

THE POPULARIZING FACTORS OF MUSLIM WOMEN'S WEAR IN INDONESIA

From Politic, Media to Fashion

Ali Tantowi | Universitas PTIQ, Jakarta – Indonesia

Email: alitantowi21@gmail.com

Abstract: This article focuses on exploring factors behind the rising popularity of veiling during the 2000s. The surging fame of the women's Muslim wear is stimulated by the changing trend within the political realm marked by the resurgence of political Islam. These alterations in the political milieu prompted corresponding adjustments in the government's stance towards Islam. Notably, there was a more accommodating approach reflected in policy reforms concerning religious matters. In addition, there are other factors that lead to the rising fame of veil among Indonesian Muslims including media, fashion as well as the celebrity factor. Media in all forms indeed play influential role in promoting the veil with songs, movies and magazines exposing the veil in a positive light. Interestingly, the songs and movies tend to use the encouragement rather obliging the veil; they ways used by the policy. Further usage by celebrity then lead to the extent where the veil becomes common. An interesting yet ironic fashion development turns out to be source for criticism as some of them deemed to be inappropriate. Still, the trend shows that veil has become common to the extent that the emergence of variety is inevitable.

Keywords: Fashion, media, politics, veil.

Introduction

Being the largest Muslim country, Indonesia presents a compelling historical narrative surrounding the evolution of Muslim attire, particularly veiling. Islam's introduction to Indonesia around the eleventh century left an indelible mark on the styles of Indonesian

Muslim dress and the way it is worn.¹ The impact of Islam on Indonesian Muslim attire is evident in the adoption of Arabic terms related to Muslim dress from the beginning of the twentieth century until now. Muslim women attire names use some Arabic such as "*mukena*" and "*jilbab*," and also local terms like, "*kudung*," "*kekudung*," "*berguk*,"² "*rukub*" and "*kerudung*." While certain terms are borrowed from Arabic, their meanings did not always stay consistent with the original interpretation in the source language, often evolving over time. The term "*Mukena*" is a borrowed expression from Arabic, specifically "*miqna*" or "*miqnaa*", originating from the root word q-n-á, which signifies 'to cover.'³ In Ibn al-Mandzur's *Lisan al-Árab*, "*miqnaa*" is elucidated as 'a garment utilized by women to veil their heads and certain portions of their attractive physique.'⁴ Upon adaptation into the Indonesian language, the meaning of *Mukena* has undergone a transformation, as *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* defines it as a fabric enveloping the head and body of a woman, worn specifically during prayers; also referred to as *telekung*.⁵

During the early 20th century in Java, a significant number of Indonesian Muslim women refrained from covering their heads as a routine practice. However, they adhered to the tradition of donning head coverings specifically during prayer sessions or when participating in religious gatherings. The earliest advocacy for the obligation of wearing a headscarf is attributed to Sayyid Uthmân, with the first documentation dating back to October 1899. The book, containing a fatwa, argues that women should cover their heads when leaving their

¹ See for instance, on the influence of Islam and Western culture on Indonesian Dress, Kees van Dijk, "Sarong, Jubba, and Trousers: Appearance as a Means of Distinction and Discrimination," Henk Schulte Nordholt (ed.), *Outward Appearances: Dressing the State and Society* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1997)

² "*Berkuk*" is derived from the Arabic term "*burqa*," which originally referred to a long dress that covered a woman's body and face. This attire was commonly worn by Muslim women, particularly during the performance of the hajj pilgrimage; see W.J.S. Poerwadarmita, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Perpustakaan Perguruan Kementrian P & K, 1954), p. 96.

³ Jones Russell, *Loan-words in Indonesian and Malay* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007) p. 120; H.J. Oosting, *Soendasch-Nederduitsch woordenboek* (Batavia: Ogilvie, 1879), p. 708

⁴ See Ibn al-Mandzur, *Lisan al-Árab*, V. III (Beirut: Dar Lisan al-Árab, n.d.), p. 184.

⁵ Poerwadarmita, *Kamus Umum Bahasa Indonesia*, p. 596.

homes, aligning more closely with discussions prevalent in the Middle East.⁶

The absence of head coverings among numerous Muslim women at that time prompted certain reformist Muslims to assertively advocate and assert that wearing a headscarf is a mandatory obligation for Muslim women. In the effort to encourage women to adopt veiling, Ahmad Dahlan, the founder of Muhammadiyah, initiated a gradual promotion of veiling among Muslim women in Kauman, Yogyakarta, starting in the 1910s when the only women who consistently wore headscarves as part of their daily attire were those who had completed the pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj).⁷ Al-Irsyad, Persis and Nahdlatul Ulama also urged the wearing of hijab not long after.⁸

The advocacy for the veil among modernist Muslims gained significant momentum in the early twentieth century through the use of printed media, sparking intense and negative reactions from other factions in the 1940s. This debate was also influenced by similar trends in Middle Eastern nations, particularly Egypt, which served as a reference point for Islamic issues during that period. Due to the unwavering promotion of the veil, the discourse not only incited polemics but also led to physical violence, ultimately proving counterproductive for the campaign. Consequently, the adoption of the veil among Indonesian Muslims, specifically in Java, during the first half of the twentieth century, was relatively limited, with only a few women affiliated with Islamic organizations.⁹

The discourse surrounding veiling in the 1970s has evolved into an issue linked to the resurgence of Islamic politics. The active involvement of Islamic activists and their propagation efforts played a crucial role in the increasing number of veiled students in public schools, signifying a success for revivalist Muslims in expressing their

⁶ See Nico J.G. Kaptein, "Southeast Asian Debates and Middle Eastern Inspiration: European Dress in West Sumatra at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century," Eric Tagliacozzo (ed.), *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement, and the Longue Durée* (Stanford: Stanford University Press), pp. 176-195.

⁷ See Peacock, *Purifying the faith: the Muhammadiyah Movement in Indonesian Islam* (California: University of Minnesota, 1978), p. 38.

⁸ Muhammad Zain, et. al., "Hijab Discourse in Indonesia: The Battle of Meaning Between Sharia and Culture in Public Space," *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 7, 3 (2023), p. 1668

⁹ Ali Tantowi, "The Quest of Indonesian Muslim Identity: Debates on Veiling From the 1920s to 1940s," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 4, 1 (2010).

political ideals. However, in an attempt to mitigate this political trend, the government implemented a policy prohibiting students in state offices and public schools from adopting veiling, citing it as a violation of the school uniform code. Veiling in public schools was viewed as a form of resistance against state authorities. The media played a significant role in this context by highlighting support from public figures, leading to a shift in official policies on veiling. Consequently, veiling in public places became more widely seen.¹⁰ Despite the challenge encountered by the advocacy for the veil, later development shows how the phenomenon of veiling from the last forty years has transformed into more complex and dynamic. This paper aims to elucidate the transformation of veiling into a pivotal aspect of Muslim women's attire, gaining significant popularity in the 2000s and evolving into a burgeoning fashion trend. Firstly, it will start from the shift in the Indonesian political landscape, coupled with the resurgence of political Islam, that positioned Islam at the forefront of the public sphere, exemplified by the mandatory veiling. Secondly, it will depict the change that gained momentum with support from various aspects, including the mass media, fashion designers, and celebrities. It is expected to show, in sum, that the popularity of veil within today's Indonesian society is indeed due to several factors range from politic to fashion aspect.

The Government's Accommodation of Islam

In the waning years of the New Order regime, Suharto displayed a discernible shift towards accommodating certain Muslim demands for policy adjustments on a broad spectrum of Islamic issues. The manifestation of this accommodation began to crystallize in the early 1990s. Examples include the establishment of the inaugural Islamic bank, Bank Muamalat Indonesia (BMI), in August 1990, the incarceration of a Catholic editor accused of insulting Prophet Muhammad in October 1990, Suharto's endorsement of the formation of Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia (the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals, ICMI) on December 7, 1990, the formalization of Islamic family law in June 1991 through the enactment of the compilation of Islamic law (KHI), , and the Department of Education and Culture's decision to rescind a policy

¹⁰ Ali Tantowi, "Veiling and Politic in Indonesia: Propagated Jilbab in the New Order Era," *Perada* 6, 1 (2023)

prohibiting students from wearing Islamic head coverings in state schools in 1991.¹¹ Some scholars contend that such accommodations were strategic manoeuvres and tactics on Suharto's part rather than genuine support for the demands and expressions of the Indonesian Muslim community.¹²

On the other hand, many Indonesian Muslims perceived the accommodation or mutual symbiosis between Islam and the government as a "necessary condition" for achieving future political objectives. Consequently, they argued that such a condition should be maintained, as evidenced by the stance of DDII. Despite the audacity displayed under Muhammad Natsir's leadership in criticizing the regime, DDII, under Anwar Harjono's stewardship, adopted a more conciliatory approach towards the government's policies. For instance, Harjono accompanied the Minister of Religion, Tarmizi Thaher, and other Muslim leaders to the *halal bihalal* event (Arabic: *ḥalāl biḥalāl*; known as the day of forgiveness) hosted by Suharto at the national palace in 1993. Moreover, DDII agreed to collaborate with ICMI in organizing a seminar in 1994 titled "*Mukjijat al-Quran*." (Ar. Mu'jijāt al-Qur'ān: the Miracle of the Quran).¹³

The economic and political turmoil of 1997 spurred the nascent reformation movements to dismantle the New Order regime. Under the advice of the counsel of Muslim leaders, Suharto, in May 1998, acceded to concluding his presidency. His successor, B.J. Habibie, who concurrently served as the founder and leader of ICMI, faced accusations of being a Suharto ally inheriting the former president's legacy. However, some individuals perceived him as "the suitable figure to guide Indonesia through the transition from an authoritarian to a more democratic era."¹⁴ While critiquing Habibie's government, Porter (2002) also acknowledged that it "represented a significant, albeit not complete, departure from the authoritarian legacy of

¹¹ Abdul Rahim, "Between Piety And Lifestyle: Hijab Shar'i on the Commodification Practices of the Islamic Culture Industry," *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 26, 1 (2022), p. 89; Abdul Azis Thaba, *Islam dan Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1996), pp. 262-302.

¹² See R. William Liddle, "The Islamic Turn in Indonesia: A Political Explanation," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55, 3 (1996), pp. 613-634

¹³ Thaba, *Islam dan Orde Baru*, pp. 350-1

¹⁴ Dewi Fortuna Anwar, "The Habibie Presidency," Geoff Forrester (ed.), *Post-Suharto Indonesia, Renewal or Chaos?* (Leiden and Singapore: KITLV and ISEAS, 1999), p. 46.

Suharto's thirty-two-year rule." On a positive note, Habibie facilitated greater press freedom, instituted multiparty democracy, and endorsed the implementation of democratic elections, along with the dismantling of New Order corporatism.¹⁵

During Habibie's brief tenure in power (May 1998–October 1999), Pancasila ceased to be the exclusive ideological cornerstone for political or mass organizations. This departure was substantiated by the resistance of Muslim groups, previously compelled to embrace Pancasila as the singular basis for their organizations during the Suharto regime.¹⁶ Additionally, Habibie's administration ushered in a political emancipation by lifting Suharto's restrictions on political parties that had been in place since 1973. This transformative environment broadened the political landscape for numerous Muslims, leading to the establishment of Islamic political parties vying for influence in the general election of 1999. Contrary to consolidating Islamic political power, these Muslim parties fragmented into eight Islamic parties and three Muslim-based secular parties. Some Islamic parties grounded themselves solely in Islam as their ideological foundation,¹⁷ while others adopted both Islam and Pancasila.¹⁸ In contrast, Muslim-based parties exclusively adhered to Pancasila as their ideological underpinning, eschewing Islam.¹⁹

Among the eight Islamic parties, three parties classified as Islamist—PK, PBB, and PPP—were dedicated to implementing Sharia by reverting to the Jakarta Charter. Due to their limited success in the 1999 general election, these parties forged a coalition known as the Central Axis (Poros Tengah), primarily comprising Islamic parties,

¹⁵ Donald J. Potter, *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia* (London, New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), p. 218.

¹⁶ See Azyumardi Azra, "The Megawati Presidency: Challenge of Political Islam," Hadi Soesastro, Anthony L. Smith and Han Mui Ling, *Governance in Indonesia: Challenges facing the Megawati Presidency* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2003), p. 45.

¹⁷ They were Partai Bulan Bintang (Crescent and Star Party, PBB), Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP), Partai Umat Islam (Islamic Community Party, PUI), Partai Keadilan (Justice Party, PK), Partai Masyumi and Partai Umat Muslimin Indonesia (Indonesian Muslim Ummah Party, PUMI).

¹⁸ Namely, Partai Kebangkitan Umat (Party of the Ummah Revival, PKU) and Partai Nahdhatul Ummah (Revival Ummah Party, PNU).

¹⁹ Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (National Revival Party, PKB), Partai Islam Demokrat (Democratic Islam Party, PID), Partai Amanat Nasional (National Mandate Party, PAN).

Muslim-based parties, and Golkar. Despite the victory of the Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Pembangunan (PDIP), led by Megawati, Sukarno's daughter, in the 1999 election, Megawati did not assume the presidency. In the framework of representative democracy, a coalition rallied around the formidable candidate K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid, leader of Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (National Awakening Party, PKB), and Nahdhatul Ulama (The Awakening of Ulama, NU). This coalition propelled Abdurrahman Wahid²⁰ to the Indonesian presidency, relegating Megawati to the position of vice president.²¹

Due to the limited influence of Islamic parties in parliament, the three Islamist parties' aspiration to implement Sharia at the national level remained unfulfilled. Nevertheless, substantial reforms were introduced in numerous state policies linked to religious matters. Faced with a setback on the national stage, certain Islamist organizations adopted alternative political strategies, striving to institute Sharia at the local level. Their endeavors proved successful in regions such as Banten, West Sumatra, South Sulawesi, and Aceh, (better be completed with year-and-elaboration) where the implementation of Sharia was sanctioned. Remarkably, these regions were permitted to enact Islamic bylaws without necessitating amendments to the national constitution—a phenomenon Oliver Roy characterizes as Islamization from the grassroots.²² Subsequent to these developments, Islam assumed a pivotal role in public life, fostering the Islamization of the public sphere. One conspicuous manifestation of Islamic bylaws in the aforementioned regions is the dress code, notably the obligatory nature of Muslim women's attire, with a particular emphasis on wearing headscarves.

Islamic Bylaws and Veiling in Java

In the early 2000s, the endeavor to implement Sharia faced challenges in West Java, the lone province in Java grappling with this pursuit. Distinct from South Sulawesi and Aceh, the impetus for Sharia implementation in West Java did not emanate from the provincial hub,

²⁰ Greg Barton, *Gusdur: An Authoritative Biography of Abdurrahman Wahid* (Jakarta, Singapore: Equinex Publishing, 2002)

²¹ For further information on the rise of political Islam in 1999, see Zachary Abuza, *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 20-24

²² Oliver Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1999), p. 24

Bandung. Rather, it originated in its districts such as Cianjur, Tasikmalaya, Indramayu, Garut, and Banten (before the latter attained provincial status).²³ Various regulations enacted by these districts in the early 2000s pertained to moral and religious ethics, encompassing obligations such as Quranic readings and collective ritual prayers (*shalat berjamaah*), the prohibition of gambling and alcohol by shuttering nightclubs, the adoption of Islamic attire, and the application of Islamic ethics—although the precise nature of the latter remains largely nebulous and symbolic, such as inscribing Arabic texts along streets to symbolize Islam. The struggle to implement Sharia in West Java was framed as a pursuit to uphold morality and order (*akhlakul-karimah*), rather than explicitly positioning it as a campaign for the preservation of Islamic laws (*syariat Islam*). This perspective is substantiated by the argument that ethics constitutes the paramount facet of Sharia systems, serving as a yardstick for every Muslim's religious commitment, as underscored in the hadith, "*I was sent to complete the honor of ethics*."²⁴

A notable regulation implemented by local governments involved the imposition of a dress code. Certain West Java districts, including Cianjur and Tasikmalaya, mandated Muslim women employed in both civil service and the private sector to wear headscarves while at work.²⁵ Furthermore, the Tasikmalaya government, in 2001, enacted Policy No. 451/SE/04/SOS/2001, compelling students to wear headscarves from primary schools to universities.²⁶

These newly instituted Islamic bylaws, collaboratively devised by local ulama and government officials, proved efficacious in augmenting the prevalence of veiled women and catalyzing shifts in their perspectives regarding veiling. A 2006 survey conducted by the Center

²³ See Haedar Nashir, *Gerakan Islam Syariat : Reproduksi Salafiyah Ideologis di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pusat Studi Agama dan Peradaban (PSAP) Muhammadiyah, 2007)

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 363–380

²⁵ H.A. Satriyo, "Decentralization and women in Indonesia: One step back, two steps forward?" E. Aspinall and G. Fealy (eds), *Local power and politics in Indonesia. Decentralization and democratization* (Singapore: ISEAS. 2003), pp. 217–29.

²⁶ Dewi Candraningrum, "Perda Sharia and the Indonesian Women's Critical Perspectives," in *Neue Willkuer gegen Frauen in Indonesien: Kontroversen um die Umsetzung der Regionale Scharia-Gesetze Perda Syariah* (*New Arbitrary against Women in Indonesia: Perda Sharia and Women's Rights*), 11 November 2006, SOAI (Suedostasien Informationsstelle, Asienhaus) and MATA Asien in Blick, at ÜBERSEEMUSEUM Bremen, Germany; see <https://asienhaus.de/public/archiv/PaperPERDASHARIA.pdf>, accessed on 8 October 2023.

for the Study of Religion and Culture (CSRC) revealed that among Indonesian Muslims residing in six regions where Islamic bylaws were enforced, the perception regarding the obligation to wear veils escalated significantly, reaching 96.2%. Nearly all respondents concurred that covering their bodies, excluding the face and palms, was obligatory. Furthermore, 24.5% of participants endorsed the notion of covering their faces with the so-called *cadar*, or face veils.²⁷

The imposition of mandatory veiling extended beyond regions officially implementing Islamic bylaws and was also evident in areas like Yogyakarta, Central Java. Notably, in 2002 and 2003, two private universities in Yogyakarta implemented a policy mandating female students to wear veils during class. Furthermore, certain Muslim-run enterprises, encompassing banks, nursery schools, restaurants, food stores, and bookstores, enforced a dress code requiring female employees to wear veils.²⁸ Additionally, Islamic institutions such as madrasahs and pesantrens explicitly began stipulating that visitors adhere to Islamic dress norms, symbolized by banners proclaiming "*Kawasan Wajib Busana Muslim*" (Islamic Dress Area) displayed at their entrances. Based on personal experiences, it is noteworthy that prior to the 2000s, these institutions did not explicitly require visitors to cover their heads, leaving such decisions to visitors' discretion.

Popularizing Islamic Dress

Audio Visual Media

In addition to the political factor, other factors including the media, are indeed in play for the rising popularity of veil. Here, television emerges as a pivotal medium in the widespread promotion of veiling, with songs and films featuring veiled women in television programs playing a crucial role in popularizing and endorsing the practice. There are at least three most popular songs in electronic media. The first one is "*Kerudung Putih*" (White Veil), composed and popularized by the renowned singer and actor Roma Irama, who occasionally was assumed a preaching role. In this song, Irama portrayed a veiled woman as both beautiful and pious, avoiding an

²⁷ Sukron Kamil and Chaider S. Bamualim, *Shariah Islam dan HAM: Dampak Perda Syariah Terhadap Kebebasan Sipil, Hak-Hak Perempuan dan Non-Muslim* (Jakarta: CSRC UIN Jakarta, 2007), pp. 178-183

²⁸ Nancy J. Smith-Hefner, "Javanese Women and the Veil in Post Suharto Indonesia," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 66, 2 (2007), p. 413.

explicit assertion that veiling was obligatory for Muslim women. The lyric is as follows,

“A beautiful face which you hide, behind your white *kerudung*. Behind *kerudung* is concealed your face. You are naturally beautiful as a God’s gift. But not because of that, I love you and not because of that I feel for you. You decorate yourself by good manners; you serve yourself to God. Those are the causes of my love to you. Those are the causes that I feel for you. Behind your headscarf is concealed your face. You are naturally beautiful as God’s gift. No man denies the beauty of your face, your grace attitude, the beauty of your smile. But what blinds eyes is the light of your faith that you show in every foot step, you are such girl that I admire.” (Rhoma Irama, *Kerudung Putih*)²⁹

The lyrics expresses profound description for a woman's inner qualities, with a focus on her piety and good manners which are symbolized by veiling . The symbolism of the white *kerudung* (headscarf) suggests a cultural or religious commitment to modesty, highlighting that true beauty is concealed beneath external appearances. The lyrics emphasizes the person's natural beauty as a divine gift, valuing inner qualities over physical attractiveness. The writers's love is explicitly stated to surpass mere physical appearance, rooted instead in the person's good manners and devotion to God. He praises a woman's adornment through moral conduct and religious dedication, presenting inner qualities as attractive and endearing. Despite acknowledging external beauty, He emphasizes that what truly captivates a woman is the light of the person's faith, suggesting that spiritual qualities overshadow physical allure.

The second most influential songs promoting veiling is "*Busana Muslim*" (Islamic Fashion) In this song, *jilbab* serves as the symbol of Muslim attire and reflects the religious identity of women who wear it. It is portrayed as a source of pride, with no need for shame, and is described as enhancing beauty. The lyrics suggests that wearing a veil indicates a healthy soul, and emphasizes that modest attire, like *jilbab*, does not provoke crime or sexual harassment. The cautionary message advises individuals to be mindful of their clothing choices, implying that provocative attire may tempt young men. Overall, the song promotes the idea that modest dressing, such as wearing *jilbab*, aligns

²⁹ See <https://www.jiosaavn.com/lyrics/kerudung-putih-lyrics/BwYiZjNDXIE>, accessed on 8 October 2023.

with cultural and religious values while discouraging clothing choices that may be perceived as provocative.³⁰

The third one is "*Jilbab Putih*" (White Veil); the lyrics describe that *jilbab* gracefully sways with each step along the road, catching people's gaze. It serves to subdue desire and brings a calming effect to the heart. The elegance of *jilbab* adds a charm the face, while the subtle grace of smile further enhances the beauty. Enchanted by *jilbab*, it is seen as a reflection of faith within heart. The white *jilbab* symbolizes purity, embodying a heart filled with love and a steadfast commitment. Like a radiant light in the midst of a dark night, the white *jilbab* signifies hope and positivity. Behind *jilbab* lies a soul infused with faith, and behind smile, there is the promise of a bright future.³¹

The last two songs gained significant popularity in the 1990s. These two songs were popularized by Nasida Ria music group. It was founded in 1975 in Kauman and led by H. Choliq Zain, and it became the first Islamic modern music in Indonesia. The songs were typically performed by Islamic music groups known as *kasidah* (Arabic: *qaṣida*) during Islamic gatherings and events like the celebration of Muhammad's birth (*maulid nabi*), this song further contributed to shaping the perception of veiling as a symbol of piety and beauty.³²

In addition to songs, certain films played a significant role in popularizing the practice of veiling. Rachmah Ida, who delved into the study of various religious film series, known as *sinetron*, which garnered high ratings, noted that the portrayal of veiling in television series was "modified to fit the trend of Islamic fashion in Indonesia." Veiled characters in these films were depicted as non-conservative Muslims. It appeared that the producers and filmmakers aimed to

³⁰ Here is the lyrics : *Jilbab jilbab lambang busana muslim. Jilbab jilbab cermin wanita alim. Jilbab jilbab jilbab tak perlu malu. Jilbab jilbab bikin cantik dan ayu. Memakai jilbab pancarkan jiwa yang sehat. Busana sopan tidak merangsang maksiat. Banyak pemuda kan tergoda. Karena busana yang merangsang. Hati hati memakai busana.* See : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9R-6nQKnWo>, accessed on 8 October 2023

³¹ Here is the lyrics: *Berkibar jilbabmu di setiap waktu. Di sepanjang jalan ku lihat kamu. Gebyar jilbabmu meredam nafsu. Busanamu menyejukan qalbu. Pesona jilbabmu anggun di wajahmu. Sekilas senyummu menambah ayu. Karena jilbabmu aku terpaku. Cermin takwa iman di dadamu. Jilbab jilbab putih lambang kesucian . Lembut hati penuh kasih teguh pendirian. Jilbab jilbab putih bagaikan cahaya. Yang bersinar di tengah malam gelap gulita. Di balik jilbabmu ada jiwa yang takwa. Di balik senyummu tersimpan masa depan cerah.* See : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZHoiZif_K8, accessed on 8 October 2023.

³² Tantowi, "Veiling and Politic in Indonesia.

project a moderate image of veiling, steering away from a more conservative representation.³³

Another media here is the printed media, the magazine. Magazine does constitute another influential medium in the propagation of veiling. According to an A.C. Nielsen Survey, Indonesian magazines ranked as the third most popular medium for attracting advertisements, trailing behind television and newspapers.³⁴ Beginning in the early 1990s, Muslim women's magazines like *Ummi* and *Annida*, established by Islamist activists, played a crucial role in promoting conservative veiling to Muslim women under the banner of *dakwah* (Arabic: *da'wa*). Diverging from *Ummi* and *Annida*, Islamic magazines in the 2000s, such as *Paras* and *Muslimah*, endorsed a more stylish approach to veiling seemingly disconnected from Islamic activism, initially founded for commercial purposes. Moreover, the chief editor of *Paras*, which achieved a circulation of 70,000 copies in 2000, asserted that the increasing demand was attributed to "the growing veiling trend among female Muslims who wanted to beautify their appearance."³⁵

The popularization of Islamic fashion was not confined to Islamic magazines; secular women's magazines also joined in during the mid-1990s. Founded in 1972 by a group of Jakarta businesswomen as a women's magazine inspired by American counterparts, *Femina* began receiving letters from readers who had embraced Islamic attire. Encouraged and demanded by its readership, *Femina* responded by allocating more space to Islamic fashion, which was previously featured only during specific periods like *Idul Fitri* and *Ramadan*. Consequently, *Femina* portrayed Islamic fashion as professional, attractive, and stylish, often juxtaposing it with Western fashion. This presentation, with both styles appearing in the same frame, conveyed the message that choosing between Islamic and Western fashion was a

³³ See Rachmah Ida, "Muslim Women and Contemporary Veiling in Indonesian sinetron," *Indonesian Islam in a New Era* (Clayton: Monash University Australia, 2008), pp. 47-66.

³⁴ See World Magazine Trends 2001/2002, <http://www.magazineworld.org/assets/downloads/indonesiaWMT01.pdf>

³⁵ See Deny Hamdhani, *The Quest for Indonesian Islam: The Contestation and Consensus Concerning Veiling* (Ph.D Dissertation: The Australian National University, 2007), pp. 112-116.

matter of personal aesthetic preference rather than a religious or political decision.³⁶

In the 2000s, alongside women's magazines, teenage secular magazines also featured an increased number of images depicting veiled women.. However, these publications appeared to strike a balance by incorporating Western fashion images into their content. Notably, the portrayal of veiled females in these magazines was framed as an expression of modernity. These images depicted veiled women participating in activities such as attending music concerts and engaging in modeling contests, rather than being exclusively tied to religious expressions or involvement in religious activities.³⁷

So, both the electronic and printed media frequently featured veiled women. Not only it exposes the veil to fame, it also portrays them in a modern context. One notable event covered by both mediums was a veiled woman achieving success in an annual beauty contest in 2004. Andina Agustina (b. 1986), the sole veiled participant in Miss Indonesia³⁸ 2004 and the first veiled contestant in the history of Miss Indonesia, secured a prize in the Favorite Princess category. In her victory speech, she expressed pride in her accomplishment, emphasizing that being veiled did not hinder her success in the competition. Agustina further asserted her desire to demonstrate that wearing a veil posed no obstacle to participating in various endeavors and achieving success.³⁹

Not only magazines, books also stand out as one of the most influential printed media in disseminating various issues. In this regards, there is a quite significant rise of number of Islamic books that promote veiling experiencing in the early 1990s compared to the relatively sparse offerings in the 1980s. Furthermore, an interesting development during this period is the notable increase in the number of female writers addressing Muslim women's issues, particularly

³⁶ See Carla Jones, "Fashion and Faith in Urban Indonesia," *Fashion Theory*, 11, 2-3 (2007), pp. 23-25

³⁷ For more information, see Suzie Handajani, "Female Sexuality in Indonesian Girls Magazines: Modern Appearance, Traditional Attitudes," *Antropologi Indonesia: Indonesian Journal of Social and Cultural Anthropology* 30, 1 (2006), pp. 49-63.

³⁸ Miss Indonesia is an annual and national beauty contest programme that is part of the Miss Universe pageant – the winner of the contest is the delegated Indonesian participant in Miss Universe

³⁹ Hamdhani, *The Quest for Indonesian Islam*, p. 94.

veiling. In contrast to the predominantly normative nature of books in the 1980s focused on propagating veils,⁴⁰ those in the 1990s delved into more captivating topics and practical concerns related to veiling. These later books explored aspects such as the elegance of veiled women, practical guidance on wearing veils, and maintaining the health of hair, skin, and body while veiled. Some publications even featured images showcasing Islamic fashion styles. This diversified approach captured the interest of a broader readership. Notably, a book titled "*Anggun Berjilbab*" (Elegant with Veils, 1993) was reprinted twelve times, attesting to its widespread popularity.⁴¹

In the 2000s, Islamic books promoting veiling underwent a transformation, with a predominant focus on Islamic fashion literature. These books typically eschewed normative explanations, instead offering guides for creating fashionable Islamic attire and showcasing images of aesthetically pleasing veiled women sporting diverse styles. Many of these publications advocated the notion that veiling can be elegant, beautiful, smart, cool, and more.⁴² The surge in demand for such Islamic fashion books during the 2000s underscored the growing interest of Muslim women in the realm of Islamic fashion. For instance, Kanisius, a publisher that released approximately nine Islamic fashion books, reported impressive sales figures, with individual books reaching up to 45,000 copies sold and undergoing five reprints.⁴³ Notably, titles like "*Kreasi Busana Kerja Wanita Muslim*" (The Variety of Muslim Women's Fashion at Work), published by Gramedia Pustaka Utama, exemplify the versatility of these books, catering not only to adult Muslims for specific occasions but also extending to Muslim children and teenagers across various events. Many of these fashion books were authored by members of APPMI and IPBM, with titles such as "*Modifikasi Busana Muslim*" (The Modification of Muslim

⁴⁰ See for instance, Mullhandy Ibn. Haj, *Enam Puluh Satu Tanya Jawab Tentang Jilbab* (Yogyakarta: Shalahuddin Press, 1986); Fuad M. Fachruddin, *Aurat dan Jilbab Dalam Pandangan Mata Islam* (Jakarta: Yayasan al-Amin, 1984); Istadiyanto, *Hikmah Jilbab Dalam Pembinaan Akhlak* (Solo: Ramadhani, 1984).

⁴¹ See for instance, *Jilbab dan Rambut Sehat* (1991), Nina Surtiretna, *Anggun Berjilbab* (1993)

⁴² See for instance, Muhammad Muhyidin, *Jilbab itu Keren* (Yogyakarta: Diva Press, 2005); Okky Asokawati, *Stylish, Smart and Soleha* (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, 2008).

⁴³ See http://gubuk.sabda.org/sekalipun_krisis_penerbit_kristen_menuai_berkat, accessed on 8 October 2023.

Fashion), "*Busana Pengantin Muslim*" (Muslim Wedding Fashion),⁴⁴ and "*Busana Muslim: Anggun dan Trendy*" (Muslim Fashion: Modist and Trendy).⁴⁵ APPMI acknowledged the continuous publication of up-to-date Islamic fashion books to meet market demands.⁴⁶

A noteworthy observation is that the majority of publishers of Muslim fashion books lack an Islamic background and are, in fact, general publishers, including entities like Gramedia Pustaka Utama and Kanisius, which traditionally have not focused on Islamic literature. Even well-known Christian book publishers, such as Kanisius, have entered the market for Islamic fashion books.⁴⁷ This phenomenon suggests that publishers without specific Islamic ideological interests have ventured into the Islamic fashion market primarily for commercial reasons and the potential for profit.

According to scholars who have delved into the study of the modern Muslim world, including Zeghal (1996), Skovgaard-Petersen (1997), and Eikelman and Piscatori (1996), the prevalence of literacy and the widespread reach of mass media have played pivotal roles. Previously, forms of religious reasoning and doctrinal concepts that were predominantly in the domain of religious scholars became more accessible to the general Muslim population. In this context, books, particularly, contributed significantly to the increase in the number of veiled women in the 1990s. This impact was particularly pronounced among educated women who showed a keen interest in reading Islamic literature. Furthermore, the decision of these women to adopt veiling also contributed to the propagation of veiling itself. Many of the Islamic books emphasized the obligation to propagate veiling to others and often included simple guides on how to promote veiling within families and communities. This dual effect, where women adopting

⁴⁴ See Anne Rufaidah, *Modifikasi Busana Muslim* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2002); Taruna K. Kusmayadi, *Busana Pengantin Muslim* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2005)

⁴⁵ See Iva Lativah, *Busana Muslim Anggun dan Trendi* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2007)

⁴⁶ See APPMI, *Gaya Kontemporer Busana Muslim* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2005), p. 3.

⁴⁷ See http://gubuk.sabda.org/sekalipun_krisis_penerbit_kristen_menuai_berkat, accessed on 8 October 2023

veiling also actively promoted it, played a role in the broader societal adoption of veiling during that period.⁴⁸

An illustrative example of the increasing number of educated veiled women can be observed among female students in state universities. In the late 1970s, for instance, at Gajah Mada University, less than three percent of the entire female student population wore veils.⁴⁹ However, by 1999, this percentage had risen significantly, with sixty percent of female students adopting veils. Interestingly, in the early 2000s, the decision to go veiled on campuses became more associated with social and practical reasons rather than purely religious ones. Many veiled women reported that wearing *jilbab* (headscarf) helped them feel calm and self-assured, especially when participating in classes alongside male students. Such was the popularity of veiling on campuses that it became a subject of jest among university students, with jokes suggesting that wearing *jilbab* had become an unwritten (de facto) requirement for attending university.⁵⁰

Fashion Designers

As explained above, politics and media have played quite major role in leading to the surging popularity of veil. At later development, fashion arguably also contributes to an even more rise in the fame and, thanks to the creative efforts of Islamic fashion designers, the attire associated with veiling then has evolved into a more diverse, appealing, modern, and stylish range. These new aesthetic representations of veiled fashion have succeeded in captivating the interest of women who were previously disinterested due to the perceived rigid and untidy appearances.⁵¹ The endeavors of Islamic fashion designers to popularize stylish veiled attire date back to 1980 when they began promoting their creations in Islamic fashion shows held in Jakarta.⁵² Motivated by the observation that many fashion events in Indonesia were not explicitly Islamic, the Uswatun Hasanah foundation actively organized Islamic fashion shows during the 1980s, particularly in

⁴⁸ See for instance, Nina Surtiretna, "Memasyarakatkan Busana Muslimah," *Anggun Berjilbab* (Bandung: Al-Bayan, 1993), pp. 138-145; Istadiyanto, "Ajakan Berjilbab dan Jalan Keluarnya," *Hikmah Jilbab Dalam Pembinaan Akhlak*, pp. 46-74

⁴⁹ Smith-Hefner, "Javanese Women and the Veil in Post Suharto Indonesia, p. 390

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 401-403

⁵¹ See for instance, Jones, "Fashion and faith in Urban Indonesia, p. 222

⁵² *Panji Masyarakat*, no. 301, p. 77

Bandung, West Java.⁵³ The primary goal of these initiatives by Islamic fashion designers was to challenge the prevailing stereotype associating veiled clothing with unsophisticated rural attire (*kampungan*). Their objective was to transform Islamic attire into a more stylish and fashionable choice, departing from the conventional perception.⁵⁴

Due to the prevailing political climate wherein individuals showcasing Islamic symbols were often labeled as extremists and fundamentalists, this appealing fashion style likely garnered interest from only a limited number of Muslim women. Consequently, due to its lack of popularity, only a handful of designers persevered in the Islamic fashion industry. Notable among them is Ida Royani (b. 1953), who tailored her designs specifically for the Jakarta elite, and Feny Mustafa and Anne Rufaidah (b. 1962), who introduced their creations to various societal strata in West Java.⁵⁵

Islamic fashion gained widespread recognition in 1994 when an Islamic fashion show took place during the second Istiqlal Mosque Festival, attracting a large audience. In this festival, Ida Royani, alongside Ida Leman (b. 1955), Nani Wijaya (b.), and Anne Rufaidah, orchestrated a notable Islamic fashion show. A year later, regardless of any political motives, Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana, the eldest daughter of the New Order president, began donning Muslim attire during official occasions in the mid-1990s. This shift suggested a departure from the previous perception that the government viewed veiling as a symbol of resistance.

The increasing interest among Muslim women in delving into Islamic studies and transforming their appearance by adopting veiling in the 1990s was perceived by fashion designers as a promising market. This recognition prompted the establishment of a dedicated Islamic Fashion Division within the Asosiasi Perancang dan Pengusaha Mode Indonesia (Association of Indonesian Designers and Businessmen of Fashion, APPMI) in 1993. Anne Rufaidah, a member who joined APPMI in 1994, earnestly delved into Islamic fashion, successfully showcasing her designs in various stores and boutiques across Jakarta,

⁵³ Tuty Cholid, *Busana Muslimah* (Bandung: Yayasan Uswatun Hasanah, 1988)

⁵⁴ See for instance, Sonny Muchlison, *Around the World with Shafira* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008), pp. 10-11

⁵⁵ Dewi Anggraeni, *Menjurus Arus: Seperempat Abad Femina mendorong kemajuan wanita Indonesia, 1972-1997* (Jakarta: Gaya Favorit Press, 1997), pp. 263-265

Bandung, Surabaya, Cirebon, Bekasi, and Depok.⁵⁶ Notably, she expanded her fashion business to international markets, including Singapore and Malaysia, in the late 1990s.⁵⁷

The burgeoning population of veiled women also captured the attention of Islamic fashion designers at the provincial level, leading to the establishment of the Ikatan Perancang Busana Muslim Jawa Barat (Association of Muslim Fashion Designers of West Java, IPBM) in 1990s. This organization initiated its presence by organizing professional fashion shows in hotels.⁵⁸

Islamic fashion designs in Indonesia drew significant inspiration from European styles, as revealed by designers during the inaugural Islamic fashion show in 1994, titled 'Trends of Islamic Fashion' at Puri Agung Sahid Hotel. Anne Rufaidah publicly acknowledged that European fashion served as the primary source of inspiration for Islamic fashion in Indonesia. However, designers also drew inspiration from other diverse influences, including China, Morocco, Pakistan, and Indonesian local traditions.⁵⁹ In the subsequent Islamic fashion show in 1996, designer Raizal Rais proudly credited Jackie Onassis as a significant influence on his Islamic fashion designs. Similarly, Dimas Mahendra emphasized his intention to avoid a resemblance to Arabic clothing, highlighting that Islam and Arabic culture were not synonymous.⁶⁰ Designer Denny Malik, responsible for choreographing the Islamic fashion event, incorporated Acheneese and Minangkabau elements, deliberately steering clear of Arabic influences. Malik asserted that Islam should not be portrayed as introverted, rigid, or untidy; instead, she aimed to present a vibrant and contemporary image.⁶¹ Musa Widyatmojo, the supervisor of APPMI, echoed this sentiment, "*Muslim fashion should not be identified with long black scary attire,*

⁵⁶ See *Busana Pengantin Muslim* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2005), p. 69

⁵⁷ Anggraeni, *Menjurus Arus*, pp. 263-265.

⁵⁸ See <https://kemenperin.go.id/artikel/3963/Kemenperin-GelarPameran-Produk-Busana-Muslim>, accessed on 8 October 2023.

⁵⁹ *Kompas*, "Makin Mempopulerkan Busana Muslim," January 30, 1994,

⁶⁰ *Kompas*, "Busana Muslim 96 Laris Menyambut Lebaran," January 14, 1996.

⁶¹ Ariel Heryanto, "The Years of Living Luxurious: Identity Politics of Indonesia's New Rich," *Culture and Privilege in Capitalist Asia* (New York: Routledge, 1999), p. 176

*but Muslim women can appear in nice, trendy, up-to-date fashion. Indonesia is a trendsetter for Muslim fashion followed by Malaysia."*⁶²

The surge in Muslim women's interest in Islamic fashion emerged in the mid-1990s, sparking a growing demand for Islamic fashion products.⁶³ This trend not only drew in more entrepreneurs but also exhibited remarkable stability, sustaining a steady customer base even during the economic crisis of the late 1990s.⁶⁴ Notably, the most significant spike in demand occurred during the month of Ramadan, when nearly all Muslims sought new clothes to commemorate Idul Fitri.⁶⁵

Veiled Celebrities

Before the popularization of veiling in the late 1990s, only a handful of female actresses and singers chose to adopt this practice during its less fashionable period. These early pioneers included Ida Royani, Ida Leman, and Neno Warisman (b. 1964). Ida Royani, in particular, stands out as one of the first prominent actresses to embrace veiling in 1978. However, following this decision, she departed from the entertainment industry, which typically demanded an uncovered head, and shifted her focus to Islamic fashion, specifically targeting elite individuals, including celebrities. Similarly, Neno Warisman experienced a decline in her career as a movie star and singer after choosing to go veiled in 1991. Nonetheless, post-2000, her veiled persona saw a resurgence in the electronic media landscape, where she became a popular presenter, preacher, and occasional actress. This revival culminated in her receiving an award from the Council of Indonesian Ulama (MUI) in 2005. Unlike Ida Royani, Neno Warisman actively promoted veiling to other Muslim women rather than focusing solely on designing Islamic fashion.⁶⁶ Her unique veiling

⁶² See http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/textile-news/newsdetails.aspx?news_id=26900, accessed on 8 October 2023

⁶³ See Kompas, "Peminat Terus Meningkat," January 14, 1996.

⁶⁴ See Eman Mulyatman, "Bisnis Busana Muslimah Bertahan di Masa Susah" in *Sabili* 8 (2001), pp. 67-9; "Hj. Hidayati Leman: Perancang Busana Muslim," *Profil Tokoh Wanita Muslim Indonesia* (Jakarta: 2002), pp. 82-83

⁶⁵ See Yun, "Ngarepake Lebaran, Rukuh Lan Busana Muslim Laris," in *Jaya Baya* 54, 19 (2000), pp. 12-3

⁶⁶ Hamdhani, *The Quest for Indonesian Islam*, pp. 94 -97

style served as inspiration for other Muslim women and was further developed by fashion designers such as Iva Latifah.⁶⁷

It was only in the mid-1990s, as Islam gained more prominence in the public sphere, that veiled celebrities became increasingly common. Among the renowned models and actresses who chose to adopt veiling during this period were Astrie Ivo and Marissa Haque in 2000,⁶⁸ Ratih Sanggarwati around 2000,⁶⁹ and Inneke Koesherawati in 2002.⁷⁰ Their decisions to embrace veiling served as inspiration for some Muslim women to follow suit. For example, Andina Agustina, the winner of Miss Indonesia in the favorite category, mentioned that her choice to go veiled was influenced by her admiration for the renowned and beautiful actress Inneke Koesherawati, who had undergone a significant transformation by adopting the veil. Furthermore, according to a survey conducted by a shampoo company, Inneke Koesherawati emerged as a significant figure inspiring other women to adopt veiling. This recognition led her to feature in the first shampoo advertisement showcasing a veiled woman.⁷¹

Companies specializing in Islamic attire do not haphazardly leverage the popularity of celebrities to endorse their products. An exemplar of this approach is Shafira, established in 1990, which evolved into one of the major enterprises in the Islamic clothing market. To amplify its market presence and assert its dominance, Shafira initiated the use of celebrities as its brand ambassadors starting in 1999. Two notable icons in the realm of Islamic fashion emerged from this strategy: the initial figurehead was Marissa Haque, a renowned actress and model, who served as the brand's icon from 1999 to 2003. Subsequently, Inneke Koesherawati, an acclaimed and attractive actress, assumed the role of Shafira's icon from 2001 onwards.⁷²

⁶⁷ Iva Latifah, *Busana Muslim: Anggun dan Trendy* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2007), pp. 60-65

⁶⁸ Citra, 3 December 2000

⁶⁹ Suara Merdeka, 7 December 2001

⁷⁰ Pikiran Rakyat, 16 July 2002

⁷¹ Hamdhani, *The Quest for Indonesian Islam*, p. 94

⁷² Muchlisson, *Around the World with Shafira*, pp. 26-7.

Recent Veiling Trends and the Debate

The surge in popularity of veiling among Indonesian Muslim women has given rise to new trends, as indicated by various terms like "*jilbab funky*" (funky veil), "*jilbab gaul*" (sociable veil), and "*jilbab sensual*" (sensual veil).⁷³ Additionally, specific terms have been coined in association with public figures and actresses, such as "*Jilbab Ala Neno*," "*Jilbab Aisyah*," "*Jilbab Zaskia*," "*Jilbab Teh Ninih*," and "*Jilbab Manohara*," jilbab Nisa Sabyan," are among others.⁷⁴ This Muslim women's fashion trend, particularly embraced by young Indonesian women, is often categorized as "Sensual Islam" signifying the practice of wearing headscarves while donning form-fitting attire that accentuates their body contours, thereby attracting male attention.⁷⁵

Stylish and trendy veiling gained significant popularity among university students in Java, particularly at Islamic universities where it resonated with modernity and fashion trends. A study conducted on the trend of stylish veiling at three Islamic universities in Yogyakarta—Universitas Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic University, UII), Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta, UMY), and Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga (State Islamic University, UIN)—revealed that nearly all female respondents believed that embracing modernity entails following contemporary trends, both in attire and mindset. It seems that they simply understand modernity as being the opposite of traditionalism and being out of date.⁷⁶ This inclination towards stylish veiling appears to be more influenced by a desire to align with modernity rather than driven by religious considerations. Furthermore, their behavior does not necessarily align with the image of devout Muslim women, as they often engage in public displays of what is considered "un-Islamic behavior," such as openly expressing romantic relationships in public

⁷³ See for instance, Mohammad Asmawi, *Islam Sensual: Membedah Fenomena Jilbab Trendi* (Yogyakarta: Darussalam, 2003), pp. 127-164; Solichul Hadi, *Jilbab Funky Tapi Syar'i* (Yogyakarta: Diwan, 2006)

⁷⁴ See <http://portal.cbn.net.id/cbprtl/cyberwoman/detail.aspx?x=Fashion&y=> accessed on 13 December 2009

⁷⁵ To my knowledge, this term was popularized by Emha Ainun Najib who also contributed to the popularity of jilbab from the late 1980s to the 1990s. He conducted a theatrical show that attracted many people to come. See <https://www.caknun.com/-/2022/lautan-jilbab-satu/> and see Emha Ainun Najib, *Syair Lautan Jilbab* (Jombang: Yayasan al-Muhammady, 1989)

⁷⁶ Asmawi, *Islam Sensual: Membedah Fenomena Jilbab Trendi*, pp. 9-10

spaces.⁷⁷ These observations suggest that their decision to don the veil may be more driven by a societal norm rather than a deeply rooted religious conviction.

Certain revivalist Muslim groups assert that contemporary Islamic fashion trends have strayed from their original purpose of concealing women's femininity or nature appeal. They accuse Islamic fashion designers, responsible for popularizing these trends, of lacking a thorough understanding of the true principles of Islamic dress.⁷⁸ According to these groups, the current styles of veiling do not accurately reflect the Islamic concept of veiling, wherein clothing is intended to cover the body and shield its femininity from the male gaze. Additionally, they criticize stylish veiled women for behaviors in public spaces that, in their view, violate the sanctity and intended meaning of wearing the veil.

Their discontent with fashionable veiling is evident, particularly in their publications affiliated with publishers like Mujahid Press and Persis Press, which, ideologically, share common ground. As outlined in the initial chapter, Persis has historically been a prominent Muslim organization advocating veiling since the 1930s. In the early 2000s, certain revivalist writers contended that such stylish veils were being used in inappropriate ways and should be deemed non-Islamic. Examples include Abu al-Ghifari's "*Kudung Gaul: Berjilbab Tapi Telanjang*" (Gaul Veil: Veiled but Naked) and Muhammad Asmawi's "*Islam Sensual: Membedah Fenomena Jilbab Trendi*" (Sensual Islam: Analyzing the Phenomenon of Trendy Veils).⁷⁹

Revivalists' disapproval of fashionable veiling was not solely expressed intellectually but also manifested in their actions. In August 2002, female students reported the existence of vigilante groups attempting to curb "inappropriate behaviors" among veiled young women, such as wearing stylish veils or engaging in romantic relationships (*pacaran*) or secluded meetings (*kehalwat*). These militant groups offered advice to stylishly veiled women and, in some cases, chastised them for their perceived improprieties. There were instances where they forcibly removed headscarves and confronted boyfriends, asserting that the women had violated the sanctity of the headscarf

⁷⁷ Achmad Warid, "Trend Busana Muslimah Gaul di Perguruan Tinggi Islam Yogyakarta," *Jurnal Penelitian Agama* 14, 3 (2005), pp. 428-440

⁷⁸ Abu al-Ghifari, *Kudung Gaul: Berjilbab Tapi Telanjang* (Bandung: Mujahid, 2002), p. 11

⁷⁹ See Ibid.; Asmawi, *Islam Sensual: Membedah Fenomena Jilbab Trendi*.

through their actions. One conservative Islamist organization vehemently denouncing trendy veils was the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (the Council of Indonesian Jihad Fighters, MMI). Its executive director regarded the recent trend of sexually alluring veils as "a serious threat to the Islamic Social Order for which MMI was struggling," emphasizing that the promotion of veiling was seen as a crucial initial step towards implementing sharia.⁸⁰

Some revivalists posit that the proliferation of stylish and trendy Islamic fashion is a result of a purported Christian and Jewish conspiracy. They view Christians and Jews as perpetual adversaries of Islam and assert that these groups, opposed to Islamic teachings, seek to subvert Muslim practices. Citing Quranic verse 2:120 to substantiate their claims against non-Muslims, these revivalists argue that, as Muslim women increasingly adhere to Islamic ethical dress codes, Christians and Jews aim to undermine these efforts by promoting fashionable Islamic dress. According to their perspective, the ultimate goal is to erode Muslim morality (*akhlak*) and divert them from authentic Islamic principles. The executive director of MMI in the early 2000s even expressed suspicion that the phenomenon of trendy veiling is part of a broader conspiracy, potentially sponsored by Jews and Christians, with the intention of undermining Islam.⁸¹ There are less tension of the debate in recent development. Despite the fact that the various trends of 'problematic' veil trend still exist, the debate no longer as contentious. Admittedly, there are still a number of figures who voice their concern. Yet, the overall picture shows that with the veil becomes very popular and common among Indonesian Muslims nowadays, its various trends also becomes more acceptable.

Conclusion

The turning point of veiling popularity among Indonesia Muslims was influenced by changes in Indonesia's political landscape and the resurgence of political Islam. These circumstances prompted alterations in the government's approach towards Islam, manifesting in more accommodating policies, notably the acceptance of Islamic bylaws (*Perda Syariah*) in specific regions. Consequently, Islam assumed a central role in the public sphere, exemplified by the mandatory

⁸⁰ Smith-Hefner, "Javanese Women and the Veil in Post Suharto Indonesia, pp. 413-4

⁸¹ See al-Ghifari, *Kudung Gauk: Berjilbab Tapi Telanjang*, pp. 7-8; Khalid bin Abdurrahman asy-Syayi, *Bahaya Mode* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1995), pp. 22-27.

veiling in certain areas in the name of moral and social ethics. Supported by media, fashion designers, and celebrities, veiling transcended regional boundaries, becoming a widespread trend among Indonesian Muslims, even in regions without Islamic bylaws. The negative stigma associated with veiling gradually diminished and eventually dissipated, marking a significant cultural shift.

Another significant factor is the media. As the veil being portrayed very positively in various forms of medias including songs, movies and pictures in magazines and so forth, the veil no longer associated with backwardness; rather is perceived now as symbol of modernity in addition to being the symbol of modesty and harmony. Furthermore, the increasing visibility of Islam in the public sphere, both directly and indirectly, contributed to a rise in the number of veiled women in Java. Islamic fashion designers and entrepreneurs recognized this phenomenon as a lucrative market for Islamic fashion. Islamic fashion became an integral part of the lifestyle of Muslim Indonesian women, seen as compatible with religious values and modernity.

However, critics argued that the trend in Islamic fashion primarily accommodated modernity, fostering a consumerist culture rather than authentically reflecting religious values and the propagation of Islam. Some accused Islamic fashion trends of deviating from their religious purpose, characterizing them as a conspiracy orchestrated by enemies of Islam. Despite these criticisms, mainstream Muslims appeared more drawn to the flourishing Islamic fashion market, as evidenced by the popularity of Islamic fashion books compared to literature from their opponents. This indicates a significant demand for Islamic fashion within the Muslim community.

At the end, the fact that now veil is now very common and popular among Indonesian Muslims actually is due to many factors range from politics, media and fashion. []

References

- “Hj. Hidayati Leman: Perancang Busana Muslim”. *Profil Tokoh Wanita Muslim Indonesia*. Jakarta: 2002.
- Abuza, Zachary. *Political Islam and Violence in Indonesia*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.

- al-Ghifari, Abu. *Kudung Gaul: Berjilbab Tapi Telanjang*. Bandung: Mujahid, 2002.
- al-Mandzur, Ibn. *Lisan al-Árab*, V. III. Beirut: Dar Lisan al-Árab, n.d..
- Anggraeni, Dewi. *Menjurus Arus: Seperempat Abad Femina mendorong kemajuan wanita Indonesia, 1972-1997*. Jakarta: Gaya Favorit Press, 1997.
- Anwar, Dewi Fortuna. "The Habibie Presidency". Geoff Forrester (ed.). *Post-Subarto Indonesia, Renewal or Chaos?*. Leiden and Singapore: KITLV and ISEAS, 1999.
- APPMI. *Gaya Kontemporer Busana Muslim*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2005.
- Asmawi, Mohammad. *Islam Sensual: Membedah Fenomena Jilbab Trendi*. Yogyakarta: Darussalam, 2003.
- Asokawati, Okky. *Stylish, Smart and Soleha*. Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, 2008.
- asy- Syayi, Khalid bin Abdurrahman. *Bahaya Mode*. Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1995.
- Azra, Azyumardi. "The Megawati Presidency: Challenge of Political Islam". Hadi Soesastro, Anthony L. Smith and Han Mui Ling. *Governance in Indonesia: Challenges facing the Megawati Presidency*. Singapore: ISEAS, 203.
- Barton, Greg. *Gusdur: An Authoritative Biography of Abdurrahman Wabid*. Jakarta, Singapore: Equinex Publishing, 2002
- Candraningrum, Dewi. "Perda Sharia and the Indonesian Women's Critical Perspectives". in *Neue Willkuer gegen Frauen in Indonesien: Kontroversen um die Umsetzung der Regionale Scharia-Gesetze Perda Syariah (New Arbitrary against Women in Indonesia: Perda Sharia and Women's Rights)*, 11 November 2006, SOAI (Suedostasien Informationsstelle, Asienhaus) and MATA Asien in Blick, at ÜBERSEEMUSEUM Bremen, Germany; see <https://asienhaus.de/public/archiv/PaperPERDASHARIA.pdf>, accessed on 8 October 2023.
- Cholid, Tuty. *Busana Muslimah*. Bandung: Yayasan Uswatun Hasanah, 1988.
- Citra, 3 December 2000
- Fachruddin, Fuad M. *Aurat dan Jilbab Dalam Pandangan Mata Islam*. Jakarta: Yayasan al-Amin, 1984

- Hadi, Solichul. *Jilbab Funky Tapi Syar'i*. Yogyakarta: Diwan, 2006.
- Hamdhani, Deny. *The Quest for Indonesian Islam: The Contestation and Consensus Concerning Veiling*. Ph.D Dissertation: The Australian National University, 2007.
- Handajani, Suzie. "Female Sexuality in Indonesian Girls Magazines: Modern Appearance, Traditional Attitudes". *Antropologi Indonesia: Indonesian Journal of Social and Cultural Anthropology* 30, 1 (2006).
- Heryanto, Ariel. "The Years of Living Luxurious: Identity Politics of Indonesia's New Rich". *Culture and Privilege in Capitalist Asia*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- http://gubuk.sabda.org/sekalipun_krisis_penerbit_kristen_menuai_be_rkat, accessed on 8 October 2023.
- http://gubuk.sabda.org/sekalipun_krisis_penerbit_kristen_menuai_be_rkat, accessed on 8 October 2023
- <http://portal.cbn.net.id/cbprtl/cyberwoman/detail.aspx?x=Fashion&y=> accessed on 13 December 2009
- http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/textile-news/newsdetails.aspx?news_id=26900, accessed on 8 October 2023
- <http://www.magazineworld.org/assets/downloads/indonesiaWMT01.pdf>
- <https://kemenperin.go.id/artikel/3963/Kemenperin-GelarPameran-Produk-Busana-Muslim>, accessed on 8 October 2023.
- <https://www.caknun.com/2022/lautan-jilbab-satu/>
- <https://www.jiosaavn.com/lyrics/kerudung-putih-lyrics/BwYiZjNDXIE>, accessed on 8 October 2023.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZHoIZifK8>, accessed on 8 October 2023.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9R-6nQKnWo>, accessed on 8 October 2023
- Ibn. Haj, Mullhandy. *Enam Puluh Satu Tanya Jawab Tentang Jilbab*. Yogyakarta: Shalahuddin Press, 1986.
- Ida, Rachmah. "Muslim Women and Contemporary Veiling in Indonesian sinetron," *Indonesian Islam in a New Era*. Clayton: Monash University Australia, 2008.

- Istadiyanto. *Hikmah Jilbab Dalam Pembinaan Akhlak*. Solo: Ramadhani, 1984.
- Jones, Carla. "Fashion and Faith in Urban Indonesia". *Fashion Theory*, 11, 2-3 (2007).
- Kamil, Sukron and Chaider S. Bamualim. *Shariah Islam dan HAM: Dampak Perda Syariah Terhadap Kebebasan Sipil, Hak-Hak Perempuan dan Non-Muslim*. Jakarta: CSRC UIN Jakarta, 2007.
- Kaptein, Nico J.G. "Southeast Asian Debates and Middle Eastern Inspiration: European Dress in West Sumatra at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century". Eric Tagliacozzo (ed.). *Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement, and the Longue Durée*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Kompas. "Busana Muslim 96 Laris Menyambut Lebaran". January 14, 1996.
- Kompas. "Makin Mempopulerkan Busana Muslim". January 30, 1994.
- Kompas. "Peminat Terus Meningkatkan". January 14, 1996.
- Kusmayadi, Taruna K. *Busana Pengantin Muslim*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2005.
- Lativah, Iva. *Busana Muslim Anggun dan Trendi*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2007.
- Lativah, Iva. *Busana Muslim: Anggun dan Trendy*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2007.
- Liddle, R. William. "The Islamic Turn in Indonesia: A Political Explanation". *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55, 3 (1996).
- Muchlison, Sonny. *Around the World with Shafira*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2008.
- Muhyidin, Muhammad. *Jilbab itu Keren*. Yogyakarta: Diva Press, 2005.
- Mulyatman, Eman. "Bisnis Busana Muslimah Bertahan di Masa Susah". in *Sabili* 8 (2001).
- Najib, Emha Ainun. *Syair Lautan Jilbab*. Jombang: Yayasan al-Muhammadiyah, 1989.
- Nashir, Haedar. *Gerakan Islam Syariat : Reproduksi Salafiyah Ideologis di Indonesia*. Jakarta: Pusat Studi Agama dan Peradaban (PSAP) Muhammadiyah, 2007.
- Oosting, H.J. *Soendasch-Nederduitsch woordenboek*. Batavia: Ogilvie, 1879.

- Panji Masyarakat, no. 301.
- Peacock, James. *Purifying the faith: the Muhammadiyah Movement in Indonesian Islam*. California: University of Minnesota, 1978.
- Pikiran Rakyat, 16 July 2002
- Poerwadarmita, W.J.S. *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Perpustakaan Perguruan Kementrian P & K, 1954.
- Poter, Donald J. *Managing Politics and Islam in Indonesia*. London, New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002.
- Rahim, Abdul. "Between Piety And Lifestyle: Hijab Shar'i on the Commodification Practices of the Islamic Culture Industry". *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 26, 1 (2022)
- Roy, Oliver. *The Failure of Political Islam*. London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1999.
- Rufaidah, Anne. *Modifikasi Busana Muslim*. Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2002
- Russell, Jones. *Loan-words in Indonesian and Malay*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007
- Satriyo, H.A. "Decentralization and women in Indonesia: One step back, two steps forward?". E. Aspinall and G. Fealy (eds). *Local power and politics in Indonesia. Decentralization and democratization*. Singapore: ISEAS. 2003.
- Smith-Hefner, Nancy J. "Javanese Women and the Veil in Post Suharto Indonesia". *The Journal of Asian Studies* 66, 2 (2007).
- Suara Merdeka, 7 December 2001
- Surtiretna, Nina. "Memasyarakatkan Busana Muslimah". *Anggun Berjilbab*. Bandung: Al-Bayan, 1993.
- Tantowi, Ali. "The Quest of Indonesian Muslim Identity: Debates on Veiling From the 1920s to 1940s". *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 4, 1 (2010).
- Tantowi, Ali. "Veiling and Politic in Indonesia: Propagated Jilbab in the New Order Era". *Perada* 6, 1 (2023)
- Thaba, Abdul Azis. *Islam dan Orde Baru*. Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1996.
- van Dijk, Kees. "Sarong, Jubbah, and Trousers: Appearance as a Means of Distiction and Discrimination". Henk Schulte

- Nordholt (ed.). *Outward Appearances: Dressing the State and Society*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 1997.
- Warid, Achmad. "Trend Busana Muslimah Gaul di Perguruan Tinggi Islam Yogyakarta". *Jurnal Penelitian Agama* 14, 3 (2005).
- Yun, See. "Ngarepake Lebaran, Rukuh Lan Busana Muslim Laris". *Jaya Baya* 54, 19 (2000).
- Zain, Muhammad et. al. "Hijab Discourse in Indonesia: The Battle of Meaning Between Sharia and Culture in Public Space". *Samarah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga dan Hukum Islam* 7, 3 (2023).