

Reflections on the Ethno-religious Identities of Chinese Indonesian Muslims

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Abstract

Studies on the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia usually discuss this group of people from economic or political perspectives. However, there are other aspects of this community that can be explored further. In this paper, I analyze the Chinese in Indonesia from the religious perspective, namely, Islam. The analysis is based on a case study of the ethno religious identity of Chinese Indonesian Muslims. The life-narrative of seven respondents is used as a lens through which ways of how the ethno-religious identities of Chinese Indonesian Muslims are formulated and reasons of why being Chinese and being Muslims are presented in ways as such are examined. I propose that this group of people could be categorized into three types, namely, the syncretistic, the non-negotiating, and the negotiating.

Keywords: Chinese Muslim, Indonesia, ethno-religious identities