

**The Quest for Indonesian Islam:
Contestation and Consensus
Concerning Veiling**

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A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
at the Australian National University

April 2007

I CERTIFY THAT THIS DISSERTATION IS ENTIRELY
MY OWN ORIGINAL WORK

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Deny Hamdani', written in a cursive style.

(SIGNED)
DENY HAMDANI

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THESIS ABSTRACT

This study examines various transformations in the practice of veiling which have involved changes in its meaning for Indonesian Muslims. It concentrates on a forty-year period from the New Order to the Reform Era. In particular, it focuses on the interplay between the practice of wearing the veil and the changing social and political constellation in Indonesia, and relates these to the presence of both contestation and consensus regarding veiling among Indonesian Muslims.

After conducting one year's fieldwork in some regions of Indonesia, I found significant changes in how Muslims negotiate their daily lives in connection with the idea of veiling. While a 'relaxed' form of veiling has long been practiced by *santri* (devout) Muslims, veiling has assumed an absolute meaning for other Muslims, especially since the increasing Islamisation of various social classes. The practice of veiling has become pervasive among Muslims: at the same time, it is intertwined with fashion trends, commercialisation and the expression of personal and religious identity.

Although some Modernist Muslims continue to contest the Islamist discourse regarding veiling, there is a growing trend to make veiling mandatory in certain parts of Indonesia. Veiling became oppressive rather than liberating in the areas where it has been imposed in the public domain. The appearance of the veil also changed: from a modest and traditional practice (*kerudung*), it was turned into the mandatory *jilbab*, which covers the head, neck and chest much more strictly. The veil transformed again in some parts of Indonesia, to become a fashion item: this made it a promising product for industry and marketing, due to the growing number of Muslim consumers. At the same time, in some places it has continued to be imposed by local Islam-oriented regimes which tend to want to control public behaviour according to their interpretation. In the light of these changes, I argue that the changing social and political conditions in contemporary Indonesia have impelled Muslims to search for an "Indonesian Islam": what form that indigenous version of Islam will take is still being negotiated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From the day I started this academic work until the date of submission, this project has involved many people and institutions which have supported and assisted me in certain phases of the whole process of this achievement. For this reason, I cannot claim that this work is purely the result of my own labor over the last few years, although I am the one who should be responsible for every single word that I wrote in this dissertation. I would like to express my gratitude to all the people who displayed their generosity, hospitality and sense of humanity in the final phases of completing this work.

I owe my deepest debt of gratitude to my supervisors and lecturers at the Faculty of Asian Studies, and the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies (RSPAS) of the Australian National University (ANU). I am also grateful to ANU scholars in the Social Sciences, who generously provided an academic atmosphere and intellectual exercise. My thanks to the ANU Library and the National Library of Australia in Canberra. Their tremendous collections of texts about Indonesia enriched my collection of written sources and my knowledge.

This thesis would not have been finished without the support and help of other people. That is why I want to thank several people who contributed to this work. Dr. Kathryn Robinson has patiently directed me to make a good argument in my thesis. In the Faculty of Asian Studies, I want to thank Professor Virginia Hooker, and the various lecturers who guided me: Greg Fealy, Aat Vervoorn, Kirill Nourzhanov, David White, Michael Flood, Patty Smith.

For editing help, I wish to thank Mandy Scott, who helped with my English grammar and structure during the drafting process. Without her intervention, I am sure that my writings would not have been easily understood. My informal editor was Neroli Vivian who passionately helped me and has been a good friend in many difficult situations. Her generosity was the greatest contribution to this thesis completion and I owe very much for her sincere support. I am also extremely grateful for the generosity of Putu Davies, who struggled to edit, format, and print my entire thesis. I realize that this process could not have run smoothly without the warmth and generosity of all these people.

The funding for this project was provided by an AusAID scholarship which supported me during my study, and provided technical and operational equipment. My home institution, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, allowed me time off to pursue my study. I thank Diana Glazebrook for her assistance, as well as Carol Laslett (ANU Liaison Officer) and Stephanie Black of AusAID.

During the entire process of designing the thesis concept, going to the field, and writing, there was another aspect of life in Canberra that made my experience more alive. This was based on my many friends, including those who gathered in the Minaret community: Yudi Latif, Edwin, Lukman, Agus Muktamar, Rahmatina, Emma Soraya,

Also Bima, Taufiq Tanasaldi, Teguh, Kang Tommy, Kang Dayat, Mas Kacung, Hamdan and Daryono, Eva Amrullah, Farid Sanoeng, Ismet, Evi Fitriani, Rosa Safira and Taufik Prabowo, Teddy Mantoro, Media Ayu, Melati, Retno, Akhmad Muzakki, Arif Zamhari, Yon, Umar and Mpok Ijah, and Zaeni Dahlan.

I also thank the PPIA, KBRI, and the Fenner Hall management, which showed me how to live in a multicultural atmosphere. I thank my friends Aki Achdiat K. Mihardja and Nini, Imam Asari, Bu Isti, Wahdi Yudhi, Ani Nigeriawati, Dara and Faisol, Ariane and Iwu Utomo, Kang Dody, Boy Pradana, Diah Arimbi, and May Munir, for conducive discussions and exchanges of books.

During fieldwork, I benefited much from the help of my informants in the field: Yasrul Huda, Romi, Yudhi, Yeni, Zaiyardam, Zikry and Ety, Bu Hasna Wirda, Trias Setiawati.

I would also like to thank the administrative staff of the Faculty of Asian Studies, the Department of Anthropology at RSPAS and the International Education Office of the ANU. I am especially grateful to Ludmila Mangos, Greg Young, Gordon Hill, Fay Castles, Fritha Jones, Penelope Judd, Chris Thomson, Louis Jackson, Lynn Toohey, and Amrih Widodo. I thank my colleagues: Mersija Maglajlic, Amelia Fyfield Ceridwen, Angela Cincotta, Joy Bai, Nicki Saroka, Wahidah Siregar, Murni Mahmud, Lintje Pellu, Traci Smith.

Last but not least, deepest gratitude to my parents: Bapak and Mimi; my brothers and sisters: Amedy, Sri, Iyus and Muhib; and my sweet nieces and nephew. Their passion and care have been my strength to survive in the middle of difficulties. Without their support and their pray, I will be unable to pass through all of this phase of my life.

Deny Hamdani
April, 2007

Glossary

<i>Abangan Muslims</i>	nominal or less strict muslims, usually refers to Javanese Muslims
<i>adat</i>	Customary or traditional law
<i>Aisyiyah</i>	women's wing of the reformist organisation muhammadiyah
<i>akhwat</i>	Literally means sister (Arabic)
<i>al-khimar</i>	head veil
<i>Asbab al-nuzul</i>	Circumstances and context for the revelation (of the <i>Qur'an</i>)
<i>aurat</i>	Nakedness, pudenda
<i>baju koko</i>	a long-sleeved plain coloured shirt without a collar that is usually worn by men to go to prayers
<i>baju kurung</i>	loose long-sleeved tunic
<i>bundo kanduang</i>	Minangkabau honorific title for elder women
<i>Bupati</i>	Head of kabupaten (regency, district)
<i>busana muslim</i>	An Islamic clothing ensemble: long loose clothing worn with a headscarf
<i>ciput</i>	a simple, snug-fitting scarf to be worn over the head, under the headscarf to cover the hair. It looks like a snail shell – <i>ciput</i> – and is also called the <i>jilbab topi</i> , or <i>jilbab</i> hat; it is a stylish one-piece design
<i>dakwah</i>	'the call'; preaching, proselysation, Islamic outreach
<i>dzalim</i>	Tyranny
<i>fatwa</i>	non-binding religious decisions in Islamic law
<i>fiqh</i>	Islamic jurisprudence
<i>fitnah</i>	chaos or discord, turmoil
<i>hadith</i>	Report or account of the words and deeds of the Prophet
<i>hajj</i>	Pilgrimage
<i>haram</i>	Forbidden, unlawful
<i>hijab</i>	Literally means 'curtain, separation'. It segregates individuals or groups from society
<i>IAIN</i>	Institut Agama Islam Negeri, State Institute for Islamic Studies
<i>ibadah</i>	Worship, religious rituals and duties
<i>ITB</i>	<i>Institut Teknologi Bandung</i> , Bandung Institute of Technology
<i>jihad</i>	to strive or struggle
<i>JIL</i>	Jaringan Islam Liberal, Liberal Islamic Network
<i>jilbab</i>	Women's head-covering that leaves only the face exposed
<i>jilbabisasi</i>	the growing prevalence of the <i>jilbab</i> among indonesian women
<i>jubah</i>	long loose Arabic robe
<i>kaffah</i>	Totality in practicing Islam
<i>kain</i>	A tightly-wrapped batik sarong
<i>kebaya</i>	Close-fitting traditional blouse

<i>kerpus</i>	internal headscarf
<i>kerudung</i>	Loose headscarf; it was once known as <i>kudung</i>
<i>khilafiyah</i>	A contentious legal matter on which the opinion of ulama is divided
<i>khittah</i>	the spirit of the strategy of the NU founding fathers
<i>kiai</i>	Noble, lofty; title of religious scholar or leader
<i>kopiah</i>	black velvet fez or felt hat for men
<i>kudung</i>	Muslim head shawl
<i>kyai</i>	male religious leader or scholar who often owns a <i>pesantren</i>
<i>Libasut taqwa</i>	Raiment of righteousness
<i>Majelis Tarjih</i>	Majelis Tarjih dan Pengembangan Pemikiran Islam (Council on Law-making and the Development of Islamic Thought); founded by Muhammadiyah in 1927
<i>maksiyat</i>	An immoral act, immorality
<i>muallimat</i>	Religious teacher training for women
<i>mufassir</i>	Scholar who specialises in Qur'anic commentary
<i>Muhammadiyah</i>	Modernist Islamic organisation founded in 1912 by Ahamd Dahlan
<i>muhrim</i>	close relative who is not a marrying partner
<i>MUI</i>	<i>Majelis Ulama Indonesia</i> , Indonesia Ulama Council
<i>Muslimat NU</i>	women's wing organisation of NU
<i>nagari</i>	traditional village in Minangkabau, West Sumatra
<i>Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)</i>	"The Revival of Religious Scholars", Indonesia's largest Islamic organisation, established in 1926 by Hasyim Asy'ari and Wahab Hasbullah to promote traditionalist Islam
<i>Nasyiatul Aisyiyah</i>	The young women's section of Muhammadiyah
<i>ninik mamak</i>	Minangkabau term used to refer to one's mother's eldest brother
<i>nyai</i>	wife of a <i>kiai</i> (see above); a female ulama and teacher in Indonesia; particularly in Java
<i>pengajian</i>	religious study group
<i>perda</i>	peraturan daerah (a regional law)
<i>perna</i>	peraturan nagari (a village law in West Sumatra)
<i>pesantren</i>	"Place of the santri", a traditional Islamic boarding-school
<i>pitji</i>	felt hat
<i>qath'i</i>	a definite or categorical principle in the <i>Qur'an</i> or <i>Hadith</i> whose meaning can not be negotiated or reinterpreted
<i>rajam</i>	Death by stoning; the punishment for a married man who has unlawful sexual intercourse
<i>ramadhan</i>	Ninth month of the Islamic calender during which fasting is required
<i>santri</i>	A devout muslim
<i>seragam</i>	uniform
<i>shahabat</i>	A companion of the Prophet
<i>shalat</i>	prayer conducted 5 times daily

<i>shalawat</i>	praises or odes for the Prophet Muhammed
<i>sharia</i>	Islamic law
<i>tabir</i>	curtain used to segregate the sexes
<i>talakuang/telekung</i>	headdress in the form of a veil
<i>tangkuluak/tengkuluk</i>	folded or tied headdress
<i>taqwa</i>	God-fearing; observing God's commands; piety
<i>UIN</i>	Universitas Islam Negeri, State Islamic University
<i>ulama</i>	religious leaders
<i>umat</i>	the ruled; the religious community
<i>ushul fiqh</i>	The roots of jurisprudence; the principle and methods enabling the development of practical legal rules
<i>wali</i>	chief, elder
<i>zakat</i>	'purification'; the 'wealth tax', payment of which is one of the Five Pillars of Islam

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