

## The Contestation of the Malay Arabic and Roman Literature: Shifts in Culture, Literature, and Religion

**Eva Dewi<sup>1\*</sup>, Bermawy Munthe<sup>2</sup>, Arbi<sup>3</sup>, Afriza<sup>4</sup>**

Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim Pekanbaru Riau, Indonesia<sup>1,3,4</sup>

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, Indonesia<sup>2</sup>

[evadewi@uin-suska.ac.id](mailto:evadewi@uin-suska.ac.id)<sup>1\*</sup>, [bermawymunthe@yahoo.com](mailto:bermawymunthe@yahoo.com)<sup>2</sup>

[arbiyasin@uin-suska.ac.id](mailto:arbiyasin@uin-suska.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>, [afriza@uin-suska.ac.id](mailto:afriza@uin-suska.ac.id)<sup>4</sup>

---

### Cite this article:

Dewi, E., Munthe, B., Arbi, A., & Afriza, A. (2023). The Contestation of the Malay Arabic and Roman Literature: Shifts in Culture, Literature, and Religion. *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab*, 7(1), 1-14. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.29240/jba.v7i1.5654>

---

Received: 04-11-2022

Revised: 07-02-2023

Accepted: 26-04-2023

---

### Abstract

This study aimed to analyze and explicate the influence of the advent of Latin script (Roman script) on the progress of Malay-Arabic script culture, language, and religion in the archipelago. The arrival of Islam had a major influence on the language, religion, and culture of the archipelago through a script, known as the Malay Arabic script. In the archipelagic history, the reconstruction of local culture through an Arabic-Malay script has affected the growth and progress of civilization. The use of the Malay-Arabic script around the 13th century in the writing tradition in schools and Islamic boarding schools as a medium made it easier to read the Qur'an, to study Arabic grammar, and to learn various aspects of other scientific fields. After that, the situation changed due to the emergence of the Romance script in the 15th century, which was brought by Europeans to the Malay world or the Archipelago. Based on the type of qualitative research using a historical approach, it showed that there was a contestation of the Arabic-Malay script with the emergence of the Romance script in Indonesia. This could be seen from the following: 1) The position of the Arabic-Malay script, which had been popular in society and was entrenched in formal and normal institutions, had been increasingly lost due to the appearance of the Roman script. 2) It was difficult to find references related to religious, social, cultural, and political sciences written in the Arabic-Malay script. 3) The transition from using the

Arabic-Malay script to the Roman script also had a religious mission, namely the eradication of Islamic symbols marked by many generations who did not understand the Arabic-Malay script as a medium to make it easier to read the Qur'an and understand religion. Based on this data, it is demonstrated that the study of Arabic-Malay script in today's society is decreasing, and the longer the majesty of the Arabic-Malay script as the Lingua Franca in archipelago civilization can be forgotten if it is not preserved and implemented in formal and non-formal education in Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Malay Arabic Script; Romance Script; culture; literature; religion

## Introduction

Culture as cultural heritage or cultural or ethnic heritage, according to Geertz, is a pattern or system of transmitted and inherited conceptions in symbolic forms used by humans to communicate, preserve, and develop knowledge, attitudes, and historical values of life.<sup>1</sup> Like biology, culture goes through processes. This means that culture develops, changes, or even disappears. Indonesian cultural life, particularly in the archipelago, is evident in regional cultures.<sup>2</sup>

Intercultural relations lead to assimilation and acculturation. Acculturation is a process of cultural and psychological change resulting from the meeting of two or more cultures. Closely related to acculturation is an adaptation between individuals or groups socio-culturally. Acculturation includes affective, attitude, and cognitive aspects.<sup>3</sup> Mulyana explained that acculturation can bring about cultural changes caused by the contact of cultural groups to accept new cultural patterns and characteristics of indigenous peoples in minority groups, such as language, values, clothing, and food.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, Nusantara culture is in the form of script. Apart from being a sound symbol to convey a message, it is realized that the shape and appearance of the script have various emotions that imply character. Each symbol represents a specific sound. These characters gain the power to imply various

---

<sup>1</sup>Rasid Yunus, 'Transformasi Nilai-Nilai Budaya Lokal Sebagai Upaya Pembangunan Karakter Bangsa', *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan*, 13.1 (2013), 5.

<sup>2</sup>Suhartono W Pranoto, 'Budaya Daerah Dalam Era Desentralisasi', *Humaniora*, 17.3 (2005), 236–242.

<sup>3</sup>David L. Sam and John W. Berry, 'Acculturation: When Individuals and Groups of Different Cultural Backgrounds Meet', *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5.4 (2010), 472–481 <<https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610373075>>.

<sup>4</sup>Khomsahrial Romli, 'Akulturasi Dan Asimilasi Dalam Konteks Interaksi Antar Etnik', *Ijtima'iyya*, 8.1 (2015), 1–13.

feelings (atmosphere and connotations) for the sake of visual design according to the purpose of communication in advertisements, internet sites, logotypes, branding/identity, etc. in visual communication design works.<sup>5</sup>

The way people write in the archipelago can change and be influenced by other cultures that move into the area. These influences are divided into three stages, namely: 1) the arrival of the Indians in the 1H in the archipelago, causing the use of the Pallawa script and the Sanskrit language in Sumatra, Java, Bali, and Sulawesi. 2) The arrival of the Arabs around 12 to 14 H in the archipelago, introduced Arabic script to spread Islam and make it easier to read the Qur'an. This also led to the emergence of the Malay Arabic script, or in Java, it is called the Jawi or Pegon script. The difference is that the Malay Arabic script uses Malay, while the Jawi or Pegon script uses Javanese and Sundanese.<sup>6</sup> 3) The arrival of European nations around the 15th century AD, led to the use of Latin alphabets to read and write.<sup>7</sup>

Many researchers have studied scripts, including Islah Gusmian, who explored the relationship between language and the Tafsir Al-Qur'an script in Indonesia. Kees Versteegh, in his article "Linguistic Contacts between Arabic and Other Languages", discussed that the contact between Arabic and other languages causes changes in the script and changes in phonological, morphological, and syntactic aspects.<sup>8</sup> Naomi Haswanto,<sup>9</sup> discusses the idea of creating a Latin typeface (font) design from various regional scripts and the visual culture of the archipelago. Ahmad Baidowi, studied the phenomenon of using the Pégon script in the tradition of writing Tafsir in boarding school (Pesantren) Java as a medium to facilitate understanding the Qur'an and studying nahwu and grammar in Arabic.<sup>10</sup> William Marsden has researched the Malay Arabic script, including the Malay spelling system, nouns, verbs, adjectives, interjections, rhymes, poetry, and Malay dialects.<sup>11</sup> Tatiana Denisova in her article Malay Islamic Historiography (XIII-XIX), Regarding Finance and

---

<sup>5</sup>Naomi Haswanto, 'Aksara Daerah Dan Budaya Visual Nusantara Sebagai Gagasan Perancangan TYPEFACE (Font) Latin', *Wimba, Jurnal Komunikasi Visual*, 1.2 (2009), 25–31.

<sup>6</sup>Uka Tjandrasasmita, *Arkeologi Islam Nusantara* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2009), 292.

<sup>7</sup>Haswanto,...25-31.

<sup>8</sup>Kees Versteegh, 'Linguistic Contacts between Arabic and Other Languages', *Arabica*, T. 48, Fasc. 4, *Linguistique Arabe: Sociolinguistique et Histoire de La Langue*, 4 (2001), 470–508 <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4057668>>.

<sup>9</sup>Haswanto,...25-31.

<sup>10</sup>Ahmad Baidowi, 'Fenomena Aksara Pégon Dalam Tradisi Penulisan Tafsir Pesantren (Pégon Script Phenomena In The Tradition Of Pesantren's Qur'anic Commentaries Writing)', *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis*, 21.2 (2020), 469–90.

<sup>11</sup>William Marsden, *A Grammar of the Malayan Language* (London: University Of Michigan, 1812).

Taxes in the Malay World, describes the use of the Malay Arabic script in hikayats and Malay scripts in the Malay world.<sup>12</sup>

Based on research that has been conducted by previous researchers discussing the grammatical grammar of the Arabic-Malay script, cultural aspects, and the use of the Malay-Arabic script in texts. These studies have not touched on the study of Malay Arabic script as the language of identity and politics. In contrast to this study, this research aims to look at the use of script in the archipelago according to the development of language, politics, and religion. This study analyzes the development of two very important scripts in the development and civilization of Indonesia, namely the Malay Arabic script, which was marginalized due to the existence of the Latin script, and which had a major influence on the development of culture, language, and religion in Indonesia.

This research is qualitative. It seeks meaning, the understanding of phenomena, events, or human life directly or indirectly in the contextual and comprehensive environment studied.<sup>13</sup> The approach used in this study is a historical approach aimed at systematically and accurately reconstructing objects of events that occurred in the past by using normative and interpretive approaches.<sup>14</sup> Based on this approach, this study attempts to analyze and explain the impact of the emergence of Latin script (Roman script) on the development of Malay Arabic script culture, language, and archipelago religion.

## **Result and Discussion**

### 1. Malay Arabic script in civilization

When Islam came to the Malay area in the 9th century AD, it came at the same time as the great Arabic language, which became the language of religion, worship, history, and science. After a while, the Arabic language was used in the Malay Islamic kingdoms, which were founded in the early 11th century. Scholars and the rest of the people in the country are learning to read, write, listen to, and speak Arabic so that it becomes the main language for education. Also, the language of the Qur'an has sprung up all over the country and has given rise to writings related to Arabic that shape the character of Malay

---

<sup>12</sup>Tatiana Denisova, 'Malay Islamic Historiography (ca. XIII-XIX) Regarding Finance and Taxes in the Malay World', *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 40.1 (2012), 7–33 <<https://doi.org/10.1163/156853112X632593>>.

<sup>13</sup>A. Muri Yusuf, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Dan Penelitian Gabungan*, ke-6 (Jakarta: Kencana, 2021), 328.

<sup>14</sup>Yusuf, 346.

civilization. This necessitated the need for an Arabic-Malay dictionary in education and teaching.<sup>15</sup>

The relationship between Arabic and the Qur'an is very close and influences each other (causality). The Al-Qur'an<sup>16</sup> was given to people in Arabic, which is a beautiful and useful language. Socio-culturally, the Al-Qur'an raises the status of Arabic in six ways,<sup>17</sup> such as by keeping linguistic patterns, such as *al-aswat*, *al-mufrodāt*, *al-tarkib*, and *al-dilalah*, as the basis for determining language rules.<sup>18</sup>

The Malay Arabic script is a mix of Arabic letters and the Malay language. It was made when Islam was brought to the archipelago in the 12th century AD. The Malay Arabic script is not only used by Malay people, but also by people from other countries, especially from Europe. Malay Arabic writing between these nations includes trade agreements, correspondence between Malay kings and European governments, and so on.<sup>19</sup>

The Malay language is said to be a *lingua franca*, which is applied to the Malay Arabic script as a medium of writing among the kingdoms, which causes communication and information to be very open and quite high.<sup>20</sup> In addition, Malay Arabs are not only dominated by Islam. Many medicinal and food products from Europe and China also use Malay Arabic in their product packaging. It was as if this character had a halal label at that time.<sup>21</sup>

The obligation of *qira'at* Al-Qur'an for Muslims greatly affects the spread of the Malay script and language in the archipelago. In the past, when a person could read the Qur'an, it was certain that he could also read the Malay Arabic

---

<sup>15</sup>Hanafi Daulah, 'Nahwu Iṣlāh Al-Ta'rīfi Bimadākhili Al-Mu'ājimi Al-;Arābiyyati Al-Malāyuwiyati Al-Ṣanāiyati Li Ṭolabati Fi Al-Dirāṣāti Al-'Arabiyyati Wa Al-Islāmiyyati', *Majallah Al-Dirāsati Wa Al-Adabiyyati* (Universitas Islam Internasional Malaysia, 2015), 99.

<sup>16</sup>Itsnaini Muslimati Alwi, 'Ad'iyah Al-Anbiya' Fi Al-Qur'an Al-Karim (Dirasah Tahliliyah Ma'aniyah)', *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab*, 3.2 (2019), 179 <<https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v3i2.797>>.

<sup>17</sup>Noza Aflisia and others, 'Asar Al-Qur'an Al-Karim Fi Al-Lughah Al-Arabiyyah Wa Al-Syīr Wa Al-Natsar: Dirasah Al-Adabi Al-Arabi Fi Ashr Shodr Al-Islam', 6.2 (2022), 484.

<sup>18</sup>Rahadian Kurniawan, Musda Asmara, and H Hardivizon, 'Arabic Language and the Concept of I'jaz Al-Qur'an (Critics to Louwis 'Awad's Thoughts/Bahasa Arab Dan Konsep I'jaz Al-Qur'an (Kritik Pemikiran Louwis 'Awad)', *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab*, 5.1 (2021), 161–71 <<https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v5i1.2622>>. Abd Aziz and Saihu Saihu, 'Interpretasi Humanistik Kebahasaan: Upaya Kontekstualisasi Kaidah Bahasa Arab', *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab*, 3.2 (2019), 299–312 <<https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v3i2.1000>>.

<sup>19</sup>Yahya Anak Rainin and Dadang Firdaus, *Sukatan Gahara* (Pekanbaru: Yayasan Gahara Muda Sehati, 2016).

<sup>20</sup>Ellya Roza, *Naskah Melayu* (Pekanbaru: Yayasan Pusaka Riau, 2011).

<sup>21</sup>Rainin and Firdaus.

script. And when you have mastered Arabic and are fluent in it, you will automatically be able to write Malay Arabic script well.<sup>22</sup>

## 2. The Influence of Roman Script in the Archipelago

The development of literacy in Indonesia is connected to the impact of foreign nations that came to the archipelago. The history of writing or written language scripts contains cuneiform letters, namely: Babylonian letters, Assyrian letters, and Old Persian letters; Pallawa, the Kawi character used in Sanskrit; Arabic letters, Kanji characters in Japanese and Chinese, premodern Jawi letters, modern Javanese, modern Balinese; Hanacaraka script from Lampung, Rencong, Karo Batak, and Bugis-Makassar; and Roman or Latin script.<sup>23</sup>

When Indians moved to the archipelago in the first century AD, they had an effect on how Sanskrit and the Pallava script were made. History records that before the arrival of the Arabic script, the Malay Arabic script, and the Latin script, the writing commonly used in the Southeast Asian region (except in Vietnam and among some of the South Chinese population) was the Pallava script (writing), which originated in India. This indicates that the influence of Hindu-Buddhist elements from India who came and settled in the archipelago carried out their lives by marrying local residents, which indirectly resulted in the acculturation of Indian and Nusantara culture, so that it cannot be denied, the fact explains that the Sanskrit vocabulary shows the influence of India has contributed to enriching the Malay, Javanese, Sundanese, and Balinese languages.

Historical records show that the Pallava or post-Pallava script lasted longer in the Sumatran region and the Malay Peninsula from the II to VIII centuries AD, especially during the Sri Wijaya period, based on inscriptions. In fact, in the 7th century AD, different kinds of script developed in every part of Mainland Southeast Asia and the archipelago. These scripts had personalities and styles of characters that fit the people of Sumatra and Java, which came from the creativity of local people (local genius).<sup>24</sup>

The second influence was Indonesia, which politically, ideologically, and religiously is not an Islamic state. But the fact that there are Muslims in Indonesia is shown by their eagerness to study Islamic sciences. This is because

---

<sup>22</sup> Al Azhar, *Pendidikan Budaya Melayu Riau* (Pekanbaru: Lembaga Adat Melayu Riau, 2018, 73).

<sup>23</sup> Akhmad Yazidi, 'Pemakaian Aksara Dalam Penulisan Bahasa Melayu Hingga Bahasa Indonesia (The Usage OF Letters On Malay To Indonesian Language Writing)', *Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra UNLAM Banjarmasin*, 3.1 (2013), 47–59.

<sup>24</sup> Ahmad Darmawi, *Bahasa dan Aksara Melayu Nusantara*, (Pekanbaru: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Riau, 2010), 151-154.

Islamic intellectuals came from the Middle East. Thus, Arabic,<sup>25</sup> its language, and culture are very familiar to Muslim communities since the arrival and development of Islam in Indonesia.<sup>26</sup> The Arabs, who came to Indonesia around the 12th and 14th centuries AD, introduced Arabic script to facilitate reading the Qur'an and the spread of Islam in the archipelago. This Arabic script is also used in writing the Malay language, which is known as the Malay Arabic script or Arabic Pegon.

Several studies have been done to try to figure out how many Arabic words are used in Malay. Orientalists started these efforts as early as the 18th century, but they disagreed about Arabic borrowed from Malay, Beg Beg reports the results of this study, in which he mentions that Howison in 1801 AD extracted 150 Arabic words from Malay, and Shellabear (1902 AD), became 285 words, in 1910 AD by Swettanham (1910 AD) became 219 words, and Winsteadt (1921 AD), the number of Arabic absorptions in Malay reached 1001 words, and Wilkinson (1961 AD) wrote a dictionary in which he referred to 892 Malay words of Arabic origin, later Winsteadt (1964 AD) compiled another Dictionary, in which he announced the same result as Wilkinson, having 892 words.<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, the third influence was the entry of Europeans into the archipelago around the 15th century AD, which led to the development of the Roman script or Latin alphabet.<sup>28</sup> Also known as Romanization.<sup>29</sup> Is the use of the script of the Latin alphabet to represent languages written in non-Roman scripts, such as Japanese, Chinese, or Arabic? This includes transliteration and various kinds of transcription.<sup>30</sup> The Latin script was the first script used by the Romans to write Latin around the 7th century BC. They learned to write from the Etruscans. While the Etruscans learned from the Greeks. The Etruscan script is an adaptation of the Greek alphabet.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup>Izzuddin bin Halimah, 'Effort of the Linguistic Assemblies in the Arab World in the Service and Development of The Arabic Language', *Majalah Al-Alamah*, 8.4 (2019), 166–78.

<sup>26</sup>Hasnil Oktavera, 'Arab Spring and Existence of Arabic Learning in the Multicultural Society of North Sulawesi', 6.2 (2022), 633–50.

<sup>27</sup>Majadi haji Ibrahim, 'Taṭawwaru Alfāzi Al-Ārabiyyati Al-Mutarriḍoti Fī Al-Malāyūwiyyati Wa Ṣirā'Uḥā', in *Al-Lughah Al-'Arabiyyah Fi Malayziya* (Riyad-Saudi Arabia: Markaz 'Abdullah Bin 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Duali Likhidmati al-Lughah al-'Arabiyyah, 2017), p. 51-52.

<sup>28</sup>Haswanto, 25-31.

<sup>29</sup>Bashir Abdulrahcem and Kazeem Adekunle Adegoke, 'Re-Thinking Romanization of Arabic-Islamic Script', *TARBIYA: Journal of Education in Muslim Society*, 4.1 (2017), 22–31 <[http://www.cjk.org/cjk/arabic/cars/cars\\_sum.pdf](http://www.cjk.org/cjk/arabic/cars/cars_sum.pdf)>.

<sup>30</sup>J. Halpern, 'CJKI Arabic Romanization System', 2010, 1–6 <[http://www.cjk.org/cjk/arabic/cars/cars\\_sum.pdf](http://www.cjk.org/cjk/arabic/cars/cars_sum.pdf)>.

<sup>31</sup>Ade Darmawi, *Bahasa Dan Aksara Melayu Nusantara* (Pekanbaru: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Riau, 2010), 219.

After the arrival of Europeans, especially the Dutch with a trade mission and colonialism<sup>32</sup> as well as for political and pragmatic reasons, on the ideas of Ch. A. van Ophuysen, a Dutch linguist, applied Latin script was applied to Malay starting in 1901. A characteristic of van Ophuysen's spelling is the use of oe for u, dj for j, tj for c, nj for ny, sj for sy, ng, the use of two dots (..) above the i suffix, giving a line (-) above e as a differentiator between two phonemes in the same symbol (for example in their word), the use of (') as a sign of hamzah and 'ain, and the number 2 for repetition.<sup>33</sup>

The Latin script was originally used in texts of treaties between governments and local rulers. Furthermore, the use of Latin script is becoming increasingly widespread in newspapers and other print media in the archipelago. In addition, the Latin script is used by the Indonesian people in communication. At this time, the Latin alphabet is the most widely used alphabet in the world to write various languages, including Indonesian, making it difficult for regional scripts to develop.<sup>34</sup>

### 3. The influence of script on culture, language, literature, and religion

Culture<sup>35</sup> is part of the assimilation and acculturation of the various cultures of the people who live in the country. Malay culture is a culture that has been passed down from generation to generation and has thrived and become thick in Riau. Malay does not only mean self-identity but is also a way of life for Malays, meaning the construction of a fundamental view of God, man, and cosmology (the universe).

The depth of understanding of culture, language, literature, and regional script can be achieved if we can see it from the perspective of the culture, language, literature, and regional script itself. Based on its definition, culture is a pattern of beliefs, attitudes, and behavior learned by a nation and then passed on to the next generation. There are many ways that different ethnic groups talk about their beliefs, attitudes, and actions that can't be said in Indonesian or other foreign languages. The local language of the archipelago is the only way to

---

<sup>32</sup>Hafiz Zakariya and Wiwin Oktasari, 'Print Culture in the Sultanate of Riau-Lingga during the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', *Asian Research Journal of Arts & Social Sciences*, 9.4 (2019), 1–9 <<https://doi.org/10.9734/arjass/2019/v9i430133>>.

<sup>33</sup>Yazidi, 55.

<sup>34</sup>Haswanto, 25-31.

<sup>35</sup>Culture comes from the Sanskrit "budhayah" which is the plural form of the word "buddhi" which means mind or reason. Culture has several systems which include tools and equipment for life, livelihood, society, science, religion, art and language. Hebbing and Glick in Ellya Roza, say that there are 2 cultures, namely material culture, which is material objects produced by humans. Meanwhile, non-material objects are norms, values, beliefs, beliefs and language. Taylor defines culture as a way of life of a community or group. Read: Roza..., 3.



understand and talk about the philosophical values that are part of art and culture, like models of clothing, food, medicine, and beauty needs.<sup>36</sup>

The European countries wanted to take Constantinople back from Turkey, so Kamal Pasha Atatürk led the Turkish Revolution of 1922–1924. However, this movement led to things that smelled like SARA. Everything that smells of Arabic (as a symbol of Islam) is removed. Turkish Arabic script is replaced with Latin letters. Including the Azan which is almost sung in Turkish.

This loss of Islamic symbols also had an effect on the Language Congress in Singapore and Medan in the 1950s, where it was decided that Latin writing would become the national writing of Malay. Then, the Malaysian Language and Library Council (DBP) was set up. This group was the first to use the term. This loss of Islamic symbols also had an effect on the Language Congress in Singapore and Medan in the 1950s, where it was decided that Latin writing would become the national writing of Malay.

Starting in the 1960s, Arab Malays were completely marginalized. Everyone is required to be able to read Latin. All textbooks at school are written in Latin letters. In addition, in the 1970s, the existence of Arab Malays nationally seemed to be "colonized" by efforts to eradicate illiteracy. Older people are considered illiterate if they cannot read and write Latin letters, even though they can write and read Arabic and Malay scripts. As a result, many Malay generations born in the 1970s are illiterate in Arabic-Malay, unable to even read the Qur'an.<sup>37</sup>

Due to the pressure of colonialism and Christian missionaries in the 19th century AD, Malay Arabic script started to be replaced by Latin script. However, it did not cause a massive religious conversion from Islam to Christianity. In fact, Islam is increasingly consolidated by carrying out resistance, even though the Jawi script (Arabic Malay) is marginalized.<sup>38</sup> At first, the teaching of religion, Arabic, Islamic civilization, and world civilization began in the Malay world through books written in Arabic Malay (Jawi script) and carried out at learning and da'wah markers, in the form of Pondok, Surau, and Balai. The Sanskrit writings were replaced with Malay Arabic scripts. After Western influence entered the Malay world, Malay Arabic script was replaced with Roman writing.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup>Abdul Wahab, Masa Depan Bahasa, Sastra dan Aksara Daerah, dalam Risalah Kongres Bahasa Indonesia VIII, "*Pemberdayaan Bahasa Indonesia Memperkukub Budaya Bangsa dalam Era Globalisasi?*", (Jakarta: Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa Kemendikbud, 2011), 161-162.

<sup>37</sup>Rainin and Firdaus..5.

<sup>38</sup>Ahmad Darmawi, *Bahasa Dan Aksara Melayu Nusantara* (Pekanbaru: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Riau, 2010), 195.

<sup>39</sup>Abdul Ghoni Ya'qub Fathoni, 'Musahamat Ulama Jawa Fiy Isro' Al-Turats Al-Malayuwi Al-Ilmi', *Majalah Al-Islam Fiy Asia*, 12.2 (2015), 32.

In fact, the reason for trying to use the Latin script was related to the politics of language. The goal was to make it easier for the colonial government to communicate with the native people. So, in 1818, it was decided that one of the things the government of the Belanda Indies had to do was to figure out how to teach the European people Malay, Javanese, and other languages.<sup>40</sup>

During colonialism, Islam was seen as a form of resistance, and the Malay Arabic script was seen as a part of the Muslim community's history and culture. So, at that time, colonialism tended to downplay anything that had to do with Islam. This included the effect of using the Arabic-Malay script. They transliterated books, letters, and newspapers in Arabic and Malay script into Latin script, including Malay scripts such as Hangtuhah and History of Melayu.<sup>41</sup>

Because of Latinization, most Malays born before the 1970s could read the Qur'an written in Arabic script, but many of them could not read Latin script. However, when the Latin script became the official script in the fields of government administration and formal education in the archipelago and abolished the Arabic-Malay script, there was a big and very sad change because many Malays who were actually Muslims were unable to read the Qur'an and Hadith correctly.

British colonization tried to spread English to Malay countries, and one of the most important things that had a big effect on Malay was the introduction of a way to write in Latin script. This greatly affects the writing system of the Arabic-Malay (Jawi) script, which has an Islamic identity for the Malay language.

In fact, the aim of the colonists at first was to write Malay in Latin script for the purpose of trade and the spread of Christianity. But after they occupied the lands of the Malay Archipelago, they changed their aim to spread English and Dutch. In fact, the first Dutch to write Malay in Latin letters was carried out by the Dutch sailor, Cornelis de Houtman, in 1598 AD. He prepared a list of Malay words that he wrote in Latin script in various regions.<sup>42</sup>

Since the development of the Latin writing system in offices and schools in the Malay world, Arabic writing has come under strong competition from Latin script writing. Latin script is considered a symbol of intelligence. As stated in the annual report on education in 1904, which looked at the character of Europeans as marked by intelligence. While Arabic script is the opposite symbol. Until then, Latin letters were more suitable for the Malay mind.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup>Darmawi..., 224.

<sup>41</sup>Darmawi..., 225.

<sup>42</sup>Adli bin Ya'qub, 'Aṣaru Al-Turāṣ Al-'Arabi Wa Al-Ghorbī Fī Al-Adabi Al-Malāyūwī', *Majallah Al-Dirasāt Al-Lughawī Wa Al-Adabiyah*, 2.11 (2019), 256.

<sup>43</sup>Ya'qub, ...257.

## Conclusion

The development of writing in the archipelago will have an effect on how culture and religion change over time. Initially, the Malay Arabic script was used as a lingua franca in Islamic civilization and Malay civilization, used for teaching and learning, and da'wah was carried out in Islamic boarding schools, mosques, and learning centers. The Malay Arabic script is also used in international trade and diplomatic relations. Furthermore, the politics of the development of the Roman script did not only bring about changes in the linguistic aspect, but it also changed the system of cultural development and the Islamic religion in Indonesian society.

The results of this study contribute to linguistic research showing that language written in the script is not only a symbol, culture and strengthening the identity of a nation, but that the existence of language written in the script is also a political language that can change social, cultural, political, and religious systems in a society. The Roman script, which is used as the Indonesian language script, should be accompanied by the progress of the Arabic-Malay script in this archipelago, by implementing it in the formal and non-formal fields, because the Arabic-Malay script has greatly contributed to the development and progress of the Nusantara civilization at the beginning of its history.

## References

- Abdul Ghoni Ya'qub Fathoni, 'Musahamat Ulama Jawa Fiy Isro' Al-Turats Al-Malayuwi Al-Ilmi', *Majalah Al-Islam Fiy Asia*, 12.2 (2015), 32
- Abdulraheem, Bashir, and Kazeem Adekunle Adegoke, 'Re-Thinking Romanization of Arabic-Islamic Script', *TARBIYA: Journal of Education in Muslim Society*, 4.1 (2017), 22–31  
<[http://www.cjk.org/cjk/arabic/cars/cars\\_sum.pdf](http://www.cjk.org/cjk/arabic/cars/cars_sum.pdf)>
- Ade Darmawi, *Bahasa Dan Aksara Melayu Nusantara* (Pekanbaru: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Riau, 2010)
- Aflisia, Noza, Badruzzaman M Yunus, Izzuddin Musthafa, Yusuf Ali, Shaleh Atho, Universitas Islam, and others, 'Asar Al-Qur'an Al-Karim Fi Al-Lughah Al-Arabiyah Wa Al-Syi'ir Wa Al-Natsar: Dirasah Al-Adabi Al-Arabi Fi Ashr Shodr Al-Islam', 6.2 (2022), 483–98
- Ahmad Baidowi, 'Fenomena Aksara Pégon Dalam Tradisi Penulisan Tafsir Pesantren (Pégon Script Phenomena In The Tradition Of Pesantren's Qur'anic Commentaries Writing)', *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Hadis*, 21.2 (2020), 469–90
- Alwi, Itsnaini Muslimati, 'Ad'iyah Al-Anbiyah' Fi Al-Qur'an Al-Karim (Dirasah

Tahliliyah Ma'aniyah)', *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab*, 3.2 (2019), 179  
<<https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v3i2.797>>

Al Azhar, *Pendidikan Budaya Melayu Riau* (Pekanbaru: Lembaga Adat Melayu Riau, 2018)

Aziz, Abd, and Saihu Saihu, 'Interpretasi Humanistik Kebahasaan: Upaya Kontekstualisasi Kaidah Bahasa Arab', *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab*, 3.2 (2019), 299–312 <<https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v3i2.1000>>

Darmawi, Ahmad, *Bahasa Dan Aksara Melayu Nusantara* (Pekanbaru: Dinas Pendidikan Provinsi Riau, 2010)

Daulah, Hanafi, 'Nahwu Iṣlāh Al-Ta'rifi Bimadākhili Al-Mu'ājimi Al-Ārābiyyati Al-Malāyuwiyyati Al-Šanāiyyati Li Ṭolabati Fī Al-Dirāšāti Al-Ārabiyyati Wa Al-Islāmiyyati', *Majallah Al-Dirāsati Wa Al-Adabiyyati* (Universitas Islam Internasional Malaysia, 2015), p. 99

Denisova, Tatiana, 'Malay Islamic Historiography (ca. XIII-XIX) Regarding Finance and Taxes in the Malay World', *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 40.1 (2012), 7–33 <<https://doi.org/10.1163/156853112X632593>>

Halimah, Izzuddin bin, 'Effort of the Linguistic Assemblies in the Arab World in the Service and Development of The Arabic Language', *Majalah Al-Alamab*, 8.4 (2019), 166–78

Halpern, J, 'CJKI Arabic Romanization System', 2010, 1–6  
<[http://www.cjk.org/cjk/arabic/cars/cars\\_sum.pdf](http://www.cjk.org/cjk/arabic/cars/cars_sum.pdf)>

Haswanto, Naomi, 'Aksara Daerah Dan Budaya Visual Nusantara Sebagai Gagasan Perancangan TYPEFACE (Font) Latin', *Wimba, Jurnal Komunikasi Visual*, 1.2 (2009), 25–31

Ibrahim, Majadi haji, 'Taṭowwaru Alfāzi Al-Ārabiyyati Al-Mutarrīdoti Fī Al-Malāyuwiyyati Wa Širā'Uhā', in *Al-Lughah Al-'Arabiyah Fi Malayzja* (Riyad-Saudi Arabia: Markaz 'Abdullah Bin 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Dualī Likhidmati al-Lughah al-Ārabiyyah, 2017), p. 51

Kees Versteegh, 'Linguistic Contacts between Arabic and Other Languages', *Arabica*, T. 48, Fasc. 4, *Linguistique Arabe: Sociolinguistique et Histoire de La Langue*, 4 (2001), 470–508 <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4057668>>

Kurniawan, Rahadian, Musda Asmara, and H Hardivizon, 'Arabic Language and the Concept of I'jaz Al-Qur'an (Critics to Louwis 'Awad's Thoughts/Bahasa Arab Dan Konsep I'jaz Al-Qur'an (Kritik Pemikiran Louwis 'Awad)', *Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab*, 5.1 (2021), 161–71  
<<https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v5i1.2622>>

Marsden, William, *A Grammar of the Malayan Language* (London: University Of

- Michigan, 1812)
- Oktavera, Hasnil, 'Arab Spring and Existence of Arabic Learning in the Multicultural Society of North Sulawesi', 6.2 (2022), 633–50
- Pranoto, Suhartono W, 'Budaya Daerah Dalam Era Desentralisasi', *Humaniora*, 17.3 (2005), 236–42
- Rainin, Yahya Anak, and Dadang Firdaus, *Sukatan Gahara* (Pekanbaru: Yayasan Gahara Muda Sehati, 2016)
- Rasid Yunus, 'Transformasi Nilai-Nilai Budaya Lokal Sebagai Upaya Pembangunan Karakter Bangsa', *Jurnal Peneliti Pendidikan*, 13.1 (2013), 5
- Romli, Khomsahrial, 'Akulturasi Dan Asimilasi Dalam Konteks Interaksi Antar Etnik', *Ijtima'yya*, 8.1 (2015), 1–13
- Roza, Ellya, *Naskah Melayu* (Pekanbaru: Yayasan Pusaka Riau, 2011)
- Sam, David L., and John W. Berry, 'Acculturation: When Individuals and Groups of Different Cultural Backgrounds Meet', *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5.4 (2010), 472–81 <<https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691610373075>>
- Tjandrasasmita, Uka, *Arkeologi Islam Nusantara* (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2009)
- Ya'qub, 'Adli bin, 'Ašaru Al-Turās Al-‘Arabi Wa Al-Ghorbī Fī Al-Adabi Al-Malāyūwī', *Majallah Al-Dirāsāt Al-Lughawī Wa Al-Adabiyah*, 2.11 (2019), 254–72
- Yazidi, Akhmad, 'Pemakaian Aksara Dalam Penulisan Bahasa Melayu Hingga Bahasa Indonesia (The Usage OF Letters On Malay To Indonesian Language Writing)', *Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra UNLAM Banjarmasin*, 3.1 (2013), 47–59
- Yusuf, A. Muri, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Dan Penelitian Gabungan*, ke-6 (Jakarta: Kencana, 2021)
- Zakariya, Hafiz, and Wiwin Oktasari, 'Print Culture in the Sultanate of Riau-Lingga during the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries', *Asian Research Journal of Arts & Social Sciences*, 9.4 (2019), 1–9 <<https://doi.org/10.9734/arjass/2019/v9i430133>>

**This page belongs to the Arabiyatuna: Jurnal Bahasa Arab**