

Interview by Jemma Purdey and Ahmad Suaedy with Erni Haryanti Kahfi, Bandung, 30 April 2014

Phd, Gender studies, Flinders University, 2000 cohort



[00:00:50]	Arrived in Australia in 2002. Wanted to study abroad to upgrade knowledge and meet people. Also grew up with Beatles songs and other English language songs and wanted to visit those countries. Came from a big religious family. Father is from Bandung, mother is from another region but lived in Bandung from the 60s. Erni was born in Serang, Banten province but thinks of herself as from Bandung. Second of six children, three girls and three boys.	Background; childhood; western influences
[00:04:44]	Went to the local state schools, not religious schools. Went to a religious university. The state schools were not religious, Erni went to extra classes and friends asked her to help them read the Koran. The family was religious but the environment at the time was secular.	Early education
[00:08:23]	Had the idea of studying overseas from childhood, studied English at school (compulsory), got good marks. At university studied English. After graduating saw a flyer about studying at McGill	Undergraduate studies; international study

	(Montreal) and applied. Collaboration between McGill and Ministry of Religious Affairs.	
[00:11:09]	McGill alumni: many work for the ministry e.g. Pak Harun Nasution, Mukti Ali, Munawar Sajal, have influence in Jakarta. Erni did a Master's of Islamic Studies, that's what McGill offers Indonesian scholars. Went to Montreal with a group from all over Indonesia from 1993 to 1995. After 1996 McGill focused only on Jakarta and Jogja. Fellow students included Harudi Nasution, the director of postgraduate program at the UII in Jogja, and Nawir, the postgraduate director at IAIN in Medan. Going to Montreal was the first time overseas, went alone, husband and child followed after six months.	Networks; living in Canada
[00:15:48]	Came back to same job in 1995, after six years wanted to go again. Had been attending a lot of women's studies conferences in Indonesia, met people from Australia and was encouraged to apply. Got an ADS. Didn't pursue applications to other countries. Wanted to go for at least a year so the family could come too. Research proposal was influenced by her work at the Women's Studies Centre, had read a lot about gender inequality in parliament so pursued that topic. Arrived at Flinders University in 2002.	Career; Application for scholarship; Gender studies
[00:20:23]	When returned to Indonesia was employed in a different position so couldn't apply what she had learned. Chose Flinders University after reading about the Centre for Development Studies there. Supervisor was Jane Haggis.	Studying at Flinders

	Also got involved with Asian Studies, met Jim Schiller and Anton Lucas, and got involved with the PPIA.	
[00:24:00]	Lived in Ascot Park, a bit away from campus, with husband and three children: third grade, first grade and childcare. Husband did whatever work he could and studied administration at TAFE. In Indonesia he was a civil engineer with his own business building houses. Was part of the community of students with families, did things together e.g. fishing, camping. Studying abroad benefited the whole family.	Life in Australia; family accompanied her
[00:28:52]	Children didn't speak English so were frustrated for the first few months but then got involved. Liked living in Australia better than in Indonesia because Australia is less paternalistic and teachers are more affectionate and appreciative of their individuality. Second child was born in Canada, had three months maternity leave and an extension. Oldest child is studying Marine Science now, second one is in senior high school and keen to go overseas.	Family in Australia
[00:34:56]	Made friends with other international students. Lived in Ascot Park, rented a house from a Singaporean Muslim family that they met at the local mosque, Adelaide City Mosque. Children had sleepovers with friends.	Friendships
[00:38:36]	Different culture caused some difficulties with study but learning other ways has helped when dealing with colleagues in Indonesia and brought new ideas. Writes about gender inequality in Islam. Presented	Studying in Australia; returning to Indonesia

	findings of research to colleagues back home, but was criticised.	
[00:41:40]	Fieldwork was in 2003, used networks to make contact with parliamentarians. There were 44 women, 11 per cent, in parliament at that time, interviewed 23 of them. Now 17 per cent of parliamentarians are women, not a significant increase. The Centre for Women's Studies is getting smaller because it's not a priority now. Local government has more women, many are relatives of male parliamentarians. Political parties don't talk to Erni about gender issues because as a civil servant she is not allowed to talk to them, they are usually directed to the Centre for Women's Studies.	PhD research; networks
[00:45:27]	When returned from Australia had lots of ideas and wrote in Pikiran Rakyat and journals, and her thesis is published as an e-book. Finished PhD in four and a half years, completed the manuscript before returning home. Family was looking forward to going back to Indonesia but have found the culture a bit difficult to conform to. Kept Moslem practices up while in Australia. Cooked Sundanese food, enjoyed going to Central Market.	Return to Indonesia; family
[00:49:19]	Went to Melbourne and Sydney with the family, got cheap flights, stayed with Indonesians. Went back to Perth and Sydney to build networks for the MOU project, to develop human resources. Met Prof. Samina Yasmeen, the director of the Centre for Muslim States and Societies at UWA. Hoping to send people	Travel within Australia; collaborations with other Australian universities

	to do postgraduate studies there. New postgraduate building at Bandung. Managed that project which was challenging, learnt how to manage a big thing.	
[00:54:33]	Undergraduate students ask her to guide them in writing for publications. Is on the board for a journal, media education, also is a copyeditor and content editor, takes a lot of time but likes implementing and improving her knowledge and contributing. Was invited to be on a committee that advises on the content of Islamic scholarly works, reinterpretation of the Koran, they are open-minded, Erni raises issues of gender equality. Doesn't have a place to develop knowledge about gender issues, her work now has diverted her to other issues.	Current activities; challenges in workplace
[01:00:14]	Teaches academic writing and Islamic civilisation not gender studies. There is strong opposition. Jakarta is more welcoming to new issues than Bandung. Implementation is planned after 2010 or 2015 so there is still time. Is organising hosting a conference, the same conference as she attended last year in Jogja. Wants to do post-doctoral studies.	Current work; future plans
[01:05:26]	Society is growing, many new ideas, wants the university to have international links so doesn't get left behind. Supports younger academics in this. Interested in the ARG and how access to resources can be improved. Lecturers are more restricted now in what they can do outside, the workload is more and they are expected to be in the office from 9.00am to 4.00pm, outside work is not valued.	Future plans; international networks

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