

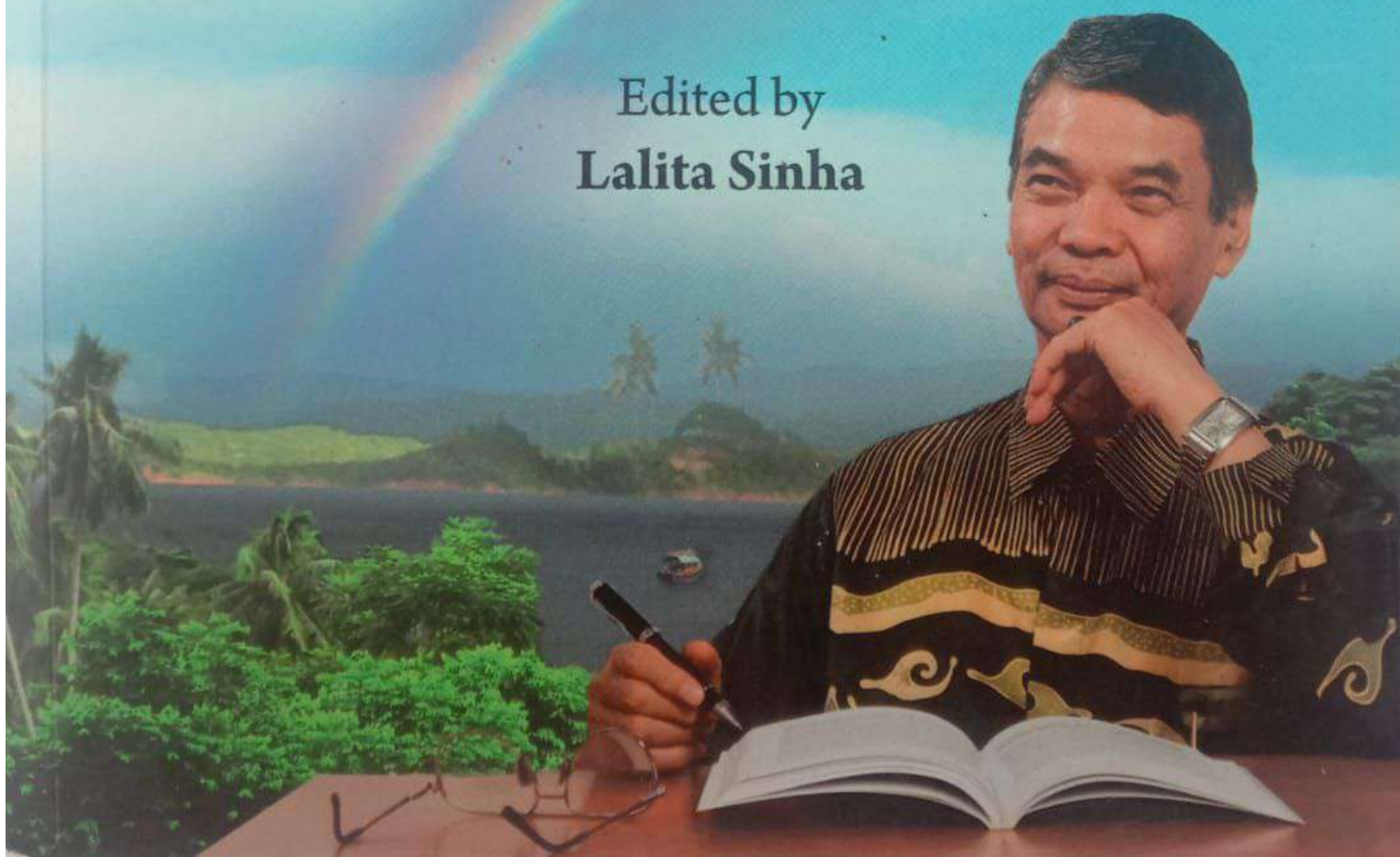
This engaging volume attests to Md. Salleh's wide-ranging interests and activities as a literary critic of broad knowledge, interests and intellectual scope, a frequent guest speaker and poetry reader at international seminars and conferences in Asia and Europe, a much-loved and respected teacher, and an inspiring friend.

Professor Wim A.L. Stokhof,
Leiden University

Rainbows of Malay Literature and Beyond

Festschrift in Honour of
Professor Md. Salleh Yaapar

Edited by
Lalita Sinha



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Chapter
4The End of *Jawi* Islamic
Scholarship? *Kitab Jawi*, Qur'anic
Exegesis, and Politics in Indonesia

Moch. Nur Ichwan

Introduction

Malay language written in Arabic script (called *jawi*) is an important characteristic of Islamisation of the Malay-Indonesian world since the introduction of Islam in this region before the 13th century.¹ The process of 'jawi-isation' subsequently replaced the existing scripts, such as *Malayu*, *surat*, *kawi*, and Pallavo-Nusantara scripts (Uli Kozok 2004, 44).² *Jawi*-isation was supported by early Muslim kingdoms in Aceh and elsewhere in the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago by using it as the official script in education, administration, trade, and diplomacy (Andaya 2001, 91–101; Putten and Al-Azhar 1995).³ The first evidence of the existence of a *jawi* text was found at the end of the 13th century,⁴ and since 15th century, according to Chambert-Loir, Malay language was written only in *jawi* script, a practice which

- ¹ I use the term '*Jawi*' (with capital 'J') in the sense of Malay culture and Malay world in general, and '*jawi*' (with small 'j') in the sense of modified Arabic characters for writing Malay language. The term *jawi* is actually applicable to non-Malay languages of the Malay world which use Arabic script. But, for the sake of clarity, I will make use of the term in the context of Malay/Indonesian language. Some communities have their own terms, such as '*pegon*' for Javanese, Sundanese, and Madurese languages written in the Arabic script; '*serang*' for Makassarese language; and '*jawoe*' for Acehnese language. Although the word '*jawoe*' in Acehnese means *jawi*, it is not included in the *jawi* meant in this article. They share similar system of writing, but each script has, albeit minor, also its own peculiarities. In Javanese, '*jawi*' simply means 'Javanese' in higher register form (*krama*); '*bahasa jawi*' means Javanese language; whereas '*tiyang jawi*' means Javanese people. Some *Kitab Pegon* mentions *jawi* in this sense. *Kitab Pegon* published in Mecca usually used the term '*jawi mariki*', which for Javanese in Java does not make sense, to differentiate it from Malay *jawi*.
- ² See also Tol et al. 2009, 309–338. On *jawi* spelling, see Kratz (2002, 21–26); on the history of *jawi* script, see Hashim Haji Musa (1999) and Laffan (2009, 139–147).
- ³ However, the process of *jawi*-isation was different from region to region. Some regions underwent earlier processes of *jawi*-isation than others. In Kerinci, according to Uli Kozok (2004, 43), *jawi* did not become common until the late 17th and early 18th century.
- ⁴ The oldest *jawi* script is found on the Terengganu Stone, dated 702 A.H. (1303) (Tol et al. 2009, 312, 326).

spread all over the Malay world (Chambert-Loir 2009b, 325–326). Until the early beginning of 20th century most religious books, including Qur'anic exegesis, were written in *jawi* script, and generally known as *Kitab Jawi*.⁵ This religious writing tradition was hegemonic for about six centuries, until the introduction of *rumi* (roman) script by the Dutch colonial administration at the end of the 19th century (Chambert-Loir 2009c, 336).⁶

Although introduced by colonial government, the *rumi*-isation process was supported by most nationalist (including Islamic nationalist) movements. This was crystallised in the Youth Pledge Congress (Kongres Sumpah Pemuda) of 1928, in which 'Bahasa Indonesia' was declared the national language. It is important to keep in mind, however, that inherent in the Indonesianisation process is de-*jawi*-isation.⁷ The effort was continued by the postcolonial Indonesian government and has contributed significantly to the decline and marginalisation of *jawi* script from the writing tradition of Indonesian Muslim scholars. Qur'anic exegesis was the field that suffered most, compared to the other fields, such as theology and *fiqh* (Islamic law). So far we do not find complete Qur'anic exegetical works written in *jawi* script after the Youth Conference of 1928, although we find them written in *pegon* using Javanese and Sundanese languages and in *jawoe* using Acehnese language.⁸

In the context of *jawi*, most scholars have dealt with *Kitab Jawi* (*jawi* literature) in general.⁹ This chapter focuses on the history of Qur'anic exegesis in Indonesia in the context of both *jawi* and post-*Jawi* Islamic scholarship.¹⁰ I shall argue that the rise and decline of *Jawi* Qur'anic works in Indonesia has been very much influenced by the politics of language and script introduced

- ⁵ Mohd. Nor bin Ngah (1983, vii) defines *Kitab Jawi* as Islamic religious books written in classical Malay language using Arabic characters (*jawi*). However, Mohd. Nor bin Ngah does not mention Qur'anic exegetical works in his book. On *Kitab Jawi* and their authors, see Heer (2007).
- ⁶ Indonesian people are more familiar with the term '*huruf Latin*' (Latin script) than 'roman' or '*rumi*', which is common in Malaysia, Brunei, and Southern Thailand. For the general readership, I use the term '*rumi* script'.
- ⁷ See also Moch Nur Ichwan (2002, 13–29).
- ⁸ Teungku H. Mujahiddin Jusuf (1995) wrote his translation of the Qur'an, entitled *Al-Qur'an al-Karim: Terjemah Bebas Bersajak dalam Bahasa Aceh*, in *jawoe*, but then it was transcribed by an editorial team with *rumi* script.
- ⁹ See, for instance, Omar Farouk Bajunid (2002, 123–148); on *jawi* in Pattani, see Matheson and Hooker (1988); Horstmann (2002, 111–122); Hattori (2002, 45–62) (2002, 45–62); Tan (2002, 197–210).
- ¹⁰ On general study of (non-*jawi*) Qur'anic literature, see Federspiel (1991); and on translation of the Qur'an in Indonesian languages, see Riddell (2009, 397–415).

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by the ruler(s)—Muslim sultanates, colonial administration, and postcolonial government on the one hand, and by the interests of reading communities, on the other hand. To portray the development of the *jawi* Qur'anic exegesis in modern Indonesia, I will cover the period from the colonial period to the New Order period,¹¹ although some aspects of post-New Order will also be touched. However, I am not suggesting here that the development of *jawi* Qur'anic exegesis shared similar development as that of *Kitab Jawi* in general. The use of the *jawi* script, and not so much its content, will be the major concern of this chapter. The books in other Malay-Indonesian languages written in Arabic characters, such as Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese (called *pegon*), Makassarese (called *serang*), and Acehnese (called *jawoe*), are excluded from the present study.

Jawi Islamic Scholarship: Early *Kitab Jawi* and Qur'anic Exegesis

Malay Archipelago had witnessed a lot of evidence of the process of vernacularisation of Islamic scholarship in some parts of the Malay Archipelago at the beginning of the 16th century, a process which had taken place since before the 13th century. This is expressed, according to Johns (1998), in three major phenomena: "...in the widespread use of the Arabic script, the fluent and confident use of Arabic loan words, and a significant corpus of literary works inspired by Arabic and Persian models. (Johns 1998, 121; 1988, 258–287)."¹² These phenomena emerged due to the fact that Islamisation has always been followed by diglossia, a situation in which two linguistic variations are used in a community, but one of them is considered superior to the other (Crystal 1988, 229). Diglossia here is the result of both Arabisation and vernacularisation.¹³ In this context, Arabic language gains the sacredness as religious language, due to the sacralisation of the Qur'an, Hadith, and other Islamic religious texts. The phenomena of vernacularisation and diglossia are mirrored well in the Qur'anic exegetical works in many cultural contexts in Indonesia. There are some Qur'anic exegetical works in the local languages using Arabic script, adopting or borrowing Arabic words and grammatical structure, and using Arabic exegetical literature as their sources (Riddell 2002, 1–26). Emphasising the importance of Arabic script,

¹¹ In Indonesian political context, 'New Order' means Soeharto era.

¹² On the Arabic and Persian words in Malay and Indonesian language, see Jones (1978).

¹³ Islamisation has led to some degree of Arabisation of vernacular languages. This was caused mainly by the use of the Qur'an, Hadith, and other Islamic texts as religious references.

Chambert-Loir said that in six centuries of *jawi* tradition, the Arabic script had seized the Malay language: the language was written in a borrowed script, and the script was specifically Islamic (Chambert-Loir 2009c, 336).

Compared to other religious fields, Qur'anic exegetical works are smaller in number.¹⁴ We may mention some of those written before the 20th century, such as a commentary on surah al-Kahf (from the 16th century), an anonymous work whose manuscript is kept in the Cambridge University Library;¹⁵ 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Singkili's *Tarjumān al-Mustafid* (from the 17th century);¹⁶ *Kitāb Farā'id al-Qur'ān* (anonymous, probably from the 18th century);¹⁷ and a complete *jawi* Qur'anic translation/exegesis, entitled *Tafsir al-Qur'an dalam Bahasa Melayu* [Qur'anic Exegesis in Malay Language] (probably from the 19th century), whose manuscript is kept at the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia in Jakarta with catalogue number

¹⁴ Berg (1886, 555) lists only one Qur'anic exegesis as part of the regular curriculum in *pesantren* or *surau* at the late 19th century, that is, *Tafsir al-Jalalayn*, co-authored by Jalal al-Din al-Mahalli and Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti, and mentions nothing about the *Tarjumān al-Mustafid*. See also Bruinessen (1990, 235). In *pesantren*, usually the students (*santri*) are supposed to have good command of Arabic. Therefore, reading Arabic books is prioritised in the curriculum over the *Kitab Jawi*. The *Tarjumān* is less used in Java, and it seems also the case in other non-Malay speaking areas.

¹⁵ According to Riddell (1989, 112–118), the manuscript of the commentary on surah al-Kahf (Q.18: 9) was presumably written in the 16th century. It was brought from Aceh to the Netherlands by a Dutch linguist of Arabic language, Erpinus (d. 1624) at the beginning of the 17th century. This manuscript is now kept by the Cambridge University Library with catalogue number MS li.6.45. It is assumed that the manuscript was produced at the beginning of the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607–1636), whose grand *mufti* (with the title 'Shaykh al-Islam') was Shams al-Din al-Sumatrani, or even before that, during the period of Sultan 'Alauddin Ri'ayat Shah Sayyid al-Mukammil (1537–1604), in which Hamzah al-Fansuri was a grand *mufti*. Andaya (2001, 101) assumes that perhaps Shams al-Din held the title Shaykh al-Islam since the time of Sultan Alauddin.

¹⁶ *Tarjumān al-Mustafid* is a complete exegetical work of 30 parts of the Qur'an, which is the masterpiece of 'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Singkili (c. 1615–1693), written in the 17th century. The time of its writing cannot be precisely dated, but from the oldest manuscript, according to Riddell, it can be identified that it was written after his return from Mecca, rather than before his death in about 1693. Based on this manuscript Riddell concludes that it was written approximately in 1675. If this assumption is correct, it means that the *Tarjumān* was composed at the end of the reign of Sultanah Taj al-'Alam and/or the beginning of the reign of Sri Sultan Nur al-'Alam. Many scholars, including Snouck Hurgronje (1906, 17: note 6), believe that the *Tarjumān* is a Malay translation of *Tafsir al-Baydāwi*. But Riddell (1984, 113–118) has refuted this account and shown convincingly that the *Tarjumān* is actually the translation of *Tafsir al-Jalālayn*, but with reference to *Tafsir Baydāwi*, *Tafsir al-Khāzin* and other exegetical works. On *Tarjumān al-Mustafid*, see Riddell (1990).

¹⁷ Al-Yasa' and Abdullah (1992, 32) said that it is the work of Faqih Jalal al-Din al-Ashi.

PNRI W.277a.¹⁸ Some manuscripts of the excerpt of parts of the Qur'anic exegesis in *jawi*, and some are complete or used to be complete exegesis or translation, are, indeed, found in some parts of the country.¹⁹ Most of them are anonymous and not printed in later period.²⁰

The use of Malay language written in *jawi* script has great benefit for the above Qur'anic exegetical works. As *lingua franca*, Malay was as official language and *jawi* as official script in state administration, diplomatic relations, economic activities, education, and trade (Kratz 1999, 46–57). One should learn Malay language and *jawi* script in order to be able to study at Islamic centres in Aceh, Palembang, Banjarmasin, Minangkabau, and other Malay speaking regions, and occupy better jobs in the Sultanate court as well as in trading companies. In non-Malay speaking regions, Arab-Malay *jawi* script was presumably mastered mainly by the learned, administrators of the courts, and traders. Many *Kitab Jawi* were translated or recomposed into Javanese language.²¹

Until the end of the 19th century *jawi* writing tradition was undisturbed. With regard to the development of linguistic aspects, Raja Ali Haji (c. 1809–c. 1873) completed his linguistic book, entitled *Bustān al-Kātibīn* (Garden of writers) on rules for spelling Malay in *jawi* script in 1851. The book discussed also Malay grammar by applying Arabic categories and gave some remarks about style and letter-writing. He said in the introduction of the book that it is important to have knowledge in the Islamic tradition, such as *kalām* (theology), *fiqh* (law), and *tasawwuf* (mysticism) (Ronkel 1901, 519–520; Putten 2002, 418). The influence of Arabic grammar is very obvious, such as in the use of Arabic grammatical terms, such as *fā'il* (subject), *maf'ūl* (object), *ism* (noun), *fi'l* (verb), *fi'l muta'addī* (transitive verbs), *fi'l lāzim* (intransitive

¹⁸ It is a complete work of interlinear vocalised Malay commentary of the Qur'an separated in 10 volumes, each containing three parts (*juz*); and each page contains five lines of Arabic text and five lines of interlinear Malay translation (Teh Gallop and Akbar 2006, 106, 138–139).

¹⁹ See Behrend (1998, 333, 553–568; see also Wijk (1893, 239–345); Ronkel (1896, 1–53).

²⁰ However, there was complete non-*jawi* Qur'anic exegetical works written in Arabic and in local languages/scripts, such as *Tafsīr al-Munīr* or *Marāh Labīd*, by Muhammad Nawawi al-Bantani, a Banten scholar living and teaching in Mecca, in Arabic and *Kitab Kur'an: Tetedakanipun ing Tembang Arab Kajawekaken* [Qur'anic Scripture: Translated from Arabic into Javanese] Betawi (Batavia): Tuan Lange Sakancanipun (Lange and Co.), 1858, in Javanese script. As far as I know, it is the first published complete Javanese translation of the Qur'an using Javanese script, with no Arabic text. There is a *pegon* Qur'anic exegesis written by Shaykh Muhammad Salih bin 'Umar al-Samarani, *Fayd al-Rahmān fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Singapore: Matba'ah al-Hajj Muhammad Amin, 1311/1894).

²¹ See Behrend (1998), 503ff.

verbs), etc. Most *ulama* in Sumatera, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and western part of Java, especially Batavia, wrote their religious treatises in *jawi*, although the titles are in Arabic. This was reflected, for instance, in Sayyid 'Uthman's (1822–1914) Islamic religious books.²²

The lithograph printing activities of *jawi* literature began as early as 1860 in Singapore. In line with the demand of market at that time, *kitab*, *hikayat*, and *syair* were published and broadly distributed in many parts of the archipelago. Their readership was wide, including the *hajj* pilgrims (Proudfoot 1993; Chambert-Loir 2009c, 334). The lithograph printing houses which produced *jawi* texts were found in Singapore,²³ Mecca,²⁴ Cairo,²⁵ Istanbul, Bombay, Batavia,²⁶ Cirebon, and Surabaya.²⁷ Looking at their locations in some important cities in various countries, it is fairly assumed that *Kitab Jawi* were vital parts of international Islamic market at that time (Laffan 2003b, 361–363). These printing activities had undoubtedly contributed to the development of *jawi* literature at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Jawi periodicals were other important agents of *jawi*-isation. The first *jawi* newspaper appeared in the Straits Settlements in late 1876, called *Jawi Peranakan (Jawi by Birth)*, managed by a group of mixed Indo-Malay parentage. About two years later, another *jawi* newspaper, namely *Wazir Indië*, was published in Batavia in August 1878, although it ended in 1879 (Laffan 2003a, 145–147). They were precedents of the 20th century *jawi* periodicals, such as *Alam Minangkabau* (sic!) (The World of Minangkabau), *Al-Imam* (Leader) (Singapore, 1906–1908), *Al-Munir* (Enlightening) (Padang, 1911–1916), and *Al-Islam* (Surabaya, 1916–1917).²⁸ However, *jawi* periodicals could not be well developed, compared to the *rumi* Malay ones. Firstly, the technology of *jawi* lithography was only lately developed and lacked of font

²² Sayyid 'Uthman ibn 'Abd Allah ibn 'Aqil ibn Yahya al-'Alawi (1822–1914) was a Batavian scholar of Hadramawt descent and Honorary Advisor on Arab Affairs to the Dutch colonial government. He wrote many books both in Arabic and *jawi* and published them at his own printing house. On Sayyid 'Uthman, see Kaptein (1997, 85–102).

²³ Such as Matba'ah al-Ahmadiyyah.

²⁴ Such as Matba'a al-Miriyya, Matba'a al-Turqi al-Majidiyya al-'Uthmaniyya, and Matba'a Fath al-Karim al-Islamiyya. On *jawi* printing in Singapore and Mecca, see Laffan (2007).

²⁵ Such as Matba'ah Dar Ihya' al-Kutub al-'Ababiyyah, Matba'ah Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi, and Matba'a Hasan al-Turkhi Ahmad.

²⁶ Such as one belonging to Sayyid 'Uthman.

²⁷ Such as Matba'ah al-Islamiyyah.

²⁸ Some periodicals published by Arab communities were mostly in Arabic language, but some includes Malay sections, such as *al-Bashir* (Good News), *al-Qistas* (Balance), and some even had *rumi* Malay editions, such as *Azzachierah al-Islamiyyah* (The Islamic Treasury) and *al-Wifaq* (Harmony), Mobini-Kesheh (1996, 236–256).

sophistication. Its fonts were mostly not elegant and difficult to read. Second, most organised political parties preferred *rumi* rather than *jawi* periodicals as their organs.²⁹ *Al-Islam* was published by Sarekat Islam (SI), but it could not survive after about one year of its existence (1916–1917). This reflected *jawi*'s lack of popularity among indigenous people, while Muslim organisations needed more membership (Laffan 2003a, 178–179). As we will see later, most Muslim organisations and parties used *rumi* script as official script in their administrative affairs and in their publications.

Marginalising *Jawi*: Colonial Politics of *Rumi*-isation

Jawi literature began to be in the state of decline especially since the introduction of *rumi* script by the Dutch colonial administration at the end of 19th century. The *rumi* script was used in the administration and education from the local to central level. This script became hegemonic, although not necessarily replacing the *jawi* script, especially since the abolition of *cultuurstelsel* (forced cultivation system) in the 1870s and later the implementation of the so-called 'Ethical Politics' at the beginning of the 20th century (Steenbrink 1993, 133). After 1900, new administrative system was introduced in the fields of civil servants, education, taxation, etc., not only for European citizens but also for indigenous people, based on European administrative measures (Deliar Noer 1980, 181). All of these developments significantly enhanced the *rumi*-isation of local languages, including Malay. *Rumi* script soon emerged as the hegemonic script which increasingly replaced the existing *jawi* and other local scripts.³⁰

Until the late 19th century, it was obligatory for all Dutch officials to have good command of Malay language and *jawi* script. However, in 1860, J. Pijnappel (1822–1901) proposed the replacement of the Arabic script with the Western *rumi* script in the Indies (Jedamski 2009, 657–658; Laffan 2003a, 145). He argued that by this policy the Dutch could make sure the replacement of Arab influences with Western culture. Despite this proposal, the colonial government commissioned the *Depot van Leermiddelen* (Government Depository of Schoolbooks) in 1878 to produce textbooks in indigenous, including Malay textbooks. The 1898 *Depot's* catalogue lists 52 titles in Malay language, some of them were written in *jawi*. Pijnappel's

²⁹ Cf. Laffan (2003a, 147–148).

³⁰ In Indonesia, there are a number of local scripts, such as Javanese, Buginese, Makassarese, and Batakese.

proposal was responded positively about three decades later by Karel Frederik Holle (1829–1896), a scholar of Sundanese literature and adviser of *Inlandsche zaken* (indigenous affairs), by promoting Sundanese script rather than Arabic script for writing Sundanese language. Another important response was the official circular of 1894 which urges all *penghulu* (religious officials) to employ *rumi* script. In 1905, J.E. Jasper argued that the Javanese people should be provided with books in *rumi* script rather than Arabic or Javanese scripts (Jedamski 2009, 657–658; Laffan 2003a, 145).

In 1908, a new commission was set up, called Commissie voor de Volklectuur (Commission for Popular Literature) to improve the availability of the textbooks in indigenous languages. Officially the target language of the Commissie's project was Malay and supported by other regional languages, especially Javanese, Sundanese, and Madurese. However, surprisingly, the Commissie had little interest in publishing Malay texts, and instead published books in 'purified' classical Javanese, Sundanese, and Madurese (Jedamski 2009, 659). The first Malay titles did not appear until 1911,³¹ and the first Malay translation until 1915, entitled *Penjakit Pest diPulau Djawa dan Madoera* (Pest Disease in Java and Madura). When occupying the newly established Kantoor voor de Volklectuur (Balai Poestaka [Balai Pustaka]³²—Office for Popular Literature) in 1917, D.A. Rinkes said explicitly: "Waktoue sekarang boekoe-boekoe Melajulah jang sangat koerang, apalagi djika dibandingkan dengan boekoe-boekoe bahasa lain (Today we have very limited number of the Malay books, compared to those in other languages).³³ One of the aims of the Balai Poestaka was to promote *rumi* Malay among the indigenous people. However, the Commissie and the Balai Poestaka did not produce religious books, such as *Kitab Jawi*, due to the Dutch colonial policy to take neutral position from religious affairs. The Balai Poestaka published the four-volume of Arab-Malay dictionary, entitled *Kamoes Arab-Melajoe* (Arab-Malay dictionary) or in Arabic *Kitāb al-Ināra al-Tahdhibiyya fi al-Lughatay al-'Arabiyya wa al-Malāyuiyya* (the Book of Didactic Illumination

³¹ *Kissah Pelajaran Kenegeri Djoedah* by Abdoellah bin Abdullah Kadir Moensji and *Hikajat Pandjisemirang*, vol. I and II, an adaptation by M. Anggawinangoen of a *jawi* manuscript dating from 1870 (Jedamski 2009, 659–660).

³² I maintain the name 'Balai Poestaka', instead of adjusting it with the current spelling 'Balai Pustaka' to keep the historical aspect of the name and spelling. During the Dutch colonial times, the former was used, not the latter.

³³ *Daftar Boekoe jang dikeloearkan oleh Commissie voor de Volklectuur di Weltevreden dan boekoe jang jang diadakannya oentoe Volkbibliotheek, akan tetapi boekan kepoenjaannya (Catalogus jang kedua)*, 1917; quoted in Jedamski (2009, 660).

of the Two Languages of Arabic and Malay).³⁴ Dictionary is not a religious book, but didactic. However, Malay in this dictionary is *rumi* Malay, and not that written in *jawi* script. The decline of the *Kitab Jawi* could not be disassociated from the politics of *rumi*-isation of the Commissie and Balai Poestaka.

Another important agent of *rumi*-isation was education. Because of the 'ethical politics', the Dutch administration improved the education quality of the indigenous people. The Dutch language was better taught for native students in the Dutch-Native Schools. The schools became also the agents of *rumi*-isation, since the students must know *rumi*, rather than *jawi*. The Dutch administrators refused to have Arabic script (*jawi*) taught in Dutch-Native Schools, such as Sundanese-language schools (Moriyama 1996, 167–169; Zimmer 2000, 62: note 44). Holle was responsible for the disappearance of Arabic-*jawi* script in the Native Schools in West Java. This was the de-*jawi*-isation process through education.

Apart from the colonial policies in administration, culture, and education, mass media were other important actors of *rumi*-isation. At the end of the 19th century, Indo-European and Chinese newspapers in the East Indies used *rumi* Malay. There were some Indo-European newspapers, such as *Selompret Melajoe* (Semarang), *Bintang Timoer* (Surabaya), *Bintang Barat* (Batavia), all published before 1886; and Chinese newspapers, such as *Warta Warna* (Semarang) and *Chabar Perniagaan* (Batavia), published after 1900 (Ahmat Adam 1995, 63–72).

Undoubtedly, *jawi* has not only cultural significance, but also ideological one. Referring to Maxime Rodinson (2005), Chambert-Loir argues that using Arabic script for Malay language (*jawi*) means associating Malay-Indonesian culture with a wider ideology-centred civilization, that is, Islamic civilisation. This also means sacralisation of Malay language (Rodinson 2005, 713–724).³⁵ In this context, one might speculate that the de-*jawi*-isation politics by the Dutch colonial government was a strategy for distancing Indonesia from the Islamic civilisation.

³⁴ In the first phase, the dictionary was the cooperative effort between B. Th. Brond and Haji Moehammad Fadloellah, and later aided by Raden Aboe Bakar Djajadiningrat and D.A. Rinkes (Laffan 2003b, 376).

³⁵ Quoted in Chambert-Loir 2009b, 325.

From *Jawi* to *Rumi*: The 1928 Youth Pledge Congress as Momentum

Rumi-isation was responded positively by both indigenous nationalist and Muslim leaders. They used *rumi* Malay/Indonesian in their periodicals and organisation administration. *Rumi* script was adopted in the first purely indigenous *Soenda Berita*, published by Tirta Adi Soerjo in 1903. Later, Tirta Adi Soerjo published other newspapers, such as *Medan Prijaji* in 1907 and *Poetri Hindia* in 1909, all using *rumi* script. Nationalist organisations, such as Boedi Oetomo (BO), Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI), and Partai Nasionalis Indonesia (PNI), also used *rumi* script in their official administrative affairs. Youth nationalist organisations, such as Jong Java, Jong Ambon, Jong Celebes, and Jong Sumatra, were no exception.³⁶

This was also the position of most Muslim organisations, such as SI, Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, Persatuan Islam (Persis), and Jong Islamieten Bond. They used *rumi* script in most of their administrative documents and publications.³⁷ This phenomenon was not surprising, because most nationalist and Muslim leaders were educated in schools and colleges of Dutch education system. Most Islamic magazines and newspapers were written in *rumi* script. SI, for instance, published such periodicals as *Neraca* (1916–1924), *Bintang Islam* (Islamic Star) (1923–1926), *Bendera Islam* (Islamic Flag) (1924–1927), *Fajar Asia* (Asian Dawn) (1927–1930), and *Laskar* (Troop) (1930–1932). *Berita Nahdlatol Oelama* (1931–1940) initially used *jawi*, but later it used *rumi*.³⁸ Most Muhammadiyah's and Persatuan Islam's periodicals were written in *rumi*.

³⁶ See, for instance, *Kitab-Peringatan Jong Java*, Jakatera [sic!]: Pedoman Besar Jong-Java, 1930.

³⁷ Nahdlatul Ulama documents usually contains *rumi*, *jawi*, and Arabic. For instance, *Verslag Congres Nahdlatol Oelama jang ke 14 di Kota Magelang* (Soerabaia: Drukkerij Nahdlatol Oelama, 1939) contains 144 pages in *rumi*, 22 pages in *jawi*, 11 pages in Arabic. Whereas, Muhammadiyah's *Almanak* contains mostly *rumi*, except quotations from the Qur'an and Hadith. See, for instance, *Almanak Moehammadijah 1354* (Djokjakarta: P.B. Moehammadijah Bagian Taman Poestaka, 1935). But, other earlier document on legal views of the *Tarjih* (Muhammadiyah's institution for producing Islamic legal opinions) used *jawi* and Arabic.

³⁸ After the Independence, *Berita Nahdlatol Oelama* was published again in August 1946, after a long interruption during the Japanese occupation (1941–1945). But it began with new volume and number, discontinuing the previous edition.

The very momentum of the complete marginalisation of *jawi* script by the indigenous people themselves occurred especially since the Youth Pledge Congress on 28 October 1928, in which the Bahasa Indonesia was declared as the national language of Indonesian people.³⁹ Indonesian language is developed from Malay language, absorbing and borrowing many Indonesian local languages and foreign languages, such as Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Portuguese, Dutch, and English. Although not mentioned explicitly, Bahasa Indonesia meant here is that written in *rumi*, and not in *jawi*. Since this Congress, most Muslim leaders and scholars used *rumi* Indonesian for writing letters, articles or books. With this development, Indonesian Muslims entered new phase of post-*Jawi* Islamic scholarship.

The End of *Jawi* Islamic Scholarship? The Case of Qur'anic Exegesis

Rumi Malay Qur'anic exegesis was also found before the Congress, such as the translation of Muhammad Abduh's work, *Tafsir al-Qoeran al-Hakim, Djoezoe' Amma*, published in 1923 (Muhammad Abduh, 1342 H/1923). Hadji Oemar Said Tjokroaminoto, leader of SI began to translate Muhammad Ali's Qur'anic exegesis, *The Holy Qur'an*, into *rumi* Indonesian in 1925 (Moch. Nur Ichwan 2001, 143–161). However, most Qur'anic exegeses at that moment were still written in *jawi* script, such as *Tafsir Surat al-Kahf dengan Bahasa Melajoe* (Commentary of Surah al-Kahf in Malay Language), by Abdoel Wahid Kari Moeda bin Muhammad Siddik, published in Makassar in 1920; *Tafsir Al-Burhan* (Proof), a commentary on Chapter 30 ('*Amma*'), by Haji Abdulkarim Amrullah, known as Haji Rasul, published in Padang in 1922; the first three parts of Mahmud Yunus' *Tafsir al-Qur'an*, published in Egypt in 1922;⁴⁰ *Alqoer'anoel Hakim Beserta Toejoean dan Maksoednja* (the Holy Qur'an with Its Aims and Meaning), part I, by H. Iljas and 'Abd Jalil, published in Padang Panjang in 1925, and *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim*, parts I–III, by Jamain bin Abd al-Murad, published in Fort de Kock (Bukittinggi),

³⁹ In Malaya, a group of artists involved in the 'Asas 50' (Angkatan Sastrawan 50—the 1950 generation of men of literature) demanded that *rumi* script was made official script. This proposal was fulfilled in the Language Congress (Kongres Persuratan Melayu se-Malaya) in 1954, although *jawi* was still recognised. The congress produced *Memorandum Mengenai Tulisan Rumi untuk Bahasa Malayu* (Memorandum on *Rumi* Script for writing Malay language) (Chambert-Loir 2009c, 334).

⁴⁰ I consulted only the second part (*juz'*) of it. According to the author in the introduction to his complete Indonesian edition, the *jawi* version contains only three parts (Mahmud Yunus 1957, iii).

in 1926. *Pegon* Qur'anic exegesis was also found in this phase, such as Al-Imam al-Basri, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim bi Lisān Jāwī wa bi Huruf al-Fighanī*, published in Surabaya in 1922.

After the Congress, most commentators (*mufassir*) of the Qur'an preferred *rumi* to *jawi* for writing their exegetical works. This was also seen in the two magazines of Qur'anic exegesis, *Tafsir Qoeran Melajoe: Soeloeh dan Pedoman Hidoep, diterbitkan mendjadi majallah boelanan* (Malay Qur'anic Exegesis: Light and Guidance of Life, published as monthly magazine), first published in 1928,⁴¹ and *Majallah Tafsir Koer-an* (Magazine of Qur'anic Exegesis) (Mahmoed Joenoes and H.M.T Bakry 1936) published monthly by Drukkerij Sumatra in Padang since 1936—but it seems these two *tafsir* magazines did not survive for long time. It seemed that the first magazine, *Tafsir Qoeran Melajoe*, was the work of M. Moenawar Cholil, *Hidaajatour Rahman* (God's Guidance), published by the same publisher in 1958. The *Majallah Tafsir Koer-an* was co-authored Mahmoed Joenoes (Mahmud Yunus) and H. Moh. Kosim Bakry. It appeared that later they decided to write and publish their own Qur'anic exegesis separately (Moh. Kosim Bakri 1964; Mahmud Yunus 1957). It is worthwhile to note that Mahmud Yunus rewrote his *jawi* Qur'anic exegesis whose first parts published in 1922 in the *rumi*, and published with the title *Tafsir al-Qur'anul Karim Bahasa Indonesia*, in 1952.

The Japanese occupation administration continued the Dutch policy of *rumi*-isation. It controlled all publications, and banned all existing periodicals. Only some periodicals were allowed to exist, such as *Swara MIAI*, later *Swara Masjumi* (in *rumi* Indonesian). The Japanese Gunseikanbu (occupational government) published official magazine *Ken Po* (in *rumi* Indonesian) and restructured the Balai Poestaka to publish popular literature to promote Japanese culture and war propaganda, all in *rumi* Indonesian language.⁴² No Qur'anic exegesis, either in *jawi* or *rumi*, was published during this era.

In the post-Independent Indonesia, the politics of 'de-*jawi*-isation' has continued. *Rumi* script is part of Indonesianisation. This was motivated by the administrative modernisation project run by the government which considers *jawi* as impractical and ineffective, and could be a hindrance to the efforts of catching up with modern sciences and technologies, which are imported from the West. In addition, *jawi* script has been associated with Islam,

⁴¹ *Tafsir Qoeran Melajoe: Soeloeh dan Pedoman Hidoep*, (Solo: Boekhandel Ab. Siti Sjamsijah), vol. 1 (January 1928).

⁴² On Islam during the Japanese occupation, see Benda (1958).

and adopting it would mean Islamisation, an effort which could be seen as discriminating other religions. Finally, *jawi* script is no longer used in the diplomatic documents and letters, even between Southeast Asian countries. These reasons underlie the de-*jawi*-isation and the adoption of a *rumi*-isation policy during the Soekarno era and afterwards. During Soeharto's New Order period, the *jawi* script was almost completely marginalised. Indeed, many old *Kitab Jawi* written before the Independence remain reprinted and easily found on the market,⁴³ but new *Kitab Jawi* written after that were rare.

The Indonesian language written in *rumi* script became a new media of expression of religious literature, including Qur'anic exegesis. This is caused not only by the nationalist spirit of 'becoming Indonesia', but also by the demand of market. Due to this reason, most publishers tended to publish books written in *rumi* script. They viewed that using *jawi* script would limit the readership, which means also bad fate for the publishers. Apart from this, *rumi* Indonesian language became also the counter language of the Dutch colonial administration, which placed Dutch language higher than the indigenous languages. Since the Independence, Indonesia has witnessed some important Qur'anic exegesis written in *rumi* Indonesian language, such as Ahmad Hassan, *Al-Furqan* (1956), Zainuddin Hamidi and Fachruddin HS, *Tafsir Qur'an: Naskah Asli, Terjemah, Keterangan* (1959), Departemen Agama (Ministry of Religious Affairs), *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* (1965–1969), Hamka, *Tafsir al-Azhar* (1968), and Departemen Agama, *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya* (1975). Later, after the New Order, Quraish Shihab published his monumental Qur'anic exegesis, *Tafsir al-Misbah* (2001–2003) in 15 volumes. These are the complete *rumi* Indonesian Qur'anic exegetical works. Since the 1928 no complete works of Qur'anic exegesis written in *jawi* script—at least until the writing of this article—was produced. *Pegon* Qur'anic exegeses have different story.⁴⁴ Some Javanese commentators of the Qur'an wrote their exegetical works in *pegon* script after the Youth Pledge Congress, such as

⁴³ Some books deserve mentioning, such as Abd al-Samad al-Falimbani, *Hidayat al-Salikin*, n.d.: Shirkat Maktabat al-Madaniyyah, 1354 H; Sayyid Uthman, *Kitab al-Qawanin al-Shar'iyah* (Bogor: Maktabah 'Arafat, n.d.); *Kitab Perukunan Melayu Besar* (Jakarta: Yayasan Sosial dan Penelitian Islam MA. Jaya, n.d.).

⁴⁴ There are some productive publishers of *pegon* religious literature, such as Menara Kudus (Kudus), Thoha Putera (Semarang), Bungkul Indah (Surabaya), Maktabah Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Nabhan wa Auladiah (Surabaya), Al-Ihsan (Surabaya), Kota Kembang (Yogyakarta), and al-Maktabah al-Uthmaniyah (Kediri). On *pegon* literature, see Sugahara (2007). She uses '*Kitab Jawa*' in the sense of '*Kitab Pegon*'. I would rather use the term *Kitab Pegon*, however, than *Kitab Jawa*. In Java, *Kitab Jawa* refers to books written in Javanese script, whereas *Kitab Pegon* refers to books of Javanese language written in Arabic (*pegon*) script.

Bisri Musthofa, *Al-Ibriz li-Ma'rifat Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Aziz*; Misbah Zainul Musthofa, *Tafsir Taj al-Muslimin min Kalām Rabb al-'Alamin*, and *Al-Iklil fi Ma'ani al-Tanzil: Mawi Terjemah Bahasa Jawi*; and Ahmad Mujab Mahalli, *Tafsir al-Mahalli li-Ma'rifat Ayat al-Qur'an wa Nuzūliha*.

However, we cannot generalise what has happened in the case of Qur'anic exegesis to all *Kitab Jawi*. *Kitab Jawi* remain published until today. There are some publishers in Aceh (such as Maktaba al-Taufiqiyya al-Sa'ada, Dar al-'Abidin, Putera Aceh Sejati), Medan (such as Sumber Ilmu Jaya, Sumber Bahagia), Jakarta (such as al-Syirka al-Tahiriyya li al-Nashr), Semarang (Thaha Putera), and Surabaya (al-Ihsan, Bintang Terang, and Maktabah Muhammad bin Ahmad bin Nabhan wa Auladiah), which published various topics of *Kitab Jawi*. Maktaba al-Harainayn which has branches in Jidda, Singapore, and Indonesia still published many *Kitab Jawi*. Beirut-based Dar al-Fikr still published al-Singkili's Qur'anic exegesis, *Tarjuman al-Mustafid*. Most of the *kitab*s, however, written by *ulama* (religious scholars) of previous generations. Very few new *ulama* write books in *jawi*. That readership of *Kitab Jawi* remains there, kept and developed by some Islamic education institutions, mainly *madrasah*, *pesantren*, *dayah*, *surau*,⁴⁵ mosque-based religious instruction, in various places in the country.

In the post-New Order there *jawi* script have been politicised in some regions which promoted formal 'shari'atisation', such as in Aceh and Bulukumba. However, this is just as political strategy to gain support from Muslim community. The *jawi* script is mostly used only to write the names of governmental offices, complementing the existing *rumi* characters. Moreover, there is no serious and systematic endeavour to revive *jawi* script through cultural and education approaches. Other attempts have also been done to revive *jawi*, such as by establishing Malay centres.⁴⁶ But they could not attract Indonesian Muslims to save one of their most valuable cultural and intellectual inheritances. This phenomenon indicates one of the major symptoms of the end of *jawi* Islamic scholarship. This is not to talk about *jawi* as media of scholarly studies in modern Islamic higher education institutions.

⁴⁵ *Pesantren*, *surau*, and *dayah* are Islamic boarding schools. *Pesantren* is a term used nationally by the government, whereas *surau* dan *dayah* are used in Minangkabau and Aceh, respectively.

⁴⁶ Such as Balai Kajian dan Pengembangan Budaya Melayu (BKBM—Centre for the Study and Development of Malay Culture), established in 2003 in Yogyakarta.

Conclusion: Post-Jawi Islamic Scholarship

I have shown that the existence of the *jawi* Qur'anic exegesis cannot be separated from the politics of language and script introduced by ruler(s) on the one hand, and from the demand of reading communities, on the other hand. It goes without saying that the popularity of particular script is also affected by political, social, and economic circumstances. The politics of *rumi*-isation introduced by the Dutch colonial administration at the end of 19th century, which was supported by nationalist (including Islamic nationalist) movements as well as by the postcolonial government had brought about the marginalisation of the *jawi* script and *Kitab Jawi* in general. The 1928 Youth Pledge Congress was the important moment when most Muslim scholars and leaders felt comfortable with *rumi* Indonesian language. This brought *jawi* Qur'anic exegesis, and to some extent *Kitab Jawi* in general, to its marginalisation. Only small number of *madrasah*, *surau*, *pesantren*, *dayah*, and mosques use *jawi* in their instruction dan da'wah. Undoubtedly, they are the final defenders of *jawi* Islamic scholarship.

However, this is not a sad ending story. Indeed, it was an end of an intellectual tradition, that is, *Jawi* Islamic scholarship, at the beginning of the 20th century. But a new phase was opened up since the 1928 Youth Pledge Congress through which Indonesian Muslims have created the post-*Jawi* Islamic scholarship. Muslims' acquaintance with *rumi* has helped them articulate easily their intellectual ideas and civilisational interests, endeavours which have resulted in tremendous production of knowledge, both religious and secular. Today, hundreds, if not thousands, of books have been written and published by Indonesian Muslim authors and scholars per month, especially after the fall of Soeharto. This unprecedented achievement, in the context of post-*Jawi* Islamic scholarship in Indonesia, deserves to be much celebrated.

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