



The Veil, Purdah, and Their Relevance to The Role of Muslim Women in The Archipelago: A Historical Study

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Abstract:

Face veil has become an issue often discussed nowadays, including in Nusantara. The face veil is often rejected or discriminated against because it is considered part of the seclusion system (purdah) that limits the role of women and is not by the culture of Nusantara. This study aims to describe the face veil and purdah traditions in the history of Nusantara and analyze whether the face veil in Nusantara is part of purdah (seclusion). This research uses a descriptive-analytical method and a qualitative approach. Data are collected by literature review and online interviews. The results indicate that the veil and purdah were once part of the history of Nusantara. The face veil is known in Malay culture as tudung lingkup, in the Ocu tradition as maroguok, and the Mbojo tradition as rimpu colo. It is concluded that wearing the veil is not always identical with the domestication of women's roles. It depends on the cultural conditions adopted by each community. In addition to the domestic role, the role that is also dominant for veiled women is the productive role.

Key Words: *Veil, Purdah, The Role Of Women, Tradition, Nusantara*

Abstrak:

Pemakaian cadar kerap kali menjadi isu yang diperbincangkan di dunia dewasa ini, tak terkecuali di Nusantara. Pemakaian cadar kerap mendapat penolakan atau diskriminasi karena dianggap merupakan bagian dari sistem seklusi yang membatasi peran perempuan (disebut purdah) dan tidak sesuai dengan kultur Nusantara. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan tradisi cadar dan purdah dalam sejarah Nusantara dan menganalisis apakah cadar di Nusantara merupakan bagian dari purdah (seklusi). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif analitis dan pendekatan kualitatif. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan kajian pustaka dan wawancara jarak jauh. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa cadar dan purdah pernah menjadi bagian dari sejarah Nusantara. Pemakaian cadar dikenal dalam budaya Melayu sebagai tudung lingkup, dalam tradisi suku Ocu sebagai maroguok, dan dalam tradisi suku Mbojo sebagai rimpu colo. Disimpulkan bahwa pemakaian cadar tidak selalu identik dengan domestikasi peran perempuan. Hal itu bergantung pada kondisi budaya yang dianut masing-masing masyarakat. Selain peran domestik, peran yang juga dominan bagi perempuan bercadar adalah peran produktif.

Kata Kunci: *Cadar, Purdah, Peran Perempuan, Tradisi, Nusantara*

INTRODUCTION

The use of the veil is often an issue discussed worldwide, including in the archipelago (Eichberger, 2021; Piero, 2022; Lailatun & Mawardi, 2023). The use of the veil has become known in the archipelago along with the development of the Islamic religion (Iankovskaia, 2020; Anzaikhan, 2022; Abdullah et al., 2022). Although there is debate among the people of the Indonesian archipelago about whether the veil is part of Islamic law or Middle Eastern custom, many Muslim women wear the veil for religious reasons. For example, Muslim women who are members of the Majelis Rasulullah, Jakarta, wear the veil because Islam essentially recommends that women maintain their dignity by not revealing their private parts (Solihat and Fujiwati, 2019). Students from Pattani at IAIN Purwokerto wear the veil because of the strong influence of Thai Muslim religious and cultural background. Veiling is a common habit for female students in Thailand (Safitri, 2021). Likewise, Muslim women who follow the Idrisiyyah Order cover their faces to implement the Shari'a even though their appearance looks foreign in Javanese society (Fathurahman, 2019).

Currently, the use of the veil in Indonesia and other parts of the world, such as in Western countries, is often met with rejection or discrimination. In Indonesia, women who wear the niqab experience obstacles because their clothes are stereotyped as terrorist clothing (Nisa, 2011). Even though many women who wear the niqab are not involved in any act of terrorism, the author observes that two reasons are often given for refusing to wear the niqab (Hass, 2020).

First, wearing the veil is considered a form of domestication, exclusion, and an obstacle to women's movement. In South Asia, for example, wearing the *burkak* or face veil is an inseparable part of a social system called *purdah*. According to Riffaat Hassan (in Effendi, 1994), *purdah* means 'to separate.' *Purdah* is the practice of separating women from public spaces. Women's place is the private area (at home), while men's is in the public area. A woman must be closed if she is forced to enter a man's territory. Along with the development of the modern feminist movement, which encourages women to leave the domestic sector, the use of the veil has also been affected. For example, Qasim Amin (in Huriani, 2021) believes that wearing the veil has implications for limiting women's movement and position in the domestic sector and confining women from leaving the house.

Second, the veil is considered not to exist in Indonesian culture. The use of the veil in the archipelago is considered to have emerged only after the entry of radical and transnational Islamic movements. Hurgronje (in Wilaela, 2016) believes that in the Dutch East Indies, no regulations required women to wear the veil and separate themselves. Ulumuddin (2020) said Indonesian culture has no trace of wearing the veil. The veil is also considered to be contrary to moderate Islam in Indonesia.

The statements above need to be studied with a more comprehensive review. This research suggests that the issue and history of the veil in the

archipelago cannot be generalized. Historical data states that the use of face veils and the purdah system has existed in several local traditions (Nisa, 2011). These include the Malay tribal traditions on the east coast of Sumatra, Sambas, and the Malay Peninsula; the tradition of the Ocu tribe in Kampar, Riau; and the traditions of the Mbojo tribe in Bima, West Nusa Tenggara. Women who wear the veil according to Islamic traditions in these areas have various roles. Unfortunately, these traditional clothes that cover women's faces are rarely introduced in the world of education because their existence is poorly documented and poorly explained.

There are several studies related to the veil in the archipelago. However, this research is usually related to the use of the veil today. Safitri (2021), for example, analyzes the function of wearing the veil among Pattani, Nahdiyin, and Salafi students. There is also Eva F. Nisa's thesis, which provides findings that the veil in the Tablighi Jamaah and Salafi groups in Indonesia is part of the Islamic lifestyle and part of the concept of "obedience," a discursive tradition in Islam, which makes the veil for the wearer part of the process of seeking Islam. The real thing (Akmaliah, 2023).

Some conduct research on the veil in Indonesian traditions. Emilia (2021) writes about Jambi women's fashion styles from the past to the present. Likewise, Wita (2023) examines the history of the typical veil from Seberang Jambi City as a form of local wisdom that has become the community's identity and its potential as cultural tourism. However, the veil in this research is more emphasized as the development of clothing, its economic potential, and its relevance to the role of women are not emphasized.

This research aims to describe the traditions of the veil and purdah in the archipelago's history and analyze whether the veil is part of purdah (seclusion). In this research, the relevance of the veil to the role of women in the archipelago will also be discussed to determine whether the use of the veil in the archipelago's history has hampered the role of women. The results of this research can contribute to Indonesian Islamic culture in viewing the wearing of the veil in modern times, which requires women to take on roles outside of the domestic role. Apart from that, it is hoped that this research can also reconstruct an understanding of the history of women's traditional clothing in the archipelago so that it can minimize negative perceptions and social discrimination that occur in society towards women who wear the veil.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a descriptive-analytical method, namely a method that functions to describe the object being studied through data or samples that have been collected (Sugiono, 2007). This method describes and analyzes certain social phenomena, the occurring facts, and their relationship with other phenomena. The approach used is a qualitative approach.

The data collection technique was carried out using two events: literature review and long-distance interviews. The literature review was carried out by tracing sources and literature materials to obtain data regarding the veil, purdah, and women's role in the archipelago's history. The sources in question are books, research results (either in the form of theses or journal articles), news in the mass media, and information on local government websites. This data is also supplemented by photos and videos found in books and online media.

The interviews were conducted remotely via online platforms, namely Messenger and WhatsApp. This interview was conducted online because the research was conducted during the pandemic (May 2020–September 2021). In this interview, the author contacted four people. First, to obtain data about the veil in the traditions of the Kampar area (Ocu tribe), the author contacted Mr. Zakaria who is the heir of Datuk Engku Mudo Sangkal, a well-known cleric in Kampar Regency who introduced the *maroguok* (a typical Ocu tribe veil). Second, the author contacted Ustaz Muhammad Irfan bin Muhammad Fudil bin Marzuki, the grandson of Guru Marzuki, to validate the truth of the information about the introduction of the veil in Betawi. Third, the author contacted Mrs. Via Dicky, a resident of Seberang Jambi City, to obtain data regarding the use of *tudung lingkup* in that area. Fourth, the author contacted Suhana Sarkawi, a Malay tudung researcher from the University of Malaya who has researched Lingga Island, Riau Islands, to obtain documentation and information about the *tudung lingkup*.

The data analysis technique used is cultural theme analysis, namely analysis by understanding typical symptoms and collecting themes, cultural focus, values, and cultural symbols in each domain. Cultural theme analysis seeks to find relationships that exist in the domain being analyzed so that it will form a holistic whole. At this stage, the researcher carefully reads crucial notes, assigns codes or markers to essential topics, compiles a typology, and reads literature related to the research problem and context. Based on the analyzed data, the author performs reconstruction through description, narrative, and argumentation (Abdussamad, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dynamics of the Role of Women in Indonesian History

Universally, gender roles for women and men are classified into three leading roles: (1) reproductive (domestic) roles, namely the roles carried out by someone to carry out activities related to maintaining human resources and household tasks such as preparing food, collecting water, looking for firewood, shopping, maintaining family health and nutrition, and caring for and educating children; (2) productive roles, namely jobs that produce goods and services for consumption and sale, such as farmers, fishermen, consultancies, services, business people and entrepreneurs. (3) social role, which is related to service activities and political participation (Hubeis, 2010)

Empirically, Southeast Asia's most common cultural characteristic is women's relatively high status in society compared to East Asia and South Asia. Although women still face many social and cultural barriers in Southeast Asia, the situation appears much different from patriarchal societies in other parts of Asia and traditional models of female domesticity in Western societies (Hirschmann, 2007). Women from the Ancient Mataram period to the Majapahit era had positions and roles equal to men in various aspects of life. Women and men have the same opportunities, although in terms of quantity, they are fewer than men. Equality is achieved in public office, social activities, the economy, the world of arts, and others. (Saraswati, 2016)

In the economic field, Southeast Asian women are considered superior in trade. It even plays a significant role in economic affairs. In rural areas, men's work includes things related to metal and animals (plowing, hunting, making crafts, and building houses). In contrast, women's work includes sowing seeds, planting vegetables, weaving, making pots, shopping at the market, preparing food, and performing ceremonies involving ancestors (Reid, 2011).

In the political field, there is a tendency for kings to choose women as royal envoys in critical situations, such as peace negotiators, bodyguards, and even picking someone up. In Sulawesi, the Toraja people sent an old and blind noblewoman to negotiate peace with the Bugis Aru Palakka troops who attacked in 1683. In culture, women were prominent in dance, acting, and music. In Pattani, for example, there is a leading opera performer named Dang Sirat (Reid, 2011).

Islamization brings about behavioral changes and significant social transformation. Islamic principles define the ideal relationship between men and women. Islam strengthens customs that existed in Southeast Asia before Islam, namely polygamy and seclusion. Women are expected to remain at home as a manifestation of their devotion and dignity. This practice has been known among the Javanese nobility and Flores since the 1500s. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, a new, Islamized Javanese elite emerged. The Mataram Islamic Court under Sultan Agung (1613–1646) actively promoted "Islamic piety." Javanese noblewomen were the most affected, while the lower classes were less so (Dewi, 2012).

The Veil Tradition in Indonesian History

The use of the veil in the archipelago was known in several areas. This is as mentioned by Hamka in *Tafsir al-Azhar*.

“When I came to Tanjung Pura and Pangkalan Berandan in 1926, I still found women wearing the headscarf. A sarong was covered over the entire body, and only half of the face was visible. Even if they left the house to meet their family in another house, they still covered their entire body by putting it in a sarong and holding the cloth in one of their hands to their face so that only half was exposed, even just their eyes. When I went to Bhima in 1956, I still

found women in Bhima when they left the house covered in sarongs as in Langkat 1927....”.

The quote above states that in Tanjung Pura and Pangkalan Berandan (now part of Langkat Regency, North Sumatra), there was a custom of wearing a hijab made of sarong, which is covered over the face so that only half of the face or eyes are visible. This was similar to *cadar* (face veil) that we know nowadays. However, each ethnicity name it differently. Malay ethnics call it *tudung lingkup*, *kain duo*, or *kain kelubung*. The Mbojo ethnic group in Bima calls it *rimpu*. The Ocu ethnic group in Kampar Regency, Riau, calls it *maroguok*. In this section, we will describe the veil in each tradition and its relation to the role of women.

“Tudung Lingkup” (Malay)

In Malay culture, there are two types of tudung. First, *tudung manto* which is worn to cover the head with the ends hanging down and hanging down and the sides touching the left and right cheeks. Second, *tudung lingkup* which is similar to a veil for Arab women (Suhardi, 2018). According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, a *tudung lingkup* is a cloth covering a woman's head and face. Some call it a barn (Sulaiman, 2010). The author did not find the use of the term *tudung lingkup* in classical Malay literature. However, in the Hikayat Malin Deman, written around the end of the 19th century, there is a section that shows the use of a *tudung lingkup*, as follows.

“Demi terpandang oleh Tuan Puteri Bongsu akan seorang laki-laki terlalu elok mejelisnya itu, maka berdebarlah hati tuan puteri, melayang roh semangatnya, jatuhlah hatinya kasih sayang yang tiada dapat diperikan lagi, melihatkan rupa cahaya gilang-gemilang itu. Maka tuan puteri pun segeralah menarik tudung ke atas hulunya (kepalanya–pen.) berselubung mukanya lalu baring seraya bersabda memanggil Nenek Kebayan. ‘Aduhai Nenek, kepala beta sangatlah ngilu rasanya: Pening kepala bagai dibaji, sakit hati bagai digunting.’” (Hakim, 2014)

‘When Princess Bongsu saw a man who was so beautiful in his beauty, the princess's heart fluttered, her spirit soared, and her heart fell in love that could no longer be described; she saw the appearance of that brilliant light. So the princess immediately *pulled the veil over her head, covered her face*, and lay down while calling Nenek Kebayan. ‘Oh Grandmother, my head hurts: My head hurts like a wedge, my heart hurts like I have been cut.’

We can find the term *tudung lingkup* in literary works by Amir Hamzah. One is in a lyric prose entitled "Mudaku" written in 1934:

“Remajalah aku dengan timang-timangan ibu, tayangan bapa, kucindan kumbang tiada bertali akupun dipingitlah. Tiadalah lain kerjaku daripada bersolek diri, ke dapur pun jarang, hanya bersulam dan mengerawanglah mengganggu jariku yang lemah-lampai itu. Tiadalah kuketahui lagi apa yang terjadi di halamanku, hanya dari peranginan rumahkulah aku memandang-mandang ke luar kalau matahari berbuni diri, kalau bulan naik berdandan, dan cempaka kuning yang kutanam di halaman

depan, hanya puncaknya kulihat nyata. Kalau sekali setahun aku berjalan ke pekan, maka dikeluarkanlah kereta bugi dan si Belang pun meringkik, lari bergontai, bulunya kemilau-kilau laku sutera kena caya. Tudung lingkup yang hampir menutupi segala mukaku pun ungkai ditiup angin, maka segeralah kukenakan kembali, malu mata datang menumpang menatap muka gadis remaja."

This prose quote describes the condition of Malay women during Amir Hamzah's life. As soon as they become teenagers, Malay women were isolated (secluded) from social interactions outside the home (Wilaela, 2016). When leaving the house, Malay women were required to wear a *tudung lingkup*. The *tudung lingkup* was understood as clothing that limits other people's views of the girl from people who are not her family. When their bodies are exposed to the opposite sex, they were embarrassed. In Malay culture, individuals must have boundaries as a controller for harmonious social interactions with other individual bodies in maintaining the norms that apply in the area (Irawan, 2019).

The use of *tudung lingkup* was known in many areas of Malay culture. In Sumatra, *tudung lingkup* were found in the Siak Sultanate, Deli Sultanate, Langkat Sultanate, Lingga Sultanate, and Seberang Jambi City. In Kalimantan, the *tudung lingkup* was worn in the Sultanate of Sambas. On the Malay Peninsula, *kelubung* cloth covering the head and face was known in Kelantan-Pattani (as reported by Zainudin, 2019). Apart from that, Guru Marzuki, a Betawi cleric with Pattani Malay blood, once taught how to wear a headscarf equipped with a sarong as a face covering. This information has been confirmed by Ustaz Muhammad Irfan, grandson of Guru Marzuki, to the author.

Sarkawi, in an online interview with the author, said there are three ways of wearing the *tudung* for Malay women. First, the entire face (except the eyes) and upper body are covered, indicating the wearer is unmarried. Second, the face is shown, indicating the woman is married or has children. Third, showing the face and body parts indicates that the woman is old.

In the eastern part of Sumatra (Deli, Langkat, and Siak), the *tudung lingkup* was part of the tradition of *berkurung* or *mencengkam*. *Berkurung* is a custom that requires girls from the time they reach puberty to remain at home until their marriage.

Berkurung existed before the 20th century. Girls were prohibited from leaving the house, anywhere at any time, except with their families. They must be went out after dark. Bathing in the river, for example, must be at dawn or dusk. They came out with their faces covered with *tudung lingkup* or thin scarves (Wilaela, 2016). In the Deli Sultanate, lower-class women wore veils after Sultan Mahmud or after 1865 (Sinar, 2011).



Figure 1. Photo of Tengku Kalsum and Tengku Latifah's daughters in a letter Algemeen Handelsblad news, 2 August 1938, archive www.delpher.nl

Girls rarely went to school. They only received primary and religious education until they were 11 years old. Age 11 and under was an age that is considered safe in the view of society, which wants to protect the honor of girls. Afterward, they stayed home or in a closed room while crocheting, embroidering, and weaving. When bored, they played the harmonica with songs and low voices. When there was an aristocratic comedy, they went to see it to entertain themselves and learn new songs. The wooden walls of her room surrounded a secluded girl's world. Usually, there was a small window on the wall for girls to peek at people passing by in front of their houses. Because she rarely went out, the girl was pale, weak, and had a habit of peeking. A Malay girl eventually found seeing or knowing her whereabouts difficult (Wilaela, 2016).

In Siak, the noble girls wore veils outside the palace, for example, during the *menjunjung duli* ceremony, a tradition of hospitality carried out every year by the sultanate for family and residents. In this ceremony, they wore black clothes and *kain pendua* (two clothes, one as a veil and one as a bottom). After entering the room, the *tudung lingkup* was placed around the waist, as the elders did. On the head, there was only a scarf or *tudung manto* (Jamil, 2005). Girls' activities in Siak included collecting rubber in the fields, looking after younger siblings at home, winding thread, and weaving (Wilaela, 2016).

The *tudung lingkup* is also worn in the Zapin dance. When dancing, the *tudung lingkup* is worn loosely over the shoulders to no longer cover the face (Rahmayani, 2021). Before the 1960s, Malay women were not accustomed to dancing in front of large audiences because it was considered impolite (Muslim, 2007). They can only be watched by fellow women (Hasibuan, 1998).

In Seberang Kota Jambi, the tradition of wearing a *tudung lingkup* is called "berkerobong" (Wandy, 2020). At the beginning of the 20th century, the habit of women in Jambi when leaving the house was only to show their eyes, hands, and feet. Jambi girls used this habit to go out without being recognized

by anyone. However, people could recognize the figure behind the veil from their clothes. In gatherings involving young people, girls often exchanged sarongs to trick young men who try to approach them (Emilia, 2021).

Seberang Kota Jambi is the area that was once the migration destination for the Hadramaut Arabs. Many of the missionaries in Jambi came from Yemen, including Sayid Husin ibn Ahmad Baragbah from Tarim City, Hadramaut (18th century). Therefore, this area was made to resemble Arab traditions. Before the 1980s, women did not use the public road in front of the house. A road for women is closed off by a zinc fence if women want to visit relatives from one house to another. Women from Seberang Kota Jambi only travel a short time and not far. Only men went to shop or market. went go to the river before dawn or before sunset. When women left the house, men entered the mosque. This tradition remained visible until 1990 (online interview with Via Dicky, 30 April 2021).

Seberang Kota Jambi is known as *kota santri* (the town of Islamic students) because of the many *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools) there. Even though young people rarely wear *tudung lingkup*, women from *pesantren* still wear *tudung lingkup* or *cadar* (contemporary *niqab*). As Via Dicky said, "Only the old ones wear it. The young one is not here, Sir. However, *pesantren* students wear it. Yes, apart from the usual *cadar*. That [Seberang Kota Jambi] is *santri* area. Many *pesantren* have been established there. Every village has a *pesantren*. From Kampung Tanjung Raden to Kampung Tanjung Johor, all of them have *pesantren*. It is still worn in Tanjung Pasir, even though by older women. There are women in every village who still wear it; it is just that it is difficult to record because those who wear it are never seen leaving the house."

She also wants to express that even though the region has a tradition of wearing the veil, this does not at all mean that his region adheres to radical beliefs like the stereotypes that appear today. "I have a brother who manages Guru Daud's *pesantren*. Guru Daud was formerly the imam of the mosque in Mecca. The *pesantren* is located in Tahtul Yaman [Village]. If you go there, I will recommend you. Coincidentally, my sister is very close to the Islamic boarding school. Many documents can be read if you wish. What is most impressive is that none of the Islamic boarding schools are radical, and the area is very peaceful."



Figure 2. Sambas Museum Archives, doc. Suhana Sarkawi

The veil in Malay tradition was an inseparable part of purdah called "*berkurung*". The tradition of secluding girls existed in the archipelago before Islam (Dewi, 2012). After Islam, the *tudung lingkup* became a complement to this tradition. There was acculturation between Indonesian customs, namely *berkurung* for girls, and Islamic teachings, which recommend or require women to cover their faces. It can be interpreted that in the Indonesian context, girls were required to cover their faces because there is a more significant potential for slander than mothers and older women. A man will feel more reluctant to look at or disturb a married woman than unmarried girl.

The secluded girls were prepared to become wives. They only left the house for specific purposes. The role of veiling women was in the domestic realm. In the Malay context, the veil was part of women's domestication. However, the productive role of veiling women in the economy and culture must be addressed. Malay girls were good at weaving. Weaving was a productive and economical activity. Because the work was complicated and the thread was expensive, Siak weaving products were expensive. Initially, this activity was an independent community effort. Then, to raise people's living standards, Sultan Syarif Hasyim brought weaving equipment that could be used for the home industry. Sultan Syarif Kasim II also bought the best weaving products made by women (Wilaela, 2016).

The girls in Asahan were also secluded, but the young people there often held meetings or visit when they go to the fields or the sea. Asahan women also often went to Deli to sell the woven cloth they make. As for the girls in Simalungun, their only productive activity was planting rice (Wilaela, 2016).

While weaving or embroidering, Malay girls also usually sang poetry and hum. Their faint voices were usually heard in villages in Riau. Girls in Langkat and Asahan were also good at singing and humming in Arabic (Wilaela, 2016). There is an opinion that Tengku Maharatu, one of the Empresses of Siak, also wore a veil. Tengku Maharatu is the Empress of Siak who had merit in the field of education. She developed Madrasah Annisa, a religious school for women in Siak (Wilaela, 2016).

The involvement of noble women in *menjunjung duli* ceremonies and Tengku Maharatu's merit in education shows that veiling women also had a social role, although smaller than a domestic and productive role. This social role includes the fields of culture and education. Cultural activities such as poetry, singing in Arabic, playing the harmonica, and Zapin dancing are also cultural activities that should be considered, even though they are carried out in a limited scope.

Maroguok (Ocu)

The Ocu tribe who inhabit Kenegerian Air Tiris (now part of Kampar Regency, Riau Province) have a distinctive veil called *maroguok*. The word *maroguok* is a variant of *berguk* or *burqa'*. This type of veil was first introduced by Datuk Engku Mudo Sangkal, who lived at the end of the 19th century. He is an expert in jurisprudence and exegesis from a *pesantren* in Taram, Minangkabau, who is also a shaykh of the Naqsyabandiyah congregation. Mr Zakaria confirmed this in his interview, "Datuk Engku Mudo Sangkal is the one who created the *maroguok* clothing in Kampar as far as I know. The proof is that my grandmother wore it before our independence."

Datuk Engku Mudo Sangkal saw that there was promiscuity in his area. The scholars of Kenegerian Air Tiris wanted the market to be held separately for men and women during the week, namely Saturdays. This was to avoid meetings between men and women which can lead to immorality. However, the implementation of the separate market failed. Datuk Engku Mudo Sangkal submitted a proposal in the state assembly stipulating that every woman left the house wearing a *maroguok*. Engku Mudo Sangkal's proposal was accepted and supported by *ninik mamak*, religious scholars, intellectuals and community leaders.

Datuk Engku Mudo Sangkal taught the making and use of this *maroguok* during *wird* recitation. The community welcomed this. The presence of the colonialists encouraged Datuk Engku Mudo Sangkal to promote the use of *maroguok* further to maintain the security and safety of women from being kidnapped and raped by Dutch soldiers. Women in Kenegerian Air Tiris wore *maroguok* to the fields, gardens, markets, mosques, schools, when visiting the dead, etc. (Ujas, 1994).

A similar explanation was given by Mr. Zakaria, "In the past, *maroguok* was worn by all ages, women, to avoid the eyes of our colonialists. That's the main thing that Datuk Engku Mudo Sangkal created *maroguok*. As long as they left the house they wore *maroguok* and when they went to the garden or fields they also wore *maroguok*. Now no one uses it like the picture above. In the era of independence, there would have been many models similar to *maroguok*. Basically, the *maroguok* or face covering hijab is related to the *aurat* (private parts) of Muslim women."

Maroguok is also worn in *batobo*, an activity of working on land (rice fields or farms) while chanting. *Batobo* is divided into three types, namely *tobo lelaki* (male *tobo*), *tobo wanita* (female *tobo*), and *tobo basampuok* (mixed). In contrast to *tobo lelaki* and *tobo wanita*, *tobo basampuok* is attended by teenagers aged 14–18. During *batobo* the activity of chanting is intended as entertainment. Datuk Engku Mudo Sangkal allowed it, but warned against it leading to an indecent relationship. He tried to compose advice, traditional and religious rhymes to

divert young people from love rhymes. In *tobo basampuok*, every male and female participant wore *maroguok*. By wearing *maroguok*, work ran smoothly, and safely, and there is more enthusiasm for singing, and reciting rhymes, riddles and jokes. Apart from that, "maroguok" also protects women from splashes of mud and hot sun.

In *batobo*, there is little differentiation of work based on gender. Men carry out heavy work, while light work is the responsibility of women, plus cooking and drinking for the participants (Wangania, 1980). However, this work differentiation has nothing to do with the usage of *maroguok*.



Figure 3. Doc. Riau Provincial State Museum

From the explanation above, it can be understood that the use of *maroguok* among the Ocu tribe was not part of seclusion and did not hinder the role of women. The majority of the population there works as farmers and cultivators. Women could still work productively on the land with the *maroguok* they wore without any obstacles. There were no customs that require women to stay at home. Even the girls who wore *maroguok* worked together with the men. In fact, *maroguok* had a positive impact on the wearer and prevented the wearer from negative things.

"Rimpu" (Mbojo)

Rimpu is a typical hijab of the Mbojo tribe (Bima and Dompu) made from a woven sarong worn and wrapped around it without pins. This woven sarong is called *tembe nggoli*. *Tembe nggoli* is made of cotton and has a geometric plant motif. There are two types of *rimpu*. First, the *rimpu colo*, namely the *rimpu* that covers the face, indicates that the wearer is not married. Second, the *rimpu mpida*, the *rimpu* that shows the face, indicates that the wearer is married.

Rimpu was born when Datuk Ri Bandang and Datuk Ri Tiro arrived in Kampung Melayu, Bima, 1641 (Arafah, 2015). *Rimpu* is a form of Bima cultural acculturation which was formed by Malay ulama and was then ratified by Sultan Abdul Khair Sirajuddin in the Hadat Tanah Bima Council through the Paruga

Suba meeting with Tureli Ngampo Abdurrahim, Bumi Ngeko (the sultan's retainer), and Dato Melayu (Jaffar, 2020). In the 18th to 20th centuries, rimpu was initially only worn by Malay women and the daughters of lebai (imams and ulama), then became a culture in Bima in the 1920s (Ramadhan, 2018). The use of rimpu was then encouraged by Sultan Salahuddin in 1930 (as reported by Murni, 2022).

Rimpu was a symbol of honor for Bima women. Bima women proudly wore rimpu to show the public they can weave and that their fabric is their work. Rimpu culture during the colonial period also helped girls maintain their honor (Fitriana, 2019). Rimpu was worn by the community as a means of keeping girls pure and away from things that cause harm (Suciyati, 2019). In Bima there was a particular room for women namely *taja*, so they spend more time at home (Jaffar, 2020). However, the *rimpu colo* (face veil) wearers in Bima were not restricted strictly like the Malay girls who wore *tudung lingkup*. It is shown that girls in Bima wore rimpu when going down to the fields (Suciyati, 2019). This means that although Bima women were expected to spend more time at home, they were not prohibited from doing productive work such as rice fields.

CONCLUSION

From the results above, it can be concluded that wearing the veil is not always synonymous with domestication. This depends on the cultural conditions adopted by each society. For people familiar with the purdah system (*berkurung* or seclusion), the veil was interpreted as restricting women from being seen by men who are not mahram. As for communities that did not implement a system of exclusion, the veil facilitated women to leave the house and interact with the opposite sex more safely. In specific contexts, wearing the veil supported women to remain productive and play a role in the economic and cultural fields. The Indonesian context, which has recognized various roles for women since before Islam, allows face veiled women in the Indonesian tradition not only to play roles in the domestic sphere. In Indonesian history, the dominant role of veiled women included domestic and productive roles, while social roles are relatively few.

In forming a moderate Islamic discourse on the archipelago, we should reflect on tradition and look at the history of the archipelago more holistically with the various diversity that exists within it. Rejection of the veil means rejecting Islamic traditions that have been practiced and developed by *ulama* (clerics) in several regions in the archipelago in the past. Even though there has been a paradigm shift regarding Indonesian women from the past to the present, it is essential to reconnect contemporary Indonesian Islamic discourse with historical facts so that it is not uprooted from its roots. It is also essential to make compromises and look for meeting points between traditional and modern thinking regarding women's clothing and roles. Reflecting on the historical fact that women who wear the veil in the archipelago play many roles in the

productive sector, nowadays, women who wear the veil should also be accepted to take on social roles.

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