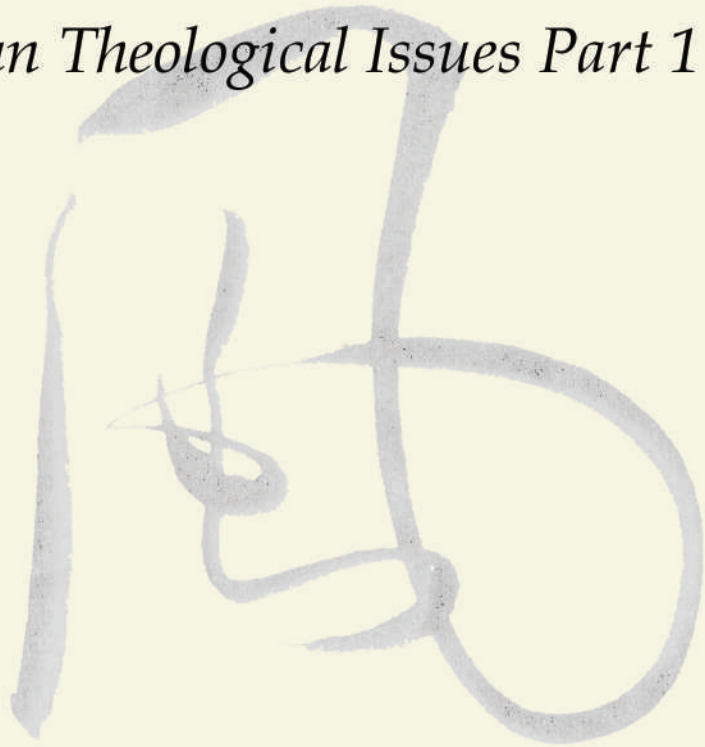


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**Constructing Chineseness in Ministry: A Contextualized  
(Re)thinking with Special Reference to Chinese Church in  
Indonesia and Singapore: Part 1**

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**Introduction**

This paper is presented in two parts. After an introductory discussion of the elements and purpose of the paper, Part 1 looks at a methodological consideration when doing local theology related to Chineseness. This is followed by a discussion of Chang Yau Hoon's paradigm, which is a model for constructing Chineseness in the Christian church in Indonesia and which, according to the author, can be used to construct Chineseness in Singapore, as well. The remainder of Part 1 discusses constructing Chineseness in ministry in Indonesia.

Part 2 delves into the issue of constructing Chineseness in ministry in Singapore. The issue of bilingual services will be explored using three Christian churches as examples. Part 2 will conclude with the author's recommendations and global applications.

Chineseness exists among the Chinese in Christian churches in countries where Chinese is the minority of the society. Chineseness helps to build a cohering unity and fosters an identity concerning political and racial tensions. In Singapore, Chineseness has been a mark of the Chinese community with the power to build a bridge in the bilateral relationship with rising China, and at the same time enhancing the values of Chinese ethical and social perceptions. In Indonesia, it is an issue of the Chinese church where survival is concerned. What are the benefits of constructing Chineseness among the Chinese church? How would it impact Christianity in the near future? This paper seeks to understand some of its implications in shaping the next generation Chinese church.

Indonesia is a paradigm of a Chinese minority country while Singapore is a paradigm of a Chinese majority country, but the fluency in Mandarin and in-depth knowledge of Chinese culture is not necessarily embedded among the Chinese.

What does “Chineseness” mean? An exploratory study carried out by a group of researches in 1985 for the Association for Consumer Research in Provo, Utah, asks:

Is a person Chinese because his or her parents are of Chinese ancestry? . . . Alternatively, might we say that a person is Chinese because he or she usually eats Chinese food, speaks a Chinese language, wears Chinese-style clothing made in China, and chooses a marriage partner who is considered to be Chinese? Finally, might we say that a person is Chinese because he or she has a high level of respect for elders, sees the family as being primary importance, is very concerned that favors be returned, and chooses not to openly show affection?<sup>1</sup>

These components reflect the ethnicity characteristically named “Chinese.” But “each one alone is an imperfect measure of the abstract concept of Chinese ethnicity.”<sup>2</sup> It is of vital importance to note that a comprehensive inclusion of various factors is necessary in order to construct Chineseness in the discussion that follows. This paper advocates scrutinizing individual categories to analyze Chineseness in relation to ministry in the Chinese churches in Indonesia and Singapore.

Allen Chun of Academia Sinica, Taiwan, speaks about Chineseness.<sup>3</sup> Due to the rising of superpower China and the indigenization in Taiwan:

Chinese everywhere have gradually avoided referring to themselves as *zhongguoren* (literally Chinese people in the sense of citizen and compatriot), while preferring to use the politically neutral terms *huaren* (Chinese) and *huayu* (Mandarin). These developments have been part of an ongoing and subtle shift in the meanings and usages of “Chineseness.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Seth Ellis, James McCullough, Melanie Wallendorf, and Chin Tion Tan, “Cultural Values and Behavior: Chineseness Within Geographic Boundaries”, in *NA-Advances in Consumer Research Volume 12*, eds, Elizabeth C. Hirschman and Moris B. Holbrook (Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research, 1985), 126-128. <http://acrwebsite.org/volumes/6371/volumes/v12/NA-12> (accessed 12 April 2018).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Allen Chun authored a book entitled *Forget Chineseness: On the Geopolitics of Cultural Identification* (New York: Sunny Press, 2017).

<sup>4</sup>Allen Chun, *Forgetting Chineseness*, <http://international.ucla.edu/Institute/article/172547> (accessed 12 April 2018).

Chun points out one critical issue: the preferred use of *huaren* and *huayu* gives birth to the new understanding of Chineseness as a race and a common language. Also the use of *huaren* and *huayu* in a country such as Singapore has become a common measurement for this particular group of people. It distinguishes Chinese from other races and serves as a demarcation between Chinese whose first language is English and Chinese whose first language is Mandarin.<sup>5</sup> Chinese whose first language is English tend to identify themselves as Singaporean with less passionate feelings towards Chinese as a mark of cultural and social identification. Chinese who speak Mandarin prefer to adopt Chinese as a cultural and social tag. Speaking Mandarin, whether at home or in school, has recently become a focus of concern and discussion.<sup>6</sup> This paper notes and incorporates it into the contextualized thinking formulation.

The next term in the title needs clarification “a contextualized (re)thinking.” A scientific and theoretical study of Chineseness is not the primary interest of this paper. With aids from these disciplines, this paper advocates strategies to open up discussion to benefit the ministry of the Chinese church and guide it toward a fuller establishment in a local context. Contextualization or doing theology in a local context is the crux of missiological study.<sup>7</sup> Contextualization

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<sup>5</sup>The language policy of Singapore’s education system has shaped the Chinese population into four difference categories, Chinese educated before 1984, English educated before 1984, New Education System bilingualism, New Education System is strong in English. In 1984, the Singapore Ministry of Education implemented a policy that the only Chinese subject taught was Mandarin; all other subjects were taught in English. The change came after the *Report on the Ministry of Education 1978* (also known as the Goh Report which was led by the then Deputy Prime Minister Goh Keng Swee). <http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/history/events/8f0a445f-bbd1-4e5c-8ebe-9461ea61f5de> (accessed 12 April 2018).

<sup>6</sup>Singapore local newspaper reports have indicated this alarming concern for government, educators and parents. See Li Li, Chee Lay Tan, Hock Huan Goh. “Home Language shift and its implications for Chinese language teaching in Singapore”. *Cogent Education*, 3:1(2016); Ashley Chia, “Mother Tongue proficiency affected”, <https://www.todayonline.com/singapore/mother-tongue-proficiency-affected-more-students-speak-english-home> (accessed 13 April 2018); Pearl Lee, “Speak your best language at home,” <http://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/speak-your-best-language-at-home-expert-advises> (accessed 13 April 2018).

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Dennis Teague. *Culture: A Missing Link in Missions* (Manila: OMF Literature INC., 1996); Franz-Josef Eilers. *Communication Between Cultures: An Introduction to Intercultural Communication* (Manila: Divine Word Publications, 1992). R. Daniel Shaw, “Beyond Contextualization: Toward a Twenty-first-Century Model for Enabling Mission,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol.34, No.4 (October 2010): 208-215.

attempts to communicate the Gospel in word and deed and to establish the church in ways that make sense to people within their local cultural context, presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets people's deepest needs and penetrates their worldview, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain within their own culture.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, in this paper, the understanding of contextualized (re)thinking means constructing Chineseness within the Chinese culture, with particular reference to selected categories of the Chinese culture in relation to the Chinese church. How would chosen categories of Chinese culture shape Chinese church ministry? The selection of Chineseness categories relies on the Chinese church in Indonesia and Singapore. This paper will examine the general movements in Indonesian Chinese churches with my personal experiences in Jakarta and Bandung. The Chinese church in Singapore will focus on three churches that started as English speaking churches but later on developed Chinese services. A brief interview with key personnel of these churches presents the demography of the church as well as the reasons that drove the leadership of that era to launch Chinese services.

In conclusion, this paper seeks to point out that Chineseness has been preserved in the Chinese church due to the values of Chineseness. Thus, this paper can establish the ground for future Chinese ministry in the face of current challenges that encircle Indonesia and Singapore.

### **Chineseness: Doing Local Theology: A Methodological Consideration**

Christianity as a movement originated in Jerusalem with a Jewish orientation. The spread of Christianity into the European continent has given itself a different outlook. When we talk about Chineseness in the Chinese church in Indonesia and Singapore, the question of contextualization emerges. To take root in the Chinese church, Christianity has to adapt to a new context. This is not just putting on a new outfit, but intrinsically being transformed to allow Chineseness to integrate into its nature. The essence of the Gospel is not in question, but

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<sup>8</sup>Darrel L. Whiteman, "Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap, the Challenge," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, vol.21, No.1 (January 1997): 2.

the system and structure of Christianity needs to be changed. The change is contextualization.

Contextualization is a process of doing local theology.<sup>9</sup> Paul Richardson in a book review commented on Schreiter's approach:

A major theme of Schreiter's study is that local theology should be contextual . . . Contextual theology begins by analyzing the situation in which the church finds itself, and attempting to see how Christ is presently speaking through that situation. Local theology flows from the dynamic interaction of gospel, church, and culture.<sup>10</sup>

This paper suggests that, according to Schreiter's analysis, in the process of contextualization, culture is an essential player in the dynamic interaction between the three. Therefore, constructing Chineseness involves identifying and extracting the essence of Chinese culture.

Chinese culture has become the issue of academic study.<sup>11</sup> And what is the relationship between the global culture and Chinese culture? Schreiter points out that "(as Arjun Appadurai argue) that the global culture is not a culture in a true sense. Rather, elements from one culture are universalized and are then received and integrated into local culture in a variety of different ways."<sup>12</sup> Theorists say that local culture is being amplified through the process of globalization. The genuine ingredients of local culture are life-transforming by nature. These ingredients will not wither away, and will magnify the culture's dynamic and inner strengths through the acceptance by another cultural recipient. That recipient will then transform these unique characteristics of that local culture into a dominant principle that carries the essence of that local culture and becomes an essence of the global culture.

Chineseness is thus a process of transforming local culture into the state of global culture which can be identified by analyzing the characteristics of local culture. The globalization of the local culture

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<sup>9</sup>Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (London: SCM, 1985); (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1985, 2015).

<sup>10</sup>Paul Richardson, "Book Reviews," *Melanesian Journal of Theology* 1-2(1985):212-213.

<sup>11</sup>For example Miikka Ruokanen and Paulos Huang, ed. *Christianity and Chinese Culture* (Grand Rapids, Michigan; Cambridge, UK: Eerdmans, 2010).

<sup>12</sup>Robert J. Schreiter, "Christian Theology between the Global and the Local," *Theological Education* Vol.29, No.2 (Spring 1993): 115.

indicates what the local provides and what the global does not.<sup>13</sup> This is the persistence of the local culture.

Theorists suggest that ethnic communities provide three things that are often lacking in majority or dominant cultures. These are: “a sense of belonging or identity, a source of moral authority for guidance in life, and a framework of meaning to explain life’s events.”<sup>14</sup> According to the analysis of the theorists from non-Chinese cultural backgrounds, Chineseness in the Chinese culture can be extracted through the global understanding of Chineseness.<sup>15</sup> It is thus argued in this paper, the understanding and constructing of Chineseness may depend on resources provided by the non-Chinese scholars.

### **From Mapping to Constructing: (Re)thinking Hoon’s Model<sup>16</sup>**

Chang Yau Hoon has published several articles on the issues relating to Christian/Chinese Christian in Indonesia.<sup>17</sup> Hoon’s paradigm is a model for constructing Chineseness of the Christian church in Indonesia, and may suggest a workable solution for the constructing of Chineseness in Singapore also.

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<sup>13</sup>Schreiter, “Christian Theology between the Global and the Local,” 116.

<sup>14</sup>Cited in Schreiter, “Christian Theology between the Global and the Local,” 116.

<sup>15</sup>Allen Chun commented in a seminar that “most of the Chinese Sinologists in the previous generation were trained in English and Western studies, more than in Chinese or China studies. . . . The fact . . . says much about the power of ‘identity’ and more precisely the ethnic stratification that ultimately drives academia.” <http://international.ucla.edu/institute/article/172547> (accessed 16 April 2018).

<sup>16</sup>Chang Yau Hoon is currently working at the University of Brunei Darussalam as the Director for the Centre for Advanced Research and Associate Professor of Anthropology at the Institute of Asian Studies. He was the Assistant Professor of Asian Studies at the School of Social Sciences at the Singapore Management University. His doctoral dissertation “*Reconceptualizing Ethnic Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia*” had won him a Doctor of Philosophy with distinction from the University of Western Australia in 2006.

<sup>17</sup>Chang Yau Hoon, “Between Hybridity and Identity: Chineseness as a Cultural Resource in Indonesia,” Working Paper No.2. *Institute of Asian Studies* (2017); “Mapping ‘Chinese’ Christian School in Indonesia: Ethnicity, Class and Religion,” *Asia Pacific Education Review* Vol.12 Issue3 (2010): 403-411; “Mapping Chineseness on the landscape of Christian Churches in Indonesia,” *Asian Ethnicity* 17(2)(2016):228-247; “Religious Aspiration among Urban Christians in Contemporary Indonesia,” *International Sociology* 31(4)(2016):413-431; Jeaney Yip, Hoon Chang Yau, “To Build a Generation of Stars”: Megachurch Identity, Religion and Modernity in Indonesia,” *South East Asia Research* Vol.24 Issue 4 (2016):477-491. Also Hoon Chang Yau. *Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia* (Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2011).

Hoon discusses and defines Chineseness in Indonesia involved in the division of two different classes of Chinese, according to scholars, the China-oriented *totok* (China-born, pure blood), and the acculturated *Peranakan* (locally born or mixed blood).<sup>18</sup> Another socio-cultural distinction accounts for the *totok* and *Peranakan*: “a *totok* refers to those Chinese who had a Chinese-oriented upbringing and who use Chinese as the medium of communication even though they were born in Indonesia. *Peranakan* refers not only to the Chinese with mixed ancestry, but also to those pure-blood local-born Chinese who cannot speak Chinese at all.”<sup>19</sup> The distinctions are based on if one can speak Chinese/Mandarin. In some cases this may include different dialects such as Hokkien (*Fujian*), Cantonese (*Guangdong*), Teochew (*Chaozhou*), Hakka (*Kejia et cetera*). The issue of fluency in speaking Chinese/Mandarin has also become an issue for the education system and Chineseness in Singapore, which will be discussed later. During the New Order period (1966-1998) under Suharto’s era, assimilation policy is the overall riding ideology that binds the nation together.<sup>20</sup> Under such circumstance, learning and speaking Chinese is a challenge. Hoon’s research details the impact of the New Order, and suggests that Chineseness had become a mark that the Chinese were tried to hide under the assimilation policy. In the same period, Chineseness became an open target for local Indonesia.<sup>21</sup> With this negative experience during the New Order policy period, Chineseness did not contribute to nation-building on the one hand, and also did not help in the development of the Chinese Christian church on the other hand.<sup>22</sup> Only after the Suharto’s regime were Chinese and

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<sup>18</sup>Chang Yau Hoon, “Reconceptualising Ethnic Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia” (PhD. Thesis, University of Western Australia, 2006), 5.

<sup>19</sup>Chang Yau Hoon, “Reconceptualising Ethnic Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia”, 7. Also cf. Chang Yau Hoon, “Mapping Chineseness on the landscape of Christian churches in Indonesia,” *Asian Ethnicity* 17:2 (2016): 4.

<sup>20</sup>Suharto’s New Order saw the era where the ethnic Chinese had been given the privilege to expand the nation’s economy, but were marginalized and discriminated against in all social spheres, including culture and language. Cf. Chang Yau Hoon, “Reconceptualising Ethnic Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia.” Also, Ian James Storey, “Indonesia’s China Policy in the New Order and Beyond: Problems and Prospects,” *Contemporary Southeast Asia* Vol.22, No.1 (April 2000):145-174; Muhammadiyah Cohen, “Happy to be Chinese in Indonesia,” *Asia Times Online* 20 October 2011 [http://www.mu.edu.sg/sites/default/files/smu/news\\_room/smu\\_in\\_the\\_news/sources/ATO\\_20111020\\_1.pdf](http://www.mu.edu.sg/sites/default/files/smu/news_room/smu_in_the_news/sources/ATO_20111020_1.pdf) (accessed 19 April 2018); Sarah Turner, “Setting the scene speaking out: Chinese Indonesia after Suharto,” *Asian Ethnicity* 4:3(2003):337-352.

<sup>21</sup>Chang Yau Hoon, “Ethnic Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia,” 100-101.

<sup>22</sup>Luciana Sani Kosasih, “Chinese Indonesia: Stereotyping, Discrimination and Anti-Chinese Violence in the context of Structural Changes up to May 1998 Riots” (MA Thesis, Utrecht University, 2010). Kosasih discussed in details on the assimilation policy



Chineseness given the opportunity to re-emerge in the nation-building process.<sup>23</sup> With the openness of the successive presidents, the legal status of Chineseness and Mandarin were reaffirmed. Chinese New Year celebrations were allowed and later declared as a national holiday by the late President Abdurrahman Wahid and then President Megawati Sukarnoputri.<sup>24</sup> Learning and speaking Mandarin, forbidden under the New Order policy, was reintroduced to the community by the open-minded Presidents succeeding Suharto.<sup>25</sup> Hoon's research points out that "most of the Chinese-language presses in Indonesia have an objective of reviving and promoting Chinese language and culture, and preventing these from vanishing from Indonesia."<sup>26</sup> Therefore, it is the task of the Indonesia Chinese, whether *totok* or *Peranakan*, to preserve the Chineseness by engaging with issues encompass culture, language, and moral values. Yet it is still vital for the Indonesian Chinese to be involved in nation-building under the directive of the Pancasila, the State Philosophy.<sup>27</sup>

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and the impact of it on the ethnic Chinese. Cf. Amanda Walujono, "The Discrimination of the Ethnic Chinese in Indonesia and Perceptions of Nationality" (Scripps Senior Theses, Scripps College, 2014).

<sup>23</sup>In 1998, President Habibie passed legislation to eliminate the term *pribumi* and non-*pribumi*. In 2000, President Abdurrahman Wahid recalled the legislation forbidding the practice of Chinese culture and use of Mandarin Chinese in public. In 2002, Megawati Sukarnoputri declared Chinese New Year a national holiday.

<sup>24</sup>Eng Goan Oei, "Chinese-Indonesians free to celebrate the Lunar New Year," *Global Indonesian Voices*, 1 February 2014, <http://www.globalindonesianvoices.com/11272/the-thinker-chinese-indonesian-free-to-celebrate-the-lunar-new-year/> (accessed 19 April 2018). Also, Chang Yau Hoon, "More Than A Cultural Celebration: The Politics of Chinese New Year in Post-Suharto Indonesia," *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies* 3(2009):90-105.

<sup>25</sup>Journalist report by Michelle Tsai, "Indonesia Learns Chinese: A once banned language makes a comeback," *Foreign Policy* 20 May 2010 <http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/05/20/indonesia-learns-chinese/> (accessed 20 April 2018). Also, Charlotte Setijadi, "Ethnic Chinese in Contemporary Indonesia: Changing Identity Politics and the Paradox of Sinification," Yusof Ishak Institute, *ISEAS Perspective* No.12 (17 March 2016):1-11.

<sup>26</sup>Chang Yau Hoon, "Ethnic Chinese Identity in Post-Suharto Indonesia," 246. "Resinicisation" is a concept among those who advocate the necessity to learn Chinese and rejuvenate the Chinese culture for the next generation *totok*. See also Charlotte Setijadi, "Ethnic Chinese in Contemporary Indonesia," 3; Johanes Herlijanto, "What does Indonesia's Pribumi Elite Think of Ethnic Chinese Today?," Yusof Ishak Institute, *ISEAS Perspective* No.32 (14 June 2016):1-9.

<sup>27</sup>Pancasila, five principles, are the philosophy of the state of Indonesia. They are: belief in the one and only God, just and civilized humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy guided by the inner wisdom in the unanimity arising out of deliberations amongst representatives, and, social justice for the whole of the people of Indonesia. Details of the Pancasila cf. Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, <http://www.indonezia.ro/republic.htm> (accessed 20 April 2018).

What can be learned from Hoon's model? In an interview with Dora Yip on December 2, 2013, Hoon revealed the triggering factor on his search of Chineseness.<sup>28</sup> He had had a unique experience when he visited friends in Indonesia. He highlighted this experience:

. . . a three-week holiday to Indonesia, where he stayed at a Chinese Indonesian friend's family home, raised many questions. The family identified themselves as Chinese yet they ate Indonesian food, spoke Bahasa Indonesia, dressed like their city-dwelling *pribumi* (native Indonesians) counterparts, and didn't have any identifying ethnic features in their house, like ancestral altars.<sup>29</sup>

What does Chineseness mean for these people? Hoon identified Chineseness by mapping the routes taken by the *totok* and *Peranakan* in relationship to ethnicity, religion, language, and culture under the New Order and Post-Suharto eras. His published papers are indispensable along with his ability to speak fluent Mandarin and Bahasa Indonesia.<sup>30</sup> Hoon suggests that "an in-depth ethnography that investigates the *habitus* of Chinese Christians and churches" is one of the foci of study."<sup>31</sup> This paper would like to look into the language spoken and the celebration of festivals as the marks of Chineseness as reflected in Indonesia.

Speaking Mandarin and Chinese dialects carry a tag of Chineseness. Naomi Dowdy, the former Senior Pastor of Trinity Christian Centre (TCC) in Singapore and the chancellor of TCA College, says language stands out as an important issue that crystalized the formation of the Chinese service at TCC.<sup>32</sup> The vision for kingdom ministry and existing need of the then TCC while worshipping at World Trade Centre drove Dowdy to launched a Chinese service.<sup>33</sup> She preached in English and her secretary, Pastor Patsy Wong, interpreted the sermon into Mandarin. Chinese and other dialect services continued into the nineties. The

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<sup>28</sup>Dora Yip, "Finding One's Identity in a Globalised World," *Asian Scientists* (2 December 2013), <https://www.asianscientist.com/2013/12/features/hoon-chang-yau-smu-finding-ones-identity-in-aglobalized-world-2013/> (accessed 20 April 2018).

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup>Chang Yau Hoon, "Mapping Chineseness on the Landscape of Christian churches in Indonesia," 14.

<sup>32</sup>Interview with Naomi Dowdy, 4 May 2018.

<sup>33</sup>The launching of Chinese service at TCC will be elaborated under Trinity Christian Centre in Part 2 of this article.

demography of the congregation clearly indicated that Mandarin speaking Chinese were better served within their comfortable language environment.

Besides language, Chinese décor is an important ingredient to construct Chineseness. There is an interesting research on Chineseness with Chinese décor. James Beattie in his article quoted Brian Moloughney's comments: "Elements of Chineseness are part of everyone's lives in New Zealand, not just those who are ethnically Chinese."<sup>34</sup> In New Zealand, Chineseness and gardens have been closely connected.<sup>35</sup> As an example, Beattie names the pavilion in front of his study the Gentleman Pavilion because it was surrounded by bamboo planted by the philosopher Wang Yangming.<sup>36</sup> His naming associates the bamboo with four qualities connected with gentleman: virtue, appropriateness, appropriate action and upright demeanour.<sup>37</sup> Thus by naming a place of the garden, the Chineseness is being translated and exported into a scenery illustrates vividly ethical values embedded in the design of the garden. This is one plausible way of constructing Chineseness through the activities of socio-cultural-anthropological endeavors.

In Hoon's mapping paradigm, what is the Chineseness of the *totok* and *peranakan*? Hoon argues that "Gereja Kristus Ketapang (GKK, Church of Christ in Ketapang) is a church with *peranakan* Chineseness, and although the church does not have any Mandarin ministry and almost none of its members speak Chinese, the Chineseness of GKK is 'still thick and dominant.'"<sup>38</sup> Hoon concludes, "Chineseness is not defined by cultural resources such as language ability, but by the *habitus* of being Chinese."<sup>39</sup> Consistent with what Hoon has discussed in his research on Indonesian Chinese, whether *totok* or *peranakan*, Chineseness is embedded in the blood of a Chinese. It is an issue of race.<sup>40</sup> To construct

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<sup>34</sup>James Beattie, "Growing Chinese Influences in New Zealand: Chinese Gardens, Identity and Meaning," *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies* 9, 1 (June 2007): 38.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 43.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Chang Yau Hoon, "Mapping Chineseness on the landscape of Christian churches in Indonesia," 5.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>In his research, Turner traces the Chineseness in the American poetry. Please cf. Anastasia Wright Turner, "Orienting Traces: (Re)viewing Chineseness in Modern American Poetry" (PhD Dissertation, University of Georgia, 2010). A research carried out by a group of researchers proved that cultural values and behavior associated with the ethnic identity of one culture may be exhibited by a substantial portion of the population of another culture. See Seth Ellis, James McCullough, Melanie Wallendorf, and Chin

Chineseness with reference to the Chinese community, whether a minority in society or a majority ethnic group in a nation, the *habitus* of being Chinese is the essential factor from which the process of mapping and constructing begins.

### Constructing Chineseness in Ministry in Indonesia

In 2010, Indonesia stood as the world's fourth most populous country after China, India and the United States, with 237.6 million people.<sup>41</sup> "Chinese" Indonesians are an ambiguous issue to define.<sup>42</sup> Aris Ananta, Evi Nurvidya Arifin and Bakhtiar note that "there is no consensus on who constitute Chinese Indonesians, making it challenging to determine accurate statistics."<sup>43</sup> Coppel noted that the 2010 census asked all respondents to identify with just one ethnic group. "Mixed marriages, geographical mobility, and intercultural interaction make this (identification of ethnicity) increasingly difficult."<sup>44</sup> As Hoon mentioned, *totok* and *Peranakan* are two groups of Chinese Indonesians.

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Tion Tan, "Cultural Values and Behavior: Chineseness Within Geographic Boundaries", in NA - *Advances in Consumer Research* Volume 12, eds. Elizabeth C. Hirschman and Morris B. Holbrook (Provo, UT : Association for Consumer Research, 1985), 126-128. Also, Qijun Han, "Negotiated 'Chineseness' and Divided Loyalties: My American Grandson," *Critical Arts*, 31:6 (2018): 59-75; Rosana Pinheiro-Machado, "The Power of Chineseness: Flexible Taiwanese Identities amidst Times of Change in Asia and Latin America," *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* Vol.23, No.1 (2018): 56-73; Jinling Li, "Chineseness as a Moving Target: Changing Infrastructures of the Chinese Diaspora in the Netherlands" (PhD dissertation, Tilburg University, 2016). There is an interesting study by Guanglun Michael Mu, "Chinese Australians' Chineseness and their mathematics achievement: The role of Habitus," *The Australian Educational Researcher* Vol.41, Issue 5(November 2014):585-602.

<sup>41</sup>Aris Ananta, Evi Nurvidya Arifin, M. Sairi Hasbullah, Nur Budi Handayani and Agus Pramono, *Demography of Indonesia's Ethnicity* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2015), 1. It is very difficult to get accurate statistics of the population of Indonesia, as scholars noted. Aris Ananta and the group have done us all a great service. Cf. Charles A. Coppel, "Reassessing Assumptions about Chinese Indonesians," <http://indonesiaatmelbourne.unimelb.edu.au/reassessing-assumptions-about-chinese-indonesians/> (accessed 18 May 2018).

<sup>42</sup>Gregory S. Urban, "The Eternal Newcomer: Chinese Indonesian Identity from Indonesia to the United States," *LUX: A Journal of Transdisciplinary Writing and Research from Claremont Graduate University* Vol.3, Issue 1, Article 19 (2013):1-11, <http://scholarship.claremont.edu/lux/vol3/iss1/19> (accessed 18 May 2018). Also, Coppel, "Reassessing Assumptions about Chinese Indonesians."

<sup>43</sup>Aris Ananta, Bakhtiar and Evi Nurvidya Arifin, "Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Province of Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis", in *Ethnic Chinese in Contemporary Indonesia*, ed. by Leo Suryadinata (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2008), 17.

<sup>44</sup>Coppel, "Reassessing Assumptions about Chinese Indonesians."

There may be more variants as various factors intersecting one another. Researchers suggest, based on the 2000 and 2010 censuses, that the Chinese population is 1.2 percent of the total population of Indonesia or 2.83 million ethnic Chinese in number.<sup>45</sup> According to the 2000 census, 35.09 percent of Chinese Indonesians throughout Indonesia are Christian.<sup>46</sup> With this size of Christian population, what is the landscape of Christian churches in Indonesia? How would Chineseness contribute to the ministry of Chinese churches in Indonesia?

Hoon has done a thorough analysis of the issue in “Mapping Chineseness on the landscape of Christian churches in Indonesia.”<sup>47</sup> In his paper, Hoon sketches the historical background of the Christian church in Indonesia, both before the New Order and after the 1998 anti-Chinese riots. Under the criticism of Chinese Indonesians, some Chinese churches have inculcated Chineseness

through teaching Mandarin in Sunday school, delivering bilingual sermons in Indonesian and Mandarin, and maintain transnational ties with Chinese churches in Taiwan, Singapore, and Malaysia. In this manner, these churches have been able to nourish and renew their Chineseness as well as to imagine themselves as part of a transnational, global network of Chinese churches.<sup>48</sup>

Speaking Mandarin is an important tag for expressing Chineseness: language is a mark of ethnicity.<sup>49</sup> Zane Goebel discusses “Language, Class, and Ethnicity in Indonesia”<sup>50</sup> and concludes, “. . . that institutional

<sup>45</sup>Ibid. Cf. Evi Nurvidya Arifin, M. Sairi Hasbullah, Agus Pramono, “Chinese Indonesians: How Many, who and where?” *Asian Ethnicity* Vol.18, Issue 3 (2016):310-329.

<sup>46</sup>Aris Ananta, Bakhtiar and Evi Nurvidya Arifin, “Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia and the Province of Riau Archipelago: A Demographic Analysis”, 30.

<sup>47</sup>Chang Yau Hoon, “Mapping Chineseness on the landscape of Christian churches in Indonesia,” *Asian Ethnicity* 17(2) (2016): 228-247.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>49</sup>However, academic research has sometimes proved otherwise. Paul Lamy in his dissertation authenticates the presupposition that “the association between bilingualism and ethnic identity is not strong, and that it varies from one mother tongue group to the other . . . that with intergroup contact and demographic context held constant, the relationship between bilingualism and ethnic identity is extremely weak.” Cf. “Language and Ethnicity: A Study of Bilingualism, Ethnic Identity, and Ethnic Attitudes; (PhD Dissertation, McMaster University, 1976).

<sup>50</sup>Zane Goebel, “Language, Class, and Ethnicity in Indonesia,” *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI)* 164-1 (2008):69-101.

activities have helped-often unintentionally-to associate region with language to the extent that both are equated with ethnicity or ethnic identity, (and) these associations do not fully account for the patterns of language use at local level.”<sup>51</sup> The reality of the demography of language is people are associated with the bigger community where the dominant language is spoken. The interesting socio-linguistic environment helps to shape people in that community; learning the commonly spoken language fosters a closer relationship, and to have privileges in commercial transactions in the most acceptable means.<sup>52</sup> On speaking the dominant language, Goebel suggests “the process of attaching cultural value to linguistic forms is dependent on individuals’ access to or participation in speech chains and the demographic makeup of those involved in these speech chains.”<sup>53</sup> In Indonesia, *totok* and *Peranakan* are in one way or another encouraged to speak Bahasa Indonesia to forge their identity as Indonesian. With this understanding, speaking Mandarin and learning Chinese culture plays an important part in formulating the Chineseness of the Chinese.

What has the Chinese church in Indonesia done to achieve the goal of constructing Chineseness with reference to the ministry? It is not possible to speak of Chineseness as it is in China. The social demography has shaped Chineseness and made it adaptable to the Indonesian nation-building program. We are therefore constructing a contextualized Chineseness in the Chinese church. Having said that, contextualization is an intricate process in which a culture is translated into another culture without losing the essence of that incoming culture. Scholars argue that “there never was a development toward a ‘truly contextual Chinese Christianity, although, ‘a Chinese ethnic identity cannot be concealed, and ethnicity remains a very important factor in Indonesia society’.”<sup>54</sup> Therefore, it is not a question of contextual Chinese Christianity, but Chineseness which consists of ethnicity as the crux of contextualization. The outward expression of ethnicity involves culture and language. Lambert points out that ethnolinguistic privileges are the factors that

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 69.

<sup>52</sup>Researchers suggest the additive bilingualism is the theory explains the said phenomenon. Cf. William E. Lambert, “Cognitive, Attitudinal and Social Consequences of Bilingualism,” cited in A. Mani & S. Gopinathan, “Changes in Tamil Language Acquisition and Usage in Singapore: A Case of Subtractive Bilingualism,” *Asian Journal of Social Science* 11(1) (1983): 105-106.

<sup>53</sup>Goebel, “Language, Class, and Ethnicity in Indonesia,” 71.

<sup>54</sup>Chang Yau Hoon, “Mapping Chineseness on the landscape of Christian churches in Indonesia,” 1-2.

determine the languages members of the community are mastering in order to excel in the community.<sup>55</sup> That reason explains why even Indonesia Muslims are learning Mandarin.<sup>56</sup>

### The Contribution of Christian Chinese Schools

Hoon has written an article on Chinese Christian Schools in Indonesia.<sup>57</sup> He argues that “Chinese schools have been important sites for transmitting Chinese culture and maintaining Chinese identity.”<sup>58</sup> Researchers even suggest “no single institution has been more effective in maintaining ‘Chineseness’ than have Chinese schools.”<sup>59</sup> Hoon proposes that mapping the Chinese Christian schools in Indonesia deserves scholars’ attention. Based upon this, Hoon attempts to describe the make-up of such schools. There are four prestigious “Chinese” Christian schools in Jakarta:<sup>60</sup> Christian School of Indonesia, Agape Christian School, Eagle’s Wings School, and People-Building School.<sup>61</sup> These Christian schools are founded and funded by Chinese churches,<sup>62</sup> ethnic Chinese philanthropists, business people or organizations unaffiliated with a church,<sup>63</sup> and by Charismatic churches.<sup>64</sup> Chinese schools are sought after in the post-Suharto Indonesia. Learning Chinese language has become a popular pursuit for both Chinese and non-Chinese-Indonesians.<sup>65</sup> The trend creates an enormous opportunity for Chinese or non-Chinese educational institutions and Christian or non-

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<sup>55</sup>Cited in A. Mani & S. Gopinathan, “Changes in Tamil Language Acquisition and Usage in Singapore: A Case of Subtractive Bilingualism,” 105-106.

<sup>56</sup>A report by Michelle Tsai on *Indonesia Learns Chinese*, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2010/05/20/indonesia-learns-chinese/> (accessed 24 May 2018). Aulia R. Sungkar, *Chinese Challenge: More Indonesians Learning Mandarin*, <http://jakartaglobe.id/archive/chinese-challenge-more-indonesians-learning-mandarin/> (accessed 24 May 2018).

<sup>57</sup>Chang Yau Hoon, “Mapping ‘Chinese’ Christian Schools in Indonesia: Ethnicity, Class and Religion,” *Asia Pacific Education Review* 12(3)(2010): 403-411, [http://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/soas\\_research/755](http://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/soas_research/755).

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 403.

<sup>59</sup>Cited in Hoon, “Mapping ‘Chinese’ Schools in Indonesia,” 403.

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, 404.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, 406.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, 405.

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, 406.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.* Not only the Indonesians are learning Chinese, the non-Chinese in Brunei are also witnessing a rise in learning Mandarin, <http://www.asiaone.com/asia/rise-non-chinese-learning-mandarin-brunei> (accessed 1 June 2018). Grace Shao reported on the trend of learning Chinese as a second language is growing, <https://america.cgt.n.com/2015/03/03/chinese-as-a-second-language-growing-in-popularity> (accessed 1 June 2018).

Christian schools, to retain and promote Chineseness through education. Chinese Christian schools in Indonesia need to integrate the national Pancasila ideology into its program. On the other hand, Chinese Christian schools have to find a meaningful way to translate Chineseness of the Chinese culture into the local context.<sup>66</sup> Of the four Chinese Christian schools, People-Building School says that “while classes are conducted in English, students have to learn Chinese and Indonesian as second languages.”<sup>67</sup> Trilingualism is a debatable issue among researchers; <sup>68</sup> this paper is not engaging in the debate but would like to mention the existence of bilingual, trilingual, and multilingual language.

Hoon says Christian schools in Indonesia “serve to maintain a physical and spatial boundary where young Chinese define their identity against the non-Chinese.”<sup>69</sup> Chinese students are the dominant population of these Christian schools. However, many non-Christian Chinese parents in Jakarta also find Christian schools attractive for their children’s education. This is mainly due to “the ethnic Chinese concentration of the schools’ population, exclusive social class, class environment, academic accomplishments, reputation, and discipline in the schools.”<sup>70</sup> In fact, as Hoon points out, the Chinese Christians schools’ aim is to prepare students for entry into overseas universities.<sup>71</sup> School discipline is an important consideration for Chinese parents when choosing schools for their children.<sup>72</sup> Researchers have shown that Chinese culture and values are the key factors promote greater success in students’ lives and future career.<sup>73</sup> Yudan He argues,

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<sup>66</sup>Hoon, “Mapping ‘Chinese’ Christian Schools in Indonesia,” 406, where Hoon pointed out that amongst church leaders that “a process of localization (or indigenization) would have to take place.” See also note 53 for discussion.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 408.

<sup>68</sup>See Scott R. Schroeder and Viorica Marian, “Cognitive Consequences of Trilingualism,” *The International Journal of Bilingualism* 21(6) (2017): 754-773; David C. S. Li, “Towards ‘Biliteracy and Trilingualism’ in Hong Kong (SAR): Problems, Dilemmas and Stakeholders’ views,” *Association Internationale de Linguistique Appliquée Review* 22(1)(Jan 2009):72-84; Fotini Anastassiou, Georgia Andreou, Maria Liakou, “Third Language Learning, Trilingualism and Multilingualism: A Review,” *European Journal of English Language, Linguistics and Literature* Vol.4 No.1 (2017): 61-73.

<sup>69</sup>Hoon, “Mapping ‘Chinese’ Christian Schools in Indonesia,” 409.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 409-410.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 409.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>There is research on the relationships between education, discipline, Chinese parents, and Chinese values. See Yudan He. “Primary School Teachers’ and Parents Discipline Strategies in China.” PhD thesis, The University of York, 2013; Kelsey Munro, Strict classroom discipline improves student outcomes and work ethic, studies



Chinese teachers employed more relationship-based discipline strategies and less aggressive techniques and punishment compared with Australian and Israeli teachers. Similar result has been obtained recently from the data collected by Riley, Lewis and Wang in China and Australia, which again demonstrated that Chinese teachers used relatively less and lower-intensity aggressive discipline methods compared with Australian teachers.<sup>74</sup>

This comparison of two different cultures showcases the central issue of discipline. Though the study by Yudan He focuses on the primary school in China, it does not cancel the validity the argument that Chinese Christian schools hold a higher position in Indonesia because of their good reputation in discipline, among other criteria. Discipline ranks high on the scale due to the dominance of Confucianism.<sup>75</sup> There is no study to show that Christian schools in Indonesia adopt the values of Confucianism, but rather the “universal Christian values” have been contextualized as “Love, Care, and Integrity,” explains the Director of the Christian School of Indonesia.<sup>76</sup> These contextualized Christian values have its counterpart in the teaching of Confucianism.<sup>77</sup>

This writer witnessed an encounter between a Chinese Christian school and Chinese culture. I taught at Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Bandung (STTB, Bandung Theological Seminary) in Bandung, Indonesia. Within the campus, a school provides formal education from primary to

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find, <https://www.smh.com.au/education/strict-classroom-discipline-improves-student-outcomes-and-work-ethic-studies-find-20161108-gsksiq.html> (accessed 7 June 2018); “Would Chinese-style education work on British kids?” *BBC News* 4 August 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-33735517> (accessed 7 June 2018); Quan Zhou, “Discipline and Self-Discipline: A Personal Cross-Cultural Perspective,” <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/china.pdf> (accessed 7 June 2018). One researcher has done a study to compare the differences in attitude between two groups of medical students and one group of resident on discipline practices, the finding throws light on the disciplinary issues. See Brady John Heward. “Comparison of the Acceptability of Discipline Practices between Chinese Medical Students and Residents and US Medical Students.” MD thesis, The Yale University School of Medicine, 2011.

<sup>74</sup>Yudan He, “Primary School Teachers’ and Parents Discipline Strategies in China,” 49.

<sup>75</sup>*Ibid.*, 48-52.

<sup>76</sup>Hoon, “Mapping Chinese Christian Schools in Indonesia,” 410.

<sup>77</sup>Interesting comparison between Jesus and Confucius can be found in Hans Küng analysis. Please refer to Hans Küng and Julia Ching, *Christianity and Chinese Religions* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), especially 105-108, 114-116, 118-120. Also, Gregg A. Ten Elshof. *Confucius for Christians: What an Ancient Chinese Worldview Can Teach Us about Life in Christ*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015.

secondary level. In 2013, I was invited to teach a course for the Lunar Chinese New Year festive season. The school organized a celebration for the students and their parents. The campus was beautifully decorated with lanterns, Chinese calligraphy (*Chun Lian*, Spring festival couplets), and Chinese foods were prepared. Students came in resplendent *Qi Pao* (Cheongsam) or *Tang Zhuang* (T'ang) clothes. Chineseness permeated the air. It takes a concerted effort from all parties to put everything together for a Chinese festive occasion celebration. Nevertheless, the ideology of Chineseness was the catalyst for the school board to initiate the celebration.

### The Ministry of Bilingual Service

Chinese Christian churches in Indonesia have to conduct services in Bahasa Indonesian, Mandarin, English, Hokkien (*Fu Jian*).<sup>78</sup> This is the linguistic ecology of Chinese Christian church. According to Hoon, Chinese Christian churches conduct services and board meetings in Indonesian and Mandarin or only in Indonesian.<sup>79</sup> I had the privilege to teach and preach in Bandung and Jakarta. In 2011, while teaching an intensive course at STTB, I was invited to preach at a prayer meeting of a local church, Hok Im Tong (a Hokkien naming convention which means evangelical church.) There were two prayer meetings on that night, one in Bahasa Indonesia, one in Mandarin at which I was preaching without interpretation. It was well attended. Hok Im Tong is a big church which has several Sunday services and weekly meetings. It provides a spatial environment to hold monolingual and bilingual services. At another preaching experience with a local Indonesia Chinese church in Jakarta, I preached three times in the afternoon. I preached in

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<sup>78</sup>Researcher suggested that there were four predominant groups migrated to Indonesia in the early year, and there were the Hokkien, Hakka, Teochiu, and Cantonese. Cf. Gregory, S. Urban, "The Eternal Newcomer: Chinese Indonesian Identity from Indonesia to the United States," *LUX: A Journal of Transdisciplinary Writing and Research from Claremont Graduate University* Vol.3, Issue 1, Article 19 (2013); 2.

<sup>79</sup>Hoon, "Mapping Chineseness on the landscape of Christian churches in Indonesia," *passim*. Scholars may have different viewpoint on language issue in Indonesia church. For example, Tabita Kartika Christiani argued that multiculturalism is a route and reality that churches in Indonesia has to tackle with. She strongly urged churches to consider the level of pluralistic approaches to languages. See her short article on "Identity in a Multicultural Church: An Experience of Indonesian Christian Church," [http://cca.org.hk/home/ctc/ctc-07-03/04\\_tabita14.pdf](http://cca.org.hk/home/ctc/ctc-07-03/04_tabita14.pdf) (accessed 8 June 2018). For general language policy, researchers have also cautioned the intergenerational transmission of a local language may impact the use of a language. Cf. Abigail C. Cohn and Maya Ravindranath, "Local Languages in Indonesia: Language Maintenance or Language Shift?" *Linguistik Indonesia* Vol. 32, No.2 (August 2014); 131-148.

Mandarin with interpretation into Bahasa Indonesia. It was an uplifting service with a congregation of about 300 to 400, mainly attended by those 30 years old and above. I preached with interpretation slightly over one hour. Although I wasn't involved in the church life of the Indonesian Chinese church, that humble and straightforward experience allowed an excellent exposure into the momentum of the Chinese Christian church. The bilingual service is a way to guarantee the continuation of the Chinese/Mandarin language medium to serve the demanding congregation in Indonesia. Exposure to the language environment is the key to master a language.<sup>80</sup> It is therefore crucial for the Chinese Christian church in Indonesia to make an effort to create and provide a spatial environment that allows the use of Chinese/Mandarin in the congregation if Chineseness is the concerned issue at heart.

In Part 1, I have focused on the paradigm of Chang Yau Hoon as a model for constructing Chineseness in the Christian church in Indonesia. I have delved into the contribution of the Christian Chinese schools in Indonesia and how the ministry of bilingual services can serve the congregation in Indonesia. Part 2 of this paper will look at constructing Chineseness in ministry in the Singapore Christian church and will conclude with my recommendations and some global applications.

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<sup>80</sup>Scholars have been debating the issue involved in raising up children with bilingual ability in Indonesia. Cf. Novi Rahayu Restuningrum, "Raising Bilingual Children in Indonesia: The Strategies," *The Jakarta Post*, Thursday 5 April 2018, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/academia/2018/04/05/raising-bilingual-children-in-indonesia-the-strategies.html> (accessed 13 June 2018).