimination. This trauma influences their identity, societal perceptions, and social boundaries. The community is diverse, comprising both culturally isolated and integrated Chinese groups, which results in varied approaches to cultural expression and integration. Despite democratization, the political system is still driven by predatory interests, with many Chinese elites participating in patron-client relationships that reinforce wealth and exclusivity stereotypes. Some Chinese Indonesians push for reform and cross-cultural unity, while others defend the status quo to protect their interests (Harjatanaya & Hoon, 2020; Hoon, 2021; Lee, 2024; Mubah & Anabarja, 2020; Setijadi, 2023).

The Peranakan Chinese community in Indonesia faces a complex historical and socio-political interplay that is aligned with the concept of tolerance tourism, which seeks to promote mutual respect, understanding, and peaceful coexistence among diverse cultural groups through tourism. By acknowledging the struggles and resilience of the Peranakan Chinese, tolerance tourism can help challenge stereotypes and foster empathy among visitors and host communities. Incorporating Peranakan Chinese heritage, stories, and cultural expressions into tourism initiatives encourages intercultural dialogue and highlights Indonesia's multicultural identity. Moreover, tolerance tourism can serve as a platform for healing historical wounds, empowering marginalized communities, and promoting inclusive narratives that contribute to social cohesion and national unity. Ultimately, tolerance tourism not only enhances the visitor experience but also fosters social cohesion and national unity by promoting respect for cultural diversity and reducing prejudice rooted in historical conflicts.

Information obtained regarding the decision to commodify Peranakan Chinese cultural heritage in Jakarta emerged from a press release by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, published on its official website, stating that it had great potential, which would then be packaged and developed into a "tourist attraction". The effort to revitalize the Peranakan Chinese cultural heritage was supported by Perdana & Woerjantari (2022), who found that the modern development of Chinatown aspects can attract visitors and create a sense of place. However, it does not necessarily encourage the same level of place attachment as historically rooted communities such as Glodok Chinatown.

A combination of historical continuity,

community practices, cultural rituals, and personal or collective memories shapes authentic place attachment. This authenticity can be achieved by creating a tourism setting that gives the illusion of authentic and behind-the-scenes experiences, fulfilling tourists' desires for the "real" while maintaining control over what is revealed (Maccannell, 1973). New developments may thrive as attractions, but it takes time, community involvement, and meaningful cultural activities to establish deeper emotional links with people (Andiani & Ekomadyo, 2021; Christina et al., 2024).

Glodok is an area that was formed during the Dutch colonial period and has now developed into the largest Chinatown in Jakarta (Blackburn, 2024; Niemeijer, 2012). The area is densely populated with shophouses that served as both shops and residences at the time. The market that grew out of people's homes is a feature that enlivens the neighborhood. Glodok was once the ultimate limit for the Chinatown district, but with the move of the city center, Glodok became the doorway to the new Chinatown (Christina et al., 2024; Oktarina et al., 2021). Modern European architectural styles, such as the use of concrete and massive columns, heavily influence the appearance of the shophouses. The ethnic identity of these shophouse buildings is found in the use of traditional Peranakan Chinese roofs and ornaments, such as *Ngang Shan* (double-sided cursive roofs) and *Hsuan Shan* (double-

sided or four-sided chair roofs) (Jingga & Lukito, 2021).

Glodok Chinatown is one of the oldest Chinatowns in Indonesia. It showcases a blend of various cultures and buildings, featuring Peranakan Chinese architecture. This unique combination of history, culture, and modernity makes it a vibrant neighborhood in Central Jakarta (Figure 2) (Andiani & Ekomadyo, 2021; Christina et al., 2024; Oktarina et al., 2021). However, its culture began to be forgotten slowly, as buildings with a mixture of Indische Woonhuis and Peranakan Chinese architecture, along with the surrounding cultural customs and activities, started to disappear (Christina et al., 2024; Lestari et al., 2019; Nabilah & Setiawan, 2023). There needs to be an intervention that can reduce the degradation that occurs in the Glodok Toko Tiga area in the form of a proposed environmental arrangement with plans for several points that can attract visitors, in the form of pedestrian paths as a connection, green open spaces, street vendor centers, community centers, and culture hubs, which are the primary interventions to be able to present the characteristics of regional culture as a Chinatown and become a point that enlivens the area.

The architectural elements of the Glodok Chinatown in the past can be recognized by their *Ngang Shan* roofs, which feature natural decorative motifs inspired by flora and fauna. Additionally, the design

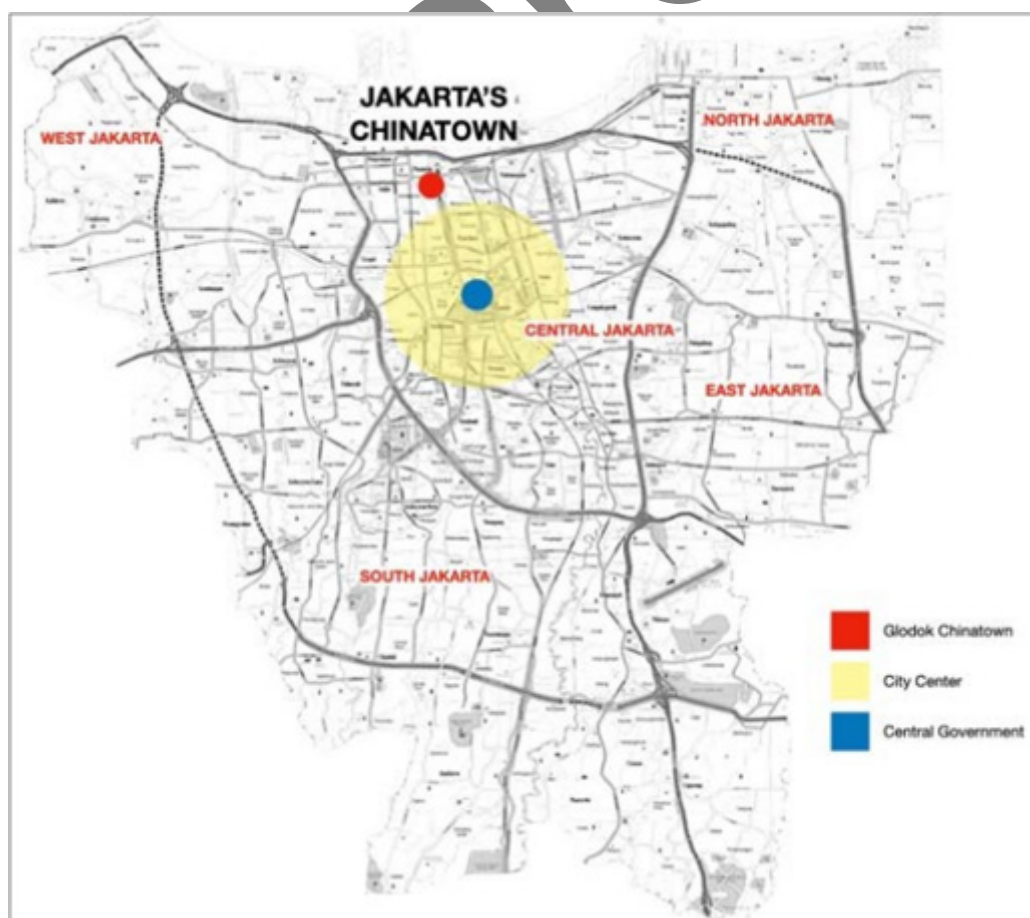


Figure 2 Location of Chinatown Area in Jakarta (Oktarina et al., 2021)



often includes mass arrangements that incorporate a courtyard to facilitate air circulation (Christina et al., 2024; Nabilah & Setiawan, 2023; Tiffany & Alimin, 2023). Today, the architectural features of Glodok Chinatown exhibit a simplification in design, particularly evident in the roofs, where flat roofs are predominant. The current decorative motifs used have transformed into geometric shapes, as well as a mass arrangement that is stacked upwards. Significant changes are currently occurring in the architectural elements of the Glodok Chinatown, particularly in the roof elements. Initially, the building featured a gable roof designed to resemble a mountain peak and a ridge that evoked the shape of a swallow. Over time, this design has evolved into a flat roof structure. In terms of decorative motifs, there has been a shift towards simpler forms, with a greater emphasis on geometric shapes. Regarding the arrangement of mass, which initially consisted of a dense configuration of elements in rows separated by a courtyard, there has been a transition to a flat plane that is stacked upward (Lestari et al., 2019).

The primary material used in the construction of traditional shophouses is wood. However, with the introduction of concrete, the primary materials shifted to steel and glass (Lestari et al., 2019). This change can be seen as a response to Indonesia's tropical climate, which is characterized by high humidity and temperatures. During the colonial period, the use of clay tiles, specifically those of the *Hsuan Shan* or *Ngang Shan* type, continued because they provide strong resistance to extreme weather conditions.

In addition to shop and housing buildings, Glodok Chinatown has four temples used by the community for worship, namely Jin De Yuan Temple, Tan Seng Ong Temple, Kwan Tee Bio Temple, and Toa Se Bio Temple. Each building has a different combination of decorations. There are several variations and combinations of roof decorations, roof tiles, door ornaments, types of materials used, and others (Figure 3). These combinations and variations reflect the Peranakan Chinese ethnic culture and are chosen following traditional Peranakan Chinese customs (Basri et al., 2020).

Glodok's identity has evolved, with the use of shophouses still dominant in urban areas. However, the characteristics of the buildings were adapted from Dutch heritage buildings, which in turn influenced the materials used and the design of the buildings. Traditional Peranakan Chinese architecture, which utilized wood as its primary building material, was replaced by concrete and thick pillars, resulting in the development of colonial-style shophouses.

After the colonial era ended, Glodok residents began to interact with local Jakarta residents, leading to development in the city's space. Modernization invaded Jakarta's architectural style, driven by the desire for something new. Old or dirty buildings were renovated in a more minimalist style, which eliminated ornate elements and massive concrete structures. Traditional Peranakan Chinese buildings,

such as temples and pagodas, were largely unaffected by modernization.



Figure 3 Peranakan Chinese Traditional Roof Ornament (top) and Modernized Shop Building in Glodok

In May 1998, a major tragedy befell the Glodok area and its buildings, resulting in burning, looting, and destruction of shophouses. Glodok residents decided to rebuild their homes in search of safety, relocate their settlements north, rebuild their damaged buildings, or abandon them altogether. The reconstruction of Glodok after the incident became a catalyst for changing Glodok's identity. Shophouse buildings in Glodok now feature a minimalist design, devoid of ornaments, and do not employ massive concrete structures. Instead, they are predominantly made of steel and glass. In the commercial area, most buildings are modern in style, while in the southern part of Glodok, residential areas still feature shophouse buildings with minimalist designs.

There is a need for a concept to develop effective cultural heritage tourism products, as the management and marketing of Glodok Chinatown as a tourist destination, carried out by the Cultural Office, have not been optimal (Andini & Nugraha, 2023; Budianto et al., 2023; Nursanty & Rahmawaty, 2025). However, Rianto (2021) stated that the development of tourism products in Glodok Chinatown is adequate and able to attract tourists, especially during cultural activities and festivals. The government has acknowledged the festival's capability to attract visitors. It serves multiple

functions beyond entertainment, promoting regional cultural traditions, exploring cultural values, and enhancing the local economy (Mandasar & Setiawan, 2023). Various tourism activities can be undertaken, including historical tourism, religious tourism, cultural tourism, and culinary tourism. However, it is essential to involve local governance and cultural offices to maintain the authenticity of the tourism experience offered.

The involvement of governance and community in Glodok Chinatown can be done by providing a space for expression to minimize cultural degradation. The community involved should encompass individuals from diverse generations to ensure the sustainable preservation of culture. One way to attract the interest of the younger generation is through educational tourism activities, art performances, interactive experiences, socializing spaces, and other initiatives (Christian & Kasimun, 2023).

In addition, the preservation and commodification of culture must involve the Peranakan Chinese Cultural Ambassador known as Koko Cici Jakarta. Koko Cici Jakarta is the spearhead responsible for developing and preserving tourism and culture under the DKI Jakarta Culture Office (Iskandar, 2022). Its task is to promote the Glodok Chinatown as a tourist destination and provide information needed by tourists. However, Koko Cici Jakarta has not effectively collaborated with the DKI Jakarta Tourism Office. This results in the development of Glodok Chinatown tourism products that often fail to align with the cultural activities that occur (Rianto, 2021).

The Krakow case study demonstrates that commodification can erode the authenticity of cultural heritage, even when the local community is not opposed to it (Corsale, 2021). The commodification of tourism activities in Glodok Chinatown can be designed to allow tourists to enjoy the religious, cultural, and historical aspects of the Peranakan Chinese ethnic group in Jakarta without disrupting the local community's spiritual and daily activities, as seen in Krakow. However, it is necessary to pay attention to the negative impacts of tourism, such as gentrification, population density, and social inequality, because Jakarta is a center of government with a dense population.

Tourism is more about individual and collective perceptions and representations of cultural heritage, rather than its objective and intrinsic value. Commodification can be seen as a response and consequence of several similar demands. At the same time, the lack of authenticity in the tourist experience is not a significant problem as long as alternative pathways are available (Corsale, 2021).

In a case study in George Town, Salim and Rahman (2022) found that tourism commodification introduces new aspects to local culture and the adaptation of cultural tourism products, thereby enhancing the local economy and quality of life. However, commodification can lead to the loss of regional identity and increase the prices of local goods

and services. To ensure the sustainable development of cultural heritage tourism, the George Town government has initiated a top-down approach to implementing sustainable tourism regulations.

Alfandy and Krisnadi (2023) stated that the Attraction, Accessibility, Amenities, and Ancillary aspects of Glodok Chinatown greatly influence tourists' interest in visiting. In their research, Rianto (2021) stated that all these aspects have been met. However, facilities and accessibility must be repaired periodically due to the high frequency of use, as they are prone to damage.

The development of the Glodok Chinatown area should be guided by Law No. 11 of 2010 concerning Cultural Heritage, as the area is home to numerous historical buildings. The law stipulates that the use of cultural heritage must be based on protection and development, rather than the other way around. By referring to Law No. 11 of 2010, tourism activities in the Glodok Chinatown area can be sustainable, without any changes that would undoubtedly damage the elements of its authenticity as a Chinatown area in Jakarta and Indonesia in general (Sulistyo, 2019).

Heritage tourism destinations are influenced by national trends, particularly the growth of heritage as a form of entertainment and mass consumption. Local entrepreneurs and stakeholders, such as property developers and heritage industry professionals, create these designs locally. The demand for uniqueness in tourism destinations has led to aesthetic control of the environment and activities within cities, aimed at making retail and tourism consumption locations (Marlina et al., 2024; Ostrowska-Tryzno & Pawlikowska-Piechotka, 2021; Pratiwi, 2011). The relationship between these activities is evident in the use of heritage-focused design by property and retail developers to ensure economic success, as well as the view of retail as an activity that contributes to the overall vitality of the city centre.



Figure 4 Santa Maria De Fatimah Church in Glodok Chinatown, a Product of Acculturation

The Glodok Chinatown Tourism Village, founded in 2021 by Jakarta's Department of Tourism and Creative Economy, has been recognized as a cultural tourism destination due to its strong



storynomics, centered on the Peranakan Chinese, Sundanese, Betawi, and Javanese cultures. In 2022, the Glodok Chinatown POKDARWIS was established to oversee the hamlet as a cultural acculturation tourism attraction. POKDARWIS defines acculturation tourist items as cultural arts performances, martial arts, traditional dress, architectural structures, language, and traditions of traditional holidays. The prime example of an architectural structure's acculturation can be seen in Santa Maria de Fatimah Church (Figure 4). The hamlet organizes annual festivities to celebrate the unity and diversity of culture in DKI Jakarta, such as the Peranakan Cap Go Meh Festival (Figure 5) and the Mooncake Festival in September. Byrd and Gutske (2007) believe that event management as a tourism product requires the involvement of various stakeholders.



Figure 5 Cap Go Meh Festival in Glodok

Glodok Chinatown in Jakarta is a prime example of the development of tolerance tourism, a concept that aims to preserve and promote cultural heritage. The revitalization of Peranakan Chinese cultural heritage in the area showcases both the opportunities and challenges of this tourism. Despite modern developments and tourism initiatives, the authenticity and deep attachment to heritage places require sustained community involvement, preservation of historical continuity, and meaningful cultural activities. This complex interplay between tradition and modernization necessitates careful management to maintain cultural integrity. Tolerance tourism fosters intercultural understanding, respect, and social cohesion by showcasing the rich and diverse cultural expressions of the Peranakan Chinese, as well as those of other local communities. The development of festivals, cultural performances, and interactive activities in Glodok Chinatown not only enhances the tourist experience but also strengthens local identity and pride, contributing to social harmony.

## CONCLUSIONS

The historical literature review on tourism tolerance in Glodok Chinatown, Jakarta, highlights the

significant role that cultural integration and inclusive tourism practices have in shaping both the identity and the future of this historic urban area. Glodok has evolved from a location characterized by centuries of migration, acculturation, and occasional social tension to its current standing as a vibrant heritage tourism destination. This transformation demonstrates the dynamic interplay between history, policy, and community involvement in promoting multicultural coexistence.

This research underscores that tolerance tourism in Glodok is not merely about promoting the area's rich Peranakan Chinese heritage or attracting visitors with its unique blend of traditions, architecture, and festivals. Instead, it is a deliberate and ongoing process of cultivating mutual respect, understanding, and appreciation among diverse ethnic and religious groups—both within the local community and between hosts and tourists. The inclusive festivals, collaborative management by POKDARWIS, and government support illustrate how tourism can be leveraged as a platform for intercultural dialogue, community empowerment, and the celebration of pluralism.

However, the journey toward sustainable tolerance tourism is complex and fraught with challenges. The legacy of historical discrimination, the risk of cultural commodification, and the pressures of urban development all threaten the authenticity and integrity of Glodok's cultural landscape. The research emphasizes the importance of addressing these challenges through inclusive policymaking, equitable resource allocation, and the active engagement of local stakeholders. Only by centering the voices and values of the community can tourism development avoid the pitfalls of superficial representation and instead contribute to genuine social cohesion.

Moreover, the Glodok case study provides broader lessons for multicultural urban settings across Indonesia and beyond. It demonstrates that booming tolerance tourism requires more than the mere coexistence of diverse groups; it demands proactive efforts to build social capital, foster adaptive strategies, and create spaces where cultural differences are not only acknowledged but embraced as sources of strength. Government agencies, local organizations, and the private sector must collaborate to ensure that tourism policies are both culturally sensitive and economically empowering.

In conclusion, the experience of Glodok Chinatown affirms that tolerance tourism, when grounded in historical understanding and community-driven initiatives, can be a powerful catalyst for social integration, economic vitality, and the preservation of shared heritage. As Jakarta continues to navigate its multicultural future, Glodok stands as a testament to the possibilities of tourism as a force for peace, unity, and mutual prosperity. The insights gleaned from this research offer a valuable blueprint for other heritage destinations seeking to balance the imperatives of cultural preservation, community empowerment,



and sustainable tourism growth in an increasingly globalized world.

This study examines the history of Glodok Chinatown, Jakarta, with a focus on the acculturation and adaptation of the Peranakan Chinese and other ethnic groups. It explores the impact of colonial policies, social upheavals, and tourism initiatives on the development of tolerance tourism. The research highlights the role of tourism in fostering multicultural understanding, promoting social cohesion, and contributing to peacebuilding. Key factors include inclusive policymaking, stakeholder collaboration, and community empowerment. The findings offer valuable guidance for policymakers, practitioners, and community leaders, underscoring the importance of local communities in tourism planning and the preservation of cultural authenticity amid the process of commodification.

The Glodok case serves as a model for other multicultural destinations, striking a balance between heritage preservation and economic development. However, the research has several limitations, including reliance on secondary data and literature review, a limited geographic and cultural scope, potential bias in historical sources, the dynamic nature of tourism and tolerance, and limited quantitative analysis. These limitations highlight the need for ongoing, multi-method research and stakeholder engagement to deepen and update our understanding of these complex processes.

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