



Essay

Manuscript, Philology, and Indonesian Islam

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The manuscript serves as a window into a nation's civilisation. Manuscripts, also known as "*Naskah Kuno*" or "*Naskah Klasik*" in the Malay world, have evolved into important pieces of cultural history that need to be conserved. The purpose of the manuscript is to learn about and comprehend the social conditions of the past and to investigate how culture and science are absorbed, recorded, and repeated. Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) said that science and civilization are products of a variety of factors, including a) the capacity of governments, social structure, and political authority; b) vocations and livelihood opportunities; and c) the development of science and technology.¹

Reproducing the scientific manuscript served to manufacture and connect the process of science creation and its relevance to civilisation. In order to recreate and analyze the social, cultural, and political settings in which they were created and utilized, manuscripts provide evidence. Overall, manuscripts may be seen of as educational practices' mediators since they help structure, organize, and have an impact on how information is acquired, disseminated, and transmitted. Manuscripts, on the other hand, are only

¹ Russell Jones, 'More Light on Malay Manuscripts', *Archipel* 8, no. 1 (1974): 45-58, <https://doi.org/10.3406/arch.1974.1185>.

snapshots of actual historical events, and as with any archaeological discovery, the whole picture can only be partly reconstructed.² Additionally, a nation's exceptional degree of civilization has been impacted by the biggest number of manuscripts ever discovered there.

We need the auxiliary science that focuses on linguistic analysis of the text within the context of historical processes in order to comprehend the manuscript's content. The study of philology is one of the primary auxiliary sciences that pays particular attention to the linguistics and history of the text.

So what does "philology" really mean? Momma³ and Turner⁴ claim that the name "philology" relates to the Greek compound "φιλολογία," which is made up of φιλο- (love) and λόγος (word). According to Plato, the composite term φιλολογία (*Philologia*) consequently refers to a love of discourse, love of argument, and love of reason. But shortly, the term "philology" began to be used to refer specifically to the study of reading language, including reading, rhetoric, literature, and textual studies. Aristotle described "philology" as the study of rhetoric, literary form, and history throughout the ancient Greek period.⁵ According to Philip August Boeckh, philology is the study of languages and literature, arts and politics, religion, and social conventions.⁶ He also described it as "the knowing of the known." According to Turner, philology is the comprehensive study of texts, languages, and the nature of language.⁷ According to Gumbrecht, the term "philology" has two distinct meanings: on the one hand, it refers to "(the) interest in or fascination with words," and on the other, it is strictly defined to indicate a historical text curatorship that only relates to written texts.⁸ In the nineteenth century,

² Stefanie Brinkmann, 'Introduction: Reconstructing Agents, Places, and Methods through Manuscripts', in *Education Materialised*, ed. S. Et Al Brinkmann (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2021), ix-x, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110741124-002>.

³ H Momma, 'Introduction: Where Is Philology?', in *From Philology to English Studies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 2, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139023412.002>.

⁴ James Turner, *Philology: The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014), 37.

⁵ See Sandys 1903-8, i: 4-5 in Momma, 'Introduction: Where Is Philology?', 2.

⁶ Stephen G. Nichols, 'Introduction: Philology in a Manuscript Culture', *Speculum* 65, no. 1 (January 1990): 2, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2864468>.

⁷ Turner, *Philology: The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities*, 11.

⁸ Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *The Powers of Philology: Dynamics of Textual Scholarship* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003).

three different types of inquiry were referred to as philology: Textual philology includes four main areas of study: 1) Textual philology (including classical and biblical studies), 2) Theories of the origin and nature of language, and 3) Comparative study of the structures and historical history of languages and language families. The discovery of a long-lost, previously undiscovered language that is the ancestor of the majority of European, northern Indian, and Iranian plateau languages was a startling outcome of this most recent investigation.⁹

In conclusion, Momma's view claims that while philology has historically been linked to literature, it has also forged alliances with other fields that demand a careful analysis of texts, whether they be historical accounts, philosophical tracts, religious commentaries, legal documents, or scientific treatises.¹⁰

Islam in Indonesia and the Manuscripts

The *Naskah Kuno* or *Naskah Klasik* was recognized as an integral component of Indonesia's tangible cultural heritage. The categorization of *Naskah Kuno*, according to UU Cagar Budaya No. 5 Tahun 1992, refers to manuscripts with handwriting or typewriter writing that were published or gathered as printed books for more than 50 years. There are several *Naskah Kuno* in Indonesia that have been gathered, codified, and divided into various topics, locations, and historical eras. Hussein said there are 5,000 Indonesian/Malay manuscripts totaling 800 titles in terms of the quantity of Indonesian manuscripts.¹¹ There are around six manuscripts or versions for each book. These approximate categories may be used to group the 800 titles: 150 works of prose fiction of various kinds, 46 works of Muslim legend, 47 works of history, 41 works of law, 116 works of poetry, 300 works of theology, and the remaining 100 works are included under "other." According to Chambert-Loir, there are 4,000 Malay manuscripts scattered unevenly throughout 26 nations.¹² Ibrahim Ismail cited R. Jones, who estimated this

⁹ Turner, *Philology: The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities*, 12.

¹⁰ Momma, 'Introduction: Where Is Philology?', 2.

¹¹ Ismail Hussein, 'The Study of Traditional Malay Literature', *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 2, no. 210 (1966): 9.

¹² Henri Chambert-Loir and Oman Fathurahman, *A Guide to Indonesian Manuscript Collections* (Jakarta: Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient in collaboration with Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 1999).

figure to be about 10,000 a few years after him.¹³ 3348 Indonesian Islamic texts have been successfully included into the Thesaurus of Indonesian Islamic Manuscripts as of 2016. The majority of the manuscripts were written in Javanese (1192), Malay (981), and Arabic (598) languages, with the most common themes being Sufism (693 manuscripts), traditional hagiography (499 manuscripts), tale and folklore (347 manuscripts), Islamic Jurisprudence (274 manuscripts), theology (257 manuscripts), ethics (197 manuscripts), traditional historiography (173 manuscripts), Arabic grammar (177 manuscripts), etc. The majority of manuscripts, whether copies or original compositions, were produced between around 1600 and 1900 AD, according to Russell Jones, and they were written on paper made in Europe.¹⁴

Chambert-Loir and Fathurahman claim that Indonesian manuscripts are now found all over the globe.¹⁵ For obvious historical reasons, a significant portion of them may be found in the Netherlands and Great Britain. Manuscripts may also be discovered in many other nations, such as Germany, France, and Russia. This dispersion alone is significant historically. Several collections have links to Indonesian expat groups. This is the case with the collections that can be discovered in Sri Lanka and South Africa: some manuscripts were copied or written by Indonesian migrants (or exiles) who established in those two countries, while others were transported from Indonesia. The majority of the (primarily Batak) manuscripts that made it to Germany were amassed by German missionaries working in North Sumatra beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century. Other collections were amassed by the German private tutor of the Dutch Governor-General in Buitenzorg (Bogor) around 1850. An American expedition visited Singapore in 1842 and brought back a modest but priceless collection that is now housed at the Library of Congress in Washington. The collection kept by the French National Library in Paris, as a last illustration, was first assembled by a French professor who had studied Malay in London in 1845.¹⁶

Chambert-Loir claims that in the 1980s, there were more than 86 catalogues that could be utilized to find the known surviving manuscripts that

¹³ Ding Choo Ming, 'Access to Malay Manuscripts', *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde / Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia* 143, no. 4 (1987): 433, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-90003313>.

¹⁴ Jones, 'More Light on Malay Manuscripts', 46.

¹⁵ Chambert-Loir and Fathurahman, *A Guide to Indonesian Manuscript Collections*, 8.

¹⁶ Chambert-Loir and Fathurahman, *A Guide to Indonesian Manuscript Collections*.

were spread throughout several nations.¹⁷ The catalogues of Klinkert¹⁸, Juynboll¹⁹, van Ronkel²⁰, Voorhoeve²¹, and Wan Ali²² are guides containing bibliographical information on Malay manuscripts conserved in The Netherlands, according to Ming.²³ Similar to this, for Malay manuscripts placed in the UK, van der Tuuk²⁴, Nieman (1871), Blagden (1899), de Haan (1900), Greentree (1910), Winstedt (1920), Voorhoeve (1963, 1977, 1982), and Mohamed Taib Osman (1972) have given crucial reference tools.²⁵ Howard (1966), Voorhoeve (1969), Ibrahim Kassim (1973), Abu Hassan Sham (1974), Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia (1984a), Chambert-Loir (1980b), and Harun Mat Piah and Ismail Hamid are important sources of information about manuscripts accessible in Malaysia (1983).²⁶ For the first time, Miller has compiled data on 256 Malay/Indonesian manuscripts found in 12 university and state libraries and museums in Australia (1982).²⁷ Since the release of catalogues by Brockelmann (1908), Overbeck (1926), and Mohamed Taib Osman, the presence of Malay manuscripts in Germany has gained widespread recognition (1972).²⁸

¹⁷ Ming, 'Access to Malay Manuscripts', 432.

¹⁸ Hillebrandus Cornelius Klinkert, 'Twee Maleische Handschriften', *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 28, no. 1 (1880): 512-24, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-90000523>.

¹⁹ Hendrik Herman Juynboll, 'Eene Episode Uit Het Oudindische Ramayana Vergeleken Met de Javaansche En Maleische Bewerkingen', *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 50, no. 1 (1899): 59-66, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-90000003>.

²⁰ Philippus Samuel van van Ronkel, 'Maleische Litteratuur van Verren Oorsprong', *Mededeelingen Der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afdeling Letterkunde* 53, no. 4 (1921).

²¹ Petrus Voorhoeve, 'Indonesische Handschriften in de Universiteitsbibliotheek Te Leiden', *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde* 108, no. 3 (1952): 209-19, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-90002429>; Petrus Voorhoeve, 'Three Old Achehnese Manuscripts', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 14, no. 2 (24 June 1952): 335-45, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0041977X00083907>.

²² Wan Mamat Wan Ali, *Siri Bibliografi Manuskrip No. 1* (Kuala Lumpur: Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia, 1985).

²³ Ming, 'Access to Malay Manuscripts', 432.

²⁴ Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk, 'Lijst van Maleische Handschriften Te Singapore Bij Den Zendeling Keasberry Verkrijgbaar, Met Opgave van Den Prijs in Dollars En Verder in Engelsch Geld', *BKI* 3 (1866): 471-74; Herman Neubronner van der Tuuk, 'Kort Verslag van de Maleische Handschriften in Het East-India House Te Londen', *TNI* 1 (1849): 385-400.

²⁵ Ming, 'Access to Malay Manuscripts'.

²⁶ Ming.

²⁷ George Miller, *Indonesian and Malayan Traditional Manuscripts in Public Collections in Australia* (Canberra: the Library, Australian National University, 1982).

²⁸ Miller.

Islamic Philology from an Indonesian Perspective

The philological method used by Indonesian Muslims in understanding and analyzing the texts is distinct from other scholarly traditions in general. Indonesian Muslims categorize the ancient manuscripts into three groups based on the legacy of the classical Islamic scholars: *matn*, *syarḥ* (commentaries), and *ḥāsyiyah* (glosses). It was explained that "*matn*" was an earlier, original text that required the interpretations and glosses of other Islamic intellectuals. The *syarḥ* and *ḥāsyiyah* were often produced by the author or other academics who need glosses and comments for the *matn* in the particular and in-depth explanation.²⁹

There are two instances when the *matn* manuscript served as a catalyst for the publishing of *syarḥ* and *ḥāsyiyah* on it, there are: 1) *Kitab Umm al-Barāhīn* by Abu 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn al-Walī al-Ṣāliḥ Yūsuf al-Sanūsī al-Mālikī al-Maghribī al-Tilmisānī (1437-1490) is a *matn* manuscript which it was gaining the *ḥāsyiyah* from Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ManṢūr al-Hudhudī in *Syarḥ al-Hudhudī alā Umm al-Barāhīn*. 2) *Tafsīr al-Jalālain* by Jalāl-Al-Dīn Muhammad ibn Aḥmad al-Maḥallī (1389-1459) and Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abī Bakr al-Suyūṭī (1445-1505). The *Tafsīr al-Jalālain* is a *matn* manuscript which it was gaining the *ḥāsyiyah* from Sulaimān ibn 'Umar Jamal in *Ḥasyiyat al-Jamal 'ala al-Jalālain* and Aḥmad al-Ṣāwī Al-Mālikī (1761-1825) in *Ḥasyiyat al-Ṣāwī ala al-Jalālain*.³⁰

The *syarḥ* and *ḥāsyiyah* procedure is also required to confirm the authenticity of Islamic writings. Due to deterioration and damaged text in the manuscript, which is also impacted by mistakes in reading and copying the manuscripts, it is possible that the content of a classical manuscript is too difficult to read. On this side, the *syarḥ* and *ḥāsyiyah* processes are required to assess the text's originality (which is logically the same as the traditional philology). However, in order to copy, interpret, and contextualize the

²⁹ Martin Bruinessen, 'Kitab Kuning; Books in Arabic Script Used in the Pesantren Milieu; Comments on a New Collection in the KITLV Library', *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde / Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia* 146, no. 2 (1 January 1990): 234, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22134379-90003218>; Ali Akbar, 'Khazanah Mushaf Kuno Nusantara', in *Filologi Dan Islam Indonesia, Ed Oman Fathurrahman* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama RI Badan Litbang dan Diklat Puslitbang Lektur Keagamaan, 2010), 7.

³⁰ Oman Fathurrahman, *Filologi Dan Islam Indonesia* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama RI Badan Litbang dan Diklat Puslitbang Lektur Keagamaan, 2010), 7.

manuscript in the current age (which is logically equivalent to modern philology), *syarḥ* and *ḥāsyiyah* are required.³¹

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³¹ Fathurahman, 12.

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