Indonesian Muslims in a Global World

Indonesian Muslims in a Global World:

Identity Narratives of Young Muslims in Australian Society

By

Teuku Zulfikar

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CHAPTER ONE

RATIONALES AND REFLEXIVITY: WHY STUDY YOUNG MUSLIMS?

I would start this book through reflecting on my experience being Muslim in multiple settings. This is important to provide the basis of thinking and inquiry toward the exploration of Indonesian Muslim youth's ways of being Muslim in Australian Society. This is also because throughout the book my focus will be on narratives of young Muslims living within their fluid and hyphenated identities.

I am an Indonesian Muslim living in Indonesia, one of the largest Muslim communities in the world. I have been exposed to Islamic values through parental guidance, community, and schooling experiences. I perceive my parents' teaching of Islamic values, my exposure with Muslim communities, and my education in Islamic institutions from primary up to the tertiary level as having been significant in the construction of my Muslim identity. My life is shaped by the teaching of Islam; thus my commitment to observing the five pillars of Islam such as the *salāt* (praying) and the *sawm* (fasting), and my embracing of Islamic conduct such as respecting elders and not drinking alcohol are reflections of these lifelong influences. This positioning definitely shapes my understanding of being Muslim, and in this book, I will highlight my research positioning. It is important to state research positioning as it influences the way I perceive things as the researcher.

I realize that during my studies in Australia, I find my positioning shifting from being an "insider" in the Muslim-majority of Indonesia to somewhat of an "outsider" as part of the Muslim minorities in Australia. I use the term "outsider" or 'Insignificant Other' (Halstead 1995b) to refer to my status as a part of the Muslim minority within Australian society. Since arriving in Australia, I have developed close relationships with the Indonesian Muslims through my involvement with the community in Melbourne, which has enabled me to observe the social dynamics within the Indonesian-Muslim community and the broader Muslim communities in Melbourne.

I have observed in my interaction with Indonesian Muslim families in Australia that most of these first generation Indonesian Muslims are committed to the Islamic teachings. In fact, they attempt to increase their Islamic knowledge through religious programs held in the Indonesian Muslim community centre and also within Muslim families. In contrast, their children negotiate their religious identity in different ways from their parents. Some young Indonesian Muslims do not show a great interest in being in the mosque[1]. This lack of interest may be the result of multiple reasons, which are revealed in this book. Similar observations are seen in many other Muslim communities in the West, such as in North America and in Europe (Alghorani 2003; Küçükcan 2004; McGown 1999).

Many studies on Muslims, such as those by Hussain (2004), Saeed (2003), and Zine (2007), indicate that the majority of Muslim parents in non-Muslim countries are concerned with enhancing their children's understanding of Islamic teaching and helping them to become devoted Muslims. Some Indonesian Muslim parents living in Victoria, for example, are found to engage in similar attempts[2] to shape their children's Muslim identity, and they frequently consult Muslim scholars to generate the best possible ways to teach their children about Islam. However, their children do not live in a vacuum; they have friends to interact with, either in schools or in their neighbourhoods. During their interactions with their friends, and the broader community, Muslim youth engage with different values and attitudes, which may be in conflict with the Islamic values as advocated in the Islamic religious texts and doctrines (Doogue & Kirkwood 2005).[3]

For example, Akhtar (2007b) and Bayoumi (2010) found in their studies a certain degree of generational conflicts within Muslim communities in the West. Akhtar (2007b), for example highlighted some major behavioural issues suffered by Muslim youth in the United States. He found that some young Muslims in his study did not show any interest in discussing religious issues. He also identified that most young Muslims he interviewed indicated that dating and the living together of different sexes without marriage are considered as acceptable forms of social life. These young Muslims also perceive that alcohol and smoking are individual choices.

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[1] This fact was observed during my presence in religious programs in the mosque and in Muslims' houses.

[2] An example of this is that some Indonesian Muslim parents invite their children to Friday praying, weekend school, religious congregations in the mosque and other events that may instil religious principles.

[3] Visit this website http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/phe/sdua00/sdua00.pdf for more detail about this issue.

Such ways of thinking are assumed to be in conflict with the teaching of Islam as stipulated in the religious texts (Akhtar 2007b). In addition, the other striking issue revealed is a cultural conflict between the younger and older generations (Akhtar 2007b). Akhtar suggests that generational conflicts emerge in terms of educational and career choices, and the other frequent conflict concerns parents' over-protection of their daughters' relationships with friends of different sexes.

The study by Bayoumi (2010), however, uncovered a rather different reality from that of Akhtar's (2007b) study. Bayoumi revealed that some young Muslims were found to be more religiously devoted than their parents. In his study of young Muslims of Arab background in Brooklyn USA, he found that these young Muslims, unlike their parents, realized that they were vanguards of Islam and they were required to represent it well in the wider American society (Bayoumi 2010). This kind of generational conflict also occurred in terms of religious attire. The feasibility of wearing the veil in public is increasing in the contemporary global world, and young female Muslims in research conducted by Ali (2005) and Mishra and Shirazi (2010), for example, choose to take on the veil. However, their decision to wear the veil may be opposed by their family members. Parents of these young Muslims in this study felt a sense of insecurity when their daughters were wearing the veil while living in a non-Muslim country such as the USA (Ali 2005; Mishra & Shirazi 2010).

Given these generational conflicts within the Muslim family and the *ummah* (Muslim community), I intend to understand whether such generational conflicts emerge within the Indonesian Muslim families and communities in Melbourne. Understanding young Muslims' ways of constructing and negotiating their Muslim identity at home and the religious spaces is an important aspect of inquiry in this study. Studies examining the construction of Muslim identity have been increasing in recent times. These studies adopt different concerns, settings, and methodologies. For example, there are studies on the contestation of Islamic values and the resistance of some Muslim parents of Somali background toward the school system in Canada (see Collet 2007; McGown 1999). Another such study is by Marranci (2007), which examines the process through which Muslim women in Northern Ireland construct their identity. A study that took place in Britain explores how young Muslims conceptualize their identity and citizenship (Basit 2009). In addition, studies on Muslims in Australia have been abundant. For example, Mansouri and Kamp (2007) investigate factors affecting the social and schooling experience of Muslim students of Arab-speaking background. This book adds a particular focus on young Muslims of

Indonesian heritage in Australia and also enriches the literature on Muslims and their construction of identity.

Studies indicate that ways of being Muslim, especially in a 'western context' are complicated. There are different ways of practising Islam and being Muslim, shaped by various social factors, such as culture, race, ethnicity, geographical location, and socio-cultural location (Kabir 2010; Sirin & Fine 2008). A study by Masquelier (2010), for example, indicates that while young Muslims in Nigeria claim themselves to be Muslim, they do not necessarily show their religious conviction through the performance of rituals. The complexity of being Muslim is also indicated by Zine (2006), who suggests that while some young Canadian female Muslims in her study take their religious markers through wearing Islamic outfit, they are challenged by stereotypical sentiments in their host countries. This study aims to add to the body of literature that sheds further light on the complex ways of being young Muslims.

In addition, this book sees Muslim families and the Muslim *Ummah* as important social and educational sites, through which the identities of young Muslims are moulded and shaped. This book, therefore, aims at investigating how Indonesian Muslim family dynamics shape the identity of young Indonesian Muslims. It also examines how religious programs in Islamic spaces such as the *madrasah* (the religious weekend school) and the *Masjid* (the mosque) shape young Muslims' identity. Given there are various discourses of being Muslim operating within families and the *Ummah*, and different ways of interpreting religious texts within these spaces, the book aims to investigate how young Indonesian Muslims negotiate these different discourses and create their own ways of being Muslim.

The data in this book is important because it provides researchers with insights into the ways in which the younger generation of Muslim youth in a 'western' context such as Australia construct their '*Muslimness'*, that is, their ways of being Muslim. It also provides an understanding into the complex identity practices these young Indonesian-Muslims in Australia engage with through the discourses of religion and culture with their family and within the immediate religious community and the broader Australian context.

The data presented throughout this book is also significant in its attempt to understand the roles of religious spaces, such as the *madrasah* (religious weekend school) and the *masjid* (the mosque) in shaping the Muslim identity of young Indonesian Muslims. The book thus hopes to enable readers to understand the significance of the existence of the religious spaces for the Muslim community. In addition, the research outcomes will also give insights to Muslim community leaders in their attempts to safeguard Muslim identity through Islamic programs held in the *madrasah* and in the *Masjid*. The findings of the study will add on to the important body of literature on Muslim youth in these new times and contexts.

Previous studies have discovered the importance of family practices (Becher 2008) and the mosque as educational sites in which Muslim identity construction takes place (Lotfi 2001). This study explores further how young Muslims negotiate their ways of being Muslim within the family and the *ummah* spaces, providing important information to the broader society through the voices of Muslim parents on their aspirations for their children, and through their children's own accounts of their developing ways of being Muslim in a non-Muslim country. This study is expected to bridge the gap between Muslim communities and the mainstream Australian society. The following section briefly discusses Muslims in the West, especially those living in Australia.

Muslims in the West

Muslims' ways of engagement in non-Muslim countries

In recent times, Muslims have migrated to many parts of the world. There are Muslims in France (see Keaton 2005); Britain (see Anwar 2008; Küçükcan 2004); Canada (see McGown 1999; Zine, 2008); the USA (see Curtis 2009; Kaya 2003; Sirin & Fine 2008); Australia (see Mansouri & Wood 2008; Saeed 2003) and in other parts of the world.

Muslims who migrated to the West live as minorities within their host countries. In spite of their minority status, their ways of engagement in their host countries differ from country to country (Esposito 2010; Raedt 2004; Schmidt 2004; Spalek & Imtoul 2007). Particular Muslim immigrant communities may experience different challenges in negotiating their ways of being Muslim while living in western countries. For example, immigrants' adaptation to life in certain host countries is relatively easy. Anwar (2008) revealed that Muslims in Western Europe encounter many more difficult situations compared to those living in Britain. Raedt (2004) also found in his study that Belgian Muslims of Turkish and Moroccan background experience different ways of engagement in their host countries. This difference occurs because of quite different migration histories. Raedt (2004) notes:

> The Turks (naturalized or not) seem to have adopted more cautiously than the Moroccans... They [the Turks] migrated more in a chain, and recruited

> more partners from their home region, and therefore have a stronger sense of community. The Moroccan pattern evolves toward internal fragmentation (Raedt 2004, 23).

This comment indicates that Turkish Muslims develop a strong connection with their family in their home and this strong bond to their home country becomes a barrier in their integration process. At the other end of the spectrum of integration, Muslim communities of Moroccan background, by contrast, have been more rapidly assimilated into the mainstream society, lacking a strongly 'present' community. Raedt (2004) also found that "the students belonging to the Moroccan communities succeed better in the Belgian educational system than the students from the Turkish communities" (p. 23). This information suggests that Muslims in the West as minority communities engage differently in their host countries. Their different engagement is also likely to have been shaped by their different attitudes toward their host countries.

A further example of this diversity is the relative ease with which Muslims in the USA, for example, engage in the American society (Esposito 2010) if compared to those living in different western countries such as in France and Belgium (Raedt 2004; Samers 2003). Such different experiences may be contingent on conditions of migration and can certainly shape different ways of being Muslim within these multiple social settings. Esposito notes:

> The identity of Muslim immigrants has been shaped by their religious-ethnic, and cultural backgrounds as well as their experiences in the West … Muslim integration into society in Europe is more difficult than in America. In contrast to immigrant American Muslims, many of whom came with education and skills, Muslims came to Europe under very different circumstances, primarily as labourers … Many Muslims in, for example, Britain, France, Germany, and Holland are trapped in social ghettos … (Esposito, 2010, 23-25)

This suggests that ways of being Muslim are not only shaped by religious and ethnic values but also shaped by the social and political contexts of Muslims' host countries. This fact leads to my inquiry in this research on the extent to which Australian societies influence Indonesian Muslim parents' ways of exercising their parenting roles at home. It also explores how young Muslims construct and negotiate their Muslim identity within their family and their religious spaces.

In one of his recent books, Esposito (2010) suggests that Muslim communities in the West are divided in their attitudes toward their host countries. First, Esposito (2010) found that Muslim leaders discourage

Muslims living in the western countries from integration into their host countries. These Muslim communities rely on their connection with the wider Muslim world. They obtain financial aid from Muslim countries such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt and other Gulf states. Through the financial aid, they build mosques and schools and most of the time they hire from these countries religious clerics (*Imam*) who have little knowledge about their host country. As a result, the way they teach Islam and engage in their host countries reflects the attitudes of their home countries. As a consequence, this attitude impedes their ways of integration (Esposito 2010).

The second attitudinal response, according to Esposito (2010), is that Muslim leaders encourage Muslim communities in the West to view themselves as an integral part of their host countries. For example, Esposito (2010) found that Muslims living in the United States view themselves as American Muslims. They do integrate within the American society and thus feel a connection to their host country through "common civic, religious and social values and interest" (Esposito 2010, 25).

Irrespective of these two different responses, most Muslim immigrants hold somewhat similar characteristics. They engage in transnational identity. This suggests that Muslims living in foreign lands are aware of their need to connect themselves with other Muslim communities in the global world. Vertovec (1998), for example, in a study of the Muslim communities in a small town Keighley, found that they engage with issues facing Muslims in transnational settings. In fact, their feeling of sympathy for the problems of Muslim's *ummah* is realized through conducting rallies, such as the rally against the war in Iraq, and also the rally against Israel's aggressive invasion of Palestinian land. Vertovec provides the further example of Muslims being involved in a series of demonstrations regarding Rushdie's satanic verses affair. In these various rallies, young Muslims and the old generations are both involved.

Although Muslims have a long presence in many parts of non-Muslim worlds, such as Australia, some Muslim immigrants do not necessarily integrate well within their host societies as noted earlier. In fact, their settlement in and engagement with mainstream societies have not been easy for several reasons, one of which is because of their minority status (Kusat, 2001). As minority communities, Muslims living in the West may suffer from prejudice. This kind of prejudice emerges because mainstream societies fail to understand the values preserved by these Muslim minority communities (Kusat, 2001). Kusat, for example, states:

> Minority groups categorised by race, nationality, and religion generally suffer from the prejudices of majority groups and especially from political

> authorities. Minority groups feel distressed and insecurity even though their rights may be protected firmly by law (Kusat, 2001, 364)

Different cultural values between those of the mainstream non-Muslim societies and those of Muslim minority communities are seen as the reasons for the emergence of tensions (Azmi 1997; Nielsen 2000). Mainstream communities do not possess a full understanding of Muslims' daily practices. In addition, scholars discuss how the distinct cultural values brought by Muslim immigrant communities aggravate the level of stress upon gaining a settlement in the host societies. Most Muslim immigrant communities come from traditional cultures (Azmi 1997), which provide norms and values distinct from those of mainstream communities in the West. For example, Muslim immigrants of Pakistani and Moroccan descent emphasise extended family values, and also on the role of men as the main caretakers of family income, which differs from Western values (Nielsen 2000). Thus, balancing the values of the home country with those of the host country is a challenge in itself within the Muslim immigrants (Azmi 1997).

For this reason, Moghissi (2006) states that Muslim immigrant communities face a barrier in their process of integration into the mainstream society. Some researchers such as Vertovec (1998), Johns and Saeed (2002), Yasmeen (2010) and Anwar (2008) found in their studies that some Muslim immigrant communities still encounter difficulties in their process of settlement and engagement within the mainstream societies. For example, some Muslims face difficulties finding a proper job because of their commitment to religious attire, such as wearing the veil. However, a study by Dizboni (2008) and Kabir (2006) suggest otherwise. They found that Muslims have succeeded in their process of integration into their host societies.

In addition to facing the challenges within Muslims' lives in their host countries, some young Muslims have been found by a number of scholars to face substantive challenges within their own Muslim minority communities. Dwyer (1999a) and Vertovec (1998), for example, revealed that young Muslims, especially the female Muslims in his study, while feeling secure being within the Muslim community, felt discomfort at the attitude of the community toward them. They found that their fellow Muslims within their immediate communities engaged in what they perceived to be excessive monitoring of their dress styles and their ways of behaving in their daily lives.

This section has discussed Muslims' different ways of engagement within their host countries, suggesting that these emerge because of different attitudes while living in their host countries, different migration stories, and different ways of perceiving their ways of being in their host countries. Some Muslims feel that integration into the host society is discouraged, while others perceive otherwise, seeing integration as strongly encouraged. In spite of these different ways of engaging in the host countries, they acquire similar characteristics, one of which involves taking on a transnational identity. Finally, I have shown that some young Muslims living within their immediate Muslim communities experience a sense of surveillance on their dress code and their ways of engaging with others in their Muslim communities.

Muslims in Australia

Islam reached Australia in the 18th century upon the arrival of Macassan fishermen from today's Indonesia (Saeed 2003). A Muslim historian, Bilal Cleland recorded that those fishermen visited the coast of *Marege*, which is located from just east of Darwin to the Gulf of Carpentaria (Cleland, 2001). The harmonious relationship between the Maccasans and the Aborigines has been evident from the imprint of architectural symbols and language (Ganter 2008). Macassan fishermen have made fishing their business commodity. They collect *trepang* from the northern shores of Arnhem and the Kimberley coast (Ganter 2008). However, the expansion of colonialism in the late of the 19th century resulted in the decline of the *trepang* industry. Macassans were subject to customs duty and license fees by the South Australian government. Although Macassans' involvement was fleeting, these early Muslim traders were among the first to establish their enterprises on Australian shores.

Despite these early contacts, the first formal Muslim settlers in Australia were Afghan cameleers (Kabir 2004, 2005, 2007). Muslim cameleers from Afghanistan reached the number of roughly 2,000-4,000 in the mid- and late 19th century although there is no record of their exact number (Stevens 1993). Although Afghan cameleers played a significant role in transportation when Australia was under the British Penal Colony, their roles were marginalized (Cleland 2001). Afghan cameleers made a significant cultural and economic contribution to Australia, which, however, was not acknowledged by the British colony.

The British colony replaced the service of camels as the main means of transportation with railways. As a result, the need for Afghan cameleers declined (Cleland 2001). Later, after the introduction of the *Immigration Restriction Act* after 1901, the Muslim communities gradually vanished. In spite of various hardships faced in the new place, these pioneers attempted to maintain their religious values in the face of public discrimination (Johns & Saeed 2002; Kabir 2007; Monsour 2002), through building communities to share their faith and cultures.

In 2007, Australian Muslims were estimated to be approximately 1.2 to 2% of the Australian population (ABS 2007) and count as one of the fastest growing minority groups in Australia (Ho 2007). Muslims numbered fewer than 100,000 in 1981 and increased to more than 300.000 in 2006. The recent figure in fact suggests that Muslim population in Australia reach the level 2.2% (the 2011 census). The presence of Muslims in Australia and whether Muslims should assimilate with the local culture continue to be the focus of academic debates at local and national levels in Australia. As part of this debate, the metaphors of ‘melting pot’ or ‘salad bowl’ have been touted in the Australian public domain (Bone 2003).

Although Australian Muslims of Indonesian background represent only 2.5% among Australian Muslims, the first Muslim community that arrived in Australia were Indonesian Muslims working along the seashore in the 17th century (Kabir 2004; Tuncer 2000). The second wave of Muslim migrants from Indonesia to Australia were the Javanese cane cutters, who were employed in Queensland (Mulyana, 1995, 2000; Tuncer, 2000). The third group of Indonesian Muslims were students who pursued their study under the Colombo Plan scholarship schemes (Tuncer 2000). In addition, in the 1950s many Indonesian Muslims migrated who were radio broadcasters recruited to work in Radio Australia. The other group of Indonesian Muslims arriving in Australia were academics who were invited to teach Indonesian history in Australian universities. Their presence in Australia in the 1950s, as temporary residents, has contributed to the emergence and to the strengthening of the Australian-Indonesian Muslim community (Tuncer 2000). In addition, in the 1970s after the White Policy was officially dismantled, many Indonesian Muslims arrived in Australia, some of whom did so illegally but have since been naturalized. Most parents participating in this study had migrated to Australia in the 1970s-1990s and some others in 2000. Those Muslim families are the first generation Muslim families in Australia and their children are the second and 1.5 generations.

An Ethnographic Study of Indonesian- Australian Muslims

Overview of methodology and theoretical frameworks

This study takes place in Victoria, in an Indonesian Muslim community centre in Australia and in some Indonesian Muslim families in Victoria, and it explores the Muslim identity construction of twelve young Indonesian Muslims. Members of the second and 1.5 generation of Indonesian Muslims were recruited to voluntarily participate in this study. The second generation refers to children from immigrant communities who were born in Australia, while children of the 1.5 generation are those who were born overseas and moved to Australia before 5-7 years of age. In addition, nine Muslim parents whose children participated in my study were also interviewed to examine their roles as educators and their aspirations for their children. The community leader and a senior community member were also interviewed to identify and examine programs conducted within the Muslim community centre that they regard as helping shape the Muslim identity.

This is an ethnographic qualitative study, and thus in collecting the data, I adopted instruments and methods of the ethnographic inquiry. Identity narratives of young Muslim analysed in this book were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, personal written narratives, and observations. These various methods of data collection allowed me to understand how young Muslims living in a ‘western’ context construct their Muslim identity. The methods also enabled me to examine how Muslim family dynamics and the religious spaces of the *ummah* shaped the Muslim identity of the Indonesian Muslim youths.

Studies on Muslim identity have been conducted by scholars from various fields. For example, Clark (2007) examines the schooling experiences of Muslim refugees in the USA, using the work of Pierre Bourdieu on cultural capital. Another study on female Muslim youth, conducted by Basit (1995) referred to the work of Erikson (1950; 1956; 1968), while other studies, such as that by Imtoual (2006) referred to the concepts of Islamophobia and religious racism. In addition, a study by Khan (2009) used the concept of globalization to frame his investigation.

In this book, I draw on the religious texts of the *Qur`ān* and the *Hadith* and the works of some scholars, such as Mondal (2008), Ramadan (2004), and Yasmeen (2008) to conceptualize the notion of Muslim identity. I refer to these two religious texts since they provide essential characteristics and categorizations of behaviour to which Muslims are meant to adhere to. In addition, these two main sources of religious principles in Islam have given an essentialized understanding of Muslim identity, which is often seen as fixed rather than static. However, the *ayāt* of the *Qur`ān* and the contents of the *Hadith* are subject to various interpretations (Saeed 2006b).

The interpretation of the *Qur`ān* is also shaped by the political agendas of competing parties within the Islamic communities themselves (Saeed 2006a). The different approaches used by exegetes in interpreting certain verses in the *Qur`ān*, for example, have led to multiple ways of understanding things in Islam. For instance, the *Qur`ān* has commanded Muslims to fast and pray, and if some Muslims fail to completely observe these principles, the majority of exegetes regard them as still holding Muslim status. Nevertheless, some exegetes perceive these Muslims' religiosity as incomplete and as having committed one of the greatest sins. Other scholars have explored how different ways of constructing female and male Muslim identities result from such different approaches used in interpreting religious texts (Duderija 2008; Mernissi 1991).

The work of Muslim scholars, such as Samina Yasmeen (2008), Tariq Ramadan (2004), Ansuman Ahmed Mondal (2008), Jasmin Zine (2008) and Tehmina Naz Basit (1995) have also helped me to conceptualize Muslim identity. These scholars have examined the construction and negotiation of Muslim identity in the West, and have provided a deeper insight into the ways of being Muslim among those who were born in the West. The work of Yasmeen (2008), for example, provides typologies of Muslim identity; some Muslims tend to be orthodox, while others tend to prefer the moderate type of Muslim identity. These different preferences on different discourses regarding ways of being Muslim are shaped by multiple factors, which I will discuss in Chapter Two.

This book looks at the ways in which a group of Indonesian-Muslim youths in Australia construct their identities of being Muslims in the family and the *ummah*. The family and the *ummah* are important social and educational sites. As we shall see in Chapter Two, the essence of education in Islam lies in the perfection of one's mind, body, and soul, and the educational process toward this starts from home (Ekram & Beshir, 2009). This means that parents are seen as educators in Islamic perspectives, and thus the family is seen as an important educational site. The same applies to the notion of the *ummah.* Muslim communities are required by Islamic teaching to nurture the Muslim faith through religious spaces, such as the *masjid* and the *Qur`ānic* class. Mosques are then a significant educational setting in Islam.

Meeting the young Muslims

Three groups of participants took part in my study. My main group of participants consisted of 12 Muslim youths of Indonesian background. These young Muslims at the time of the interview were enrolled in Australian public schools in Year 9 up to Year 12, and they were 14 to 17 years old when interviewed. Two students were 14 years old (Year 9); one student was 15 (Year 10), five students were 16 years old (Year 11), and the other four were 17 years old (Year 12). Twelve students took part in my study. Six of the Indonesian Muslim youths were second generation Muslims. Their parents or one of their parents were Indonesians but they were born and had grown up in Australia. The other six were recorded as being of the 1.5 generation. They were born in Indonesia but moved to Australia at an early age. Two young Muslims participating in my study came from a mixed family. Yani has an Indonesian mother and an Australian father, while Zaki has an Australian mother and an Indonesian father. The other young Muslims have Indonesian parents.

Hanafi is 17 years old, and by the time of the interview, he is in Year 11. Hanafi was born in Indonesia and moved to Australia when he was 5 five years old. Both his parents are Indonesians. His father is an accountant in a cosmetic company, while the mother works as a research assistant in an Australian university. He has two siblings, and Hanafi is the oldest in his family. *Hafnizar* is 15 years old, and by the time of the interview, he is in Year 9. Hafnizar is Hanafi's brother and was born in Indonesia but moved to Australia when he was four years old.

Yani is 17 years old and was born in Indonesia to a mixed-family background and moved to Australia when he was 2 years old. At the time of the interview, he is in Year 12. His mother is an Indonesian and the father is an 'Anglo' Australian. His father works for an oil company as an engineer.

Ikhwan and Salma are two young Muslims who were born in Indonesia to an Indonesian family and moved to Australia at the age of 5. Ikhwan is 16 years old and Salma is 17. Ikhwan is in Year 11 at the time of interview, while Salam is in Year 12. Their father holds a doctorate's degree from an Australian university and works as an adjunct professor at the Faculty of Economics and Commerce in an Australian university. His mother also holds a doctorate's degree and works at Botany Laboratory.

Billah is 16 years old. He was born in Australia to an Indonesian family. His father is a professional plumber, and the mother is a housewife. He lives with two other siblings, and he is the youngest child in the family. He is in Year 11 at the time of interview.

Zaki is 16 years old and was born in Australia to a family of a mixed family background. His father is an Indonesian and the mother is an Australian. His father works in a factory and the mother is the housewife. He is the only child in the family and he lives with his parents. At the time of the interview, Zaki is in Year 11. *Darni* is 17 years old and was born in Indonesia but moved to Australia in the age of three months old. Her father is a factory worker and the mother is a housewife. She was in Year 12 by the time of interview.

Fatma was born in Indonesia and moved to Australia when she was 5. She is 16 and sits in Year 11. Her father runs a business in Australia, and the mother holds a doctorate's degree from an Australian university and works as research assistant at the university. *Suci* was 15 and she was born in Australia to an Indonesian family. Her father is a factory worker and the mother is a housewife. He is in Year 10 at the time of interview.

Imani was 15 and she is in Year 9. She was born in Australia to Indonesian parents. Her father is a factory worker and the mother works in a hospital. *Hera* was 17 and sits in Year 12. She was born in Australia to Indonesian parents. Her father owns a private business and the mother was the housewife.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORIZING MUSLIM IDENTITY

To understand Muslim identity, I work with two bodies of literature in this book. Firstly, I draw on the interpretations of the Muslim religious texts, the *Qur`ān* (The Muslim Holy book) and the *Hadith* (The Prophet traditions) to understand the ways in which Muslim identity is represented in these religious texts. For Muslims, the *Qur`ān* is the main source of guidance in their lives, in which *Allāh* prescribes the Islamic principles (Guessoum 2008; Saeed 2008) to be adhered to by Muslims. In addition, the *Hadith*, the Prophet Muhammad's actions and remarks, is also seen as the main religious text that provides guidance in being Muslim, and thus the teaching of the *Qur`ān* and the *Hadith* shapes Muslim identity (Duderija 2010a).

In understanding ways of being Muslim as represented in the religious texts, I first identify some verses of the *Qur`ān* and some *Hadith* that provide an understanding of Muslim identity. I then draw on the works of *Ibn Kathir,* a *mufassir.* A *mufassir* is an Islamic exegete who knows and narrates the religious texts of *Qur`ān* and *Hadith*. *The* exegesis is a critical explanation or interpretation of a text, especially a religious text. There are many Islamic exegeses or *tafsir* for Muslims to refer to, such as *tafsir al-manār, tafsir al-misbah, tafsir Ibn Kathir* and other *tafsir* on the interpretation of the *Qur`ān*. The works of *Ibn Kathir* are commonly used in the Indonesian-Muslim community here in Australia and in Indonesia as well.

The second body of literature that I engage with relates to the social and cultural construction of Muslim identity since social settings shape Muslim identity and vice versa. I draw on the work of Muslim scholars studying Islam and Muslims in the west, such as Tariq Ramadan (2004), Jasmin Zine (2008), Alia Salem Imtoual (2006), Tehmina Naz Basit (1995), Samina Yasmeen (2008) and Ansuman Ahmed Mondal (2008). They argue that the conceptualization of Muslim identity is located in the interplay of discourses of religious texts, and the social and cultural lived experiences of young Muslims.

I provide a discussion on the roles of Muslim families and the *ummah* in shaping young Muslims' identity. In Islam, Muslim parents and the *ummah* have the responsibility to take on an educational role in developing their children's minds, bodies, and souls. Thus, Muslim families and the religious spaces within the *ummah* are considered as educational and social sites for the identity formation of Muslim youth.

Muslim Identity

In this section, I explain two interrelated issues. First, I discuss the conception of Muslim identity as prescribed by the religious texts. This is one of the theoretical frameworks used in this study. In the second sub-section, I draw on the understanding of Muslim identity as conceptualized through agencies and discourses surrounding Muslim communities, and as conceptualized by some Muslim scholars whose work provides insights into Muslim communities in the West as well as their ways of being Muslim.

The Qur`ān, and the Hadith: The conceptions of Muslim identity

Michel Foucault (1926-1984) is one of the theorists that problematises the notion of discourse in his work. Sara Mills who reviews Foucault's works suggests that various meanings of discourse are proposed by Foucault in a number of his different works. One of these meanings is that it constitutes the meaningful utterance that has an effect on something; another definition is seen as being a group of statements that provide a certain meaning (Mills 2003); discourse is also seen as practices, which are governed by unwritten rules (Mills 2003). These varied meanings convey a somewhat similar understanding of discourse, which is that it consists of unwritten rules and statements that individualize certain groups of people and regulate their practices.

According to Foucault, some religious texts such as the Bible in Christianity can be a source of rules that regulate discourses or statements, to which people, such as political figures frequently refer to back up their points. In my work, I consider the Muslim Holy Book, the *Qur`ān* as an important source of discourses of Muslim identity and practices, since it is the sacred book referred to by Muslims around the world (see also Saeed 2008). For many Muslims, the *Qur`ān* and the *Hadith* are important sources of Islamic discourses, which guide and frame ways of being

Muslim (Guessoum 2008). The religious texts of Islam, the *Qur`ān* [1] and the *Hadith* of the prophet Muhammad (PbuH[2]) provide important markers of Muslim identity. Some prominent themes of the *Qur`ān* are *Imān* (faith), *Akhlāq* (conduct) and *Ibadāt* (ritual), which characterize ways of being Muslim (Mir 2007).

The *Imān* is an expression of the Muslims' faith addressed in the first pillar of Islam, the *Shahāda,* and is the key component of Islamic identity (Esposito 2010; Marranci 2008; Ramadan 2004; Rippin 2005). It is a declaration that there is none worthy of worship but *Allāh* and that the Prophet Muhammad is His final messenger. The *Akhlāq* relates the approved forms of conduct of Muslims as prescribed by the *Qur`ān*. For example, it is stated in the Muslims' religious texts that Muslims should ensure that their conversations and actions do not harm others. It is also stated in the *Qur`ān* that Muslims are encouraged to respect their elders such as parents. Muslims are not to engage in derogatory acts toward other people, be they Muslims or non-Muslims alike.

The Prophet Muhammad (PbuH), as reported by *Al-Bukhāri* and also reported *by Hakim, Ahmad,* and *Ibn Asakir*[3]*,* said that:

> Indeed, I was sent to the world to perfect and purify the conduct and the behaviour of the human being

This *Hadith* suggests that one of the main teachings of Islam is the perfection of one's behaviour. In fact, the Prophet as narrated by Abu Musa also asserted that:

> The best among you is the one who behaves best toward people (This *Hadith* is reported in *syahih Bukhāri*-the collection of *Bukhāri*, no.8, p.21)

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[1] *Qur`ān* is the Arabic word for 'recitation' or 'reading'; various names are applied to the *Qur`ān*: "revelation (*tanzil*), the reminder (*dhikr*), the creation (*Furqan*) and the scripture (*kitab*)" (Saeed, 2008, p. 38). The *Qur`ān,* revealed to the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him more than fourteen centuries ago, contains major issues ranging from theological and ritual to social issues (Saeed, 2008)

[2] PbuH stands for Peace be upon Him (the Prophet Muhammad); it is a noble title that should go with the prophet Muhammad. It means that all Muslims who mention the prophet's name should use this title; it is highly recommended for Muslims to do so.

[3] These persons are some of the collectors and preservers of the *Hadith.* This *Hadith* is reported in the collection of Al-Bukhāri, no 273, and reported by Al-Hakim in his book, no. 163/2, and by Ahmad, no. 318, and by Ibn Asakir, no. 8, p.21

In a similar tone, the *Qur`ān* states that:

> You will never attain piety until you spend of what you love. And anything you spend of, God has full knowledge of it (*Ali-Imran*, 92).

The *Hadith* and the *ayāt* also encourage Muslims to be respectful in their interactions with fellow human beings. The other important component of the *Qur`ānic* teaching is the *Ibadāt* (Ramadan 1999, 2001, 2002, 2004), the ritual. These include *salāt,* the five daily prayers; *sawm,* fasting during the month *of Ramadhan*; *zakāt,* charity to the poor, and *hajj* or pilgrimage to Mecca. The observance of these Islamic rituals can be a framework to measure Muslims' religious piety (Hassan 2008) and it marks the character of the believers (Rippin 2005). That *Ibadāt* as a significant marker of Muslim identity has been stated in the *Qur`ān:*

> Who performs the salāt and spends out of what We have provided them, it is they who are the believers in truth (*Al-Anfaal*, 3-4)[4].

The requirement for Muslims to have faith in *Allāh*, the God Almighty, to observe good conduct during personal and social interactions and to worship faithfully has become the central identity marker for Muslims. The discourses of religious texts identify that those who are considered Muslims are those who possess these identity markers.

In addition, the *Qur`ān* covers the issue of modesty. It requires believing men and women to cover certain private parts of their body. The issue of modesty is more emphasized in respect for believing women than it is for believing men. In spite of the controversy in the interpretation of the messages of the *Qur`ān,* mainstream Muslim communities see these messages as religious requirements, and thus as Muslim-specific markers. The obligation to cover certain parts of the body is revealed in the following two *ayāt.*

> Say to believing women that they should lower their gaze and remain chaste and not to reveal their adornments – save what is normally apparent thereof, and they should fold their shawls over their bosoms (*An-Nur*, 31)

> O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and wives of the believers that they should draw over themselves some of the outer garments [when in public], so as to be recognized and not harmed (*Al-Ahzab*, 59)

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[4] Taken from *tafsir ibn kathir*-this *tafsir* (the book on *Qur`ānic* interpretation) is famous in the Muslim world as well as among Muslims in the West.

One of the most prominent Muslim scholars in the Islamic world, *Ibn Kathir* sees these two verses as the command to cover certain private parts of Muslim women's bodies. In his interpretation of these verses, *Ibn Kathir* views the veil as a marker that differentiates believing women from the non- believers.

As interpreted by *Ibn Kathir,* covering the private parts of women's bodies, popularly known as the *aurāt* in the Islamic literature, is a religious duty which is obligatory for all believing women. Because of this command, the veil in Islam becomes the specific marker of a Muslim woman as advocated by the Qur`ān. However, Zine (2006) suggests that there are many possible interpretations of these verses. According to some scholars, these verses do not indicate a particular sanction for un-veiled believing women (Zine 2006). This is so because the verses do not explicitly mandate the need for believing women to cover their hair. They rather refer to the encouragement for believing women to draw a veil to cover their bosoms. Some other modern Muslim thinkers, such as Fatema Mernissi, and Leila Ahmed also do not see covering hair as an obligation. In fact, a progressive Indonesian Muslim scholar, Musda Mulia, sees the imposition and the formalization of the veil in the public sphere as not Islamic.

In this section, I have described *essentialized* understandings of Muslim identity as represented in the interpretation of the religious texts: *Qur`ānic* verses and the messages of the *Hadith.* Markers of Muslim identity as represented in these religious texts include praying five times daily, fasting, alms giving and also the pilgrimage to Mecca. Although religious texts provide essentialized understandings of Muslim identity, ways of being Muslim are also shaped by social and cultural factors, and thus there are multiple and different ways of being Muslim. In the following discussion, I examine the work of some Muslim scholars on ways of being Muslim.

Social and cultural construction of Muslim identity

While acknowledging that the construction of Muslim identity is rooted in religious doctrine (Ramadan 1999, 2004; Yasmeen 2008; Zine 2008), Muslim researchers and scholars also believe that Muslim identity is socially and culturally constructed (Bayat & Herrera 2010; Duderija 2008; Imtoual 2006; Mondal 2008). Zine (2008), for example, acknowledges:

> This malleability of Islamic identity is a function of the disjuncture between how Islamic identification is socially mapped, enacted, and lived,

> on the one hand, and the religious conception of Islamic identity rooted within doctrinal texts, on the other. These two aspects of Islamic identity – the social and the religious – generate a dichotomy between the socially defined, ascriptive characteristics of Islamic identity and those which are divinely ordained and inscribed within the praxis of religious tenets, such as the Five Pillars of Islam (Zine, 2008, p. 143).

As shown in the quote, Zine (2008) indicates that the term ‘Muslims’ refers in society to those who declare their faith to Islam as their religion, regardless of their level of practice of the Islamic rituals such as the *salāt* and the *sawm* (Zine 1997). However, she also suggests that understanding Muslim identity cannot only be approached through discourses of religious texts but also needs to be based on the exploration of the political, social, cultural, and historical contexts, since they shape Muslim identity (Kabir 2010). Therefore, interrelated discourses such as those of home environments, educational institutions, and broader community contexts shaping Muslim identity also need to be considered (Duderija 2008, 2010a; Herrera & Bayat 2010b) in studying Indonesian young Muslims’ ways of constructing their Muslim identity.

Given this fact, in this section, I describe social, political and cultural factors that are significant in shaping Muslim identity (Curtis 2009; Duderija 2010b; Esposito 2010; Werbner 2004). For example, the social contexts of particular countries where Islam has been rooted for centuries such as in some South-East Asian and Middle-Eastern countries shape certain ways of being Muslim. Muslims who live in a country such as Kazakhstan will view and practice the religion differently from those who live in Saudi Arabia, because Islam has yet to become the mainstream religion in the former country (Hassan 2002, 2008). Likewise, different cultural values and politics within Muslim families, Muslim communities, and educational institutions influence young people’s ways of being Muslim. Furthermore, Muslims’ commitment to religious principles, such as donning the veil and adherence to the five-times-daily prayers, is also shaped by the policies and politics of the countries in which they live (Ali 2005; Cole & Ahmadi 2003; Herrera & Bayat 2010b; Mishra & Shirazi 2010).

An additional factor that contributes to different ways of being Muslim is the fact that the religious texts are interpreted differently (Ramadan 2004; Zine 2008). Adis Duderija notes this issue in the following:

> any attempt to understand the religious identity construction among Western-born generation of Muslims needs to take … the structural-hermeneutical factor in religious identity construction. This phrase refers to