

# The Oligarchic Politic of Chinese Indonesians in Lampung

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## Abstract

The oligarchic politic in Lampung Province is controlled by Chinese Indonesians. The oligarch group's business interests are combined with political power at the government level. So that the dominance of Chinese Indonesians in many sectors of life is very apparent, ranging from access to quality education, ownership of luxury facilities, land ownership, privatization of tourist destination objects, to local government policies related to the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs sector). This literature study used a qualitative approach with a political sociology approach. This study found that political practices in Lampung province were controlled by Chinese Indonesian oligarchist groups. International class higher education institutions can only be accessed by Chinese Indonesians. Chinese Indonesians politicians have assets in the form of luxurious living facilities, which keep social inequalities from non-Chinese Indonesians. These Chinese Indonesians control vacant land and productive land which are far greater than the natives. Furthermore, the national program in the form of increasing the number of foreign and domestic tourists pushed tourist objects/destinations in Lampung Province to be privatized by Chinese Indonesians, while the development funds are taken from the APBD. Finally, the Regional Government is not able to make regulation in favor of practitioners of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, which in reality they are miserable under the market system created by Chinese Indonesians.

**Keywords:** *politics, oligarchy, China, Lampung.*

## Introduction

Chinese have long entered the Lampung region. This can be proven by the discovery of some ceramic goods from China in the inland mountains of Sumatra in 1977, in Telagamukmin, Purwawiwitan Village, Sumberjaya Sub-District, North Lampung Regency, about 85 kilometers from Kotabumi. These sites were completely unknown in the colonial era, and only began to be

revealed in 1965 when Javanese immigrants entered Lampung in the Suharto era (McKinnon, 1993).

Even though the legacy of the Chinese in Lampung was predicted since the Megalithic era, Chinese descendants were recognized as Indonesian citizens since the era of President Soeharto, so that they were politically indistinguishable from native Indonesians, but the presence of the Chinese in the daily life of the Bandar Lampung community could not be unified. The way of life of Non-Chinese Indonesians is different from Chinese Indonesians. So even though they are both Indonesians, between Chinese Indonesians and Non-Chinese Indonesians is like water and oil; are both liquid objects, but cannot be unified (Maryanah, 2018). For more than three decades (1966-1998), or after the G-30S/PKI which impacts reached various regions including Lampung. Chinese Indonesians are legally recognized, but their rights are wiped out culturally (Setijadi, 2016).

From the point of view of Chinese Indonesians in Lampung, they isolate themselves, gather with fellow Chinese Indonesians, and use their language as a result of negative stereotypes from outside Chinese Indonesians (Edward Aspinall, Sebastian Dettman, Eve Warburton, 2011). This negative stereotype of the external environment is responded by isolating and shutting down themselves (Arsetya, 2015).

This study has similarities with previous studies, which saw the presence of Chinese Indonesians was not fully accepted, considered as the party that caused the problem, and practice collusion with the government in doing business. However, this study provides another contribution by looking at multivariable. If the Chinese Indonesians feel that they are a minority and always receive restrictive or regulative discriminatory treatment (Tanasaldy, 2015), the phenomenon in Lampung shows another side from the point of view of non-Chinese groups, who are powerless in the economic and political fields. This is supported by Evi Fitriani in her study which showed the perception of Indonesians on Chinese Indonesians who have experienced significant developments in the economic and political fields over the past 15 years (Fitriani, 2018). It is according to Goodman who stated that China's weapons and strategy are public discourse, which can change and are easily manipulated, both in international and local political discourse. Nevertheless, the Indonesian government in the era of President Joko Widodo remained with China as an Asian giant. This also happened because of pressure from political opponents (Goodman, 2017).

The oligarchic politics in this study illustrates five main issues namely, access to the elite domain of education dominated by Chinese Indonesians, who have great prosperity that widens the economic gap, Chinese corporate land ownership blindly violates traditional values, business privatization which harms the state and its partisanship on corporations rather than practitioners of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises by the proletariat.

## Methodology

This study used a qualitative method with a political sociology approach. Lipset conducted a reconstruction of the research design by adopting sociology in political science. Both are incorporated into a strategy called content analysis (Korom, 2019). Meanwhile, to strengthen the analysis of this study, capitalist economic theory and oligarchic political theory were used to explore material research objects, namely politics and economics of Chinese Indonesians in Lampung Province.

Asep Hermawan and Yusran stated that qualitative research has subjective, holistic, phenomenological, anti-positivist, descriptive, naturalistic, and inductive characteristics (Hermawan & Yusran, 2017). As far as possible, this study would provide a subjective view of the informants and a subjective interpretation of the researcher holistically if the problem is phenomenological. The informant's views in the field, documentation in the form of books, journals, and reports/mass media coverage will be important data in this descriptive study. Because of the characteristics that must be inductive, each sub-discussion will be preceded by a theoretical hypothesis that has been developed by previous studies.

There are at least five (5) main topics that are discussed with the precedence of hypotheses submitted by previous researchers. First, the world of education is transformed into an industrial and business world run by capitalists (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). This hypothesis is confirmed by field data in Lampung, both obtained from informants through in-depth interviews and from media reports and previous research findings. In general, Lampung capitalists run the world of education as they do business and industry, so that only large capital families are able to access quality education services.

The second topic that is also inductive from this study is the anti-Chinese movement since the colonial era in Indonesia due to social, economic, and political jealousy (Heidhues, 2012). The latest event that occurred in Lampung affirmed this hypothesis, where social jealousy still persisted. Many recent studies affirmed the level of racism on Chinese Indonesians in Lampung, which is a minority in quantity but has political and economic power (Evi Nurvidya Arifin, M. Sairi Hasbullah & Agus Pramono, 2016). This is evidenced by a number of politicians who collaborated with the Chinese oligarchs, who led to mass protests, even the authorities arrested practitioners who were judged to have violated the law.

The third topic is government investment regulation. Theoretically, the government must issue regulations that guarantee a balance between foreign and domestic investors (Goetzmann, Ukhov, & Zhu, 2001). Failure to maintain balance impacts on injustice, where foreign investors with large capital will enjoy the facilities more than domestic investors. This also happened in Lampung, where land ownership is dominated by large capitals, and even these Chinese capitalists have both productive and non-productive land (vacant and fixed land). These non-productive lands are only owned and left alone, without being utilized. While productive lands

are used for business development even though they are contrary to customary norms, cultural rights of the community, even criticism from the authorities on the environment.

The fourth topic is privatization. Theoretically, the privatization regulation that is not implemented by understanding a good sociological context will have a detrimental effect on the state, even the people. It is not profit but actually a loss (Schmidt, 1996). The failure of the government in granting permission for privatization in Lampung was finally proven in the social conflict, namely economic inequality between wealthy Chinese Indonesians and the local community. As a result, social movements in the form of protests have sprung up, including how Lampung people feel that their land has been seized by corporations with business licenses from the government.

The fifth topic is the regulation of the Lampung Government related to MSME business and capital. Theoretically, this problem is still about a capitalistic state and the exclusion of the proletarian class. One sign is when socialism-communism collapsed, capitalism rose (Jian, 2005). The phenomenon in Lampung reinforces the theory of state development that leads to capitalism, and at the same time, the government no longer reflects the loyal behavior of Pancasila in the precept of social justice for all Indonesian people. MSME practitioners have difficulty accessing capital and business funds, while large businesses are able to access it. This can be proven by the bankruptcy of MSMEs, but the advancement of the property business.

The five main topics in this study were analyzed with a phenomenological approach that emphasized the presentation of events according to the researchers and left them as they were in the field (Bogdan & Taylor, 1992). So that all the narratives on the topics presented in this study are what actually happened in the field as experienced and perceived by the community in real terms, not the ideal and supposed events that occurred.

In this study, it is often mentioned that the practice of the political economy in Lampung was oligarchic. This study assumed that there are similarities between the characteristics of sociological events in the field with the concept of an oligarchic political economy. One of them, the ideal development constraints in Indonesia were caused by political practices controlled by oligarchs (Deliarnov, 2006). In addition, the reform era still inherited the spirit of economic oligarchy and political collusion from the New Order era (President & Harvard, 2010). So this study becomes important because it is confronted with a sociological view that has a wide range, depending on the interests of its use (Zafirovski, 2020).

For this reason, this study found a new finding that what happened in Lampung today is a continuation of historical experience since the New Order era, which inherited oligarchic economic practices and political collusion (Edward Aspinall, Sebastian Dettman, Eve Warburton, 2011) (Edward Aspinall, Muhammad Uhaib As'ad, 2016). The main agent is the Chinese Indonesians group in collaboration with native politicians in running the capitalist economy. As a victim, the people would resist even in the form of complaints, street protests, or

criticism through scientific papers, without knowing whether their struggle will get positive results. While community defeat occurs in five dimensions of life: education, social welfare, land ownership, management of business resources, and access to capital.

## **Discussion**

### **1. Access to Elite Education**

Education in Lampung province is a phenomenon referred to as collusion in education and capitalism. Globalization, political economy and industrial business are closely related to the education service business. So that the character of educational institutions changes and becomes a kind of business (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Education in Lampung province, especially at the secondary school level can only be accessed by the elite class.

The term elite class in Lampung province can be divided into two categories: rich Indonesians and rich Chinese Indonesians (Githa, 2019). From a research finding, capitalism has undergone a transformation process, which starts from oligarch capitalism to people capitalism. So that the agents of capitalism become more widespread, but still leaves an old problem; elimination of the lower middle class or grassroots (Jian, 2005).

In the context of education in Lampung, besides the dominance of elite Indonesians, the dominance of Chinese Indonesians is very strong. Their opportunity and power to access quality education, especially international class education, is far greater (Aldo, 2019). This is in line with a statement by an informant, "Isinya orang-orang elite semua" (Mezan, 2019).

This fact refers to the elite campus in Lampung province, where the majority of students are Chinese Indonesians and elite Indonesians, which is another picture of a struggle for dominance in the scientific field. Educational institutions become a field of competition for dominance, not only in Lampung but also in China itself. So it is not a strange case if a prolonged conflict arises, quietly or openly (Hong, 2008).

Social conflict in the subconscious of native Indonesians and jealousy that cannot be erased does not only occur in Lampung Province. In one finding, similar suspicion occurred in America in seeing the Chinese diaspora (Wang, 1995). Not only in America, but in Indonesia also needs a new paradigm in seeing almost similar problems. Because, the difference in accessing quality education services, starting from the level of schools to quality universities in Lampung, is still dominated by Chinese Indonesians. So that there is still political contestation between Chinese Indonesians and local people, which results in horizontal ethnic conflict (Lan, 2012).

On the other hand, Chinese Indonesians are supported by family wealth and have the support of political power. All this fosters business fields, and ultimately, becomes sufficient capital to access quality education services (Githa, 2019). However, it is important to note, the social jealousy of native Indonesians towards Chinese Indonesians in Lampung, in the context of the

dominance of access to quality education, takes place psychologically. On the surface, Chinese Indonesians in Lampung is not much different from Chinese Indonesians in Java. They live peacefully and side by side (Astutik & Effendi, 2016).

A life that seems safe and peaceful does not reflect the inner life of the community. A study by Tabah Maryanah showed that, in everyday relationships, Chinese Indonesians in Bandar Lampung experienced exclusion (Maryanah, 2018). This shows the existence of a social conflict in the inner dimension along with the state of peace in the outer dimension. "Different inside, different outside" is one of the characters of Indonesians. One reason for this is the injustice of access to quality education services.

The relationship between elite education and large capital possessed by a person often occurs in many places, for example in South Korea (Lee & Brinton, 1996). The experience of Chinese Indonesians in Lampung only repeats experiences elsewhere and affirms the fact that elite education can only be accessed by people with large capital. Social jealousy that arises from the injustice of access to quality education services will be the roots of cultural violence (Mu'in & Effendi, 2018).

Cultural violence may not appear to be verbal violence and anarchism which causes material and financial damage. However, cultural violence will only have an impact on the differentiation of social classes because of differences in cultural ethnicity. The injustice of access to quality education services will always be a source of cultural violence, where Chinese Indonesians will forever not be seen as fully Indonesian citizens.

## **2. Luxury Facilities for Chinese Indonesians Politicians**

Anti-Chinese political movement is not a new case in Indonesia (Heidhues, 2012). Once upon a time, the Chinese were considered to collaborate with the colonial side. In fact, they were involved in creating chaos in 1945-1946. So many Chinese Indonesians lost their property. However, the bitter experience persisted with a different pattern but contained a similar spirit of jealousy. In the case of Lampung, jealousy occurred because these Chinese Indonesians politicians have unusual luxury facilities, especially in comparison with the number of poor native Indonesians (Khudri, 2019).

The phenomenon that occurs in Lampung is just one other fragment from a long history that has not changed. The dominance of Chinese over the world of business and commerce, the familiarity of Chinese Indonesians with direct or indirect political power, is no longer a new case in Indonesia, as well as being the root of racial violence itself (Muntholib, 2008). What is unique from the experience of Chinese Indonesians in Lampung is the absence of a deterrent effect. This shows that Chinese Indonesians are still comfortable repeating the same problem, namely as a minority in power over the majority and causing social jealousy.

In the Lampung case, the informant stated that Chinese Indonesians politicians have villas and elite houses, as a symbol of their wealth, and on average they are affiliated with political parties (Ayu, 2019). It can be stated that they are not only in control of elite education access, these Chinese are also in control of local and national politics. So that China accumulates all sources of prosperity in themselves, so that Chinese oligarchists are formed. The Lampung case is an eyewitness to this day where the social structure of colonialism persisted, one of which is the minority Chinese elite which remains in power (Sahasrad, 2019).

The luxurious life of Chinese Indonesians politicians in Lampung is not only representing the social structure of the colonial era but more than that, it can be stated to have become colonial itself. Because, sociologically, the presence of Chinese is still considered foreign. Like the colonials, Chinese Indonesians represented what was Filomeno V. Aguilar Jr. defined as a capital accumulation (Aguilar Jr., 2001). The concept of capital accumulation, in the context of Chinese Indonesians in Lampung, is reflected in the luxurious facilities displayed by Chinese Indonesians politicians before native Indonesians.

Triggers of social jealousy clash vis-a-vis with six Indonesian characters. In his study, Syamsu Ridhuan tested a theory by Mochtar Lubis which stated that the character of Indonesians included: hypocrites, reluctant to be responsible, weak-tempered, feudal-minded, like social conflicts (Ridhuan, 2018). The feudalism of Indonesians meets the Chinese Indonesians oligarchy. Therefore, it becomes difficult to find a solution to the problem in which the problem in Lampung as concrete evidence of the problem of Chinese Indonesians, their Islamic identity that has been formed for a long time is not a solutive solution. Because, Chinese Indonesians converted to Islam and Islam became their social identity for a long time in Indonesian history (Ali, 2007).

Many cultural introductions to Chinese identity have been carried out, including by building the Chinese Cultural Park. The Chinese Cultural Park which was built in Jakarta is projected to be a place where minority groups form identity and become a place to communicate with other groups outside of themselves (Kitamura, 2007). However, based on the Lampung case, this cultural problem-solving strategy is not necessarily enough to erase the other image of Chinese Indonesians, as the biggest connoisseurs of welfare, even bigger than native Indonesians..

### **3. Land Ownership**

The dominance of Chinese Indonesians over native Indonesians in Lampung has become increasingly complex which is not only limited to social jealousy due to differences in access opportunities for quality education services and capital accumulation that accumulates in the hands of oligarchic groups. However, this dominance also occurred in terms of ownership of land and vacant land in Lampung, even non-productive land. An informant said, "Vacant and fixed lands belong to China. Because the chairperson of PDI-P is Chinese. Really (big money). Besides them, the land is owned by native elites" (Githa, 2019).

This land ownership is another important issue that is distinguished from the economy, even if the peak becomes a supporting aspect of Chinese business groups. Ownership of productive and non-productive lands (vacant and fixed land) becomes a symbol where Chinese Indonesians who are also politicians have power in Lampung. In terms of land ownership, Chinese Indonesians share with wealthy natives. The rich native and Chinese Indonesians businessmen and politicians seem to be intimate and share each other (Anti, 2019).

In Indonesia, in general, Chinese Indonesians ownership of land in Indonesia is indeed problematic. Widiyanto is one of the researchers who looks at this issue from a legal aspect. In Yogyakarta, Widiyanto found out that Yogyakarta Regional Head Instruction K/898/I/A/ 75 is an example that Chinese Indonesians cannot own land in Yogyakarta (Widiyanto, 2007). Whereas in other places, it is still limited to social conflicts that might be resolved legally (Susanti & Bosko, 2018). Apart from the legal and illegitimate of Chinese Indonesians on land ownership, all of them are included in the category of Chinese existence in Indonesia.

In Lampung province, the conflict over land ownership by Chinese Indonesians was represented by native Indonesians protesting against land co-operation by cultivation rights of Sugar Group Companies. This conflict began after the issuance of a decision of public officials (Minister of Forestry, Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources, Head of BPN, Governor and Major), which gave permits to the business entities of PT Sugar Group Companies (SGC) in Tulang Bawang Regency and Central Lampung Regency. While on the other hand, people who have long lived around the area feel pressured by the act of land acquisition by the SGC (Suluh, 2018).

In 2010, oligarchic politics that combined power between capitalist investors and the political power of the rulers came face to face with customary values. So that the SGC does not care about land acquisition, even though the land is been included in Buai Aji Customary Common Land and Register 47 Way Terusan Productive Forests. In terms of political and legal regulations, traditional values and the voice of the community remain defeated (HMInews, 2010).

Ten years have passed, but the Lampung capitalist oligarchy is still entrenched. Sugar producer PT Sugar Group Company (SGC) was sued by a group of students from the University of Lampung (Unila). The lawsuit was delivered by students in front of the people's representatives in the Commission Room II of Lampung Province House of Representatives (Kaparino, 2019). It can be stated that the presence of business conducted by the Chinese Indonesians group in Indonesia will continue to be the root of social, economic and political problems that will never be resolved.

Conflict over customary land ownership which incidentally belongs to the people cannot be expected to be resolved in the hands of public officials, namely rulers who have political power. Because, three legal and political experts from the University of Lampung (UNILA), Dr. Yudianto, Dr. Dedy Hermawan, and Dr. Darmawan Purba, stated that the government was



inconsistent (Batin, 2019). Analisa dari para pakar ini bisa diterima karena Chinese Indonesians dalam banyak hal memang menjalin politik oligarki, yakni dengan kekuatan uang mampu bekerjasama dengan pemerintah.

The analysis of these experts is acceptable because Chinese Indonesians in many aspects use oligarchic politics, that is, with the power of money, they are able to work with the government.

In this context, many experts have proposed alternative solutions, where the government which has power control must be able to create a balance between protecting the rights of foreign and domestic investors. It should not be lame and seem biased (Goetzmann, Ukhov, & Zhu, 2001). Because, culturally, Chinese presence in Indonesia is still regarded as an "alien" as explained in many research findings. The government's failure to create balance, in the case of the SGC, is an example of the injustice of protection for the interests of entrepreneurs and the interests of the people on ulayat (customary common land).

#### **4. Privatization of Tourist Destinations**

Chinese Indonesians in Lampung did not stop expanding their political economy. The Chinese Indonesians developed their dominance in other domains, such as the privatization of tourist destinations. They manage tourist destinations individually or in groups. One example is the Zoo of a businessman named Irwan Nasution. He is joined in an oligarchy association called the Taman Safari Indonesia Association (Putri) (Githa, 2019).

Tourist destinations in Lampung province are quite attractive to foreign tourists. Many foreign tourists such as from Singapore, China, Canada, America, and Europe, praised the beauty of tourist destinations in Lampung. The foreign travelers commented that they obtain the convenience of traveling in Lampung, which makes them feel at home for staying 2 to 5 days. This is due to satisfactory accommodations, diverse tourist attractions such as Way Kambas Conservation Park and White Sand Beach, optimal transportation and other facilities (Bursan, 2006).

However, the concept and practice of privatization often clash with nationalization (Hanke, 1987). The problem of privatization is a miscalculation by the government if it does not see the real context on the field. In general, privatization will ease the burden of state subsidies if the costs are considered large and can provide the private sector with better opportunities. However, the ability of the state to analyze and know the context is important so that privatization can be efficient (Schmidt, 1996).

The privatization of tourist destinations in Lampung province is a source of problems. Privatization provides opportunities for local oligarchs to enrich themselves, and get rid of the majority of people. Suprianto, Chairperson of the Lampung WALHI Council, stated that the government provides enormous access to capital to control living resources; land, water, and

natural resources contained therein through deregulation, liberalization, and privatization regulations. The right to control the state is then manipulated to the maximum possible capital accumulation, and not for the welfare of the people (Suprianto, 2008).

Politically, the privatization of tourist destinations is not an impossible matter. For example, the Central Java Province House of Representatives asked the provincial government to stop the privatization of the Karimunjawa Tourism Area, Jepara Regency (Erick, 2017). In other words, the same thing can be performed by the Lampung Province Government as long as there is political will. However, the context of Central Java and Lampung is very different. The privatization of tourist destinations by the private sector in Lampung is an oligarchic political game, where Chinese Indonesians with large capital are very strong (Mezan, 2019).

Conceptually, privatization cannot be separated from neo-liberalism programs (Heynen & Robbins, 2005). While in the Russian context, after the collapse of communism, the most obvious sign is the massive privatization (Appel, 2004). This theory still applies in the context of the practice of privatization of tourist destinations in Lampung, where the private parties that manage are Chinese Indonesians and elite Indonesians. In fact, in the interest of capitalizing tourist destinations, the consideration and advice of The Indonesian Forum for Environment (WALHI) were ignored.

The neglect of criticism and suggestions from WALHI and the community is the impact of oligarchic political practices. All development of regulations, economics, and politics are controlled by Chinese Indonesians and native politicians. So it is not a strange case if the public continues to protest all corporate crimes related to Chinese business, for example, PT SGC (Sihaloho, 2019).

Then on another occasion, the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) targeted a number of companies in Lampung that were suspected of not complying with government regulations. One of them is a permit owned by PT Sugar Group Companies (Bowo, 2019). All these series of events reinforce the concept that Lampung is under the political control of the oligarchs, and the companies that always cause problems are dominantly owned by Chinese Indonesians.

## **5. Government Regulation on MSMEs Business**

Another thing that can be traced to the business dominance of the Chinese Indonesians elite is the policy of the Regional Government in the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector. The total export value of Lampung Province experienced a decrease of 249.02 million United States dollars (US) or 8.82 percent in October 2019 compared to the previous month of 273.12 million US dollars. The decrease occurred in the group of animal/vegetable, fats/oilseeds, and coffee/tea/spices. Head of Lampung Central Statistics Agency (BPS) Yeane Irmaningrum stated, the value of exports in October 2019 compared to September 2019 was 319.53 million

dollars, also decreased by 70.51 million US dollars or decrease by 22.07 percent (Yasland, 2019).

Along with the decline in the number of exports, MSMEs practitioners are troubled by the existence of very strict regulations. Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) practitioners complained about the difficulty of maintaining business due to the tightening of regulations set by the government. An MSMEs practitioner, Iwan Setyawan, comes from the "Tangan Di Atas (TDA)" community stated that there is currently a tightening of regulations on MSMEs. This is inversely proportional to the relatively decreasing economic growth. According to Iwan, turnover was dropped, regulations were even tightened, as a result, some people closed the businesses. Iwan stated this was conveyed in the dialogue on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) at Taman Santap Untung Restaurant, December 14, 2019 (Pamungkas, 2019).

The obstacle often faced by Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) practitioners is the lack of capital. Acting Head of Lampung Cooperative and MSMEs Office, Agus Nompitu, stated that 99 percent of employment in Indonesia came from MSMEs. However, out of 99 percent of MSMEs practitioners, there were only 20 percent who have access to capital assistance. While 80 percent did not have capital access. While 80 percent of large business practitioners had access to capital (HarianMomentum, 2019).

The difference in perspective between MSMEs practitioners who it difficult to access capital funds and information from The Head of the Cooperative Office and MSMEs who stated that MSMEs practitioners did not have the access to capital are pieces of evidence of the government's impartiality on MSMEs practitioners. Access to capital is only enjoyed by large business practitioners. For this reason, it is not wrong if the growth of sales of luxury homes in Lampung increased rapidly. In fact, land and property owners in Lampung have benefited from the toll road construction process which has an increasing demand for land and housing(CendanaNews, 2016).

Most surprisingly, Lampung was included in the first category of utilities as the city with the highest increase in housing prices. Based on the BI survey, for the first quarter of this year, the price of the Bandar Lampung residential area was expected to grow 3.15% quarterly. For small houses in that period increased by 3.37%, medium houses by 2.77% and large houses by 3.31% (Purboyo, 2019). In other words, Lampung is not a comfortable place for MSMEs practitioners. Lampung is a business place for capitalists with large capital.

The question is, due to the weakened of MSMEs and the increasing property sales, who are the buyers? An informant in the field said that most buyers are Chinese Indonesians (Aldo, 2019). This data affirms the political map of the Chinese Indonesians oligarchy, which makes all fields of business and the economy just a cover. In fact, they are developing a big business pattern that is controlled by their own circle. Access to housing is another way to own the land. An informant

said, even if the efforts of MSMEs practitioners were destroyed, the property business would never be destroyed. Because the sellers and buyers are not ordinary people but the rulers and business people of Chinese Indonesians.

### Closing

The practice of political oligarchy in Lampung is a legacy of the colonial era, which ran until the New Order era, and remained strong in the reform era. The pattern played by Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia in general and Lampung, in particular, remains similar, that is, looking for sources to carry out economic monopolies and to work with even the rulers through collusion, corruption, and nepotism. So that the victims remain on the proletariat. Of course, this is a reason for social jealousy that never ends and becomes a social disease in Indonesia.

The five realms of social, economic and political life raised in this study are examples of partial cases, but they show the political economy of Chinese Indonesians themselves. In these five big topics, Chinese Indonesians in Lampung are the main agents of oligarchic political practice. As a result, ethnic minorities with large political-economic power must continually clash with other social sub-systems, namely the majority group who are weak and do not get political and economic support from the authorities. While on the other hand, the government is already in the trap of this Chinese Indonesians political-economic game.

A literature study has both advantages and disadvantages. A literature study is only able to obtain data that has been previously documented, both in the form of books, journals, reports, and news that are spread in the mass media. Field data obtained from informants through interviews in this study only serve as reinforcement and complement and do not change the research characteristics as a field study. So that the study of literature is open to criticism from further research in the future. In other words, this research hypothesis that Chinese Indonesians in Lampung are the main agent of oligarchic politics can be refuted by field research, or even similar research type, a literature study.

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