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QUR'ANIC READINGS AND MALAY TRANSLATIONS IN 18TH-CENTURY BANTEN QUR'ANS A.51 AND W.277

Ervan Nurtawab 

ABSTRACT

This article examines two copies of the Qur'an from 18th-century Banten held in the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia, A.51 and W.277, that contain interlinear Malay translations, focusing on two aspects, i.e. Qur'anic readings and Malay translations, to reveal Qur'anic pedagogical practices in the region. This article suggests that differences in the way a Qur'anic reading is used for the writing of the Qur'an guide us to understand the users and their levels of acquired skills and knowledge. In this regard, the Qur'an A.51 was possibly used for those who gained high level skills in Qur'anic recitation, while the Qur'an W.277 was possibly made for students at basic levels or ordinary Muslims. Meanwhile, the examination of their Malay translations reveals that both present a different style in rendering, compared to those in two 17th-century Malay commentaries (i.e. the Cambridge manuscript Or. li.6.45 and the *Tarjumān*) and the *Jalālayn*, a well known work on Qur'anic exegesis in the Muslim world. In a broader context, this article affirms the existence of Malay translations in the Qur'ans A.51 and W.277 as a proof for the continuation of Malay exegetical activities in 18th century after the composition of the *Tarjumān* in the late 17th century.

KEYWORDS

Banten Qur'an; diglossia;
Malay language; *qirā'āt*;
Qur'anic exegesis; Qur'anic
translation

Introduction

This article examines aspects of Qur'anic readings (Arabic: pl. *qirā'āt*) and of Malay translation found in two Qur'anic manuscripts from 18th-century Banten. These manuscripts are currently part of the collection of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia (Perpustakaan Nasional Republik Indonesia, PNRI) at Jakarta, coded A.51 and W.277. Gallop and Akbar (2016: 96) note that the Banten Qur'an A.51 (henceforth, the Qur'an A.51) was among the Qur'anic copies that the Dutch Government acquired from the royal library of Banten, which were then presented to the Bataviaasch Genootschap (Royal Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences) in 1835. The Banten Qur'an W. 277 (henceforth, the Qur'an W. 277) however, was previously part of the manuscript collection owned by Hermann von de Wall (d. 1873). Then, this Qur'anic manuscript, together with the rest of his collection, was presented to the Bataviaasch Genootschap in 1873.

The existence of Malay translation in both copies of the Qur'an is important to consider given that scholars (Johns 1996: 43, 1997: 4–5; Riddell 1989: 119, 2009: 402; Azra 2004: 82), generally argue for the silence of Malay Qur'anic exegetical activity for about three

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centuries after the *Tarjumān al-mustafid* (henceforth, the *Tarjumān*) was composed by ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf al-Sinkilī (d.1693) in late 17th-century Aceh. I expect that the study of Qur’ans A.51 and W.277 from 18th-century Banten would break the silence, considering the ways in which both copies served the purposes of Islamic pedagogical practices (but targeting different audiences as presented in my analysis to follow), when in use for learning in the Banten Sultanate period. Furthermore, not only were they used for the recitation of the Qur’anic text, but they also fulfilled the purpose of understanding its meaning.

Muslims are advised to recite the Qur’an everyday, and at higher levels of education they are told to understand its meaning through their participation in Islamic learning. In connection with our attempt at digging up the Qur’an-based tradition in non-Arabic speaking countries, I address two aspects that are important to consider, one being Qur’anic readings and the other being translation.

We could rely on the use of Qur’anic readings as one of the important sources in understanding the living Qur’an tradition in a given Muslim society. The understanding of this aspect will reveal styles in Islamic learning, its transmissions and connections among Muslim communities. I suggest that translation found in these two Banten Qur’ans reflects their important role in the development of Qur’anic exegetical activity in the 18th-century Malay-Indonesian world, especially in Banten. As far as this research is concerned, no scholars have looked at a continuation in Malay commentaries between the 17th century period and the following centuries, aside from Riddell (1984) who examined the extant copies of the *Tarjumān* from the 18th and 19th centuries.

Regarding the identification of the Qur’ans A.51 and W.277, Gallop and Akbar (2006: 135–139) provide a strong indication that both Qur’ans were possibly written by the same copier. As presented in Figures 1a and 1b, they identify one copy as becoming a copy of another, given that translations found between the lines of the Qur’anic text are identical. Qur’an W.277 comprises ten volumes where each volume contains three *juz*. Qur’an A.51 is however divided into five volumes, each containing six *juz*. Nevertheless, Gallop and Akbar (2006) see a tendency that the latter copy was previously made in ten volumes (which is the same as the number of volumes in the former copy), each containing three *juz*.

Considering the fact that these Qur’anic copies contain a Malay interlinear translation, it is possible to argue that its translation text provides proof of Malay exegetical activity in the 18th century Malay-Indonesian world. In connection with the way in which Qur’anic exegetical activity developed in the region, Malay-speaking Muslims, especially those who resided in 18th-century Banten, witnessed the launching of a Malay translation of the whole Qur’an after the composition of the *Tarjumān* in the late 17th century.

In connection with the study of its Malay translation, my focus is on the identification of possible sources that the author might have drawn on during the process of its composition. In this regard, we might question whether this work strengthens a connection between Malay works on Qur’anic exegesis, especially the *Tarjumān*, and four popular Arabic commentaries in Southeast Asia, i.e. *Tafsīr al-Baghawī*, *Tafsīr al-Khāzin*, *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*, and *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, or conversely whether the copier of Qur’ans A.51 and W.277 presents different styles of translation. This is especially the case with *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn* (henceforth, the *Jalālayn*) as shown in the composition of the *Tarjumān* (Riddell 1984) and of the Malay commentary found in the collection of Sheik Muhammad Said (SMS) in Marawi City, Philippines, that I call ‘SMS Malay Tafsīr’ (Nurtawab 2016: 42–44, 2019: 129–154). For the purpose of this comparative study, I use the printed



Figure 1a. The opening page of *Sūrat al-Kahf* in Qur'an A.51. Photo: courtesy of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia (PNRI), 2014.



Figure 1b. The opening page of *Sūrat al-Kahf* in Qur'an W.277. Photo: courtesy of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia (PNRI), 2014.

edition of the *Jalālayn* (original title, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿazīm*) published by the Maktabah Dār Ihyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabīyah publisher (n.d.). As for the *Tarjumān*, the work I consult in this article was printed by Dār al-Fikr publisher in 1990.

It is worth noting that the Qurʾan and its commentary are conceptually two different works. Qurʾans A.51 and W.277 however contain Malay interlinear translation that show attempts from the copier(s) of these Qurʾans to present the meaning of the Qurʾanic text for a non-Arabic speaking society. This translation activity inevitably requires a certain level of knowledge in Arabic and Qurʾanic commentaries (*tafsīr*). The mastery of both disciplines would assure that the translation process can be properly done, showing that this activity can be regarded as part of interpretation. Based on this perspective, I began a study of translations found in both Qurʾans, to be compared with similar explanations found in some popular Arabic and Malay commentaries.

Qurʾanic readings

Qurʾanic readings (*qirāʾāt*) can be defined as different ways of pronouncing the same Arabic words found in the Qurʾan. Based on the mainstream accounts of Qurʾanic studies, a variation in Qurʾanic readings can be traced back to the life of the Prophet Muḥammad in 7th-century Arabia. During his lifetime, the Prophet Muḥammad reportedly accepted some dialects which his companions spoke for Qurʾanic recitation. Two canonical projects of the Qurʾan during the period of Abū Bakr and, especially, ʿUthmān, to a large extent led to the limitation of Qurʾanic readings by which the Qurʾan could be recited. One of the popular accounts telling us about the preferences of some Qurʾanic readings during the canonisation project of the Qurʾan in ʿUthmān’s period is the instruction from ʿUthmān to the committee to do their work by always referring to the Quraysh clan’s dialect. Al-Ḥabsh (1999: 33) and Gade (2009: 484) note that the reason for the standardisation was to minimise errors and preserve the lines through which the authorised transmission could be traced back to the Prophet Muḥammad.

In the following centuries, Qurʾanic readings were transmitted and some were widely used and achieved popularity in certain parts of the Muslim world. The 10th-century Muslim scholar, Abū Bakr ibn Mujāhid (d.324/936), compiled seven canonical Qurʾanic readings known as *al-qirāʾāt al-sabʿ*. These seven accepted and standardised readings from the period of Ibn Mujāhid are those which represented the prominent Qurʾanic reading traditions in the five centres of Islamic learning at the time, i.e. Mecca, Medina, Damascus, Basrah, and Kufa. The authoritative reciters who transmitted the seven canonical readings are Ibn Kathīr (Mecca, d.120/737), Nāfiʿ (Medina, d.169/785), Ibn ʿĀmir (Damascus, d.118/736), Abū ʿAmr (Basra, d.154/770), ʿĀṣim (Kufa, d.128/745), Ḥamzah (Kufa, d.156/772) and al-Kisāʾī (Kufa, d.189/804).

In the centuries that followed, Ibn al-Jazarī (d.883/1429) identified ten Qurʾanic readings while other scholars were quoting up to 14 Qurʾanic readings, but it was the standardisation made by Ibn Mujāhid that has come to be widely accepted by the majority of Muslims. Riddell (2014, 2017) notes that following the codification of the Qurʾanic reading systems, the practice of Qurʾanic reading had been limited to three systems transmitted by ʿĀṣim/Ḥafṣ, Nāfiʿ/Warsh/Qālūn and Abu ʿAmr/al-Dūrī.

Nowadays, the most widespread popular reading is that transmitted from ʿĀṣim by Ḥafṣ (d.180/796), alongside the reading from Nāfiʿ transmitted by Warsh (d.197/812).

Gade (2009: 484) notes that when reciting the Qur'an a reciter is obliged to be consistent with the used reading until the recitation has been completed. To mix up the readings in one occasion is strictly prohibited.

Ibrahim (2008: 369–372) states that historically speaking, Muslim communities follow a specific Qur'anic reading for their daily usage. He notes that the majority of Qur'anic copies produced down through Muslim history are written according to one of the seven accepted readings. This assumes that the existence of a Qur'anic copy corresponds to the popularity of a specific Qur'anic reading system in a given society. Nevertheless, this is not always the case because, in my analysis to follow, some extant manuscripts of the Qur'an in Banten used a Qur'anic reading system that in some scholars' opinions was not popular among ordinary Muslims in the region. Riddell (2017: 85), for example, notes that ordinary Muslims do not pay attention to what system of Qur'anic reading they recite daily because this field of study is ranked at an advanced level in Islamic education.

Qur'anic readings in 17th-century Malay commentaries

Some studies have been made concerning the use of Qur'anic reading as a norm for recitation among the Malay Muslim community. Riddell (1990, 2014, 2017), for example, looked closely at some aspects of Qur'anic readings found in two 17th-century Malay commentaries, i.e. the Cambridge manuscript Or. Ii.6.45 and the *Tarjumān*. Riddell (2014) notes that the reception of one system in Qur'anic reading among Malay Muslims followed the global trend in the Muslim world.

In his examination of the Cambridge manuscript Or. Ii.6.45, Riddell (2017) argues that aspects of Qur'anic readings presented in this work were taken from two Arabic commentaries that have been widely used in the Malay-Indonesian world, namely *Tafsīr al-Baghawī* and *Tafsīr al-Khāzin*. In referring to both works, the author of the Cambridge manuscript presents three different systems of Qur'anic reading transmitted by Ibn 'Āmir, Ibn Kathīr and Ya'qūb.

In examining the aspects of Qur'anic readings found in *Sūrat al-Kahf*, Riddell (2017: 89–91) notes that MS Or. Ii.6.45 offers some explanations on this subject in verses 17, 34 and 47. In doing so, the author of MS Or. Ii.6.45 referred their explanation to the Qur'anic reading systems transmitted by Ibn 'Āmir, Ibn Kathīr and Ya'qūb. The inclusion of those three readings in this work, as Riddell (2017: 89) notes, supports his statement on the way the author of this work greatly drew on the work by al-Baghawī, i.e. *Ma'ālim al-tanzīl*, aside from *Tafsīr al-Khāzin* and *Tafsīr al-Bayḍāwī*.

Regarding the examination of Qur'anic readings found in the *Tarjumān*, Riddell (1984, 2014, 2017) suggests that this information represented an addition under the column *fā'idah* and was inserted by Baba Da'ud Rumi, the main disciple of 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Sinkilī, under the supervision of the author. His examination of Qur'anic readings found in *Sūrat al-Kahf* reveals that Da'ud Rumi presented Qur'anic readings based on three different readings from Ḥaḥḥ (d. 796), Abu 'Amr (d. 770) and Nāfi' (d. 785)/Qālūn (d. 835).

Riddell (2014: 66) suggests that 'Abd al-Ra'ūf and his main disciple, Baba Da'ud, must have considered what was mainstream at the time in the use of Qur'anic reading in the Muslim world. In this regard, he says, the *Tarjumān* uses the system of Qur'anic

reading transmitted by Ḥafṣ as a norm and treats other systems, for example those by Abu ‘Amr/al-Dūrī and Nāfi‘/Qālūn, as variants that appear in the column *fā'idah*. The selection of Ḥafṣ' Qur'anic reading as appears in the *Tarjumān* provides a window into the popularity of this system of Qur'anic reading in the 17th-century Muslim world and ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf’s intention to make the *Tarjumān* accessible for the majority of Malay Muslims.

The above findings show the use of a Qur'anic reading as a norm for daily recitation or as variants that usually appear in the margins of Qur'anic text. They have motivated me to propose some questions regarding the existence of the two Banten Qur'ans being studied here and how both copies of the Qur'an socially coexisted in 18th-century Banten society. Firstly, which Qur'anic reading is used as a norm for the composition of these Qur'anic copies? Secondly, why did these two identical copies of the Qur'an exist in this milieu? Thirdly, how does the use of a Qur'anic reading for the writing of Qur'anic text as found in these copies give us ideas about the development of the Qur'an tradition during the period of the Banten Sultanate? As for the latter question, the examination of a Qur'anic reading used as a norm for the writing of these two Qur'ans would reveal their distinctive functions as a tool for Qur'anic pedagogical practices.

Given what Riddell suggests as the popularity of Ḥafṣ' reading in the 17th-century Muslim world, it is very likely that Ḥafṣ' reading also enjoyed its popularity as a norm for Malay Muslims to recite the Qur'an in the following centuries, and then up to the present time. In other words, ordinary Malay Muslims in the 18th and 19th centuries based their daily Qur'anic recitation on Ḥafṣ' reading. In connection with our attempt to look at these two Banten Qur'ans and explore their distinctive roles within pedagogical practice, I suggest that the different Qur'anic reading system selected as a norm for copying the Qur'anic text can give us ideas about the levels of Muslim groups as the target users for the study of the Qur'an.

Regarding the circulation of canonical Qur'anic readings among Malay-Indonesian Muslims, two Indonesian experts in Qur'anic readings, Fathoni (2012) and Sakho Muhammad (2019), point out a very clear difference in recitation between Ḥafṣ and Qālūn. Fathoni (2012: 21) notes the former was very popular in Indonesia while the latter was popular in Libya, Tunisia and Qatar. The popularity of Ḥafṣ' reading among the Indonesian Muslims, as Sakho Muhammad (2019: 78–79) notes, is because this reading system fits the non-Arabic speaking Muslims well.

Qur'anic readings in Banten Qur'an: the case of MSS A.51 and W.277

In this section, I address two aspects in seeking to identify the use of a Qur'anic reading system as a norm for copying the Qur'anic text. The first concerns the reason that a copier selects one system for the writing of the Qur'an. In the following analysis, I consider how both copies of the Qur'an address different target audience in Qur'anic learning. In order to see these differences in the use of these two Qur'anic copies for pedagogical practices, I select Sūrat al-Kahf from both copies as samples of study. Then, I take some samples of phrases from those verses that, in my identification, are representative of a specific reading as the basis for the writing of the Qur'ans.

The examination of these selected phrases shows a clear difference in the way in which the copier(s) of both Qur'ans chose different reading systems, one choosing the reading transmitted by Ḥafṣ and the other preferring that transmitted by Qālūn. All

Table 1. Excerpts of Qur'anic text in the Qur'ans A.51 and W.277 showing a specific Qur'anic reading system.

Qur'an A.51		Qur'an W.277	
Verse	Notes	Verse	Notes
18:16	T: marfaqan M: mirfaqan	18:16	T: mirfaqan (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:17	T: tazzawaru (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)	18:17	T: tazzawaru (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)
18:17	T: fahwa al-muhtadī (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: fa-huwa	18:17	T: fa-huwa al-muhtadi (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:18	T: taḥsibuhum (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)	18:18	T: taḥsibuhum (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)
18:18	T: wa la mulli'ta (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: wa la muli'ta (Hafş)	18:18	T: wa-la muli'ta (Hafş)
18:33	T: uklahā (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: ukulahā (Hafş)	18:33	T: ukulahā (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:34	T: thumurun (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: thumrun (Abū 'Amr/al-Dūri), thamarun (Hafş)	18:34	T: thumurun (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)
18:34	T: anā aktharu (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: ana	18:34	T: ana aktharu (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:37	T: wahwa (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: wa-huwa (Hafş)	18:37	T: wa-huwa (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:39	T: anā aqalla (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: ana	18:39	T: anā aqalla (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)
18:44	T: 'uquban M: 'uqban	18:44	T: 'uquban (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)
18:55	T: qibalan (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: qubulan (Hafş)	18:55	T: qubulan (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:59	T: li-muhlakihim (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: li-mahlakihim	18:59	T: li-muhlakihim (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)
18:69	T: satajiduniya (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: satajidunī (Hafş)	18:67	T: satajidunī (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:70	T: tas'alannī (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: tas'alnī (Hafş)	18:70	T: tas'alnī (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:72	T: ma'ī (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: ma'īya (Hafş)	18:72	T: ma'īya (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:76	T: min ladunī (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: min ladunnī (Hafş)	18:76	T: min ladunnī (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:81	T: yubaddilahumā (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: yubdilahumā (Hafş)	18:81	T: yubaddilahumā (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)
18:85	T: fa-attaba'a (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: fa-atba'a ('ayn)	18:85	T: fa-atba'a (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:88	T: jazā'un al-ḥusna or jazā'un al-ḥusnā (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: jazā'an al-ḥusnā (Hafş)	18:88	T: jazā'un al-ḥusnā (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)
18:89	T: thumma attaba'a (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: atba'a	18:89	T: thumma attaba'a (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)
18:93	T: al-suddayni (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: al-saddayni	18:93	T: al-saddayni (Hafş) M: (Nil)
18:94	T: suddan (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: saddan (Hafş)	18:94	T: suddan (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: (Nil)
18:94	T: Yājūj wa-Mājūj (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: Ya'jūj wa-Ma'jūj (Hafş)	18:94	T: Ya'jūj wa-Ma'jūj M: (Nil)
18:98	T: dakkan (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: dakkā'	18:98	T: dakkan (Nāfi'/Qālūn)
18:102	T: dūniya (Nāfi'/Qālūn) M: dūnī	18:102	T: min dūnī (Hafş) M: (Nil)

selected phrases are presented as a comparative study in Table 1, where 'T' indicates words or phrases found in the main text of the Qur'anic copy, and 'M' represents text in the margin.

Looking at the excerpts found in the Qur'an A.51 as presented in [Table 1](#) together with studies of Qur'anic readings (Ibn Muḥammad 2002: 14–15; Fathoni 2012), I identify the excerpts from the main text of the Qur'an A.51 as Qur'anic readings transmitted by Nāfi'/Qālūn. In doing so, it is confirmed that the copier of the Qur'an A.51 utilised Nāfi'/Qālūn's reading in the composition of this Qur'an. Meanwhile, he put sections of Ḥafṣ' reading system in the margin as a variant. Considering the way in which Nāfi'/Qālūn's reading was not dominant in the 18th-century Malay-Indonesian world, I suggest that the Qur'an A.51 was not made to address the majority of Muslims for their daily Qur'anic recitation because they seemed to have been more familiar with Ḥafṣ' reading system.

Nāfi'/Qālūn's reading seemed to have been popular in 18th-century Banten, assuming the existence of the many experts in this Qur'anic reading system. My identification of two other Banten Qur'ans, i.e. A. 50 and A. 54, reveals that both Qur'ans were written based on the Nāfi'/Qālūn's reading system. As for Qur'an A. 50, the marginal notes were accurately and completely made to inform of alternative readings transmitted by Ḥafṣ. In this connection, Gallop and Akbar (2006: 134–135) identify A. 50 as written in high quality with the text in colours. Gold roundels were made to separate the verses. This manuscript was owned by al-Sultān Muḥammad 'Alī al-Dīn of Banten (r.1777–1802) (see also Friederich and van den Berg 1873: 63). Qur'an A. 54 meanwhile contains the Qur'anic text with an interlinear Javanese translation. It also contains the inserted *Jalālayn* that was presumably made later by the user.

The difference in the use of the Qur'anic reading for the writing of the Qur'anic text also gives us ideas on which copy was made first. As presented in [Table 1](#), there is a strong indication that Qur'an A.51 was made earlier, with the copy written more accurately than Qur'an W.277. In Qur'an A.51, the Qur'anic text was written based on the reading transmitted by Nāfi'/Qālūn, and Ḥafṣ' reading system is placed as variant in the margin. Aside from that, the former copy contains more detailed information like codes that inform the readers of the way the Arabic Qur'an should be pronounced (*tajwīd*). This kind of information is rather absent in the latter copy.

The majority of Banten Muslims seemed not to have been familiar with Nāfi'/Qālūn's Qur'anic reading system, and it seems that both students and ordinary Muslims had difficulty following the recitation based on this Qur'anic copy. Considering this difficulty in following the recitation, I assume that the copier then decided to write the Qur'anic text by using the reading system that was more familiar to the majority of Muslims in the region. It seemed to have been easier to re-write its interlinear Malay translation. But this is not the case with the re-writing of its Qur'anic text as found in Qur'an W. 277. As a result, some recitations that clearly belong to Nāfi'/Qālūn's reading remain in that copy.

The copier must have been knowledgeable about differences in Qur'anic readings. It is very likely that some Nāfi'/Qālūn's readings found in Qur'an W.277 (it was primarily copied based on Ḥafṣ' reading), were due to constraints he found during the re-writing process. In this process, the copier seemed to have paid attention to the Qur'anic text he consulted in the Qur'an A.51 because the idea was to re-write both Qur'anic text and its interlinear translation. While he seemed not to find any difficulties in doing the latter text, his intention to make the second copy (W. 277) seemed to have been disturbed by the way he needed to swap Nāfi'/Qālūn's readings with that of Ḥafṣ'. As presented in [Table 1](#), some of Nāfi'/Qālūn's readings mistakenly remain written and are thus mixed with Ḥafṣ' readings that I identify to be used as a norm for the re-writing of the Qur'anic text in

W.277. In doing so, he seemed to have decided not to provide any explanation on variants of Qur'anic readings in the margin of the second copy (W.277) as found in the first one (A.51).

Malay translation

In this section, I examine the Malay translation found alongside the Qur'anic text in both Qur'ans A.51 and W.277. We have noted that Malay translation in both copies is identical, showing that one text is a copy of another. In my attempt to analyse its Malay translation, I select the text that is more legible, that is the Qur'an A.51. For the purpose of the study, my focus is firstly on the examination of Malay as a local dialect, and secondly on the identification of its sources that in many ways helped the copier translate the Qur'an.

At this stage, questions arise as to why both Qur'ans A.51 and W.277 have a Malay translation, who their respective audience was, and how these works differ from other Banten manuscripts that are commonly in Javanese. In connection with the examination of this Malay translation, I address two aspects. Firstly, the study of a local Malay dialect used for a Qur'anic translation gives us ideas of the way in which Malay was used by Muslim scholars who travelled from many parts of the archipelago, as the medium of instruction in the region, and how it was fused with other local languages. The second point connects with the way in which the copier(s) successfully rendered the Qur'anic text into Malay. Here, we can trace sources that he possibly used during the composition of this translation. Moreover, it is essential that we also address how this translation work strengthened the domination of certain Arabic commentaries, especially the *Jalālayn*, for Islamic pedagogical practices in 18th-century Banten.

Malay language in Banten dialect

Ota (2006: 14 and 35) notes that Dutch sources from the 18th century divided the inhabitants of Banten into two groups, namely the 'Banten' or 'Javanese' and the 'Mountain Javanese.' 'Banten' refers to those who lived within and around the city and speak Javanese. The 'Mountain Javanese' refers to those who speak 'Javanese mountain language'. During this century, the number of people living in Banten was approximately 10,000, with about 45,000 living in the territory which covers the areas from the Ci Sadane river to Panimbang. Although the word 'Sundanese' is not found in the 18th century Dutch sources, the words *Zundase taal* (Sundanese) was once mentioned to address the language used in West Java at the end of the 17th century. Moreover, the Sundanese kingdom did exist in the early 16th century in those areas. According to Ota, these two groups are regarded as Javanese and Sundanese nowadays. So far only limited information on the Baduy people, a traditional community living in the southern part of Banten, is found in the 18th-century documents.

The usage of Javanese in the region was more dominant. It was not only to serve formal communication, but it was also a spoken language for many of those who lived in Banten. The interlinear translations found in the manuscripts of the two Qur'ans and some *tafsir* works, especially the *Jalālayn*, from the Banten royal collection were commonly written in Javanese. Some examples listed in Freiderich and van den Berg (1873: 64–65, 68) are A. 54 and A. 59 that contain the Qur'anic text, the *Jalālayn* and Javanese translation. The existence of those manuscripts in Javanese proves a stronger affiliation to aspects of Javanese

culture, especially in the way they used Javanese as the medium of instruction in Islamic pedagogical practices.

One Muslim scholar who actively wrote works in Javanese, and also Arabic, is ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Qahhār (1750s and 1760s), a mixed Arab-Banten Muslim scholar who was educated during the reign of al-Sulṭān Abū al-Naṣr Zayn al-‘Āshiqīn (r.1753–1777). Van Bruinessen (1995: 182) notes that ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Qahhār is a Muslim scholar who was responsible for the production of the many extant Islamic manuscripts in Arabic and Javanese from Banten. These manuscripts were part of the royal Banten collection before they were presented to the Bataviaasch Genootschap in 1835.

During the period of the Banten sultanate, Malay however enjoyed its vital role for the purpose of diplomacy. In Pudjiastuti’s (2007: 215) work that was based on her doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Indonesia in 2000, she listed 54 letters from the Banten sultanate and identified them from their languages and scripts. Her list shows that 37 out of all the identified documents were written in Malay, showing the dominance of this language as the medium of communication for the Banten sultanate to maintain their international relationships. The existence of these Qur’ans with Malay interlinear translation is therefore evidence of its role as the medium of instruction as well, especially among Muslim travellers who had transitted in Banten and followed local Sufi orders before they continued their journey to Aceh and, finally, Arabia to study Islam. In this regard, I suggest that ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Qahhār was possibly among those responsible for the production of the Qur’ans with a Malay translation. Or at least, he may have agreed with the use of these works to serve the study of the Qur’an in order to help their disciples who come from many parts of the eastern archipelago, especially Mindanao, and who did not speak Javanese.

In this connection, Fathurahman (2019: 117–118) finds that the Maranao Malay Muslim scholars of Mindanao are identified as having a genealogical link with the Shattār-īyah Sufi order through ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Qahhār. This explains a common travel itinerary among Mindanao Muslim scholars in visiting Banten, and possibly Cirebon, before leaving for Aceh and, finally, Ḥaramayn. Aside from that, Kawashima (2017, 2019) explores two journeys made by two Mindanao Muslim scholars, i.e. ‘Abd al-Majīd al-Mindanawī and Sayyidna Tuan Muhammad Said, to Mecca via places in the archipelago from the late 18th century to the early 19th century. Although there is no known historical account that they also visited Banten, this indicates the active participation of Mindanao Muslim scholars in the network of Muslim scholars in the archipelago where Banten in the 18th century had been considered one of the main places for the study of Islam.

The identification of manuscripts in the library of a Mindanao Muslim scholar in Marawi City, coordinated by Kawashima, confirms that Mindanao Muslim scholars used Malay as the medium for Islamic learning (Fathurahman et al. 2019). The Banten sultanate seemed to have been experienced in facilitating the needs of those travellers during their stay to study Islam. This is especially the case with the production of Malay translation as found in the Qur’ans W. 277 and A. 51.

I suggest that Malay language used for the interlinear translation in both Qur’ans A. 51 and W. 277 was greatly influenced by Javanese dialects. This can be seen through the occurrence of ě in the final syllables in Malay words used in translation found in the Qur’an A.51 (Table 2). This might shed light on a diglossic situation in the multilingual

Table 2. *e as ë in final syllables in translation of the Qur'an A.51, *Bataviasch Maleisch* and Banten letters in 1619.

Qur'an A.51	<i>Bataviasch Maleisch</i> (Homan 1867)	Banten Letters 1619 (Ricklefs 1976: 132–134)
akën	akën [p. 63]	akën [Fol. 326]
dijadikën	di djadiken [p. 63]	
këkël	këkël [p. 63]	
manurunkën		
sabënërnya	bënër [p. 63]	
dëngën	dëngan [p. 63]	dëngën [fol 326], dangën [fol 325]
sangët		
dicaritarkën		
mangatakën		Mangatakën
manyakutukën		
malayinkën		
sësëlnya		
dapët		
disësëtkan		
dibangkëtkën		

society in Banten at that time, where Malay as a lingua franca throughout the archipelago came into contact with Javanese and, to certain extent, with Sundanese as vernacular languages.

I identified the possible influence of other areas where a Malay dialect also preserved *e as ə in certain final syllables. It is worth noting that the speech community in Batavia is geographically close to Banten. While we could see that Javanese was used as both a formal and vernacular language in 18th century Banten, there is still a possibility that a Malay dialect used in the Qur'an A.51 gained influence especially from Malay spoken in Batavia.

Sneddon (2003: 84) notes that Portuguese, Malay and Dutch had been used by the Protestant clergy in Batavia since its capture by the Dutch in 1619. Malay was then chosen due to the complexity of languages used in this region. This is the case with the VOC administration where the Dutch preferred to use Malay for diplomatic purposes. Demographically speaking, as Nothofer (1995: 86) notes, it is reported that there were about 5,000 'Javanese and Sundanese' living outside the walls of the fort in 1671. Meanwhile, the inhabitants of Batavia accounted for about 2,700 Chinese, 5,300 *Mardijkers* (freed slaves), 1,300 Javanese (including Sundanese), 900 Balinese, and 600 Malays.

It is also worth noting a controversy among the Christians regarding the use of Malay for religious purposes, especially as to which kind of Malay (High or Low Malay), should be used for the translation of the Bible. High Malay is a literary variety which had been used and developed in the Riau-Johor royal court. Meanwhile, Low Malay, or Pasar Malay, was used to identify the spoken dialects of Malay in different areas.

Some clergymen proposed using High Malay to promote Christian mission in the East Indies. In contrast, Robson (2002: 19–21) and Sneddon (2003: 84–85) note that François Valentijn strongly disagreed with the usage of High Malay since it would simply create a so-called artificial language among the Christian adherents when a dialect of Malay or no Malay dialect existed in their daily life. The Church Council in Batavia eventually decided on High Malay, though this Malay did not gain acceptance in Java. As evidence of this approval, the Church Council published the Bible translation in High Malay prepared by Leydekker and finished by Werndly in 1731. However, the local leaders and VOC

officials maintained their communication by using the so-called *Dienst Maleisch* (Service Malay), a Malay vernacular which was influenced by Javanese and to a lesser extent by Sundanese (see also Beekman 1988: 66–67).

The above description assists us to understand a diglossic situation when the Banten people initially started preparing translations and developing their exegetical activity. If we try to connect the linguistic situation in 18th-century Banten with the classification of High and Low variety, we conclude that there was a diglossic situation which involves two different or genetically unrelated languages as a linguistic anthropological context when Qur'an A.51 was produced.

Translating the Qur'an: the identification of its sources

In this section, my focus is on the identification of sources that the copier of Qur'an A.51 possibly used for the composition of his Malay Qur'anic translation. I propose two assumptions: firstly, whether this translation shows a certain level of connection with the well known work on Qur'anic exegesis, i.e. the *Jalālayn*, and secondly, the possibility of the copier referring to works like the *Tarjumān*. In this regard, we need to look at how far the translator or commentator has gone in his exegetical activities.

Riddell (2017: 85), for example, estimates that 65% of the text found in the Cambridge MS is allotted to presenting tales, aside from additional explanations provided for translation of the verses. Conversely, the *Tarjumān* contains more texts that serve the translation of the Qur'an although some additional explanations on the Qur'anic readings and tales are also present. In connection with the examination of Qur'an A.51, I find that translation in this Qur'anic copy is mostly allocated to the rendering of the verses although a few additional explanations are still found as commentary.

In looking at the characteristics of Malay translation in the Qur'an from 18th-century Banten, I address three points. The first focuses on the analysis of the chapter heading found in *Sūrat al-Kahf*. The second presents additional explanations that are absent from both the *Jalālayn* and the *Tarjumān*. The third shows the way in which these three Malay translations share similar commentaries.

Chapter heading

Chapter headings in the Qur'ans usually give the readers information concerning the chapter (*sūrat*) such as its identification by name, place and circumstances of revelation, numbers of its verses, words and letters. Some commentators also include information regarding the virtue of reciting the chapter at certain times and occasions based on prophetic tradition.

The examination of the chapter heading of *Sūrat al-Kahf* proves very useful in seeing possible connections between one work of Qur'anic commentary and another, by considering how the commentator follows styles of chapter heading present in works referred to for the composition of the commentaries in question. See Figures 2a and 2b for the chapter heading of *Sūrat al-Kahf* found in Qur'ans A.51 and W.277.

An examination of the chapter heading of *Sūrat al-Kahf* found in Qur'an A.51 (Figure 2a) reveals that this Qur'an has provided more detailed information on the related chapter, compared with those in Qur'an W. 277 (Figure 2b), the *Jalālayn*, and the *Tarjumān*. The



Figure 2a. Chapter heading of *Sūrat al-Kahf* in Qur'an A.51. Photo: courtesy of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia (PNRI), 2014.



Figure 2b. Chapter heading of *Sūrat al-Kahf* in Qur'an W.277. Photo: courtesy of the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia (PNRI), 2014.

exception in the *Tarjumān* is that it also quotes a prophetic saying confirming the virtue of reciting this chapter at bedtime. Transliteration of the chapter headings found in the Qur'ans A.51, W.277, the *Tarjumān* and the *Jalālayn* is presented in [Table 3](#) below.

My examination of Qur'an A.51 reveals that this work not only informs the readers of the name of the chapter, place of revelation, and number of verses, but it also discusses some opinions among the Muslim scholars on the number of verses. The presentation of those opinions is absent in the chapter heading of *Sūrat al-Kahf* found in the Qur'an W.277. This kind of information is also absent in the heading for the same chapter in the two commentaries being compared here, i.e. the *Jalālayn* and the *Tarjumān*.

Additional information found in the margin, next to the chapter heading of *Sūrat al-Kahf* ([Figure 2a](#)), discusses exactly how many verses *Sūrat al-Kahf* contains. Based on the transliteration of the chapter heading in Qur'an A.51 ([Table 3](#)), I assume that Muslim scholars based in Mecca and Medina marked 105 verses in *Sūrat al-Kahf* as being identified as Meccan verses (*Makkīyah bi-lā khilāf wa-hiya mi'ah wa-khams āyāt*

Table 3. Chapter headings of *Sūrat al-Kahf* found in the *Jalālayn*, A.51, W.277, and the *Tarjumān*.

Jalālayn Translation	<i>Sūrat al-Kahf</i> Makkīyah illā wa-‘šbir nafsaka al-āyah mi‘ah wa-‘ashara āyāt aw wa-khams ‘ashrah āyah <i>Sūrat al-Kahf</i> Meccan except <verse > wa-‘šbir nafsaka al-āyah 110 verses or <1 > 15 verses
Qur’an A.51	<i>Sūrat al-Kahf</i> makkīyah wa-hiya mi‘ah wa-iḥdā ‘ashara āyāt <placed in the margin> Makkīyah bi-lā khilāf wa-hiya mi‘ah wa-khams āyāt fi al-Madaniyīn wa-al-Makkī wa-sitt fi al-Shāmī wa ‘ashr fi al-Kūfī wa-iḥdā ‘ashr fi al-Baṣr
Translation	<i>Sūrat al-Kahf</i> Meccan, and it 111 verses Meccan without disputes and it 105 verses in < the scholars of > Medina and Mecca, and <10 > 6 in Shams and <1 > 10 in Kufah and <1 > 11 in Basrah
Qur’an W.277 Translation	<i>Sūrat al-Kahf Sūrat al-Kahf</i> Makkīyah wa-hiya mi‘ah wa-iḥdā ‘ashrah āyah Makkīyah <i>Sūrat al-Kahf Sūrat al-Kahf</i> Meccan and it 111 verses Meccan
<i>Tarjumān</i>	<i>Sūrat al-Kahf</i> Makkīyah Wa-hiya mi‘ah wa-iḥdā ‘ashrah āyah Ini surat al-Kahf turunnya di Makkah melainkan wa-‘šbir nafsaka al-āyah yaitu seratus sepuluh ayat atau seratus sebelas ayat
Translation	<i>Sūrat al-Kahf</i> And it 111 verses This is <i>Sūrat al-Kahf</i> revealed in Mecca except < the verse > wa-‘šbir nafsaka al-āyah. It 110 or 111 verses < the <i>Tarjumān</i> then quotes the prophetic saying on the virtue of reciting this chapter on bedtime taken from <i>Tafsir al-Baydawi</i> >

fi al-Madaniyīn wa-al-Makkī). Muslim scholars based in Damascus, however, registered 106 verses while those based in Kufah and Basrah mentioned 110 and 111 verses, respectively (*wa-sitt fi al-Shāmī wa-‘ashar fi al-Kūfī wa-iḥdā ‘ashar fi al-Baṣr*). It is confirmed that the above information is absent from both the *Jalālayn* and the *Tarjumān*, and that the reason why it exists in the Qur’an A.51 needs to be investigated in future research.

Malay expression in rendering passages of the Qur’anic text

I argue that the copier of Qur’an A.51 did not refer to the *Tarjumān* for the task of translation. A different style in communicating the meaning of the Qur’an in Malay is clearly present as shown in the study of translation in *Sūrat al-Kahf*. Moreover, no copy of the *Tarjumān* was ever known to be part of the royal Banten collection. A reference to the *Jalālayn* is very much possible however, given that some manuscripts of the *Jalālayn* were once listed as part of the collection.

As for the examination of translation found in Qur’an A.51, I have identified some Malay expressions that are clearly different from those in the *Jalālayn* and the *Tarjumān*. In Tables 4, 5 and 6 I detail three examples of expressions found in Qur’an A.51, that differ from those in other commentaries, as proof that the copier of Qur’an A.51 presented his knowledge based on other sources or made a translation from his own point of view.

In Table 4, my attention is on the phrase found in the *Jalālayn*, i.e. *min ghadā wa-‘ashā* (that is breakfast and lunch). The *Tarjumān* clearly presents an additional explanation of this verse by referring to the above phrase, i.e. *daripada makanan pagi-pagi dan petang-petang* (that is breakfast and lunch). However, Qur’an A.51 gives a different phrasing, i.e. *razki kamu akēn kuat kamu* (your livelihood to make you strong). The use of different words in some ways indicates a likelihood that the author did not draw on the *Jalālayn* when translating this verse.

This is also the case with the explanation for the word *rashadan* found in *Sūrat al-Kahf* verse 24 (see Table 5). The *Tarjumān* clearly follows the way the *Jalālayn* presents its explanation. An example of this can be seen in the last part where a chunk of the

Table 4. Translation of *Sūrat al-Kahf* verse 16.

<i>Jalālayn</i>	(fa'wū ilā al-kahf yanshur lakum rabbukum min rahmatihī wa-yuhayyi' lakum min amrikum mirfaqan) bi-kasr al-mīm wa-fath al-fā' wa-bi-al-'aks ma tartafiqūna bihi <u>min ghadā' wa-'ashā'</u>
A.51	bermula kata satengah marika itu akèn satengahnya apabila kamu cẽrailah marika itu dan yang disembah maka teguhilah ibadah kamu kapada Allah dan tiada ada kami sembah malainkèn Allah karena kami tiada dapèt maninggal ibadah > addition in the margin > kapadanya maka barbunilah kami ka dalèm guha supaya dianugrahai tuhan kamu akèn kamu rahmatnya dan supaya dimudahkèn daripada kamu <u>razki kamu akèn kuat kamu</u>
<i>Tarjumān</i>	Kata setengah daripada segala orang muda itu kepada setengah mereka itu dan jika kamu asingkan diri kamu daripada mereka itu mana daripada yang disembah mereka itu yang lain daripada Allah ta'ala maka ambil oleh kamu akan tempat kepada gua niscaya ... kan agi kamu oleh tuhan kamu daripada rahmatnya dan di-sng-b-g-r-hakannya bagi kamu barang yang kamu kasih akan dia daripada <u>makanan pagi-pagi dan petang-petang</u>

Table 5. Verse 24 of *Sūrat al-Kahf*.

<i>Jalālayn</i>	(wa-'dhkur rabbaka) ay mashī'atuhu mu'allaqan bihā (idhā nasīta) al-ta'liq bihā wa-yakūnu dhikrahā ba'da al-nisyān ka-dhikrihā ma'a al-qawl qāla al-Ḥasan wa-ghayruhu mādāma fi al-majlis (wa-qul 'asā an yahdiyani rabbi li-aqraba min hādha) min khabr ahl al-kahf fi al-dilālah 'alā <u>nubuwwatī (rashadan) hidāyah</u>
A.51	malainkèn sebut olehmu insya Allah dan sebut tuhanmu apabila lupa angkau manyebut insya Allah dengèn insyā Allah kata olehmu ya Muhammad bahuwasannya hampir tuhanku akèn manunjuk daku daripada sagala ininya yang amat damping <u>kapada agama yang sabēnērnnya</u>
<i>Tarjumān</i>	Dan sebut olehmu mashī'ah tuhanmu pada halmu men-ta'liq-kan dengan dia dan dikata olehmu mudah-mudahan bahwa ditunjukinya akan daku oleh tuhanku yang terlebih hampar daripada kabar isi gua ini pada menunjukkan atas <u>nubuwatku dengan hudan-nya</u>

Table 6. Verse 62 of *Sūrat al-Kahf*

<i>Jalālayn</i>	(fa-lammā jāwazā) dhālika al-makān bi-al-sayr ilā <u>waqt al-ghadā' min thāni' yawm</u> (qāla) Mūsā (li-fatāhu ātinā ghadā'anā) huwa <u>ma yu'kalu awwala al-nahār</u> (laqad laqinā min safarinā hādha naṣaban) ta'ban wa-ḥuṣūlahu ba'da al-mujāwazah
A.51	maka tatkala sampailah keduanya berjalan kepada batu <u>majma' al-bahrayn</u> itu maka kata Musa akan Yusa' marilah bawa makanan kita makan bahwasanya kita perolehlah dalam pelayaran kita ini lelah
<i>Tarjumān</i>	maka tatkala lalulah keduanya daripadanya tempat itu dengan berjalan datang <u>esok hari yang kedua</u> kata Musa bagi Yusa' datangkan olehmu <u>akan makanan kita pagi ini</u> sanya telah sudah kita rasai daripada pelayaran kita ini lelah

Tarjumān, i.e. *nubuwatku dengan hudan-nya* (my prophethood by his guidance) is in line with that in the *Jalālayn* text, i.e. 'alā nubuwwatī (rashadan) hidāyah (on my prophethood (rashadan) guidance). Qur'an A.51, however, presents a different expression of translation, i.e. *kapada agama yang sabēnērnnya* (to the true religion).

Aside from the above examples, we also see that Qur'an A.51 did not refer to the *Jalālayn* when translating *Sūrat al-Kahf* verse 62 (Table 6). In this regard, I give an example of the way the copier did not specify a time when the Prophet Moses and his servant realised that the fish they brought had jumped into the ocean. The *Tarjumān*, in contrast, clearly drew on the *Jalālayn* by explaining that the event took place at breakfast time on the second day, as shown in the underlined passages.

This confirms that the *Tarjumān* followed the phrase of the *Jalālayn* text, i.e. ilā waqt al-ghadā' min thāni' yawm (to breakfast time on the second day) and mā yu'kalu awwala al-nahār (what is eaten in the morning), by presenting the translation as: *esok hari yang kedua ... akan makanan kita pagi ini*. The information on the time of this event is absent in Qur'an A.51. Rather, the author addresses the place of meeting between the Prophet Moses and Khidr and identifies it with the stone of *majma' al-bahrayn*.

Table 7. Verse 11 of *Sūrat al-Kahf*

<i>Jalālayn</i>	(Fa-ḍarabnā 'alā ādhānihim) ay anamnāhum (fi-al-kahf sinīn 'adadan) ma'dūdah
A.51	maka kami tutupi telinga marika itu supaya tiada didēngēr marika itu sawara dan kami kēraskēn atas marika itu tidur dalēm guha itu babarapa tahun lamanya kata satēngah adalah tidur marika itu dalēmnya tiga ratus sambilan tahun lamanya maka tiap-tiap satahun dibalikkēn < addition in the margin > marika itu supaya jangan dimakan tanah tatapi pada marika itu saparti siang hari jua.
<i>Tarjumān</i>	Maka kami tidurkan mereka itu di dalam gua beberapa tahun dibilang

Table 8. Verse 18 of *Sūrat al-Kahf*.

<i>Jalālayn</i>	(Wa-taḥsabuhum) law ra'aytahum (ayqāzan) ay muntabihīn li-anna a'yunahum munfatihah jam' yaqīzu bi-kasr al-qāf (wa-hum ruqūd) niyām jam' rāqid (wa-nuqallibuhum dhāt al-yamin wa-dhāt al-shimāl) li-'allā ta'kulu <u>al-ardu luḥūmahum</u> (wa-kalbihum bāsīt dhirā'ayh) yadayhi (bi-al-waṣīd) bi-fanā'i al-kahf wa-kānū idhā 'nqalabū inqalaba huwa mithluhum fi al-nawm wa-al-yaqzah (law 'tṭala'ta 'alayhim la-wallayta minhum firāran wa-mulli'ta) bi-al-tashdid wa-al-takhfif (minhum ru'ban) bi-sukūn al-'ayn wa-ḍammihā mana'ahum Allāh bi-al-ru'b min dukhūl aḥad 'alayhim
A.51	dan pada sangka kamu jaga dalēm guha bahuwasanya marika itu tidur dalēmnya dan kami balikkēn marika itu ka kanannya satahun sakali dan ka kirinya pun satahun sakali kata satēngah dalēm satahun dua kali dan anjing marika itu tidur dalēm pintu guha manghuncurkēn tangannya pada sama tēngah pintu jikalau angkau lihat marika itu maka masa ini niscaya barpaling lari marika itu dan amat takut angkau daripada hitu marika itu dan bēsar tubuh marika itu
<i>Tarjumān</i>	Dan kau sangka jaga mereka itu jika kau lihat karena segala mata mereka itu terbuka padahal mereka itu tidur dan kami balik-balikkan mereka itu kepada pihak kanan dan kiri mereka itu supaya jangan dimakan tanah segala tubuh mereka itu dan anjing mereka itu menghamparkan dua tangannya tepi gua [kisah] adalah apabila berbalik mereka itu niscaya berbalik anjing mereka itu padahal ia seperti mereka itu pada tidur dan jaga

Glosses in the Qur'an A.51 not found in the *Jalālayn* and the *Tarjumān*

Qur'an A.51 presented glosses in several verses aside from the translation. In this regard, I offer two examples where the copier clearly presented explanations from his own knowledge or sources other than the *Jalālayn*. The first is verse 11 of *Sūrat al-Kahf* (Table 7).

As presented in Table 7, both the *Jalālayn* and the *Tarjumān* give a short explanation of the verse while a detailed explanation in translation of the same verse is found in Qur'an A.51. Qur'an A.51 nevertheless intended to explain earlier (as this part of the translation should have explained verse 18), on how long the People of the Cave slept on the ground, and how their bodies did not decompose. In this regard, he translated a passage of the verse 11 as follows: *adalah tidur marika itu dalēmnya tiga ratus sambilan tahun lamanya maka tiap-tiap satahun dibalikkēn* < addition in the margin > *marika itu supaya jangan dimakan tanah tatapi pada marika itu saparti siang hari jua* (and they had slept in it for 309 years, and once a year their [bodies] were turned in opposite direction, but they felt it [a duration of one year] as if it were just a day).

The explanation of how often their bodies were turned to avoid being decomposed is absent from the *Jalālayn* and the *Tarjumān*. Similarly, it is absent in the translation of verse 18 (Table 8). However, Qur'an A.51 presents a more detailed explanation, attaching some opinions on the frequency of how often their bodies were turned when sleeping. As presented in Table 8, Qur'an A.51 provides detailed information regarding the turning of the bodies from the right to the left or reverse when falling asleep for several hundred years inside the cave, i.e. *kami balikkēn marika itu ka kanannya satahun sakali dan ka kirinya pun satahun sakali kata satēngah dalēm satahun dua kali* (we turned their bodies to the right once a year and to the left once a year as well, some say twice a year). This confirms

that information on how often the turning of the bodies took place in a year is absent from both the *Jalālayn* and the *Tarjumān*.

Concluding remarks

In this article, I highlighted aspects of Qur'anic readings and translation found in the 18th-century Banten Qur'ans A.51 and W.277. The examination of both aspects is important and gives us ideas on how both copies of the Qur'an are representative mediators of Islam in such an environment revealing different roles in Qur'anic learning and practices. This study also guides us to the ways the Malay language co-existed in understanding the Arabic Qur'an for non-Arabic speaking Muslims in a multilingual society as in 18th century Banten. Moreover, this research disproves the claim by Riddell and others of a 300-year silence in Malay *tafsīr* writing following the appearance of the *Tarjumān*.

The study of Qur'anic readings found in Qur'ans A.51 and W.277 reveals that both copies of the Qur'an were made for different audiences. Qur'an A.51 was intended for specialists in Qur'anic fields on the grounds that this copy has detailed explanations placed in the margin, especially on the Qur'anic readings taken as variants. As for the Qur'anic reading taken as a norm for the writing of the Qur'an, Qur'an A.51 refers to the system of Qur'anic reading transmitted by Nāfi'/Qālūn that might have been unfamiliar to and difficult to recite for ordinary Banten Muslims. Given that this reading was unfamiliar among the ordinary Muslims in that environment, there was an attempt to re-copy the Qur'an, together with its Malay translation, by utilising Ḥafs' reading as a basis for scribing the Qur'anic text. This project was certainly time consuming, and we can find sections of the Qur'anic reading that belong to Nāfi'/Qālūn's system in Qur'an W. 277.

As for its Malay Qur'anic translation, it is confirmed that the renderings of Qur'an A.51 were written between the lines of the Qur'anic text unlike those in the *Jalālayn* and the *Tarjumān*. In this connection, Riddell (1984: 77) notes that the *Jalālayn* – and the *Tarjumān* – provide rendering of the verses in the form of a gloss that gives readers more information than the Qur'anic text. These renderings were given between the sections of the Qur'anic text, showing the former exactly explaining the latter.

I suggest that the copier(s) of both Qur'an A.51 and W.277 in some ways utilised the *Jalālayn* as a reference for making its interlinear Malay translation. This is also supported by the many copies of the manuscripts of the *Jalālayn* and its glosses found as part of the royal Banten library. Aside from his effort to make two Qur'anic copies based on different reading systems, the scribe's orientation nevertheless is given to the rendering of the Qur'anic text. In connection to the presentation of commentary that is absent from both the *Jalālayn* and the *Tarjumān*, there might be resemblances with other popular Arabic commentaries like *Tafsīrs al-Baghawī*, *al-Khāzin* or *al-Bayḍāwī* that warrant further research.

As examples above show, in trying to provide a gloss the copier provided renderings that are not in line with those in the *Jalālayn*. This fact therefore confirms its uniqueness compared with the glosses presented in two Malay commentaries, i.e. the *Tarjumān* (Riddell 1984) and the *SMS Malay Tafsīr* (Nurtawab 2016, 2019), as both those works strictly followed how the explanation of the Qur'anic verses should be presented in accordance with the *Jalālayn*.

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- 'Umar ibn Muḥammad al-Shīrāzi al-Bayḍāwī [The translator who seeks benefits: the holy Qur'an and in its margin the translator who seeks benefits and this is a Malay translation of the commentary entitled the lights of revelation and the secrets of interpretation by Nāṣir al-Dīn Abī Sa'īd 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar ibn Muḥammad al-Shīrāzi al-Bayḍāwī]. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.
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