

**Interview by Jemma Purdey with Fatima Hussein, Yogyakarta, 28 May 2014
Phd, Islamic studies, Melbourne University, 1999-2003.**



[00:00:05]	Grew up in Solo, Central Java, the youngest of three and the only daughter, so she was spoilt. Her grandfather was from Yemen, and came to Indonesia and married her grandmother who was half Yemeni and half Indonesian. They had ten children and Fatima's mother was the seventh. The family is quite traditional and religious but education is valued. As a young teenager she enjoyed going to Bandung where her older cousins were studying.	Childhood; Family background
[00:03:30]	The family lived in her grandparents' big house, in Solo, with members of the extended family and she and her cousin of a similar age were like sisters. They went to a private Islamic senior high school, nearby, where most of the students were of Yemeni descent. She finished school in 1984 and went to Yogyakarta State University (UNY) and did philosophy. [Description of how she came to choose that university.]	Childhood; Family background; Early education; Undergraduate education
[00:08:14]	She was introduced to a more critical way of looking at religion and it raised questions for her and caused internal conflict. Challenges involved in moving between university and home and trying to reconcile their different approaches to religion. [Story about how she used those notes to write a piece to commemorate Pak Usa Sahari, her Islamic philosophy lecturer's, 60th birthday.] She was already seen as a bit of a rebel in the family.	Early education; Religion; Family
[00:11:54]	Graduated with a departmental award and became a teacher, she was already working as an assistant to Pak Usa, but she felt so young and was teased by her students so she wanted to do further study. She worked for two years in Pak Usa's publishing house and research centre and he paid for her to learn English at Gajah Mada	Undergraduate education; Early career; Scholarship opportunities; Motives to study overseas

	University (UGM). Then she got a job lecturing at UGM and a year later saw an ad for a scholarship to McGill. It was her dream to study overseas and she was accepted and did nine months academic English study in Bali but at first her mother (who was divorced from her father when Ima was three) wouldn't let her go, but then she did.	
[00:16:52]	It was her first time overseas, she didn't know how to cook and didn't know anything about Canada. Did her master's in Islamic philosophy by coursework with minor thesis.. She submitted in March, so had a few months to spare and went to Hollywood in LA. [Anecdote about missing out on a dean's honour award.]	Studying overseas; Living in Canada
[00:19:44]	They were very poor because the Canadian government scholarship was only just enough to live on. Studying in English was hard at first but she made friends and learned from them and she ended up getting 3.8 out of 4.0. During the first year she lived with Indonesians but in the second year her friend offered her a place living with a Pakistani woman and her ten-year-old son and that worked out well.	Living in Canada; Friendships
[00:23:05]	She went back to Indonesia in 1997. The Rector of IAIN asked all the foreign alumni to apply to do PhDs and said there was an opportunity at ANU. So in 1998 she applied to do a sandwich program and was accepted. The program was cancelled because of the political turmoil in Indonesia at the time but she was encouraged to apply for an AusAID scholarship. [Story about her interview with Krishna Sen.]	Scholarships opportunities; Application process
[00:26:47]	Was accepted and went to Jakarta for six week training where people told her to go to Melbourne not Canberra. So she contacted Abdullah Saeed and went to Melbourne in July 1999. [Anecdote about 'Fatimah's corner' in the MIALS (Melbourne Institute for Asian Languages and Societies) building and her mum coming to visit Melbourne for a month in September 2002.]	Pre-departure training; Arriving in Australia; Family; Studying in Australia
[00:31:10]	Her life in Melbourne was completely different to her life in Canada because she worked as a research assistant for Prof. Saeed and, in 2000, Ariel Heryanto came and he introduced her to different social theories. She learnt a lot outside university and was involved in informal discussion groups. She was the postgraduate representative for the MIALS students. The	Living in Australia; Studying in Australia; Leadership; Work experience in Australia; Leisure activities; Travelling in Australia; Scholarship opportunities; Professional network

	<p>facilities were good, people were very friendly and she tutored for Ariel's courses in bahasa Indonesia, at the advanced level. So she earned money and could experience the culture – go to the ballet, the orchestra, Lygon St – something she missed a lot in Montreal. Also got the MA Bartlett scholarship for travel so went to Sydney for fun, Tasmania with a friend, New Zealand (twice) to present a paper and to Canberra, to the ANU on a NVSS (National Visiting Scholar Scheme) scholarship for a month.</p>	
[00:36:32]	<p>Went to Indonesia probably once a year, twice for field work and once on the way to present a paper at National University of Singapore. And her husband came three or four times. They were married in 1999, in Indonesia, then she came back to Australia. He's a civil servant so couldn't leave his job for very long but he visited, once for a few months, and they made a lot of phone calls.</p>	<p>International mobility; Family</p>
[00:39:36]	<p>Submitted her dissertation in September or October 2003 and got the results mid-2004 with very minor revisions, only a few words. Abdullah was her primary supervisor, with Arief Budiman. She became good friends with tutors from Japanese and Chinese studies and they came to her farewell party. Few other students got a farewell party. Accommodation? At first with a family in West Brunswick for a few months, until she was married. Then she rented various units around Brunswick sometimes with her husband, sometimes with other Indonesian students and finally she stayed near the university in Dorrit St with two other Indonesians.</p>	<p>Studying in Australia; Supervisor-student relationship; Friendships; Living in Australia; Indonesian community in Australia</p>
[00:42:59]	<p>Religion and faith in Melbourne? Except for Idul Fitri and Idul Adha she didn't go to a mosque, it was a bit far to walk and she didn't feel like she belonged to the community of the closest mosque. She preferred to have a more personal relationship with God. She sometimes went to the semi-mosque at the university for Friday prayer. She didn't have a religious community in Melbourne, didn't even join in with the Indonesian community that much because she wanted to maximise the opportunity to experience being there.</p>	<p>Religious practice in Australia; Living in Australia</p>
[00:46:26]	<p>Had three good friends. She met them in and around MIALS. Really likes Melbourne because still has friends there. [Chatting with Jemma</p>	<p>Friendships; Returning to Australia; Ongoing connections with</p>

	about when they met, mutual friends and Jemma's work.] Got an Endeavour scholarship in 2010 so went to ANU for two and a half months, with her husband, and could do her own research. Spoke a few times and did a short course about leadership.	Australia; Scholarship opportunities
[00:53:04]	She got a Fulbright scholarship in 2008 to go to the US for three months. She was based at the University of Seattle and did some guest lectures about Islamic perspective of women. When she came back from Canada her family saw how she'd changed and she was critical of how the women in the family waited on the men and ate after them. She even ate with the men and showed them that she can be like that and still maintain her faith. [Comments about wearing her scarf in Indonesia and in Melbourne soon after 9/11, anecdotes about how people responded to her as a Muslim.]	Scholarship opportunities; International mobility; Living in Australia
[00:58:29]	Went for her hajj in 2006 and again with her mum in 2009 to do the umrah. She was also invited by the director of diplomacy from the Indonesian Ministry for Foreign Affairs to be part of annual bilateral meetings between Indonesia and Austria, and is involved in Vienna International Christian Islamic Summer University, which happens every two years, so has travelled to Europe every year since 2009. In 2012 she taught in Salzburg out of that connection. Last year she got funding from the Ministry of Religious Affairs to do collaborative research with Professor Stefan Hammer into social challenges to Muslim minorities in the EU, in Athens, Berlin, Vienna and Belgium. [Elaborates about this work.]	Professional networks; International mobility; Career
[01:05:14]	[Anecdote about staying in a Benedictine monastery in Altenburg, Austria in 2009 and getting to know Prof, Hammer who comes to Indonesia every year now.]	International mobility
[01:10:22]	[Discussion about balancing work and family life, opportunities that can't be taken now that she has her son and involvement in a Canadian community development project that takes her to Makassar and Surabaya every month.]	Career; Family; Professional network
[01:13:14]	Involvement in other organisations? She is the coordinator for the Australian Reference Group (ARG). The members were chosen and Michael Bracher invited her to be the coordinator for education. Last year they did some PD events and research looking at international programs at	Alumni network; Professional network

	different universities. This year they're revising some of the activities. For a few years Fatima also interviewed candidates for different scholarship programs, reviewed PhD applications for AusAID and, recently, was asked to be a reviewer, on the selection committee, for a new Indonesian scholarship, the Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education (LPDP) funded by the Ministry of Finance. Any Indonesian is eligible and the budget is unlimited. This is better than the DIKTI scholarships.	
[01:20:35]	[Discussion about other Australian alumni and the project.]	
[01:27:51]	END	