

Chinese Muslims (predominantly Hui) and other foreign Muslims in Taiwan. By comparing how Chinese Muslims and foreign Muslims exhibit images of Islam to the public, I argue that images of Islam in Taiwan are not monolithic but diverse and constantly changing.

Ethnic Categories of Muslims in Taiwan today

Today, Muslims are multi-ethnic and multi-national in Taiwan. When the congregational prayer (*salat al-jama'ah*) takes place in Taipei Grand Mosque every Friday, the prayer hall is always overcrowded with Muslims from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including local Chinese Muslims (predominantly Hui), Arabs, Turks, Africans, Malaysians and Indonesians. Taipei Grand Mosque looks like a mini global village. Muslims from different backgrounds and areas meet each other and exchange ideas after the congregational prayer. Regarding the total Muslim populations in Taiwan, no official statistic has been published. However, I try to estimate the Muslim populations in Taiwan in Table 1 based on my interviews with Muslim representatives in each ethnic background and collections of data from the Ministry of Education,¹⁰ Ministry of the Interior¹¹ and other official websites.¹²

From Table 1, we can see that Indonesian Muslims are the largest ethnic group, accounting for between 83 % to 96 % of the Muslim population in Taiwan. Indonesian Muslims are thus the most visible Muslims in Taiwan. Taiwanese often see Indonesian female Muslims who wear headscarves taking care of their elders in public or celebrating Eid al-fitr. Indonesian Muslims accounting for this huge proportion is due to the open policy by Republic of China (ROC) government in the 1990s for drawing in foreign workers and students. The majority of Indonesians (around 275,000)¹³ in Taiwan are migrant workers in specific fields, such as construction, manufacture, fishing, housekeeping and caregiving; others (around 5,000)¹⁴ are students pursuing degrees in universities of Taiwan. Indonesian Muslims in Taiwan have created internal networks such as associations and mosques for helping other Indonesian Muslims in material and spiritual need.

Table 1: Statistics of Muslim populations in Taiwan based on Ethnic categories

¹⁰ Ministry of Education, <<https://ois.moe.gov.tw/fs/html/Statistics.html>> (accessed on 22 November, 2017)

¹¹ '1.03 General Conditions of Religions,' *Ministry of the Interior*, <<http://sowf.moi.gov.tw/stat/year/elist.htm>> (accessed on 22 November, 2017).

¹² 'Foreign Workers in Productive Industries and Social Welfare by Nationality,' *National Statistics, ROC (Taiwan)*, <<http://statdb.mol.gov.tw/html/mon/212030.htm>> (accessed on 22 November, 2017).

¹³ According to the website of National Statistics, ROC. (Taiwan), Indonesian workers are 257,596. In addition to this official statistic, around 26,000 Indonesians are workers without legal status. See 'Foreign Workers in Productive industries and Social Welfare,' *National Statistics, ROC (Taiwan)*, <<http://statdb.mol.gov.tw/html/mon/212030.htm>> (accessed on 23 November, 2017); Interview with an Indonesian representative in Taipei, 1 September 2017.

¹⁴ 'Newsletter: Statistics of Foreign Students in Universities,' *Ministry of Education*, <<http://stats.moe.gov.tw/files/brief/105%E5%B9%B4%E5%A4%A7%E5%B0%88%E6%A0%A1%E9%99%A2%E5%A2%83%E5%A4%96%E5%AD%B8%E7%94%9F%E6%A6%82%E6%B3%81.pdf>> (accessed on 23 November, 2017)