

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF CHINESENESS ON THE EVOLVING TERRAIN OF ISLAMIC IDEOLOGY IN INDONESIA

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Abstract: This study delves into the complex relationship between 'Chineseness' and contemporary Indonesian Islam, situated amidst domestic and international dynamics. Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority democratic nation, has experienced a surge in religious self-assurance. Actively exploring its unique Islamic characteristics, mainstream Islam embraces pluralism and tolerance, aligning with the wasathiyah path. The past decade has seen intensified China-Indonesia cooperation, shaping a globally-oriented image of Indonesian Islam. The infusion of Chineseness unfolds through three approaches. "Re-framing" tries to position Indonesia at the heart of Islam's historical narrative. Passionate advocates, notably within the Nahdlatul Ulama, seek to illuminate the contributions of historical Chinese Muslims. "Re-encounter" integrates the Chinese Muslim community into mainstream Indonesian society, manifesting pluralistic values. "Re-engagement" involves multifaceted interactions between Indonesian Islam and contemporary China, influencing perceptions of Islam's adaptation to modernization. In essence, this study posits that the growing importance of Chineseness in Indonesian Islam is shaped by shifts in Indonesian Islam, changes in state-society dynamics, and evolving global geopolitics. The impact of the Chinese element resonates through narrative reframing, societal re-encounters, and re-engagements with contemporary China.

Dr. Xue Song is an Associate Professor at the Institute of International Studies, Fudan University, specializing in China-Indonesia relations and ethnic politics in Indonesia. She is the author of the monograph "The Political Logic of Ethnic Mobilization in Indonesia" (in Chinese) and has contributed articles to journals including Contemporary Southeast Asia and Asian Ethnicity. Her commentaries have been featured in Kompas, the Jakarta Post etc.



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Room Y5-205
5/F, Yeung Kin Man Academic Building
City University of Hong Kong

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Via Zoom
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