Who are normal and extreme muslims? discursive study of christians voice about muslims identity in Surakarta, Central Java / Suhadi

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ABSTRACT
This article assumes that language is not only a way of saying things (informative), but also a way of doing things (performative) or exercising power Through conducting eight focus group discussions (FGDs) involving 39 Christian participants in Surakarta Central Java, this research studies the Christians discourse on their fellow Muslims. In those FGDs, I stimulated the participants discussion by the basic question, How do you speak about Muslims. Though the question is about Muslims, but in fact sometimes they also speak about themselves. I am concerned about the discursive study of religion taking advantage from Norman Fairclough discourse analysis theory and method focusing on the analysis of linguistic practice, discursive practice, and social practice. As a result, the discussions of participants were on a hegemonic struggle between dominant and peripheral voices to define what is considered (ab)normal Muslims. Christian participants identified extremist (fanatical, fundamentalist) Muslims as abnormal. They positioned extremists and excessive persons as extraordinary. Thus, they identified extremism as not the norm but an exception to the rule of religions. In distinguishing between normal and extreme the participants primarily positioned themselves as normal or ordinary religious people who are moderate. They identified those who cause conflict as neither moderate Muslims nor moderate Christians, but fundamentalists in their respective faiths.