

# Negotiating Chineseness and Christianity in Indonesia

The interplay between culture and religion presents a nuanced and intricate dynamic. To address these complexities, this paper delves into the experiences of Chinese Christians in Indonesia. The analysis of Chinese Christianity in Indonesia involves a consideration of ‘Chineseness’ — encompassing ethnicity, identity, language, and cultural assets — in relation to Indonesian nationalism and state ethnic policies. The dual identity of being both Chinese and Christian proves more challenging in Indonesia compared to other contexts, given that historically, both Christianity and Chineseness symbolize elements of ‘foreignness’. The paper examines the ways in which Chinese Indonesian Christians exercise agency and employ various strategies to articulate their multiple identities. The paper is a product of a recently published book by the author entitled *Christianity and the Chinese in Indonesia: Ethnicity, Education and Enterprise* (2023, Liverpool University Press).

## Speaker

**Chang-Yau Hoon** is Professor of Anthropology at the Institute of Asian Studies, and former Director of the Centre for Advanced Research, University of Brunei Darussalam. He is also Visiting Senior Fellow at ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute and Adjunct Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia. He chairs the International Academic Board of the Centre of Brunei Studies and Brunei Research Institute at the College of ASEAN Studies, Guangxi University for Nationalities, China. He specializes in the Chinese diaspora, identity politics, multiculturalism, and religious and cultural diversity in contemporary Southeast Asia.



## Book Talk Series

### CHRISTIANITY & the CHINESE in INDONESIA

*Ethnicity, Education  
& Enterprise*

CHANG-YAU HOON



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