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THE ORIGIN AND SPREAD OF THE JAWI SCRIPT

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SYNOPSIS

This paper discusses the origin and the spread of the Jawi Script. Jawi Script is derived from the Arabic Script, but it later changed its name to Jawi because in Jawi Script there are six more new letters being added to it to represent the six Malay phonemes which are not found in the Arabic Language.

The oldest known Jawi writing is the Terengganu Inscriptions dated 24th February 1303 or 702 Hijrah. Later on Jawi Script was used extensively in the Sultanate of Malacca, the Sultanate of Old Johor, the Sultanate of Aceh, the Sultanate of Johor-Riau and other sultanates and kingdoms of South East Asia. Jawi Script had spread from Aceh in North Sumatra in the west to Ternate and Tidore in the Moluccas Islands in the eastern part of Indonesia, and then from Cambodia in the north to Banten in the south.

Nowadays, about 16,000 Malay Jawi manuscripts are being preserved and kept in many libraries and archives around the world. In the 19th and 20th Centuries, Jawi Script was also used in many printed Malay books, kitabs, magazines, newspapers, novels, periodicals, school books, official documents and other printed materials. But nowadays the use of Jawi Script is very limited, because since 1963 the official script used for the Malay Language is the Roman alphabet, and in Indonesia the official script is the Latin letters.

Introduction

Jawi Script derives from the Arabic Script, and then when the Arabic script was used to write in Malay Language, it gets its new name known as *Tulisan Melayu* (Malay Script) by the Johorians (from the State of Johor Darul Takzim) or *Tulisan Melayu Huruf Arab* (Malay Writing of the Arabic Script) and *Pegon Script* as it is known in Indonesia. And now its name is more well known as *Tulisan Jawi* or the Jawi Script. The word *Jawi* derives from an Arabic language word which is in the adjectival form of the word Jawa (جاوه). Jawah for the Arabs refers to the name and also the people of South East Asian Region. That is why in Mecca, Medina and Jiddah till the present time, the Arabs still use the word Jawah to refer to the people who came from the South East Asian Region or the Malay Archipelago, such as the Malays, the Pilipinos, the Javanese, the Acehnese, Thai Muslims, the Buginese, and other South East Asian people. Actually the word Jawah was borrowed from a Prakrit word, a language from the sub-continent of India, Iava Dwipa or Java Dwipa which refers to the South East Asian Region. The Arabs only adopted the word *Iava* or *Java* and dropped the word *Dwipa*. The reason for the changing of the name from the Arabic Script to the Jawi Script, is because in the new Jawi Script there are six new letters added to represent the six Malay phonemes which are not found in the Arabic letters ie. /p/, ق; /g/, ك; /c/, چ; /ny/, ن; /v/, ف; and /ng/, غ .

Some of these new letters were copied from the Persian letters which were also derived from the Arabic Language.

Arabic Inscription in South East Asia

The Arabic Script and writing used in South East Asia only existed after the coming of Islam and the spread of the teachings of the Islamic religion in this region. At first the Arabic letters were used to write the Arabic text only. This can be found and proven by the existence of Arabic inscriptions on tombstones found in the South East Asian region such as:

- a. The Tombstone of Sheikh Rukunuddin in Barus, West Coast of North Sumatra, Indonesia dated 48 H.
- b. The Tombstone in Phan-rang in Central Vietnam dated 431 H / 1039 A.D.
- c. The Tombstone of the daughter of the Sultan of Pahang, Malaysia on 14th Rabi'al-Awwal 419 H.

- d. The Tombstone of the daughter of Sultan Abdul Majid ibni Muhammad Shah al-Sultan, Negara Brunei Darussalam, dated 440 H / 1048 A.D.
- e. The Tombstone of Sheikh Abdul Kadir ibn Hussein Shah Alam in Langgar, Kedah Darul Aman, Malaysia, dated 290 H.
- f. The Tombstone of Fatimah binti Maymun bin Hibatullah, in Leran, Gresik, East Java, Indonesia, dated 475 H / 1082 A.D.

All the inscriptions on the Tombstones as mentioned above were inscribed in the Arabic language.

The Terengganu Inscriptions

The earliest inscriptions in Jawi Script, so far found, is the Terengganu Inscriptions. It is being inscribed on a stone pillar. The content of the inscriptions is on the propagation of the Islamic Hudud Law in the Sultanate of Terengganu. The inscriptions were scientifically deciphered by Prof. Dr. Syed Muhammad Naguid Al-Attas, Professor of Islamic Studies from the National University of Malaysia. He wrote and published a book on this subject entitled *The Correct Date on the Terengganu Inscriptions* in 1971. In the book he concluded that the date of the inscriptions was on February 22nd 1303 A.D. Professor Dr. Syed Muhammad Naguib Al-Attas gave a public lecture on the Terengganu Inscriptions in 1971, in the Main Lecture Hall, in the National University of Malaysia, Lembah Pantai, Kuala Lumpur.

The Jawi Spelling System

The Terengganu Inscriptions has a unique Jawi System of Spelling. It uses more vowel letters and also aspirated-b and a few other aspirated phonemes which are much influenced by the Sanskrit Phonemes such as /bh/, /th/, /dh/ and so on. Therefore the system is different from the one used in Aceh and other areas which are much more influenced by the Arabic system of spelling, such as the using of diacritics *fathah*, *kasrah*, and *dammah* and using less vowel letters such as *alif*, *ya* and *wau*. Therefore the Jawi System of Spelling of the Terengganu Inscriptions is known as the Jawi Malay System of Spelling and the other one especially the one used in Aceh is known as Arabic System of Spelling. Almost all books and manuscripts written in Javanese Pegon Script are of the Arabic System of Spelling.

The Spread of the use of Jawi Script in the Malay Language

After the period of the Terengganu Inscriptions, the use of Jawi Script in Malay spread out all over the Malay Archipelago. This is because Malay Language was the *lingua franca* in the South East Asian Region. Malay Language was used to spread the teachings of the Islamic religion, the language used for the international trade, and the language used for the diplomatic relationships between the kingdoms and sultanates of South East Asia. In the later period Malay language was also used, for the spread of the Christian teachings by the Christian missionaries especially in the eastern part of Indonesia. The spread of the use of Jawi Script intensified in the Malacca Sultanate (1400-1511 A.D.), the Old Johor Sultanate (1511-1728 A.D.), the Aceh Sultanate (1550-1800 A.D.), the Johor-Riau Sultanate (1728-1824 A.D.), the Brunei Sultanate, and also in the kingdoms and sultanates of Palembang, Jambi, Banjarmasin, Sambas, Pontianak, Pattani, Champa, the Malay States of the Malay Peninsula, Sumatera, Borneo, Ternate and Tidore in the Moluccas Islands, Mempawah and Kota Waringin in Borneo, Langkat, Deli-Serdang, Panai, Aru, Siak Seri Inderapura, Tamiang, Minangkabau, Bengkulu, Kerinci in Sumatera, Senggora, Yala and Setul in Southern Thailand. It was also used in Makassar, Bone, in the Celebes Islands, and also by the Malays of Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and South Africa.

In the Port of Gujerat on the West Coast of the Indian sub-continent, Malay written in Jawi Script, was also used as a trade language. The eminent writer and ulama from Gujerat, India, Syekh Nuruddin al-Raniri learned the Malay Language with Jawi Script when he was still staying in Gujerat, before he went to stay in the Kingdom of Aceh Darussalam. During his tenure in Aceh he wrote many books on the teachings of Islam, about 'aqidah, fiqh, Islamic Law and the Islamic philosophy.

The Oldest Jawi Manuscript

At present there are about 16,000 Malay manuscripts written in Jawi Script kept and preserved in many libraries and museums around the world such as in London, Leiden, Singapore, Jakarta, Lisbon, Berlin, USA, Russia, Paris, Egypt, Sri Lanka, South Africa, and also in the Library of the University of Malaya, the National Archives of Malaysia, the National

Library of Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka of Malaysia and other institutions. Besides that there are many Malay manuscripts kept by many individuals in Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, Pattani, South Africa, in many Malay states of Malaysia and also in Indonesia.

Among the oldest Malay manuscripts are the two letters written in Malay with Jawi Script kept in a library in Lisbon, Portugal. The two letters were written by Sultan Abu Hayat of the Sultanate of Ternate, in the North of Moluccas Islands. The first letter was written in 1521, and the second letter was written in 1522. The content of the letters was to get assistance from the King of Portugal, to drive away the Spaniards who were always disrupting the trading activities carried out by the traders of the Sultanate of Ternate. Another old Malay manuscript is the *Kitab 'Aqa'id al-Nasafi* which was dated 1590 A.D. / 998 H. Other old Malay manuscripts written in Jawi are as follows; the *Hikayat Tutanameh* (1600 A.D.), *Surat Izin Berniaga* of the Sultan of Aceh given to Henry Middleton, an English Trader (1602 A.D.), *Surat Emas* (Golden Letter) *Sultan Iskandar Muda Makota Alam* of Aceh to King James I of England (1615 A.D.), *Hikayat Seri Rama* (1633 A.D.), and other hikayats.

The Malay Masterpieces

There are many Malay masterpieces written in Jawi Script during the classical Malay period such as *Hikayat Raja Pasai* and *Kitab Bahr al-Lahut* written by Abdullah Al-Arif. Both manuscripts were written between 12th to 14th Century A.D. Besides that there are other masterpieces written in Jawi such as *Hukum Kanun Melaka*, *Undang-undang Laut Melaka*, *Hikayat Amir Hamzah*, and *Hikayat Muhammad Ali Hanafiah*. The writers were anonymous.

During the Old Johore Kingdom there were several Malay masterpieces written in Jawi Script such as *Kitab Sulalatus-Salatin* or *Sejarah Melayu*, which was written by Tun Sri Lanang of Johor when he was in captive by the Sultan Iskandar Muda Makota Alam of Aceh, in 1613 A.D. *Hikayat Hang Tuah* and *Adat Raja-raja Melayu di Segala Negeri*. Then Bukhari of Johor or better known as Bukhari al-Jauhari or Al-Johori who wrote his masterpiece, *Kitab Taj al-Salatin*, when he was serving with the Sultan of Aceh.

During the Golden Era of the Kingdom of Aceh Darussalam there were many prominent scholars and writers who wrote many books and kitabs in the Malay language using the Jawi Script. Among them are as follows:

- a. Sheikh Hamzah al-Fansuri, who was a Sufi, born in Barus, Aceh. Among his masterpieces are as follows; *Sha'er Burung Pungguk*, *Sha'er Burung Pingai*, *Sha'er Perahu*, *Sha'er Dagang*, *Sha'er Sidang Faqir*, *Sharab al-'Ashiqin*, *Asrar al-'Arifin*, and others.
- b. Sheikh Shamsuddin al-Samatra'i or Shamsuddin Pasai, one of the disciples of Hamzah Fansuri, a Sufi ulama who followed the teachings of *Wahdat al-Wujud* or the *Martabat Tujuh*. Among his kitabs are as follows; *Sharah Ruba'i Hamzah Fansuri*, *Tanbih al-Tullab*, *Anwar al-Daqa'iq*, *Kitab Mir'at al-Mu'minin*, *Kitab Mir'at al-Iman*, *Kitab Al-'Arifin* and *Mir'at Al-Qulub*.
- c. Sheikh Nuruddin Al-Raniri, who was born in Rander, Gujerat, India but later on he served with the Sultan of Aceh. His masterpieces are as follows; *Kitab Sirat Al-Mustaqim*, the first Kitab Fiqh written in Malay using the Jawi Script. Besides that he also wrote other kitabs such as *Bustan al-Salatin*, *Durrat al-Fara'id*, *Asrar al-Insan*, *Akhbar al-Akhirat fi Ahwal al-Qiyamah*, *Jawahir al-Ulum*, and *Tibyan fi ma'rifat al-Adyan*.
- d. Sheikh Abdul Rauf al-Fansuri or better known as Abdul Rauf Singkel. He was the first Malay ulama who translated the Kitab Tafsir al-Qur'an in Malay language with Jawi Script. The title of his tafsir is *Tafsir Al-Qur'an al Baydawi*. Until the present day this *kitab tafsir* still being used in village mosques and musallas in Malaysia and also in other places in Brunei. He served with the Sultan of Aceh in the second half of the 17th Century A.D. Among other kitabs he wrote are as follows; *Mir'at al-Tullab*, *Kitab Umdat al-Muhtajin*, *Kifayat al-Muhtajin*, *Hujjat al-Balighah*, *Shams al-Ma'rifah* and others.

In the western part of the Borneo Island there were many Malay Kingdoms, and there were many ulama's who served with the sultans of those kingdoms. The most prominent ulama from this area is Sheikh Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari. He wrote his famous kitab *Sabil al-Muhtadin*, one of the biggest kitab on fiqh in Malay. He wrote more than 40 kitabs. Among other kitabs written by him are as follows; *Tuhfat al-Raghibin*, *Qaulu al-Mukhtasar*, *Kanzu al-Ma'rifah*, *Usul al-Din*, *Kitab Al-Nikah*, *Kitab al-Fara'idh*, *Fat al-Rahman*, *Bidayat al-Muhtadi*, *Bulugh al-Marram* and others.

There were many more Malay ulamas who wrote many kitabs in Malay with the Jawi Script, such as Syeikh Uthman bin Shihabuddin al-Funtiani of Pontianak, Sheikh Muhammad Yusuf al-Maqasari of Makassar, in the Celebes Island who wrote his Kitab *Safinat al-Najah*. He studied Islamic teachings in Mecca and Medina, and then he served with the Sultan of Banten in West Java. He was involved in many wars in Banten to fight against the Dutch Company. Later on he was captured by the Dutch Army and he was sent into exile in Sri Lanka, and later on to South Africa. He passed away in 1699 in Cape Town, South Africa.

In Pattani, Southern Thailand, there were many ulamas who wrote kitabs in Malay with the Jawi Script. Among the ulamas was Sheikh Daud bin Abdullah al-Fatani, who wrote at least 99 kitabs. Among his writings are as follows; *Kitab Furu' al-Masa'il*, *Sullam al-Muhtadi*, *Munyat al-Musaili*, *Minhaj al-Abidin*, *Kashf al-Ghummah*, *Ilmu Tasawuf*, *Al-Duruth al-Thamin*, *Tarikh Fatani*, *Sifat Dua Puluh*, *Tarjamah Bidayat al-Hidayah*, *Bughyat al-Tullab* and others. Other ulama's of Patani in the classical period were Sheikh Ahmad al-Fatani and Sheikh Ismail Daud al-Fatani.

In West Sumatra, Indonesia, there were many ulamas such as Sheikh Burhanuddin Ulakan, and then in the 19th and 20th Centuries A.D. there were modernist Muslim ulama's such as Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad, who published the well known journal the *Al-Munir* which followed the publication of *Al-Manar* in Egypt, Sheikh Muhammad Jamil Jambek, Sheikh Haji Rasul alias Abdul Karim Amirullah and Haji Abdul Malik Abdul Karim Amirullah or best known as Prof. Hamka who wrote more than 200 books, kitabs, pamphlets and articles in the Islamic journals and magazines.

The Use of Jawi Script in Letters Written by the Kings, Sultans, Governors and other Leaders in South East Asia

There are many Malay letters written in Jawi which were written or produced by the kings, sultans and other prominent figures of South East Asia and also European Governors and traders. We can check all these letters from the books written by Annabel Teh Gallop and Bernard Arps (1991), and Annabel Teh Gallop (1994). All those letters are kept in several libraries in the United Kingdom.

The Use of Jawi Script

Besides using Jawi Script to write letters to and from the kings and sultans of South East Asia and also the European Company officers, the Jawi Script was also used to write books on hikayat (such as *Hikayat Seri Rama*), religious books (such as *Sabil al-Muhtadin* and *Furu'al-Masa'il*), history books (such as *Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai* and *Sejarah Melayu*), books on government administration (such as *Taj al-Salatin* and *Bustan al-Salatin*), books on Qanunic Law (such as *Undang-undang Laut Melaka* and *Hukum Kanun Melaka*), books on medicine (such as *Mujarabat* and *Kitab Ilmi Tib*), the life story of the Prophets and the sahabats (such as *Qisas al-Anbia'* and *Hikayat Amir Hamzah*), books on astrology (such as *Bintang Dua Belas* and *Taj Al-Muluk*), books on handicraft (such as *Perahu Melayu*), books on animals (*Kitab Ilmu Gajah* and *Naskhah Burung Ketitir*), books on Panji Stories (such as *Panji Jayeng Kusuma*), books on precious stones (such as *Kitab Batu Permata*), books on Marriages (such as *Kitab Nikah*), books on sex (such as *Kitab Jima'*), books on the making and developing guns (such as *Kitab Peluru Petunang*), kitabs on *Fara'idh*, kitabs on *'Azimat*, and others.

Jawi Script Used by the Christian Missionaries.

Christian missionaries also used Malay language written in Jawi Script in order to spread the teachings of Christianity by translating the Bible into Malay Language i.e. as part of their propagation of the Christian teachings among the Malays. Among those who used Malay language written in Jawi were St. Francis Xavier, Claudius Thomsen, P.Keasberry, Shellabear and Leydekker.

Leydekker used Jawi in his translation of the Bible in Malay, entitled; *Elkitab Jaitu Perdjangjian Lama dan Perdjangjian Baharuw* (1748/1758). C.Thomsen published his Christian magazine in Malay. The magazine was entitled *Bustan Arifin* (1821) and then he published another Malay magazine *Cermin Mata* also in Jawi. A book of the Bible entitled *The Acts of the Apostle* was translated into Malay using the Jawi Script i.e. *Kisah Perbuatan Rasul-rasul*.

Jawi Script used by other languages of South East Asia.

There are many books written in Minangkabau Malay using the Jawi Script such as *Undang-undang Adat, Undang-undang Minangkabau, Tambo Adat, Adat Istiadat Minangkabau,* and *Kitab Kesimpanan Adat Minangkabau.*

In Javanese language there are also many religious books written in Jawi Script known as *tulisan Pegon* such as *Kitab Layang Anbia', Kitab Primbon, Kitab Mujarabat, Kitab Perukunan, Kitab Munjiat, Kitab Masa'il al-Ta'lim, Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Ibriz* (3 thick volumes), *Serat Menak* which has 3,000 pages and others.

Jawi Script was also used in other languages of South East Asia such as the Achinese language, Bugis-Makassar language, Palopo language, Bone, Talo, Goa, Kerinci, Rejang, Bengkulu, Pasemah, Lampung, Siak, Singkep, Lingga, Kutai, Banten, Pasundan and others.

Jawi Script in the Publication of newspapers and magazines.

The first magazine published in Malay was *Bustan Arifin* in 1821. It was published by the Christian Missionary, and then it was followed by another magazine the *Cermin Mata*, also published by the Christian Missionary.

The first newspaper published in Jawi was *Alamat Lanka Puri*, published in Colombo by Sri Lankan Malays in 1869, and then it was followed by the publication of another newspaper – *Wajah Selong*, also in Sri Lanka. The newspaper, the *Jawi Peranakan* was first published in Singapore in 1876, and after that there were other Malay Jawi newspapers published such as *Sekola Melayu* (1888), *Seri Perak* (1893), *Tanjong Penagri* (1894) and *Jajahan Melayu* (1896).

In the 20th Century there were many more Malay newspapers and magazines which were published in Jawi script such as *Al-Imam, Saudara, Utusan Melayu, Al-Ikhwan, Utusan Zaman, Pemasuh, Mastika* and others. There were also many Malay books published in Jawi such as *Hikayat Abdullah, Hikayat Pelayaran Abdullah ke Kelantan dan Terengganu, Hikayat*

Pelayaran Abdullah ke Judah, Tuhfat al-Nafis, Salasilah Melayu dan Bugis, Pengetahuan Bahasa and others.

Malay kitabs were also published and printed with modern technology in Jawi, not only in Malaya and Singapore but also in Egypt, Istanbul, Bombay, Bangkok, Jakarta, Cirebon, Surabaya and Mecca.

Malay reading books used in the Malay schools were also printed in Jawi such as *Julung Bacaan* and *Canai Bacaan*. There were also many Malay modern novels which were also printed in Jawi Script such as *Perang Sabil di Palestine, Geylang Serai Karam, Bilik 69, Korban Bilik 69, Janda, Empat Kali Haram* and *Ustazah*.

Conclusion.

From the lists of kitabs, books, magazines, newspapers, novels, pamphlets and others as mentioned above, it shows very clearly to us that Jawi Script had played a very prominent role in the spread of the Malay language, and also in the spread of the teachings of the Islamic religion in the South East Asian Region. Jawi was also used by other languages in South East Asia, such as Javanese, Acehnese, Buginese, Minangkabau and others languages. But after the coming of the Western colonial powers, the use of Jawi Script was curtailed. Since the Language Act of 1963 passed by Malaysian Parliament Malay language has to adopt the Roman letters, and in Bahasa Indonesia Latin letters has been used since 1928. Therefore, now the use of Jawi Script in Malay language has been limited very seriously.

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