



Artikel ini bertujuan mengkaji tradisi penulisan dan penyalinan tafsir Al-Qur'an di kawasan budaya Jawa dan Sunda dari abad ke-18 hingga awal abad ke-20 M dari segi penggunaan aksara, gaya bahasa dan tulisan, begitu juga latar sosio-historis di balik penulisan karya-karya tersebut. Sebagian besar karya ditemukan dalam bentuk manuskrip, dan beberapa karya ditemukan dalam bentuk cetakan. Penulis juga melakukan investigasi sejauh mana karya-karya tersebut memberi kontribusi bagi terbentuknya Islam lokal di Asia Tenggara, khususnya di Jawa dan Sunda. Dalam artikel ini penulis membuktikan bahwa tradisi penulisan karya tafsir Al-Qur'an di Jawa dan Sunda telah mapan dan berkembang dengan baik sejak abad ke-19, atau bahkan lebih awal lagi, yaitu abad ke-18 Masehi.

Kata kunci: tafsir, Al-Qur'an, Jawa, Sunda.

The Tradition of Writing Qur'anic Commentaries in Java and Sunda

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Introduction

This article aims to examine the tradition of writing or copying Qur'anic commentaries in the Javanese and Sundanese cultural regions of the island of Java from 18th to early 20th centuries in terms of the choice of script, language and writing styles, as well as the socio-historical background behind the production of such manuscripts. Some works are however available in printed forms. I also investigate how far these manuscripts contributed to the making of local Islam in Southeast Asia, specifically in Java and Sunda.

In general, most scholars believe that prior to the early 20th century Southeast Asian Muslims had not developed the understanding of the Qur'an through the production of Qur'anic com-

mentaries or translations. In this article, either Qur'anic commentary or translation is considered the work of interpretation [read: *tafsīr*].¹ It is with the case of Karel Steenbrink's study. Concluding the survey of L.W.C. van den Berg in 1886, Steenbrink writes:

¹ The terms *tafsir* and *terjemah* are Malay/Indonesian words derived from Arabic. Yet, both terms have been used without clear distinct definitions. The example of this is the identification of the *Turjuman al-Mustafid* of Abdurra'uf al-Fansuri al-Sinkili (d. 1693 AD). Peter G. Riddell seems to consider it a translation due to its nature itself, which is the translated version of the Jalālayn. Furthermore, it has been proven that 'Abdurra'uf himself chose the interlinear method for the compilation of the *Turjumān*, which shows his Malay style as being imitated from Arabic grammar. Finally, the use of linguistics approach for his analysis automatically affects Riddell's pre-supposition that the *Turjumān* is essentially a translation. [See all his works pertaining to the *Turjumān* published from 1984 to 2004, especially his Ph.D thesis at the Australian National University, 1984 entitled, "'Abd al-Ra'uf al-Sinkilī's *Turjumān al-Mustafid*: A Critical Study of His Treatment of Juz 16"']

Meanwhile, Anthony Johns prefers to regard the *Turjumān* as more than just a translation. This is a commentary in his eyes, and the reflection of the Malay 'ulamā' attempting to vernacularize Islam and the Qur'ān. Furthermore, Johns sees this work as the result of 'Abdurra'uf's oral tradition with which he taught the students the meanings of the Qur'ān in his *Madrasah*. He could be the example of how a great Malay scholar did Islamic education in the 17th century in Aceh. [See Anthony Johns, "She Desired Him and He Desired Her (Quran 12:24): 'Abd al-Ra'uf's Treatment of an Episode of the Joseph Story in *Tarjuman al-Mustafid*," *Archipel*, 57, vol. II, (1999), p. 112.] On the other hand, Harun basically identifies the *Turjumān* as a commentary as shown in his Ph.D. thesis title: "Hakekat Tafsir *Tarjumān al-Mustafid* Karya Abdurrauf Singkel," (Ph.D. thesis at the UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 1988). Nevertheless, he does not comment on the use the term "tafsir" in it. While he calls the *Turjumān* "tafsir," he seems not to feel this kind of identification as a serious matter worth for academic inquiry. As a matter of fact, these two terms are very different in terms of their definitions as well the acceptance of the work in the Arab world.

Through my study of the *Turjumān*, I argue that the *Turjumān*, of course together with all acts of interpreting and translating the Qur'ān implemented in the forms of independent writings, is actually *tafsir*, the work of interpretation. [See Ervan Nurtawab, "New Light on the Study of 'Abdurra'uf's *Turjumān al-Mustafid*," presented in the Workshop on "Islamic Manuscript Tradition and Kitab in Southeast Asia," at Nagoya University, Nagoya-Japan, on Nov. 23, 2007].

Walaupun Al-Qur'an dan hadis merupakan sumber utama agama Islam, studi khusus yang berfokus pada kitab suci ini atau kumpulan hadis, belum dilakukan. Dan ternyata hanya satu buku tafsir saja yang dipakai, sedangkan kumpulan hadis yang 'klasik' sama sekali tidak ditemukan.

Hal ini membuktikan bahwa pendekatan Alquran dan hadis tidak terjadi secara langsung, tetapi hanya melalui seleksi yang sudah diadakan oleh kitab-kitab lain, khususnya kitab fiqh.²

Albeit the Qur'an and hadith are considered the primary sources of Islam, there had not been any study that focuses on either this holy text or hadith collection. And it turns out to be one tafsir is only available, while the "classical" hadith collection is not found at all.

This fact shows that the approaches to the Qur'an and hadis were not directly done, yet through the selections extracted in another kitābs, especially in the fiqh *kitābs*.

From the above statement, Steenbrink is still in line with his previous scholar's opinion which states that in Southeast Asia the Qur'an is not directly approached through the production of tafsir. This conclusion is ostensibly due to the inavailability of proper data and no pesantren at that time reportedly considered it one of primary sources of Islam.

Another scholar who supports Berg's argument is Martin van Bruinessen. In this regard, Bruinessen writes:

A century ago, the Qur'an and the traditions were rarely studied directly, but mostly in the 'processed' form of scholastic works on jurisprudence and doctrine.³

Van den Berg's impression is probably generally correct: in the late 19th century, tafsir was not yet considered a very important part of the curriculum. Under the impact of modernism, with its slogan of return to the Qur'an and the hadith, the interpretation of the Qur'an obviously assumed greater importance.⁴

The above statement points out that Bruinessen re-strengthen Steenbrink's argument. Furthermore, he states that the slogan of the

² Karel A. Steenbrink, *Beberapa Aspek tentang Islam di Indonesia Abad ke-19*, (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1984), p. 157.

³ Martin van Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning: Books in Arabic Script used in the Pesantren Milieu: Comments on a New Collection in the KITLV Library," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* /BKI 146:2/3 (1990), p. 229.

⁴ Bruinessen, "Kitab Kuning," BKI, p. 253.

Qur'an and the hadis as the impact of modernism has given the *ulamas* a space and chance for the production of tafsir.

Bruinessen's argument is perhaps correct since modernism has apparently opened Muslim eyes to be brave in directly approaching the Qur'an which leads to the increasing number in the production of tafsirs. Yet, it does not mean that prior to the emergence of modernism in the early 20th century Southeast Asia the writing of Qur'anic commentaries was less popular. In fact, more works are gradually found to support that prior to the 20th century local Muslim communities in Southeast Asia have actively attempted at understanding the Quran through the production of Qur'anic commentaries and translations. Prior to the 20th century, the aim of producing Qur'anic commentaries even appears to be not only to understand the Qur'an, but also give a new version of the Arabic Qur'an in Javanese. Having been influenced by modernism, such a substitution is seemingly no longer available. In this article, I will show that, particularly in Java and Sunda, local Muslim communities have actually developed the tradition of writing and copying Qur'anic commentaries since the 19th, or even the 18th, century.

***Pégon* Script in Java and Sunda**

It is necessary to initially know the origins of *pégon* script by which the tradition of Islamic MSS have been developed in Java and Sunda, as well as Madurese and how such a script have been widely used in the writing of Islamic kitābs, local tafsir in particular, in Java and Sunda. By the 16th century, the Indian Sanskrit language was well-adopted for the development of Javanese literature.⁵ Then, Muslims have established the tradition of intellectual Islam since the 17th century. Furthermore, Islam has been initially disseminated to maritime districts in the Javanese regions through the trading routes. Islam was peacefully introduced by the Arab traders and Muslim missionaries and was followed by the dissemination and assimilation of Arabic scripts with local

⁵ To know further about the influence of Sankrit on old-Javanese literature, see Zoetmulder, *Kalangwan: Sastra Jawa Kuno Selayang Pandang*, (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1994), p. 10-67.

Malay and Javanese as to the development of Islamic literature since the 15th century, or even earlier.

T. H. Pigeaud in his work, *Literature of Java*,⁶ explains that, like another regions influenced by Islam and Arabization, the Arabic script was introduced in Java since its early phases of Islamization. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the old Islamic MSS produced around the 16th century, says Pigeaud, are still in Javanese script. This fact shows how high prestige the Javanese literature was.⁷ Equally, the palm-leaf used for writing old-Javanese script had been utilized long time ago. Due to its rough fibers, it is more difficult to make dots and short bending lines on its surface. The fibrous lontar forced people to write in parallel straight lines, while the Arabic script has many short bending lines. Eventually, this shows the fact that the introduction of Arabic script is coincided with the introduction of *kertas*⁸ [paper] as material for writing in Java and most other regions in archipelago. Thus, the palm-leaf Javanese MSS in Arabic script are automatically not found.⁹

The writing of Javanese and Sundanese texts in Arabic script is in need of modifying several new letters by adding some diacritical signs in order to represent all Javanese spellings.¹⁰ All Javanese

⁶ T. H. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java. Catalogue Raisonné of Javanese Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Leiden and Other Public Collections in the Netherlands. Volume I*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), p. 25-27.

⁷ This prestige can be seen from the powerful Javanese culture. The Archipelago Islamic MSS are mostly written in Jawi script. Yet in Java, there are an enormous amount of Islamic MSS written in Javanese script.

⁸ The Malay word, *kertas*, is derived from Arabic, *qirṭās*, originally from Greek, *chartes*. See Russell Jones, "The Origins of Malay Manuscript Tradition," *Cultural Contact and Textual Interpretation*, (Dordrecht: Foris Publication, 1986), p. 131.

⁹ Contradictory to this opinion, Edi S. Ekadjati proves that local script and paper have been initially used for the media of Islamic learning, specifically in the Sundanese region. He researched three Sundanese "Lontar" MSS kept in the National Library of Jakarta in December 2003. Ekadjati proves that one of the MSS contains the Islamic teaching, such as the basmallah, shahadah (confession), and prayer. See for further Ekadjati, "Data Baru Islamisasi di Tatar Sunda," December 2003. [Unpublished article], p. 3.

¹⁰ In the *pégon* script, there is additional diacritical sign not available in Arabic, namely *e*, *eu*, and *o* with respectively ~, ~, dan ~. Apart from that, the

texts written in Arabic script are identified as *pégon* texts. According to Pigeaud, this name identification is possibly given due to its short bending lines in the writing of Arabic script. This is in comparison with the parallel straight lines used in Indian-Javanese script.

The *pégon* script is also called *gundil* due most works are not vocalised. It enjoyed its popularity among Indonesian Muslim communities. Certainly, the texts are difficult to read for those who are uneducated from such Islamic educational institution as *pesantren*, Islamic boarding school. Ekadjati states that in the 18th century the Arabic script had been less popular among Muslim communities in the Sundanese-Priangan region. The example of this is MS I238, entitled *Hadits Kudsi*—predicted from Cirebon in the 18th century—containing *sūra al-Fātihah*. The local script, *cacarakan*, was still in use for Qur’anic terms.¹¹ Having converted the Arabic to the *pégon* script, such a script mostly replaced the prestigious position of Indian-Javanese script. Yet, a general distinction comes up as to the use of *pégon* or *gundil* script for Islamic texts as well as of Javanese script for other works.¹²

During the 19th and early 20th centuries, says Pigeaud, some Javanese Islamic MSS, in *pegon* script and *gundil*, had been printed in lithographic method. These printed works had been distributed by some local publishers, commonly belonged to some middle-class *santri* Muslims. On the other hand, the attempt to increase the use of Javanese script in the 19th century had become popular among Javanese aristocrats. Consequently, the use of *pégon* script for the writing of Islamic MSS significantly decreased.¹³ In the West-Java region, on the other hand, it is estimated that the use of *pégon* script for the writing of Sundanese MSS had its own period and strongly connected to the authority policies as to the use of official script. However, it has been generally accepted that the *pégon* script was

vowel *e* also uses بي , such as the word *kabéh* (كابهيه). Some additional letters in the *pegon* script are (ك), (غ), and (چ), respectively for *g*, *ng*, and *c*.

¹¹ Edi S. Ekadjati & Undang A. Darsa, *Katalog Induk Naskah-naskah Nusantara, jilid 5: Jawa Barat: Koleksi Lima Lembaga*, (Jakarta: YOI, 1999), p. 425.

¹² Such a distinction is of course ambiguous. In fact, many works on Islam are written in Javanese script.

¹³ Pigeaud, *Literature of Java: Volume 1*, p. 27

used in one period between the Javanese-Sundanese [earlier] and Latin scripts [later].¹⁴

In the Sundanese pesantrens, *pégon* script has been used as medium for Islamic learning since the 18th century and reached its peak in the period between the 19th and the mid-20th century. This script type is mostly used for writing on Islamic studies, especially on Qur'anic commentaries. As for another script, the Javanese script was used in Sunda since the 11th century. It was then intensively used in the 17th century during the Mataram administration. Since then, the Javanese script as well as language was even officially used for knowledge and administration.¹⁵

As to the use of Javanese language in Sundanese MSS, especially in the Cirebon and Priangan regions, there are two MSS entitled *Sejarah Bopati-bopati di Cianjur* and *Sejarah Cikundul* indicating that a Javanese scribe once lived in Sundanese region. Since local people did not easily understand the language but only a few people, the attempt of writing in Sundanese emerged. Yet, it is still unclear whether the movement focused on the production of new texts or just copying previous ones.¹⁶

Qur'anic Commentaries in Java

There are many Islamic MSS written in Javanese script and language. Arabic language had been hardly used with exception of writing Qur'anic Mushāfs. Equally, we found many mistakes in terms of spelling for Arabic terms due to the dialect distinction between the two languages. Such factors reveal further evidence that the structure of Javanese language and literature is powerful to compare with Islamization and Arabization toward the Javanese local communities. The tradition of writing Javanese texts took place in the palaces milieu. Meanwhile, some pesantrens established the tradition of writing Islamic kitabs to be a media for conducting Islamic education among Muslims communities.¹⁷

¹⁴ Edi S. Ekadjati, et.al., *Naskah Sunda Lama Kelompok Cerita*, (Jakarta: Depdikbud, 1983), p. 137.

¹⁵ Ajip Rosidi, et.al., *Ensiklopedi Sunda: Alam, Manusia, dan Budaya termasuk Budaya Cirebon dan Betawi*, (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 2000), p. 37-38.

¹⁶ Ekadjati, et.al., *Naskah Sunda*, p. 127.

¹⁷ These Islamic MSS has been usually inherited to the next generation of ulama. In this regard, there is the collection of Abdurrahman Wahid kept in the

A comprehensive understanding of the Qur'an is not an easy task. It is likely to be more difficult in the societies inherently affiliated with such well-established pre-Islamic culture as Javanese community. In such a culture, understanding the Qur'an is a serious matter. Even, the Javanese Muslims also have great difficulties in reciting the scripture. It can be seen from the fact that many Javanese Muslims mistakenly read the Qur'an except for those who have been educated in the *pesantrens*.¹⁸ One of them is a prominent Jāwī ulama, Kyai Mahfudz al-Tarmasi (1868-1919). He came from a pious family and lived in Mecca since 1874 A.D. when he was six years old. Kyai Mahfudz also wrote on Qur'anic sciences, hadis, and fiqh. Yet, out of his twenty works, there is no single work dealing with tafsīr.¹⁹

Albeit Qur'anic recitation is considered difficult, Javanese Muslims have dealt with Qur'anic commentaries since the 18th century. The evidence is MSS Lor 2097-R-15.710, consisting of the Qur'anic text followed by its Javanese commentaries, themes and names of sūras. This copy reportedly uses European paper with the watermark Churchill 406. This copy is predicted to have existed from the end of the 18th century and becomes the collection of Professor Roorda library in Delft and, then Leyden, who passed away in 1874.²⁰ Such a fact of course attracts our attention since the works on Qur'anic commentary are increasingly found in the following century. Some commentaries are complete, meaning that

National Library of Jakarta, which is initially the heritage of the previous Nahdhatul Ulama [NU] Ulama.

¹⁸ The evidence of this is the way Javanese people write and spell Arabic words. They often made mistakes. For example, the *'Abd al-Rahman* changes into *Ngabdurrahman*. It is also with the case of Kitab names. To large extent, Arabic spelling does not fit the Javanese tongue. It also becomes a serious matter among Sundanese communities.

¹⁹ His works on the Qur'anic science are as follow: *al-Fawā'id al-Tirmasiyyah fī Asānīd al-Qirā'āt al-'Asyriyyah*; *al-Badr al-Munīr fī Qirā'āt al-Imām ibn Kaṣīr*; *Tanwīr al-Sadr fī Qirā'āt al-Imām Abī 'Amr*; *Insyirāḥ al-Fu'ād fī Qirā'āt al-Imām Hamzah*; *Tamīm al-Manāfi' fī al-Qirā'āt al-Imām Nāfi'*; dan *'Unyat al-Ṭalabah bi Syarḥ Naẓm al-Tayyibah fī al-Qirā'āt al-'Asyriyyah*. For the biography of Kyai Mahfuz Termas and his works, see Abdurrahman Mas'ud, "Mahfudz al-Tirmisi (D. 1338/1919): An Intellectual Biography," *Studia Islamika* 5:2 (1998), p. 27-48.

²⁰ T.H. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java: Volume II: Descriptive Lists of Javanese Manuscripts*, (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1968), p. 66.

they interpret the whole Qur'an. Some are incomplete, usually found in "very mixed MSS," and pieces of Arabic tafsīr re-copied in such "very mixed MSS."

As for the two latter, some that can be mentioned here are MS in the collection of Royal Military Academy, Breda. It contains sūras al-Fātiḥah, al-Anbiyā', and Yūsuf. The Arabic Qur'an is followed with Malay, Javanese, and Latin languages originally from the private collection of Professor Reland in Utrecht.²¹ The second work is MS IS.1. by Syekh Imam Arga. This MS contains several texts, namely the Arabic Qur'an with its Javanese commentaries and some *primbon* texts. It contains several sūras, such as sūras *Patekah* [al-Fātiḥah], *Dakan* [al-Dukhān], *Rahman* [al-Raḥmān], *Watangat*, *Anabail*, *Anaza 'at* [al-Nāzi'āt], *Abbas* [‘Abasa], *Kuret* [al-Quraysh], *Antaqat*, *Buresj* [al-Burūj], *Syamsi* [al-Syams], and *al-Takāsur*.²² Some texts followed by interlinear translation in Javanese. It measures 19.5 x 16 cms and has 366 pages with 14 lines per page.²³

The third work is the MS entitled *Kur'an Winedhar* Chapter 1. This is actually a printed work that contains the Qur'an with commentaries in Javanese script and language, written in 1936 in Sūrakarta and kept in the library of the Sūrakarta palace.²⁴ The fourth work is entitled *Serat Alfatekah* and has 530 pages. It contains Qur'anic commentaries. The date and place of its production are unknown. The fifth work is MS entitled *Serat-serat Alfatekah* and has 590 pages in Javanese. Its date is also unknown and now kept in the library of the Mangkunagaran palace.²⁵ The sixth work is *Serat Wirid Giri Jaya*, written in 1925. This MS contains the Qur'an with Javanese commentaries and the attached image showing a Cirebonese Muslim praying.²⁶

²¹ Pigeaud, *Literature of Java: Volume II*, p. 870.

²² As can be seen, some names are difficult to identify.

²³ Behrend & Titik Pudjiastuti (eds.), *Katalog Induk Naskah-naskah Nusantara Jilid 3A: Perpustakaan Fakultas Sastra UI*, (1997), p. 449.

²⁴ Girardet, Nikolaus, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Javanese Manuscripts and Printed Books in the Main Libraries of Surakarta and Yogyakarta*, (Wiesbaden-German: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1983), p. 79.

²⁵ Girardet, *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 344.

²⁶ Girardet, *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 345.

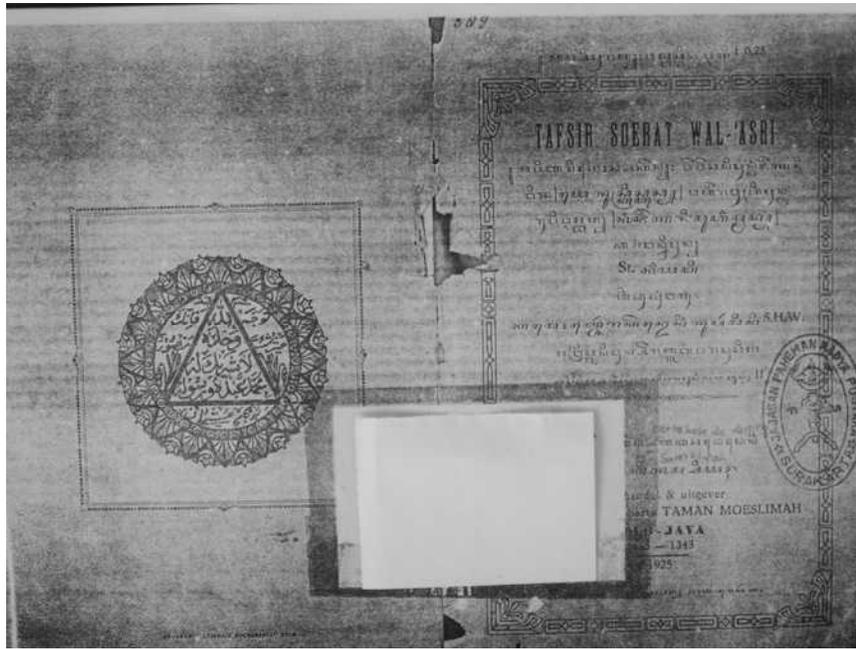


Figure 1. The Cover of *Tafsir Soerat Wal-'Asri*

The seventh work is entitled *Tafsir Soerat Wal-'Asri* by St. Chayati of Tulungagung and has 16 pages, printed by the Worosoosilo publisher of Surakarta in 1925. It connects its commentary to the story of the prophet 'Isā informing the coming of the Prophet Muhammad.²⁷ The eighth work is entitled *Kiyamat Kubra I-IV* by Kendar Purbadipura of Surakarta. This work contains Islamic eschatology based on Qur'anic commentaries by Bagus Ngarpah, and is kept in the Sonobudoyo library in Yogyakarta.²⁸

The ninth work is coded PB C.97, which contains three texts. The first one is the six pillars of *īmān*, twenty attributes of God, and then translation of *sūra al-Baqarah* verse 171 and *sūras* concerning the Judgment day. The second one is the commentary of *sūra Saba'* verse 29 until the beginning of *sūra A'lā*. The third one is the Qur'anic commentaries related to the Judgment day from *sūra A'lā*

²⁷ Girardet, *Descriptive Catalogue.*, p. 548.

²⁸ Girardet, *Descriptive Catalogue.*, p. 871.

until sūra al-Nās. This commentary fragment is taken from the Javanese commentaries reportedly made by Bagus Ngarpah. It is unknown where the MS was scribed. Yet, it is predicted from the early 20th century. The tenth work is almost the same as PB C. 97 in terms of the content. It is coded PB C.41, which contains four books. The first book is the Qur'anic translations started by the explanation of the pillars of īmān and of the twenty attributes of God. Secondly, the fragment of the Qur'anic verses concerning the Judgment day, from sūra al-Nūr verse 26 until sūra al-Nāzi'āt. The third one is the fragment of the Qur'anic verses from sūra Fuṣṣilat verse 21 until sūra al-Nāzi'āt. The fourth one is the fragment of the Qur'an from sūra al-Nāzi'āt verse 13 until sūra al-Nās. This fragment is taken from the translations reportedly made by Bagus Ngarpah.²⁹

The eleventh work is MS SB. 12 entitled *Tafsīr Alquran saha Pethikan Warni-warni*, which contains three different texts and is scribed by more than one writer. The meant commentary lies in the beginning of the MS, which is the fragment of sūra al-Baqarah with its tafsīr—the *Jalālayn*—and in its margin added by some notes in Javanese, in pegon script.³⁰ The twelfth work is entitled *Tafsīr Qur'an Jawen*, printed by the Siti Sjamsijah publisher of Surakarta in 1930, and probably a complete work and published volume by volume. This Javanese commentary is in Javanese language and script. Yet, I get one volume only, which has 282 pages containing one part of chapter 1, which is sūra al-Baqarah from verse 52 to 139. The numbering is also printed started from number 287 to 562. The Qur'anic text is followed by its Javanese translations in Javanese script, then its detailed commentary lies in the bottom. Regarding the complete works, the tradition of working a complete works on the Qur'anic commentaries has been well-established since the 19th century. In this regard, there are at least four complete tafsīrs produced in the 19th century. All of them are handwritten works but one work which is a printed Qur'anic translation. Firstly, this printed work is entitled *Kitab Kur'an*, which is the Qur'anic translation in Javanese script and language, and becomes the

²⁹ Behrend, *Katalog Induk Naskah-naskah Nusantara Jilid I: Museum Sonobudoyo*, (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1990), p. 549.

³⁰ Behrend, *Katalog Museum Sonobudoyo.*, p. 558

ownership of some libraries in Java.³¹ In the collection of Sonobudoyo library, its title page is lost so that the date of publication is unknown. Nevertheless, the same copy is also found in the collection of Radyapustaka library. This copy has its title page printed in red ink and mentions the year 1858.

As for this copy, Uhlenbeck states that this is basically the first Qur'anic translation in Javanese script and language and printed by the Lange & Co. of Batavia in 1858.³² It measures 24 x 28.2 cms and has 462 pages, with 27 lines per page and complemented by such signs as *rubu'*, *sumun*, *nisf*, dan *juz'*, which show that this work is probably meant to substitute the original version of the Qur'an in Arabic. In this regard, I argue that we could not basically regard this work as the first complete Qur'anic translation in Javanese script and language since there are still some complete works on the Qur'anic translation produced in the Javanese and Sundanese regions along the 19th century as will be elaborated. However, this work could be apparently considered the first complete Javanese printed work on the Qur'anic commentaries.

³¹ Also as one of the collection of the Mangkunagaran library, see Girardet, *Descriptive Catalogue.*, p. 345.

³² Uhlenbeck, *A Critical Survey of Studies on the Languages of Java and Madura*, (Leiden: KITLV, 1964), p. 54; and Feener, *Notes towards the History of Qur'anic Exegesis*, p. 55-56. Keijzer studied this MS in his article, "De Twee Erste Soera's van den Javaanschen Koran," *BKI X*, (1863), p. 314-366.

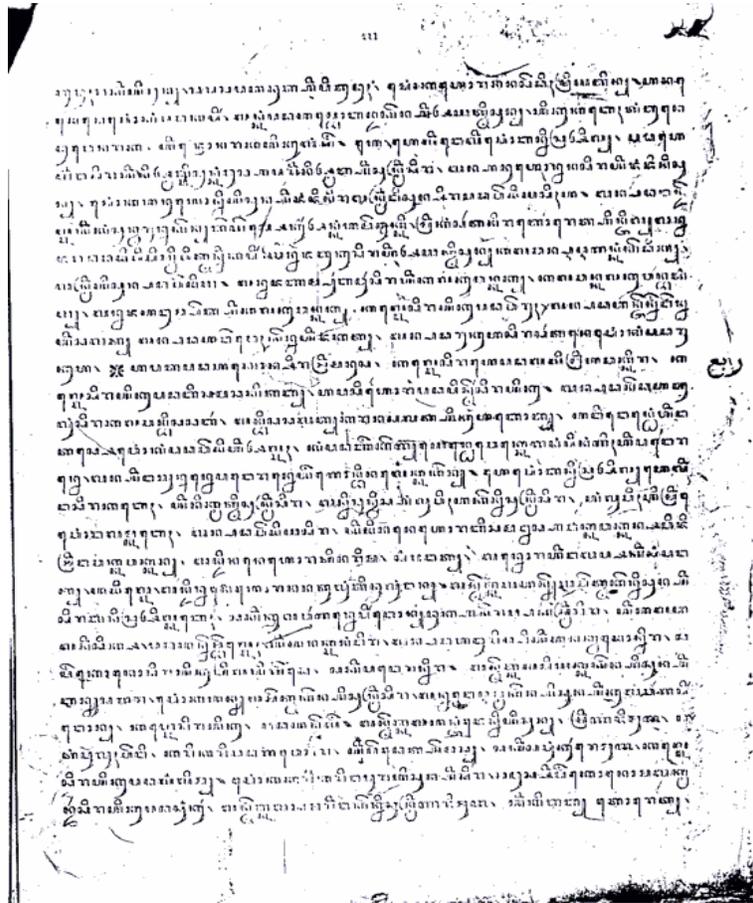


Figure 2. *Kitab Kuran* printed by Lange & Co of Batavia in 1858.

The second complete work on the Qur'anic commentary is entitled *Kur'an Jawi* by Bagus Ngarpah, scribed by Ki Ranasubaya and edited by Ng. Wirapustaka. It measures 21.5 x 34 cms. In its title page, it is mentioned the year 1835-1905, showing the date of its writing. This MS is very voluminous. It has three large volumes and has 1559 pages in total based on the numbering. It has also many blank papers in each volume. In both first and second volumes, this work uses paper without watermarks and chain and laid lines. It contains text in between 20 and 23 lines per page. To make it more neatly, the author initially made such guide lines before writing. The first volume has 387 pages that contain the

Qur'anic translation in Javanese script and language from sūra al-Fātiḥah until sūra al-Tawbah verse 94. The second volume has 577 pages and contains the Qur'anic commentaries from sūra al-Tawbah verse 95 until sūra al-‘Ankabūt verse 44. As for the third volume, this 594 pages MS contains the Qur'anic commentaries from sūra al-‘Ankabūt verse 45 to the end of the Qur'an, which is sūra al-Nās. To make it more neatly, the author initially made some kind of lines before writing. In this volume, there are 22 lines per page, including one short line in the top-middle paper for numbering. The total number of pages does not include some blank papers in each volume. There is no illumination and illustration. Yet, these three volumes are in good condition as well their very neat and beautiful writing. The scribe is apparently professional. Compared to the above printed Javanese commentary, this work is not complemented by such signs as *rubu'*, *ṣumun*, etc. They are the same in that the Arabic text is excluded in both works at all and the texts start from the left side. It is unlike the Qur'an that starts from the right side. These three volumes are also apparently made for substitution of the original text of the Qur'an in Arabic, as could be proven in terms of the arrangement, short explanation in each beginning of the sūras as well their meanings, the place of revelation [Makkiyyah or Madaniyyah], and the total number of verse in each sūra.

The third complete Qur'anic translation in Javanese script and language is entitled *Kur'an Jawi* also by Bagus Ngarpah, scribed by Suwanda. It measures 36.5 x 23 cms. In its title page, the year 1835-1905 is mentioned as the date of writing. This complete Javanese translation is made in one volume. It has 791 pages with the numbering in Arabic numeral until number 746. The number of lines in each page is different, ranging from 25 to 33 lines per page. Like the above two Javanese translations, the Arabic text is not included in this third work at all, and -unlike the Qur'an- the text starts from the left side.

Uhlenbeck gives short explanation on Ngarpah's Qur'anic translation. He considers Ngarpah's work the second Javanese Qur'anic translation and gradually printed in 1884 albeit there are only eight first chapters available in the printed forms.³³ Uhlenbeck's description indicates that there was an attempt to

³³ Uhlenbeck, *A Critical Survey.*, p. 54.

publish this translation work although I have not got information whether it is fully already printed. Considering the fact that Ngarpah has two works on Qur'anic translation, it is unclear as to which translation is already printed since the eight chapters printed work is still not found. Looking at the title mentioned by Uhlenbeck,³⁴ in all possibility it apparently refers to the three volumes of Javanese Qur'anic translation by Ngarpah.

The fourth complete Javanese Qur'anic translation is entitled *Al-Kur'an*. This MS consists of 2 volumes. The first volume has 628 pages and contains the Qur'anic sūras from al-Fāṭihah to al-Isrā'. The Arabic text is followed by its commentaries in Javanese, in *pegon* script. No date of writing is available in this copy. This MS is in bad condition so that it is difficult to read it. The second volume has 716 pages containing the Qur'anic sūras from al-Kahfi until the end of the Qur'an. Like the first volume, no date is available in this copy.³⁵ The way a scribe wrote these two copies is apparently neat and professional. In each verse, some dots are made possibly for dividing the verse into words or phrases to be easier to literally understand and translate. Similarly, some dots are also available in its translation section possibly for the same function. The Qur'anic text and its commentary are written in black ink. The *waqf* signs, the sūra headings, and the first word in each sūra are in red. Some corrections are made. It is specifically with the case of sūra al-Baqarah verse 253.

In the early 20th century, we also found one complete Javanese Qur'anic translation, which is the work of Moh. Amin bin Ngabdul Muslim. It has five volumes, gradually published from 1932 to 1935 by the Siti Sjamsijah publisher in Solo. The first volume contains the Qur'an and its Javanese commentary from chapter 1 to chapter 6, while the second one from chapter 7 to 12. The third volume comprises the Qur'an and its commentary from chapter 13 to chapter 18, then followed with chapters 19–24 in the next volume. The last volume contains chapters 25–30. The numbering uses the Arabic numerals, starting from number one (1) for each sūra. There is one person picture attached in the beginning of each

³⁴ Uhlenbeck, *A Critical Survey*, p. 91.

³⁵ Jennifer Lindsay, et.al., *Katalog Induk Naskah-naskah Nusantara jilid 2: Kraton Yogyakarta*, (Jakarta: YOI, 1994), p. 208–209.

sūra, and it is also followed by the advertisement for the publication of the Siti Sjamsijah publisher.

As for the determination of the first complete printed Javanese Qur'anic commentary, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu regards tafsīr *al-Ibrīz*: *Qur'an Tarjamah Jawi* by Kyai Bisri, published in Yogyakarta in 1967, as the first printed Javanese Qur'anic commentary.³⁶ This argument is automatically revised by the evidence of some complete works on the Javanese Qur'anic exegesis, both in Javanese and *pegon* scripts produced long before the publication of tafsīr *al-Ibrīz* in 1967. Regarding the first printed work, I state that the Javanese Qur'an published in 1858 is considered the first printed work on the Javanese Qur'anic exegesis.

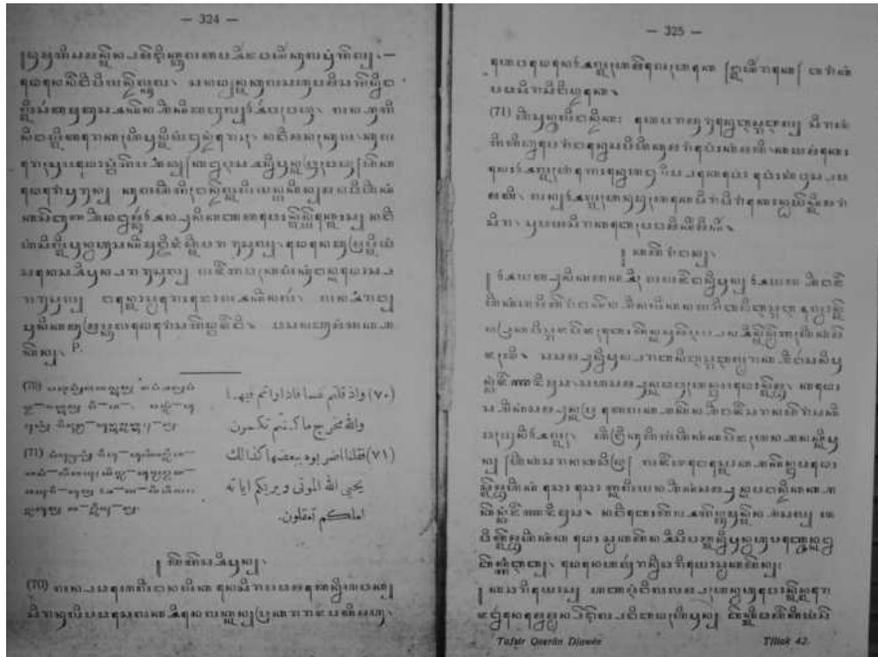


Figure 3. *Tafsir Qoeran Djawen* page 324 & 325

³⁶ Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu (ed.), *World Bibliography of Translations of the Meanings of The Holy Qur'an: Printed Translations 1515–1980*, (Istanbul-Turki: Research Centre for Islamic History, Art, and Culture, 1406/1986), p. xl.

Qur'anic Exegesis in Sunda

Nowadays, the Sundanese area is officially divided into two provinces, Banten and West Java. Thus, the elaboration of the local tradition of Qur'anic exegesis would be started from the Bantenese area, then continued to the West Java. In the Bantenese area, I found that the attempt of understanding the Qur'an are frequently inherently connected with the writing of the Qur'anic Mushāfs. The Bantenese Qur'anic Mushāfs, states Annabell Gallop, have some uniqueness. With regard to the size, Bantenese Qur'anic Mushāfs are found larger than average produced in the archipelago. Regarding the text block, the texts cover almost all areas of each paper. It seems that there is almost no empty space at the side of the page. As for the calligraphy, its Arabic calligraphy is written more tidily than the average. Lastly, the writing of the word *Allāh* is commonly in red ink.³⁷ This identification brings us to the statement that some Qur'anic Mushāfs kept in the Indonesian National Library are obviously of Bantenese style. In this regard, Gallop and Akbar have listed some Qur'anic Mushāfs predicted from the Bantenese region, namely MSS A. 50; A. 51 [a-e]; A. 52 [a-k]; A. 53 [a-k]; A. 54 [a-e]; W. 277 [a-j]; and W. 278.³⁸

The production of Qur'anic commentaries in this area are usually included in what some scholars regard as *Mushāfs*. In my view, some MSS of the Qur'an with its interlinear translations were made not only for the Mushāfs, but also the media of understanding its meaning. In this regard, such works could be identified as the work on tafsīr. I will list four Bantenese Qur'anic Mushāfs containing translations in local languages. Most of them are kept in the National Library at Jakarta. There is only one MS kept as the collection of one Mosque in Banten.

³⁷ Quoted from Ali Akbar, *Kaligrafi dalam Mushaf Kuno Nusantara: Telaah Naskah-naskah Koleksi Perpustakaan Nasional RI*, thesis at the University of Indonesia, (2005), p. 75.

³⁸ Annabel Gallop & Ali Akbar, "The Art of the Qur'an in Banten: Calligraphy and Illumination," *Archipel* 72, (2006), p. 134-140. See also Akbar, *Kaligrafi salam Mushaf Kuno Nusantara*, p. 75.

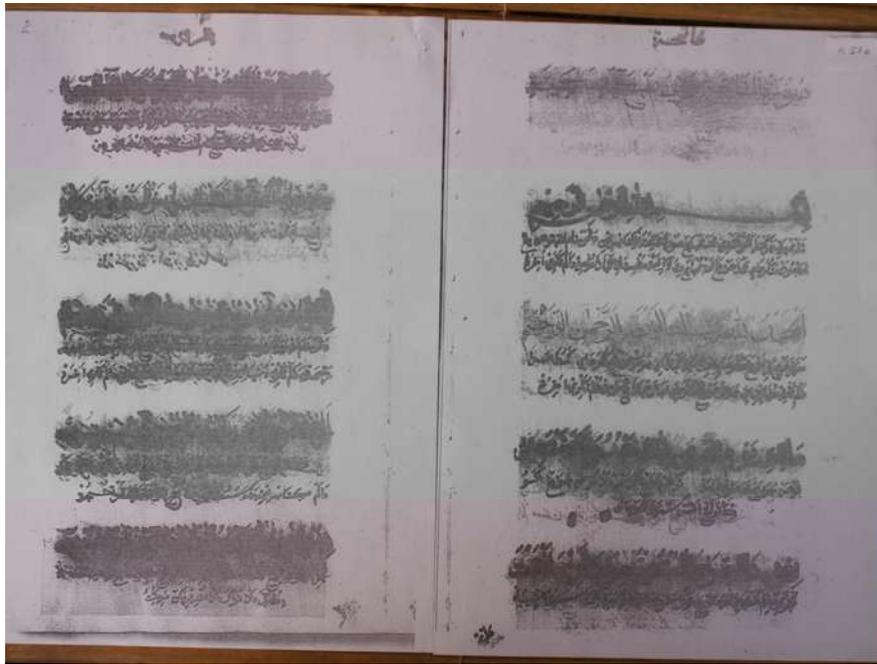


Figure 4. MS A.51 Sura al-Fatihah with its commentaries in Malay. This MS A. 51 [a-e] is very much similar to MS W.277 [a-j]. In other word, this is another copy of MS W. 277 or *vice versa*.

The first Qur'anic commentary of Banten is coded MS A.51, as the collection of the National Library. This is a complete work written in 5 volumes. Each volume contains 6 chapters: [a] 496 pp, [b] 543 pp, [c] 608 pp, [d] 601 pp, [e] 691 pp. This MS measures 30.5x19.5 cms. In each page, it contains 5 lines of Arabic text, which is the Qur'an, and followed by 1-2 lines of Malay translation. The black ink is mostly used for writing the Qur'anic text and its commentary. The red ink, on the other hand, is utilized for the sūra headings, the first words of the Qur'anic text in each sūra, the waqaf and chapter signs. The Arabic text and its Malay commentaries are mostly written inside the frame, except for some signs for chapters, the explanation on the status of sūras as to whether it is Madaniyyah or Makkiyyah and the number of its verses as well as the related debates. According to Gallop & Akbar,

there are some indications that this MS was initially planned to write in 10 volumes, containing 3 chapters in each volume.³⁹

The second Qur'anic commentary of Banten is MS A. 54, which is the Qur'an with its Javanese interlinear translation. This manuscript is divided into five volumes. Yet, chapters 15-16 are reportedly unavailable. With the exception of volume 3, each volume contains six chapters; [a] 346 p, [b] 355 p, [c] 242 p, [d] 332 p, and [e] 306 p. It measures 50.5x36 cms and uses European paper. Each page contains 18 lines in which 9 lines for Arabic text in red and another 9 lines for Javanese commentary in black. Its text block measures 43x24 cms. Text frame is unavailable.⁴⁰

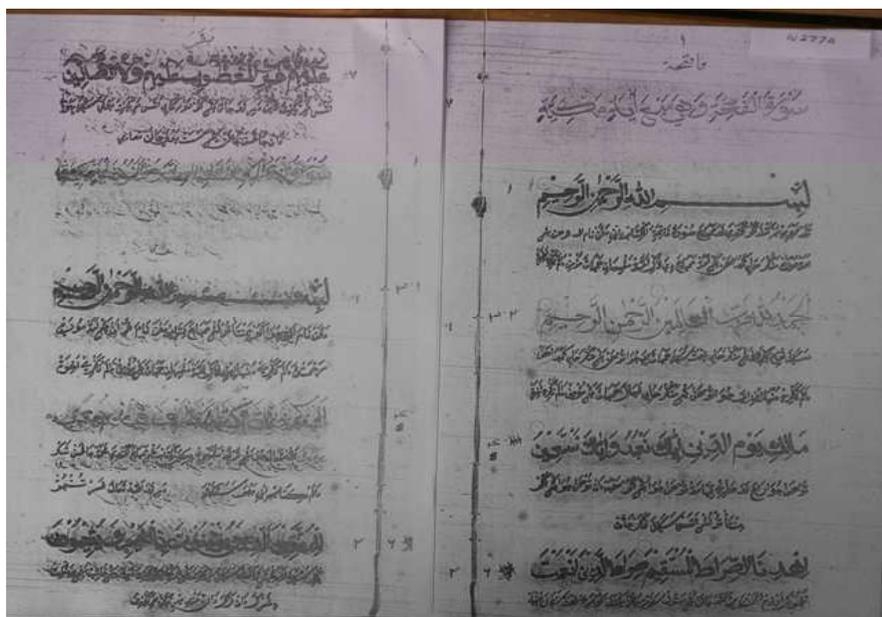


Figure 5. MS W 277 Surah al-Fatihah with its commentaries in Malay. MS W. 277 is obviously the second complete Malay Qur'anic commentary after the *Turjuman al-Mustafid*, written in circa 1675.

The third Qur'anic commentary of Banten is MS W. 277. This manuscript can be considered the vocalised Malay Qur'anic

³⁹ Gallop & Akbar, "The Art of the Qur'an in Banten," *Archipel* 72, p. 135-136.

⁴⁰ Gallop & Akbar, "The Art of the Qur'an in Banten," *Archipel* 72, p 138.

commentary.⁴¹ This work is divided into 10 volumes in which each contains three chapters; [a] 202 ff, [b] 298 ff, [c] 296 ff, [d] 304 ff, [e] 326 ff, [f] 312 ff, [g] 316 ff, [h] 324 ff, [i] 350 ff, and [j] 354 ff. It measures 32x20 cms. Its text block constitutes 28x11.5 cms. Each page contains five lines of Arabic text followed with one or two lines of Malay commentary. It uses black ink, and no text frame is available. The red ink, on the other hand, is utilized for the *sūra* headings, the first words of the Qur'anic text in each *sura*, the waqaf and chapter signs. The Arabic text and its Malay commentaries are mostly written inside the frame, except for some signs for chapters, the explanation on the status of suras as to whether it is Madaniyah or Makkīyah and the number of its verses as well as the related debates. In almost all aspects, this manuscript is very much similar to MS A.51 [a-e]. In other word, this is another copy of MS A.51 or vice versa. The fourth Qur'anic commentary of Banten is kept in Mosque Agung Banten measuring 30x18 cms, with its text block 22x11 cms.⁴²

The fifth one is *Marāḥ Labīd* by Shaykh Nawawi of Banten.⁴³ This is Arabic commentary of the Qur'an and written in Mecca. Shaykh Nawawi is one of the most prominent Jāwī Ulama lived in the Haramayn during the 19th century. He was awarded as the *Imām* of the Haramayn and invited to the Azhar University to give a speech there. During his career, he produced a numerous number of

⁴¹ As to the Qura'nic exegesis tradition in Malay, most scholars believe that it is almost three hundred years after the writing of the *Turjuman* in circa 1675 AD there was only one complete Malay commentary of the Qur'an available. Those who agree with this opinion are Anthony Johns (1996: 43; 1997: 4-5); Peter Riddell (1989: 119); Azyumardi Azra (2004: 82); and Wan Shaghīr Abdullah (2005). With this mushaf containing a complete work on Qura'nic translatio, I state that it is only about one hundred year the local 'ulamā's already produced some complete Malay commentaries.

⁴² Gallop & Ali Akbar, "The Art of the Qur'an in Banten," *Archipel* 72, p. 139.

⁴³ Nawāwī was born in Tanara, Banten, in 1813 A.D, from a religious family. He initially got Islamic education from his father, who was the *penghulu*. His name is Umar ibn Arabi. Then, Nawāwī studied with a pious ulama, Haji Sahal, in Banten bernama, then travelled to Karawang to see Raden Haji Yusuf to study with him. As many Archipelago ulama did, Nawāwī then made a journey to Mecca when he was 15 years old, and travelled to some centres for the study of Islam in Middle East region. He once went home, but he immediately went back to Mecca and lived permanently there until his death in 1897 A.D.

works on various Islamic fields. He is considered a representative of the Jāwī Ulama who wrote in Arabic very well. His *magnum opus*, the *Marāḥ Labīd* is written in two big volumes. Snouck Hurgronje informed that this tafsīr was printed in Mecca in circa 1884 A.D. Having been testified by the Ulamas in Mecca and Cairo, the *Marāḥ Labīd* was firstly published in Cairo in 1887, together with one attached tafsīr entitled *Kitāb al-Wajīz fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīz* by al-Wāḥidī (d. 468 A.H.).⁴⁴

During this period, Karel Steenbrink assumes that the established traditional Islamic thought in the Haramayn had not been infected by the modernist movement pioneered by Muhammad 'Abduh (1850-1905). Based on the fact, the attempt to connect the understanding of the Qur'an to the Western thought is not found in the *Marāḥ Labīd*.⁴⁵ Unlike 'Abduh (d. 1905), Nawāwī relies on the neo-classical tradition, which primarily refers to the works of the Medieval ulamas. In this regard, the *Manār* of 'Abduh is mainly influenced by the Mu'tazilī school of thought while the *Marāḥ Labīd* is made for preserving the medieval Islamic thought of such ulamas as Ibn Kaṣīr, al-Maḥallī (d. 1460), and al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505).⁴⁶

In the first section of his tafsīr, Nawāwī listed some reference works upon which he heavily drew. They are the *Futūḥāt al-Ilāhīyyah*, *Mafātīḥ al-Gayb*, *al-Sirāj al-Munīr*, *Tanwīr al-Miqbās*, and *Tafsīr Abū al-Sa'ūd*.⁴⁷ In his work, *al-Mufasssīrūn: Ḥayātuhum wa-Manhajuhum*, Muhammad 'Alī Iyāzī then identifies the *Marāḥ Labīd* as belonged to the *tafsīr al-ṣūfī* with the consideration that he

⁴⁴ Riddell, *Islam and the Malay Indonesian World: Transmission and Responses*, (Singapore: Horizon Books, 2001), p. 195; and Abd. Rachman, "Nawāwī al-Bantani: An Intellectual Master of the Pesantren Tradition," *Studia Islamika* 3:3 (1996), p. 96.

⁴⁵ Karel Steenbrink, *Beberapa Aspek.*, p. 122. In this regard, Abd. Rachman states that each work on the Qur'anic commentary cannot be separated from its authorial religious intention. Thus, says him, as if Nawāwī is like Imam al-Gazālī living in the 19th century due to his high prestige among the Sunnite ulamas. On the other hand, as if Muhammad Abduh is like Ibn al-Rusyd living in the 19th century since he pioneered the idea of rationality in the discourse on the religious thought. See Abd. Rachman, "Nawāwī al-Bantani," p. 96.

⁴⁶ 'Abd. Rachman, "Nawāwī al-Bantani," p. 95.

⁴⁷ See Shaykh Nawawī, *Marāḥ Labīd*, vol. 1, (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1994), p. 3.

refers to the *Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah* by Muḥy al-Dīn ibn al-‘Arabī. Yet, it does not make this containing a nuance of *ishārī*. The *Marāḥ Labīd* is then considered the work in which the Qur’anic text is understood in the *Zāhir* way.⁴⁸

It is strange and of course incorrect to classify the *Marāḥ Labīd* as *tafsīr al-ṣūfī*. No data is available to support that *Marāḥ Labīd* has connection with the work of ‘Ibn al-‘Arabi, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*. Nawāwī’s statement itself in his muqaddimah mentions the work *al-Futūḥāt al-Ilāhīyah* -without mentioning its author- as one of his references. It is ‘Alī Iyāzī who then connect *al-Futūḥāt al-Ilāhīyah* to the work of a prominent sufi, Ibn al-‘Arabī. Basically, Nawāwī preferred to use Arabic linguistics and traditions since he puts hadis, the companion *aṣar*, the *tābi’īn* and the *Salaf* generation tradition in a high priority. Furthermore, Nawāwī is the follower of the Ash‘arite theology and al-Gazālī’s thought. Iyazi’s opinion needs to be critically studied, the fact that Nawāwī mentions the work *al-Futūḥāt al-Ilāhīyah* does not mean the work of Muḥy al-Dīn ibn al-‘Arabī, yet it is clearly the work of Sulaymān ibn ‘Umar al-‘Ujaylī al-Azharī (d. 1790) -known with *al-Jamal* and the follower of the Sāfi’ite- entitled *al-Futūḥāt al-Ilāhīyah bi Tawdīḥ Tafsīr al-Jalālayn lil-Daqā’iq al-Khiffīyah*, written in 1196 A.H., firstly published in Cairo in 1303 A.H.

The last commentary is MS coded A.60 entitled *Jamālayn lil-Jalālayn* of Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn Sulṭān Muhammad al-Qārī. Its date of writing is mentioned in 1010 A.H. Its date of copying, 1178 A.H. is available in the colophon. Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī ibn Sulṭān Muḥammad al-Qārī was born in Hira and got his early Islamic education in his hometown. He made a journey to Mecca for study and then lived permanently there until his death in d. 1014 A.H./1606 A.D. Nūr al-Dīn is the *faqīh*, follower of the Hanafī school, *mufasssīr*, and expert in ḥadīth. Apart from the *Jamālayn lil-Jalālayn*. His another work on the Qur’an is *Anwār al-Qur’ān wa-Asrār al-Furqān*.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ See ‘Alī Iyāzī, *al-Mufasssīrūn; Hayātuhum wa Manhajuhum*, (Teheran: Wizārat al-Şaqāfat al-Irsyād al-Islāmi, 1373 H), p. 546.

⁴⁹ ‘Adil Nuwayhid, *Mu’jam al-Mufasssīrīn min Şadr al-Islām hattā al-‘Aşir al-Hādīr*, volume 1, (Libanon: Muassasah Nuwayhid al-Şaqāfiyyah, 1988), p.

As for the tradition of Islamic MSS in the West Java region, says Edi S. Ekadjati, the Arabic script, together with Arabic terms, had not been widely used during the 18th century. The evidence of this is the existence of MS I238, entitled *Hadis Kudsi*—possibly from Cirebon in the 18th century—containing sūra al-Fātiḥah in which the Qur'an is written in Javanese script.⁵⁰ In this century, we still have no evidence whether the West Java communities produced the Qur'anic commentarie or translation but such a transliteration. Since the rapid development of Islamic MSS tradition, there are many more Qur'anic commentaries produced during the 19th century in the West Java region.

During the 19th century, the writing tradition of Islamic MSS has been established throughout the region. However, Cirebon and Bandung had been two important scriptoriums of Islamic MSS for their largest production. This fact shows that both Cirebon and Bandung were the centres for the development of socio-politics and culture. In 2003, I conducted the survey of Islamic MSS using the catalogue of Edi S. Ekadjati dan Undang A. Darsa, published in 1999, as the reference. In this survey, I made some kind of classification in terms of its production place, the themes, and the use of language and script for 245 MSS predicted produced during the 19th century. Regarding its production place, the MSS were produced in different places, such as Bandung: 85 MSS; Cirebon: 95 MSS; Sumedang: 5 MSS; Subang: 2 MSS; Ciamis: 2 MSS; Tasikmalaya: 5 MSS; Garut: 6 MSS; Cianjur: 6 MSS; Kuningan: 3 MSS, while the rest (36 MSS in total) are produced in other places in the Priangan region. As for the themes, the Priangan Islamic MSS contains various Islamic fields, such as The Qur'an: 13 MSS; Qur'anic Commentary/Translation: 6 MSS; Fiqh: 42 MSS; Tasawuf/Ethics: 78 MSS; Manakib: 10 MSS; Tawḥīd/Theology: 19 MSS; Adab: 5 MSS; Prayers: 36 MSS; and Islamic Story: 37 MSS.

With regards to the use of script, the West Java Islamic MSS produced throughout this region were written in Arabic script: 12 MSS; Latin script: 7 MSS; Pegon script: 96 MSS; both Arabic & Pegon scripts: 82 MSS. The rest MSS were made in other local

361-362. See also 'Umar Riḍā' Kaḥḥālāh, *Mu'jam al-Muallifīn*, vol. 7, (Beirut: Ihyā' al-Turāṯ al-'Arabī, t.th.), p. 100.

⁵⁰ Ekadjati & Darsa, *Katalog Jawa Barat.*, p. 425.

script, which is *cacarakan*. The name of author is scarcely included in the West Java Islamic MSS, and it also becomes one of the main characteristics of Archipelago Islamic MSS.

The attempt to understand the Qur'an has been implemented through various kinds of works. Most works are made for technical functions, which mean that they could be directly practiced as guidance books to conduct certain religious ceremonies. They are like *fiqh*, *tarekat*, *manakib*, prayers, etc. Thus, the writing of Qur'anic commentaries were not popular and of course not for such practical functions. In this regard, most Qur'anic commentaries were usually included in other fields in one kitab. It is possibly for showing the practical function of such Qur'anic commentaries. Like in Java, the variety of Qur'anic commentaries in this region is also found. Firstly, some works are only the translations of certain *sūras* and mixed with other Islamic fields. The second one is the fragments of non-local Arabic *tafsīr*—the *Jalālayn* for example—recopied in the very mixed MSS, while the third one is complete work on the Qur'anic exegesis. In terms of the script, during the 19th century the *pegon* script is mostly used. In terms of the language, the West Java Islamic MSS were predominantly written in Javanese language.

For the former two forms, some works containing the Qur'anic commentaries are, firstly, MS I254 entitled *Tarekat*—originally from Cirebon in the 18th century; some *tafsīrs* and understanding of certain verses are available between pages five and fifty,⁵¹ and secondly MS I362 entitled *Sohibul Kitab Abdul Mursid*—from the 18th century Cirebon—comprising of the learning on the *tafsīr* of certain Qur'anic verses in Javanese. There are also further commentaries of the verses.⁵² Thirdly, this MS is coded I450 entitled *Kitāb Tafsīr Fātiḥah*, from the 19th century Bandung. It

⁵¹ This 66 pages MS is written in Arabic and Javanese languages, in Arabic and *pegon* script, using the local paper made of wood of the Saeh tree. This MS is divided into three parts. Firstly, it contains the commentaries of and understanding of certain Qur'anic verses. Two more parts contain prayers and Shattariyyah-based theology. This MS is kept in the Kasepuhan palace, Cirebon. See Ekadjati & Darsa, *Katalog Jawa Barat.*, p. 436.

⁵² This MS is written in Arabic and Javanese languages, in Arabic and *pegon* scripts. It has 222 pages. It is also complemented with the explanation of one sufi order. See Ekadjati & Darsa, *Katalog Jawa Barat.*, p. 519–520.

constitutes the copy of Javanese text containing the Sundanese commentary of sūra al-Fātiḥah.⁵³ The fourth one is MS I499 entitled *Kitab Doa-doa*, probably from Garut in the 19th century. In pages 1-15, it contains the Qur'anic texts followed by the commentary in Javanese, while in pages 16-33 containing the prayers in Javanese, and some in Sundanese.⁵⁴ The fifth one is tafsīr *Jalalayn*, written by Syekh Ahmad Ibnu Abbas with the use of the pegon script. This work is scribed by Muhammad Bakri Assafii in the 19th century, probably from Cirebon. This MS is coded I12a.⁵⁵ This MS are in need of further study to know, apart from 'Abdurra'ūf's *Turjumān al-Mustafid*, whether the *Jalalayn* is also translated into any other local language like Javanese or Sundanese. The sixth one is MS I2 comprising the Qur'anic text followed by its Javanese commentary in the pegon script.

Regarding the complete tafsīr work, one of them is scribed, or probably written, by R.H. Abdoel Madjid in 1856 in Sumedang. As identified in the catalogue, there is a title in the cover, namely *al-Qur'an*. It measures 44.5 x 28 cms, and its text measures 34 x 21 cms. This 637 pages MS uses European paper. Black ink is dominantly used.⁵⁶ The second complete work is anonymous MS coded I12 entitled *Tafsīr Alquran* that has 698 pages. It uses local paper and the date of its writing is unknown. The Qur'anic text is in Arabic, while its commentary is in Javanese, in pegon script.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, I found this copy not complete so that it is difficult to determine whether it was a complete work.

As many other areas of the Malay-Indonesian world, the writing tradition of West Java Qur'anic exegesis had been increasingly established in the early 20th century. In this regard, there are more ulamas interested in the working on either Qur'anic commentary or translation. One of them is Kyai Ahmad Sanusi (1888–1950).⁵⁸ He

⁵³ This MS has 14 pages, using the European paper, with the watermark *Superfin 1897*, written in Arabic and Sundanese languages, in Arabic and pegon scripts. See Ekadjati & Darsa, *Katalog Jawa Barat.*, p. 586–587.

⁵⁴ This 34 pages MS is reportedly from Garut. See Ekadjati & Darsa, *Katalog Jawa Barat.*, p. 618–619.

⁵⁵ See Ekadjati & Darsa, *Katalog Jawa Barat.*, p. 241.

⁵⁶ Ekadjati & Darsa, *Katalog Jawa Barat.*, p. 234.

⁵⁷ Ekadjati & Darsa, *Katalog Jawa Barat.*, p. 240.

⁵⁸ Kyai Ahmad Sanusi was born in Cibadak, Sukabumi, in 1888. regarding the fact that his father was the leader of the Cantayan pesantren, the young

could be regarded as the prolific ulama. Gunseikanbu mentions that he wrote about 101 works in various Islamic fields.⁵⁹ Without mentioning the reference, Fadlil Munawwar Manshur even states that Sanusi has produced about 480 works.⁶⁰ In my opinion, we could consider him the most prolific ulama that produced the Qur'anic commentaries during his lifetime. During his life, he wrote seven Qur'anic commentaries in which most of them are incomplete. The seven works are *Tafsīr Malja' al-Ṭālibīn*; *Tamshīyat al-Muslimīn*; *Rawdat al-'Irfān fī Ma'rīfat al-Qur'ān*; *Tanbīh al-Hayrān fī Tafsīr Sūrat al-Dukhān*; *Hidāyat al-Qulāb al-Sibyān fī Fadā'il Sūrat Tabāarak Mulk min al-Qur'ān*; *Tafriḥ Qulūb al-Mu'minīn fī Tafsīr Kalimāt Sūrat Yāsīn*; and *Tamshīyat al-Wildān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*.⁶¹ He wrote a complete Qur'anic commentary, which is the *Rawdat al-'Irfān fī Ma'rīfat al-Qur'ān*.

Rawdat al-'Irfān is the Qur'anic commentary in Sundanese containing the Qur'anic text, its literal translation, and commentary.⁶² The study of this commentary has been done by Asep Mukhtar Mawardi in his work, *Haji Ahmad Sanusi; Riwayat Hidup dan Perjuangannya*, (1985), more exclusively by Fadlil Munawwar Manshur in his work, *Ajaran Tasawuf dalam Raudatul-'Irfān fī Ma'rīfatil-Qur'ān karya Kiai Haji Ahmad Sanusi: Analisis Semiotik dan Resepsi*, in 1992. In the latter, the *Rawdat al-'Irfān* is

Ahmad Sanusi of course already got Islamic education since his childhood. In 1909, he made a pilgrimage to Mecca and advanced in Islamic knowledge. He studied Islam with many prominent ulamas in Mecca, one of them is Indonesian ulama, Kyai Mahfudz Termas.

⁵⁹ Gunseikanbu, *Orang Indonesia yang Terkemuka di Jawa*, (Yogyakarta: UGM Press, 1986), p. 442–443.

⁶⁰ Fadlil Munawwar Manshur, *Ajaran Tasawuf dalam Raudatul-'Irfan fī Ma'rīfatil-Qur'ān karya Kiai Haji Ahmad Sanusi: Analisis Semiotik dan Resepsi*, M.A. Tesis at the Gajah Mada University, Yogyakarta, (1992), p. 337.

⁶¹ His two commentaries, namely *Tafsīr Malja' al-Ṭālibīn* and *Tamsyīyyatul Muslimīn*, has been studied by Husen Hasan Basri in his work, "al-Turās al-'Ilmi al-Islāmī bi-Indūnīsīyyā: Dirāsah fī Tafsīray Malja'u-ṭ-ṭālibīn wa Tamsyīyyātu al-Muslimīn li-al-Shaykh al-Ḥāj Ahmad Sanūsī," *Studia Islamika* 8:1 (2001): 153–180. His complete work on tafsīr, the *Rawdat al-'Irfān*, becomes the object of the study by Fadlil Munawwar Manshur in his work, *Rawdat al-'Irfān fī Ma'rīfat Al-Qur'ān karya Kiai Haji Ahmad Sanusi: Analisis Semiotik dan Resepsi*, M.A. thesis at the Gajah Mada University, Yogyakarta, (1992).

⁶² Manshur, *Ajaran Tasawuf*, p. 3.

said to contains the tasawuf teaching. It is also said that the writing of the *Rawḍat al-'Irfān* constitutes a series of writing with another work, namely the *Malja' al-Ṭālibīn fī Tafsīr Kalām Rabb al-'ālamīn*. *Malja' al-Ṭālibīn* was reportedly written when Kyai Ahmad Sanusi was arrested in Gang Kampung Bali Kecil Nomer 6 Tanah Abang, Weltevreden, Jakarta. Like the *Rawḍat al-'Irfān*, the *Malja' al-Ṭālibīn* is also the Qur'anic commentary in Sundanese, in pegon script. Both are different in that the *Rawḍat al-'Irfān* contains two types of commentaries, while the *Maljā' al-Ṭālibīn* contains the literal translation only.⁶³

Basing himself on the interview with Muhammad Abdurrahman Badri Sanusi, the oldest son of Kyai Sanusi, Manshur states that the *Rawḍat al-'Irfān* is a series of Kyai Sanusi's creative activity in expressing his ideas through the use of Sundanese language. His first work on the Qur'anic commentary is the *Maljā' al-Ṭālibīn*. He was only finished with it until chapter nine divided into 28 thin volumes. It is estimated that Kyai Sanusi rewrote some aspects contained in the *Maljā' al-Ṭālibīn* when he worked on the writing of the *Rawḍat al-'Irfān*. His second work on tafsīr is the *Tamsyīyat al-Muslimīn*. This kitab is more widely used since it is written in Indonesian language. Thus, it is also for non-Sundanese speaking readers. Like the *Maljā' al-Ṭālibīn*, the *Tamsyīyat al-Muslimīn* is also not finished, yet it only contains 10 chapters. As a result, there are 21 chapters left in the *Maljā' al-Ṭālibīn* while 20 chapters in the *Tamsyīyat al-Muslimīn*. The unfinished *Maljā' al-Ṭālibīn* and *Tamsyīyat al-Muslimīn* is because Kyai Sanusi had to move from his home prison in Jakarta to Sukabumi. In Sukabumi, Kyai Sanusi faced many social and pesantren problems. Taking such obstacles into account, he wrote on tafsīr for his students in different style. Hence, he wrote both *Maljā' al-Ṭālibīn* and *Tamsyīyat al-Muslimīn*.⁶⁴

Manshur explains that the *Rawḍat al-'Irfān* is divided into two parts in terms of its creation process. The first part contains the Qur'anic text and its commentary from chapters 1 to 15, while the second from chapters 16 to 30. The first and second parts of the

⁶³ Manshur, *Ajaran Tasawuf*, p. 9–10.

⁶⁴ Manshur, *Ajaran Tasawuf*, p. 123–126.

Rawḍat al-‘Irfān are different in terms of their history of writing and publication. The publication of both parts is of course originally from hand-written form, recopied by hand, and then published in lithographic method.⁶⁵

As for the first part of the *Rawḍat al-‘Irfān*, it was created through the oral tradition conducted by Kyai Sanusi together with his 30 students. His students seriously followed his tafsir in which they took notes on any verses as well as their translations, and gave comments.⁶⁶ The notes were then collected by his secretary (*kātib*), Muhammad Busyra. Having been collected, Busyra recopied all the student notes. Then the result was given to Kyai Sanusi for remarks and corrections in case of [un]intentional mistakes. The agreement made by Kyai Sanusi can be seen from the fact that he allowed the publication of this text. After the death of Muhammad Busyra, Kyai Sanusi appointed a new *kātib*, Muhammad ibn Yahya. His writing result, which is the copy of the first part of the *Rawḍat al-‘Irfān*, was then gradually printed in litography by the same publisher until its tenth printing. Then, it was printed in the Pesantren Gunung Puyuh publisher, Sukabumi, and the Orba Shakti publisher, Bandung.⁶⁷ From its second to tenth printing, the *Rawḍat al-‘Irfān* in Muhammad ibn Yahya's copy version had been printed in Sukabumi, Cianjur, and Bandung. Since the Dutch colonialist applied too high taxes for such a publication, the Pesantren Gunung Puyuh Publisher was then sold. For this reason, the publication of the *Rawḍat al-‘Irfān* is done outside. Each publication made 5,000 copies. Considering the fact that the first part of the *Rawḍat al-‘Irfān* has been already printed tenth times, there are approximately 50,000 copies of the *Rawḍat al-‘Irfān* spread among Sundanese communities. All these publication are based on Muhammad ibn Yahya's copy.⁶⁸

Regarding the second part of the *Rawḍat al-‘Irfān*, Kyai Sanusi himself wrote it. Thus, the *Rawḍat al-‘Irfān* has original version from the author. But, it is in bad condition so that it is very difficult to read. His oldest son, Muhammad Abdurrahman Badri Sanusi,

⁶⁵ Manshur, *Ajaran Tasawuf*., p. 114.

⁶⁶ Manshur, *Ajaran Tasawuf*., p. 115–116.

⁶⁷ Manshur, *Ajaran Tasawuf*., p. 117.

⁶⁸ Manshur, *Ajaran Tasawuf*., p. 120.

then made preservation for this original copy. When he found the original version in good condition and readable, Badri Sanusi successfully copied all the texts from chapters 16 to 30. Since he felt that his writing is not neat, Badri Sanusi assigned a professional *kātib*, Acep Manshur, for making the copy of it to publish. He did in lithography and then printed and published by the Pesantren Gunung Puyuh. The publication of the second part of the *Rawḍat al-'Irfān* is just done in the late 1990s due to many obstacles. It was because the copying process by Badri Sanusi and then by Acep Manshur took much time. Therefore, the second part of the *Rawḍat al-'Irfān* only reached its first printing, which produced about 5.000 copies.⁶⁹

In his *World Bibliography of Translations of the Meanings of the Holy Qur'an; Printed Translations 1515–1980*, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu states that the *al-Amin al-Qur'an* by H. Qomaruddin Shaleh–A.A. Dahlan–Jus Rusamsi, printed in Bandung in 1971 is considered the first complete printed work on the Sundanese Qur'anic commentary.⁷⁰ It seems that we could find another way to state there is one complete work printed in the pre-independence period, which is the *Rawḍat al-'Irfān* of Kyai Sanusi, albeit its second part is just printed in the 1990s.

Conclusion

The facts that there are many works on the Qur'anic commentaries produced since the 18th century show that the tradition of writing Qur'anic commentaries in Java and Sunda has been well-flourished long before the 20th century. In Java, some commentaries are complete, meaning that they interpret the whole Qur'an. Some are incomplete, usually found in "very mixed MSS," and pieces of Arabic tafsīr re-copied in such "very mixed MSS."

In the Banten region, the production of Qur'anic commentaries in this area are usually included in what some scholars regard as *Mushaf*. It is proven that some Qur'anic *Mushaf* with its interlinear translations were made not only for the Qur'anic recitation, but also

⁶⁹ Manshur, *Ajaran Tasawuf*, p. 121–122.

⁷⁰ Ihsanoğlu (ed.), *World Bibliography*, p. xli.

the media of understanding its meanings. In this regard, such works could be identified as tafsīr. In the West Java region, the variety of Qur'anic commentaries in this region is also found. Firstly, some works are only the translations of certain sūras and mixed with other Islamic fields. The second one is the fragments of non-local Arabic tafsīr—the *Jalālayn* for example—recopied in the very mixed MSS, while the third one is complete work on the Qur'anic exegesis. In terms of the script, during the 19th century the pegon script is mostly used. In terms of the language, the West Java Islamic MSS were predominantly written in Javanese language.[]

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