

NEGOTIATING TRANSLATORS, STATE, AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES: THE GENEALOGY OF QUR'ANIC TRANSLATION IN THE JAMBI MALAY LANGUAGE

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the ideological negotiations involved in the establishment process of the *Al-Qur'an and Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi* (QTBMJ), a Qur'anic translation project supported by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs. This study investigates how the process of vernacularizing the Qur'an into Jambi Malay reflects the interaction between state ideology, translator agency, and local cultural values. Utilizing Michel Foucault's framework of power relations combined with a descriptive-analytical method, this study focuses on examining the archival documents, interview reports, and content analysis related to QTBMJ. It was found that the word choice of Qur'anic vocabulary in QTBMJ is not considered a neutral linguistic act but rather a result of negotiation process between religious, political, and social ideologies. Another concern is due to translation choices concerning gender-sensitive terms (e.g., *qawwamun*, *al-nisā'*, *nafs wahidah*) and how these reflect the broader shifts in religious and gender discourse in Indonesia. This article argues that the translation of the Qur'an into a local language is a complex process that involved dynamic interaction between state authority, translator subjectivity, and moral tradition of the local community. This study will contribute to the growing literature on Vernacular Islam, Qur'anic Translation, and The Language of Political Religious in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: *vernacularization, translation, Jambi Malay Qur'anic translation, public ideology.*

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi negosiasi ideologis yang terlibat dalam produksi *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi* (QTBMJ), sebuah proyek penerjemahan *Al-Qur'an* yang didukung oleh Kementerian Agama Indonesia. Studi ini menyelidiki bagaimana proses vernakularisasi *Al-Qur'an* ke dalam bahasa Melayu Jambi mencerminkan interaksi antara ideologi negara, agensi penerjemah, dan nilai-nilai budaya lokal. Dengan menggunakan kerangka hubungan kekuasaan Michel Foucault dan metode deskriptif-analitis, studi ini mengacu pada dokumen arsip, data wawancara, dan analisis konten QTBMJ. Ditemukan bahwa pemilihan kosakata *Al-Qur'an* dalam QTBMJ bukanlah tindakan linguistik yang netral, tetapi merupakan hasil negosiasi di antara ideologi agama, politik, dan sosial. Perhatian khusus diberikan pada pilihan penerjemahan yang menyangkut istilah-istilah yang sensitif gender (misalnya, *qawwamun*, *al-nisā'*, *nafs wahidah*) dan bagaimana hal ini mencerminkan pergeseran yang lebih luas dalam wacana agama dan gender di Indonesia. Artikel ini berpendapat bahwa penerjemahan *Al-Qur'an* ke dalam bahasa daerah merupakan proses kompleks yang dibentuk oleh interaksi dinamis antara otoritas negara, subjektivitas penerjemah, dan tradisi moral setempat. Studi ini berkontribusi pada literatur yang berkembang tentang Islam vernakular, penerjemahan *Al-Qur'an*, dan politik bahasa keagamaan di Asia Tenggara.

Kata Kunci: Vernakularisasi, terjemah, Al-Qur'an Terjemah Bahasa Melayu Jambi, ideologi publik.

A. Introduction

The construction of religious understanding among Indonesian society through Qur'anic translation and tafsir has been ongoing for several decades. In 1965, the Indonesian government, through the Department of Religious Affairs (Depag), published the first official Indonesian translation of the Qur'an, titled *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* (The Qur'an and Its Translation), also known as the *Jama'ah Mu'awanah Nahdatul Ulama* (JAMUNU) edition. Since this initial release, the translation has undergone four major revisions: the first in 1971 (Mukti Ali edition), then in 1990 (Saudi Arabia edition), 2002 (first revised edition), and 2019 (second revised edition).¹

In addition to the Qur'anic translation, the Ministry of Religious Affairs (formerly Depag) has produced several tafsir publications. These were not only intended to familiarize the public with the Qur'an but also to shape religious understanding in alignment with the state ideology.² In response to this objective, the Ministry gradually began publishing Qur'anic commentaries. In 1975, it released a single-volume tafsir covering Juz 1-3. This was followed in 2004 by the publication of Juz 1-6, then Juz 7-12 in 2005, Juz 13-18 in 2006, Juz 19-24 in 2007, and finally, Juz 25-30 in 2008.³

After completing the *Al-Qur'an dan Tafsirnya* project, the Ministry, through the *Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf al-Qur'an* (LPMQ), began exploring thematic Qur'anic interpretation. Between 2008 and 2012, the Ministry completed the *Tafsir al-Qur'an Tematik Kementerian Agama* (TQTKA), which covers 26 major themes found in the Qur'an.⁴ Furthermore, up to 2023, the Ministry, through the Research and Development Center for Literature, Religious Treasures, and Organizational Management (LKKMO), under the Research and Development Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, has translated the Qur'an into 26 regional languages across Indonesia. These include local languages spoken in Java, Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Bali. Notably, six regional translations have been made available in digital form: the Malay Jambi, Malay Palembang, Mandar, Using, Sundanese, and Banyumasan translations.⁵

Scholarly studies thus far have largely focused on the Indonesian-language translation of the Qur'an. This is evident in the works of Pink (2019)⁶, Faizin (2021)⁷,

¹ Hamam Faizin, "Sejarah dan Karakteristik *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* Kementerian Agama RI" *Suhuf*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (2021): 283-311. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22548/shf.v14i2.669>

² Nugroho, Mustaniruddin, and Taufik, "Ideological Contestation on the Production of Gender Exegesis within Institutional Quranic Interpretation in Indonesia," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu al-Qur'an dan Hadis*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (2024): 346-369. DOI: [10.14421/qh.v25i2.5388](https://doi.org/10.14421/qh.v25i2.5388)

³ Departemen Agama RI, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Tematik: Kedudukan dan Peran Perempuan* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2009), xiii-xv.

⁴ Departemen Agama RI, *Kedudukan dan Peran Perempuan...*, xiv-xv.

⁵ "Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Daerah," Badan Litbang dan Diklat Kementerian Agama RI, accessed 27 Februari 2025, <https://balitbangdiklat.kemenag.go.id/berita/terjemahan-al-qur-an-bahasa-daerah>.

⁶ Johanna Pink, "Tradition and Ideology in Contemporary Sunnite Qur'anic Exegesis: Qur'anic Commentaries from the Arab World, Turkey, and Indonesia and their Interpretation of QS 5:51," in *Die Welt des Islams*, New Series, Vol. 50, Issue 1 (2010).

⁷ Faizin, "Sejarah dan Karakteristik al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya Kementerian Agama RI".

Lukman (2022)⁸, Rohmana (2019)⁹, Baidan (2016)¹⁰, Ichwan (2009)¹¹, Muta'ali (2014)¹², Gallop (2006)¹³, dan Riddell (2014)¹⁴. Their studies primarily explore the history, characteristics, theological schools, and political ideologies underlying the translation of the Qur'an into Indonesian. In contrast, research on regional language translations of the Qur'an remains very limited and largely unexplored. Aside from the fact that many foreign scholars have difficulty understanding local languages, regional Qur'anic translations are often considered less significant than the Indonesian version. Only a few scholars have examined regional Qur'anic translations. Among them are Rohmana (2019)¹⁵ who studied the Sundanese translation; Johns (2009)¹⁶ and Riddell (2014)¹⁷ who focused on the Malay translation; and Nurtawab (2009)¹⁸ and Gusmian (2016)¹⁹ who explored the Javanese translation.

However, the translation of the Qur'an into local languages what Azra refers to as the process of vernacularization is a state-led effort to preserve regional languages, bring communities closer to the Qur'an, and construct religious understanding in ways that align with local traditions, customs, and cultures, making the Qur'an more accessible and comprehensible.²⁰ Within this context, the study of regional Qur'anic translations, particularly the Jambi Malay translation, becomes especially important. There are several reasons why the Jambi translation warrants scholarly attention. First, since *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi* (abbreviated as QTBMJ) was only launched on November 2, 2023, knowledge regarding its characteristics, form, format, and content is still very limited. Therefore, research on QTBMJ is both timely and essential.

Moreover, the negotiation process between religious scholars (translators), local Jambi Malay language experts, and traditional community groups in determining and

⁸ Fadhli Lukman, "The Official Indonesian Qur'an Translation: The History and Politics of Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya," n.d.

⁹ Jajang A. Rohmana, "Negosiasi, Ideologi, dan Batas Kesarjanaan: Pengalaman Penerjemah dalam Proyek Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Bahasa Sunda," *Suhuf*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Juni 2019): 21-55.

¹⁰ Nashruddin Baidan, *Terjemahan Al-Qur'an: Studi Kritis Terhadap Terjemahan Al-Qur'an Yang Beredar Di Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2016).

¹¹ Moch. Nur Ichwan, "Negara, Kitab Suci dan Politik, Terjemah Resmi AlQur'an di Indonesia", in Chambert-Loir, Henri (ed), *Sadur, Sejarah Terjemahan di Indonesia dan Malaysia* (Jakarta: KPG, Pusat Jakarta-Paris, Pusat Bahasa Universitas Padjajaran, 2009).

¹² Abdul Muta'ali, "The Repercussion of Grammatical and Cultural Culpability of the Holy Qur'an Translation to Religious Harmony in Indonesia". *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (.2014): 59-70.

¹³ Annabel Teh Gallop and Ali Akbar, "The Art of the Qur'an in Banten: Calligraphy and Illumination." *Archipel* 72 (2006): 95-156.

¹⁴ Peter G. Riddell, "Translating the Qur'an into Indonesian Languages," *Al-Bayan, Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 12 (2014): 1-27.

¹⁵ Jajang A. Rohmana, "Negosiasi, Ideologi, dan Batas Kesarjanaan....," 21-55.

¹⁶ Anthony H. Johns, "Penerjemahan" Bahasa Arab ke dalam Bahasa Melayu: Sebuah Renungan, in Henri Chambert-Loir (peny.), *Sadur Sejarah Terjemahan di Indonesia dan Malaysia* (Jakarta: KPG, 2009), 49-58.

¹⁷ Peter G. Riddell, "Translating the Qur'an into Indonesian Languages," *Al-Bayan, Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies* 12 (2014): 1-27.

¹⁸ Eryan Nurtawab, "Quranic Translation in Malay, Javanese, and Sundanese: A Commentary or Substitution?," in *The Qur'an in the Malay-Indonesian World* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016).

¹⁹ Islah Gusmian, "Tafsir Al-Qur'an Bahasa Jawa: Peneguhan Identitas, Ideologi, Dan Politik Perlawanan," *SUHUF* Vol. 9, no. No. 1 (2016): 141-68.

²⁰ Azyumardi Azra, *Islam Nusantara: Jaringan Global Dan Lokal* (Bandung: Mizan, 2022).

applying language is a critical aspect that must be closely examined. This includes ideological negotiations in the selection of vocabulary for translating Qur'anic terms. For instance, how translators render potentially sensitive terms such as those related to legal verses, gender, tawhid (ambiguous verses), politics, and social issues is a key feature of regional Qur'anic translations. Another important consideration is how translators navigate the negotiation process between their ideological interests, the state's ideology, and the prevailing expectations of the local community.

In response to this overlooked area of study, this article seeks to explore how negotiation processes took place between the state, translators, and local communities in the vocabulary choices found in *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi* (QTBMJ). With this context in mind, the article argues that the translation of the Qur'an into regional languages is a complex process shaped by the dynamic interaction between state authority, translator subjectivity, and local moral traditions. To support this argument, the article is divided into several sections. Following the introduction and research methodology, it reconstructs the QTBMJ writing process, including the appointment of the writing team, the ideological framework behind the translation, and the decision-making involved in the selection of Qur'anic vocabulary. The subsequent section analyzes the use of specific vocabulary choices and the ideological influences behind those decisions.

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, employing Michel Foucault's theory of power relations and using a descriptive-analytical method. Foucault's framework is utilized to trace how religious discourse is constructed by the state apparatus through QTBMJ. The main sources for this article include the full 30-juz QTBMJ text, written between 2017 and 2021, along with meeting notes, revision drafts, and related documentation. In addition to these textual sources, the article also draws on interviews with members of the writing team, the organizing committee, the QTBMJ secretariat, as well as stakeholders involved in the preparation process ranging from officials at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Center for Religious Literature to academic representatives from UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi.

Data collection in this research is divided into two main phases. The first phase involves gathering data on selected Qur'anic verses translated in QTBMJ based on specific thematic categories. In addition to library research, data were collected through interviews with seven informants from the translation and validation teams. These informants include academics from UIN Jambi, the University of Jambi, the Jambi Province Malay Customary Institution (LAM), and core members of the QTBMJ writing committee. These individuals were selected based on their active involvement and deep knowledge of the QTBMJ translation and compilation process from start to finish.

B. Result and Discussion

1. History, Form, and Characteristics of QTBMJ

The writing project of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi* (QTBMJ) began in 2019 based on an assignment letter from the Center for Research and Development of Religious Literature, Heritage, and Organizational Management (Puslitbang LKKMO) of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia and was completed in 2021. After undergoing layout, editing, cover design, and printing processes, QTBMJ was

officially published on December 23, 2022 (29 Jumadil Ula 1444 AH) by the Research and Development Agency for Religious Literature and Organizational Management under the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Jakarta. The first edition of QTBMJ was officially launched on Thursday, November 2, 2023, at the Astaka Main Arena of the 27th National STQH (National Qur'anic Recitation Competition) in Jambi.²¹ The four-year process from writing to publication indicates that QTBMJ went through a rigorous and structured process, from the selection of translators and validators to its final release.

QTBMJ was published as a single volume, comprising the complete 30 juz (sections) of the Qur'an, with dimensions of 17.2 x 25 cm. It received *Tashih* certification from the *Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf al-Qur'an* (LPMQ) with the reference number: 2847/LPMQ.01/TL.02.1/12/2022 and code: I1AIAJA2612022 469. This *tashih* stamp appears on the final page of the QTBMJ and is written in Jawi (Arabic-Malay script). The presence of the LPMQ *tashih* stamp signifies that the Arabic text and its translation in QTBMJ underwent validation and accuracy checks by the LPMQ expert team.

The translation section of QTBMJ contains 904 pages, with an additional xiv pages comprising welcome remarks, a foreword, names of the translation team, technical translation guidelines, and validation notes. QTBMJ is printed as a hardcover edition, predominantly colored in red, black, gold, and touches of white. The front cover features Arabic calligraphy that reads *al-Qur'an al-Karim*. Below the calligraphy is the title written in Jambi Malay: *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi*. Further below, the cover lists the collaborating institutions involved in producing QTBMJ, namely the Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Research and Community Service Institute (LPPM) of UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi.²²

At the beginning pages of *QTBMJ*, several prominent figures provide welcome remarks and a foreword to *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi*. These include a message from the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Yaqut Cholil Qoumas; the Head of the Research, Development, and Training Agency of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Prof. Dr. Suyitno; a foreword by the Head of the Research and Development Center for Religious Literature, Heritage, and Organizational Management (LKKMO), Prof. Dr. Arskal Salim; a welcome note from the Rector of UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, Prof. Dr. H. Su'aidi; and a foreword by the Head of the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM) of UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, Dr. Ayub Muraslin. These remarks generally discuss the purpose and significance of translating the Qur'an into the Jambi-Malay language.²³

QTBMJ is written in two languages using a two-column layout. The right column features the Qur'anic verses in Arabic script, while the left column contains the translation in Jambi-Malay. The entire text is formatted and read from right to left. At the beginning of

²¹ Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, "Terbit, Al-Qur'an Terjemahan Bahasa Melayu Jambi!," accessed February 1, 2025, <https://kemenag.go.id/nasional/terbit-al-qur-an-terjemahan-bahasa-melayu-jambi-ijm4k>; LPPM UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, "Acuan Teknis Penerjemahan Dan Validasi Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Bahasa Melayu Jambi," n.d.

²² Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi* (Jakarta: Lembaga Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2023.), i.

²³ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi...*, i-v.

each surah, the top section of the page provides the surah title, classification of the verses (Makkiyah or Madaniyah), the surah's sequence number, and the total number of verses within that surah. This bilingual, two-column layout reflects the Ministry of Religious Affairs' effort to help local communities in Jambi Province better understand the Qur'an within their socio-linguistic context.

The translated Qur'an also includes footnotes to explain words that are difficult to understand or require further elaboration. In total, there are 1,366 footnotes throughout the *QTBMJ*. Nearly every surah includes footnotes, with only a few, mostly those found at the end of *Juz 'Amma*, having none.²⁴ The use of footnotes indicates that *QTBMJ* is not merely a literal translation of the Qur'an; it also aims to provide deeper context and understanding, especially for verses that require further explanation.

In its composition, the translated Qur'an is organized according to several subthemes for each set of verses. For example, verses 21-22 of Surah al-Baqarah are grouped under the theme "*Perintah baibadah kapado Allah*" (The command to worship Allah). Verses 23-24 of the same surah are labeled "*Kamukjizatan al-Qur'an, sikok surat pun idak biso disaingi*" (The miraculous nature of the Qur'an no single surah can be matched). Verse 25 is categorized as "*Balasan bagi orang Mukmin nang soleh*" (The reward for righteous believers). This pattern continues throughout other verses and surahs. The structure resembles that of a thematic Qur'an, arranged by topics within a single surah.²⁵ This semi-thematic format adopted by *QTBMJ* enables readers to grasp the meaning and context of Qur'anic verses in a more focused and topic-oriented manner.

2. The QTBMJ Writing Team

The *QTBMJ* writing team consists of two main groups: the translation team and the validation team. Each group includes a supervisor, a chairperson, a secretary, subject matter experts, and team members responsible for translation or validation.²⁶ The team members come from diverse academic backgrounds, including Qur'anic studies, Hadith, Islamic education, sociology, Islamic thought and politics, literature, linguistics, and cultural studies. Among the 25 individuals on the team, only two specialize in Qur'anic studies or tafsir, two in sharia or fiqh, and one in Hadith. The rest have expertise in culture, local customs, language, sociology, Islamic thought, politics, and other fields.

Qur'anic Translation Team into Jambi Malay Language

No	Name	Description
A.	Translation Team	
1.	Dr. H. Hadri Hasan, M.A. (Director)	Hadri Hasan is a lecturer at UIN Jambi. He was awarded the title of Professor in 2020 in the field of Qur'anic interpretation. Besides serving as the Rector of UIN Jambi starting in 2011, he has also led the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) of Jambi Province since the same year.
2.	Dr. H. Mahbub Daryanto, M.	Mahbub serves as the Head of the Academic, Student Affairs, and Cooperation Administration Bureau (AAKK) at UIN STS Jambi.

²⁴ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi...*, 15–25.

²⁵ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi*, 50–55.

²⁶ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi*, vi–xi.

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	Pd. I. (Chairperson)	He previously held the position of Head of the Ministry of Religious Affairs Office in the Riau Islands Province.
3.	M. Gazali, M. Pd. (Secretary)	Gazali is a lecturer at the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training (FTK) of UIN Jambi. He holds a master's degree in Educational Research and Evaluation.
4.	Prof. Dr. Su'aidi, M.A. Ph.D. (Expert Team)	At the time the QTBMJ was compiled in 2019, Su'aidi was serving as the Rector of UIN STS Jambi. His area of expertise is Islamic thought and politics, with a dissertation focused on Nahdlatul Ulama (NU).
5.	Prof. Dr. H. Syukri Saleh, M.A. (Expert Team)	Syukri is a lecturer at UIN Jambi in the field of Qur'anic interpretation. In 2020, he succeeded Hadri Hasan as the head of MUI Jambi Province and concurrently served as Director of Postgraduate Studies at UIN STS Jambi. He participated in the National Conference of Qur'anic Scholars organized by the Ministry of Religious Affairs to discuss the Ministry's Thematic Qur'anic Interpretation project.
6.	Drs. H. Azrai Al-Basyari (Expert Team)	Azrai is the Chairman of the Malay Customary Council (LAM) of Jambi City. Commonly known as Datuk Azrai, he led the council for two consecutive terms from 2012 to 2022.
7.	Dr. Illy Yanti, M. Ag. (Translator)	Illy Yanti is a lecturer at UIN Jambi with expertise in Islamic law and community development at the Faculty of Sharia.
8.	Dr. Sayuti, M.H. (Translator)	Sayuti is an academic and practitioner in Islamic law. His publications often address the practice of Islamic law in Indonesia, particularly in Jambi. At the time QTBMJ was compiled, he was serving as Dean of the Faculty of Sharia at UIN Jambi.
9.	H. Sissah, M. Ag. (Translator)	H. Sissah is a senior academic at UIN Jambi specializing in Islamic economics and law.
10.	Kholid Musyaddad, M. Ag. (Translator)	Kholid is a lecturer at UIN Jambi. His writings focus on Islamic education development and philosophy of education.
11.	Dr. Zarfina Yenti, M. Ag. (Translator)	Zarfina is a lecturer at the Faculty of Adab, UIN STS Jambi. Her research explores gender and cultural issues. In 2019, she was appointed Head of the Center for Gender and Child Studies (KPSGA) under the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM), UIN STS Jambi.
12.	Dr. Addiarrahman, M. SI. (Translator)	Addiarrahman is an academic and researcher in Islamic economics at the Faculty of Islamic Economics and Business, UIN Jambi. His interests include Islamic economics, maqasid sharia, and socio-religious studies. He earned his Ph.D. in Islamic Economics from UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.
B.	Validation Team	
1.	Prof. Dr. Su'aidi, M.A. Ph.D. (Advisor)	Previously described.
2.	Dr. Ayub Mursalin, S.	At the time the QTBMJ was written, Ayub Mursalin was serving as the Head of the Institute for Research and Community Service

	Ag., M.A. (Chairperson)	(LPPM). His area of expertise is the sociology of law. He earned his doctoral degree in France.
3.	M. Husnul Abid, M.A. (Secretary)	Abid is the Head of the Research Center (PUSLIT) under LPPM UIN Jambi. In addition to actively writing on social issues, he was formerly a journalist in Yogyakarta and Jambi. His academic background is in Communication Studies (Master's) and Arabic Literature (Bachelor's).
4.	Prof. Dr. H. Syukri Saleh, M.A. (Expert Team)	Previously described.
5.	Drs. H. Azrai Al-Basyari (Expert Team)	Previously described.
6.	Dr. Rofiqoh Ferawati, M. El. (Expert Team)	At the time QTBMJ was written, Rofiqoh served as Vice Rector for Academic and Institutional Affairs from 2019 to 2023. Her academic background is in economics.
7.	Dr. Bambang Husni Nugroho, M.H.I. (Validation Team)	Bambang is a lecturer and Head of the Qur'anic Studies and Tafsir (IAT) program. His academic background includes Hadith Interpretation (Bachelor's) and Sharia Sciences (Master's and Doctorate).
8.	Dr. Sya'roni, M. Pd. (Validation Team)	Sya'roni is a lecturer and also holds a position at LPPM UIN STS Jambi. His research focuses on the management of Islamic educational institutions, pesantren, and local wisdom.
9.	Dr. Masiyan, M. Ag. (Validation Team)	A lecturer in the Hadith Studies program. At the time QTBMJ was written, he was serving as Vice Dean for Academic and Institutional Affairs at the Faculty of Ushuluddin and Religious Studies (FUSA), UIN Jambi. His educational background, from Bachelor's to Doctorate, is consistently in Hadith studies. He is the only Hadith studies lecturer at UIN STS Jambi with a doctoral degree.
10.	Dr. Supian Ramli, M. Ag. (Validation Team)	Supian is a lecturer at the Faculty of Islamic Religion (FAI), University of Jambi (UNJA). His expertise lies in Qur'anic interpretation. He earned his Bachelor's degree from IAIN/UIN STS Jambi and his Master's and Doctorate degrees from UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. In Jambi, he is known as a prominent preacher who frequently appears on television to discuss issues related to fiqh and tafsir.
11.	Dr. K.A. Rahman, M. Pd.I. (Validation Team)	Rahman is a lecturer at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP), University of Jambi (UNJA). He earned his Bachelor's in Arabic Language Education (PBA) from IAIN Jambi in 1998, his Master's in Islamic Education Management (MPI) from IAIN Jambi in 2003, and his Doctorate from the Indonesia University of Education (UPI) in 2012. His expertise is in educational administration and management.

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12.	Arfan Azis, S. Th.I., M. Soc. Sc., Ph.D. (Validation Team)	Arfan is a lecturer and Vice Dean for General Administration at the Faculty of Da'wah. His expertise is in Sociology and Anthropology.
13.	H. Abdullah Firdaus, Lc., M.A. Ph.D. (Validation Team)	Abdullah Firdaus is a lecturer in the Islamic Political Thought program. His expertise is in Islamic thought. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Arabic from Al-Azhar University, Cairo. He also pursued a Master's program for two years at another university in Egypt. Later, he continued his Master's and Doctoral studies at the National University of Malaysia (UKM).
14.	Dr. Muhammad Fadhil, M. Ag. (Validation Team)	Fadhil is a lecturer at UIN Jambi with a focus in the field of education.
15.	Dr. Rahmi Hidayati, M.H.I. (Validation Team)	Rahmi is a lecturer at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Jambi. Her expertise lies in Sharia studies. She earned her Doctorate from UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.
16.	Alhusni, S. Ag., M.H.I. (Validation Team)	Alhusni is a lecturer at UIN Jambi and formerly served as the Head of the Comparative Schools of Thought program at the Faculty of Sharia, UIN Jambi.

Validation teams come from ten different academic disciplines: tafsir (2 members), hadith studies (1), Islamic law (5), the Malay Customary Institution (1), Islamic education (6), Islamic thought (2), culture (1), sociology (2), communication (1), and economics (3), as well as one bureaucrat. Among the 25 members of the translation and validation teams, only eight come from core Qur'anic disciplines, while the remaining 17 have backgrounds in general academic fields such as education, Islamic thought, customary law, culture, sociology, communication, and economics.

The composition of the *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi* (QTBMJ) team, which involved scholars from interdisciplinary backgrounds, shows that the translation process was approached from various academic perspectives, ranging from core Islamic sciences to cultural studies, linguistics, and sociology. In principle, the involvement of experts in culture and language can certainly enhance the sociolinguistic relevance of the Qur'anic translation to the Jambi context. However, the limited participation of scholars with expertise in tafsir is a critical point in evaluating the QTBMJ project.

The lack of involvement of tafsir experts in the translation process carries several potential risks and biases. The selection of translated vocabulary may have been conducted arbitrarily without adhering to proper Qur'anic translation methodology. This could result in distortions of meaning and the intrusion of cultural bias into the QTBMJ. For this reason, the oversight of scholars trained in tafsir is essential in ensuring the accuracy and faithfulness of the translation.

In addition to critiques of the team composition, the QTBMJ translation process itself also warrants further investigation. Ideally, the Qur'an should first have been translated into

Jambi Malay by the translation team, and only after that should the results have been reviewed by the validation team. However, in practice, the translation team did not operate according to this original plan. As a result, most of the Qur'anic verses had not yet been translated into Jambi Malay. Ultimately, it was the validation team that translated the majority of the Qur'anic text.²⁷ Nearly all chapters and verses were translated by the validation team, meaning that the validation team effectively assumed the role of translators as well. In practice, the translation validation process was carried out by individuals who served as both translators and validators.²⁸

This stagnation in the work of the translation team appears to stem from several factors. Notably, the composition of the original translation team lacked members with expertise in the Qur'an and tafsir. Yet, translating the Qur'an into another language requires a deep understanding of Qur'anic vocabulary, tafsir, and the broader Qur'anic sciences. For this reason, a new team was eventually formed to validate (and, in many cases, complete) the translation. This team included individuals with expertise in tafsir/Qur'anic studies, hadith, Islamic law/fiqh, and related disciplines.²⁹

Nevertheless, it is important to note that not all individuals listed as members of the expert team or the translation/validation team were involved in translating the Qur'an. Some of the names were included solely due to their influence and positions as top university leaders. As a result, their names were included out of necessity, even though they did not contribute whatsoever to the translation of the Qur'an. In terms of academic background, several of these individuals had no scholarly connection to Qur'anic translation and, in fact, never attended any meetings related to the QTBMJ translation process.³⁰

The inclusion of unqualified individuals in the QTBMJ translation and validation team may lead to several implications. The most significant impact is the potential inaccuracy of the translation, which may fail to reflect the intended meanings of the Qur'anic verses. Furthermore, listing individuals who made no substantial or scholarly contributions may undermine the legitimacy of the QTBMJ translation. Another consequence is the potential public perception that QTBMJ was produced by individuals lacking credibility and the necessary competence to translate the Qur'an.

3. Technical Guidelines for Translation and Validation

The translation of the Qur'an into local languages, particularly Jambi-Malay, presents several challenges. For the translation team, the linguistic diversity and richness across the 11 regencies and cities in Jambi Province posed a specific difficulty in determining which dialect to use. The team debated whether to use the *mudik* (upriver) or *ilir* (downriver) variant of the Jambi dialect, both of which differ significantly in pronunciation and vocabulary.³¹ After extensive discussions and debates, the translation team agreed to use the popular Jambi-Malay spoken in Jambi City. This choice was based

²⁷ Bambang Husni Nugroho, personal interview, January 10, 2023, Jambi.

²⁸ Masyan M. Syam, personal interview, January 11, 2023, Jambi.

²⁹ M. Husnul Abid, personal interview, February 3, 2023, Jambi.

³⁰ Arfan Azis, personal interview, February 15, 2023, Jambi.

³¹ UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, "Acuan Teknis Penerjemahan dan Validasi Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Bahasa Melayu Jambi."

on the fact that the Jambi City dialect is more widely understood by the majority of the Jambi population.

More specifically, the following technical references were established:

1. The Jambi-Malay translation of the Qur'an was based on the 2019 revised edition of the Official Translation of the Qur'an by the Ministry of Religious Affairs.
2. The translation and validation process involved rendering the official translation into the popular Jambi-Malay dialect of Jambi City.
3. Several prefixes such as *ter*, *ke*, *se*, *me*, and *ber* (e.g., *terpilih*, *keduanya*, *sesuatu*, *memilih*, and *bersama*) were adapted into *ta*, *ka*, *sa*, *ma*, and *ba*, resulting in *tapilih*, *kaduonyo*, *sasuatu*, *mamilih*, and *basamo*.
4. In general, words ending in "a" were altered to end in "o" (e.g., *kata* to *kato*, *semua* to *semuo*), except for words like *pula* and *bawa*, which changed to *pulak* and *bawak*.
5. Certain words, such as *perhatikan* and *esa*, were translated into more culturally distinctive terms, namely *imak* and *so*.
6. Demonstratives like *ini* and *itu* were translated as *ni* and *tu*.³²

These technical translation and validation guidelines for QTBMJ primarily serve as a reference for linguistic adaptation but do not elaborate further on the detailed validation process. Ideally, the translation team should have also outlined the mechanisms for resolving differences of opinion among translators regarding the meaning and interpretation of specific vocabulary. Nevertheless, the above guidelines can be used as a reference for both translation and validation of the QTBMJ.

4. The Translation Process of QTBMJ

The compilation of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi* (QTBMJ) was carried out by two main teams: the translation team and the validation team. These teams were composed of Qur'anic scholars from UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, representatives from the Jambi Malay Customary Council, and members of the Jambi Malay Language Center.³³ The academic team was responsible for translating the Arabic Qur'an into Indonesian, based on the 2019 revised edition of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Once the vocabulary was selected, it was then translated or matched into equivalent terms in Jambi Malay. After receiving the Indonesian translation from the academic team, the customary and language center teams translated the vocabulary into Jambi Malay, by the terminological explanations provided by the Qur'an translators from UIN Jambi.³⁴

5. Negotiating Ideology, Context, and Public Morality in QTBMJ

The translation of the Qur'an into a regional language is the result of a negotiation process involving the translator's ideological orientation (religious understanding), public moral expectations, and the translator's lived context.³⁵ Translators cannot easily avoid the dialectical interaction among these three elements. Ideological negotiation refers to the

³² Acuan Teknis Penerjemahan dan Validasi Al-Qur'an Tarjamah Bahasa Melayu Jambi UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi.

³³ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi...*, iii–xi.

³⁴ Abdullah Firdaus, personal interview, April 8, 2023, Jambi; Dokumen hasil notulensi rapat QTBMJ.

³⁵ Jajang A. Rohmana, "Negosiasi, Ideologi, dan Batas Kesarjanaan...", 21–25.

process of reconciling differing internal ideologies held by the translator with dominant or prevailing religious ideologies. The demand for public moral ideology refers to the expectation that the Qur'an be translated in a manner consistent with the beliefs of the majority public. Consequently, individual translators or translation teams do not have full freedom to incorporate their interpretations and views into the translation of Qur'anic texts. The translator's context includes the specific situations, conditions, and events within which the translator lives.³⁶ These three variables often influence one another in the translation process, as is evident in the QTBMJ translation.

a. Issues Concerning Women and Females

The mention of the female gender in several Qur'anic verses generally uses two Arabic words: *al-nisā'* and *al-mar'ah*. According to many Qur'anic commentators (*mufasssir*), these two terms carry different meanings and connotations. In various Arabic dictionaries, *al-nisā'* is defined as referring to the female gender and also to wives, while *al-mar'ah* more specifically refers to an adult woman. The word *al-nisā'* appears 59 times in the Qur'an, whereas *al-mar'ah* appears 139 times. This indicates that the two words convey different nuances of meaning.³⁷

In the QTBMJ translation, however, no distinction is made between *al-nisā'* and *al-mar'ah* both are uniformly translated as *perempuan* (woman/female).³⁸ The Jambi Malay language also recognizes the term *batino* in addition to *perempuan*. However, *Batino* is not used at all in the QTBMJ translation. It appears only once in the translation of the surah name *al-Nisā'*. Beyond that, the word *batino* is completely absent from the rest of the translation.³⁹

The single occurrence of *batino* in the title of Surah *al-Nisā'* is likely because this surah title is not translated in the reference text *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, allowing the QTBMJ translation team more flexibility to render it in colloquial Jambi Malay. Nevertheless, according to one translator, *batino* in the Jambi Malay community is considered to carry a lower level of respect compared to *perempuan*.⁴⁰ In local usage, *batino* often bears a pejorative or mocking tone toward women. Therefore, because the subject of translation is the Qur'an a sacred text the translators chose the word *perempuan*, which is regarded as more polite and carries a more positive connotation.⁴¹

Furthermore, the choice to use *perempuan* for both *al-nisā'* and *al-mar'ah* was strongly influenced by the 2019 revised edition of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* published by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag), which served as the main reference text. This edition no longer uses the term *wanita* to translate either *al-nisā'* or *al-mar'ah*.⁴² This contrasts with earlier editions such as the JAMUNA edition (1965), the Mukti Ali

³⁶ Jajang A. Rohmana, "Negosiasi, Ideologi, dan Batas Kesarjanaan...", 50.

³⁷ Muhammad Fu'ad Abd. Al-Baqi, *Mu'jam Mufahras Li Alfaz al-Qur'an al-Karim* (Kahirah: Dar al-Hadits, 1965), 699-700, and 665.

³⁸ Kementerian Agama RI, *al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi*, 132-40.

³⁹ Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia-Jambi* (Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa, 1997), 327.

⁴⁰ Bambang Husni Nugroho, personal interview, February 5, 2023, Jambi.

⁴¹ Bambang Husni Nugroho, personal interview, Februari 8, 2023, Jambi.

⁴² Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahnya* (Jakarta: Lembaga Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, 2019), 156-178.

edition (1971), the Saudi Arabia edition (1990), and the first revised edition (2002), where *wanita* was frequently used to translate both terms. However, as feminist movements in Indonesia gained momentum and gender-biased vocabulary came under increasing criticism, the Ministry of Religious Affairs eventually restricted the use of *wanita* and no longer employed it in its Qur'anic translation.

Based on this translation, the use of the term *perempuan* to translate both *al-nisā'* and *al-mar'ah* in QTBMJ reflects a more progressive stance by the translation team regarding gender issues. The translators are aware of feminist debates and critiques concerning the use of *perempuan* and *wanita* in rendering Qur'anic terms. Feminists in Indonesia have long debated the origins and implications of these two words. The word *perempuan* originates from the Old Javanese word *empu*, which denotes "master," "noble," or "respected." With the prefix *per* and the suffix *-an*, it evolved into *perempuan*, and was later absorbed into the Malay language with the meaning of "honored" or "respected woman." Some interpretations also link *perempuan* to the word *ampu*, meaning "support" or "pillar."⁴³

In contrast, the word *wanita* derives from the Sanskrit *vanita*, which means "the desired one." It was later adopted into Old Javanese (Kawi) as *wanita*. According to some scholars, *wanita* carries a different connotation from *perempuan*. In Javanese etymology, it is associated with the phrase *wani ditata*, meaning "brave enough to be ordered" or "willing to be controlled." This connotation portraying *wanita* as someone desired and submissive to men was further reinforced during Indonesia's New Order era. Under Suharto's leadership, the five main pillars of *Dharma Wanita* emphasized the woman's role as a companion to her husband, mother of future generations, household manager, supplemental breadwinner, and citizen.⁴⁴

This historical background has contributed to the perception of *wanita* as a term with more negative, submissive connotations. The female gender, denoted by *wanita* is viewed as dependent, lacking autonomy, and limited to domestic affairs.⁴⁵ For this reason, the QTBMJ translators chose to use *perempuan* instead of *wanita*. The term *perempuan* is seen as more gender-progressive, as it portrays women as capable individuals who can engage in domestic, public, and socio-political spheres. In this view, *perempuan* is no longer represented as someone who must serve or remain under male authority.

The choice of vocabulary in the Qur'anic translation above indicates an ideological negotiation process within the translation of QTBMJ. This negotiation arises from a contest between religious conservatism, the local linguistic context, and considerations of gender progressiveness. Such negotiation is evident in the use of the word *perempuan* to translate both *al-nisā'* and *al-mar'ah*. This choice reflects the translators' efforts to respond to feminist critiques and to avoid patriarchal connotations in translation. The use of *perempuan* may also be seen as a shift toward a more gender-sensitive ideological stance.

⁴³ Sudarwati and D. Jupriono, "Betina, Wanita, Perempuan: Telaah Semantik Leksikal, Semantik Historis, Pragmatik," *FSU in the Limelight* Vol. 5, no. No. 1 (1997), <https://www.angelfire.com/journal/fsulimelight/betina.html>.

⁴⁴ Sudarwati and D. Jupriono, "Betina, Wanita, Perempuan...."

⁴⁵ Susi Yulawati, "Perempuan Atau Wanita? Perbandingan Berbasis Korpus Tentang Leksikon Berbias Gender," *Paradigma: Jurnal Kajian Budaya* Vol. 8, no. No. 1 (2018): 69.

Furthermore, the translators' response to the cultural and sociolinguistic realities of Jambi society also represents a contextual negotiation. The QTBMJ translation team aimed to find expressions that best fit the local context. The use of *perempuan* in the QTBMJ translation reflects, on one hand, a negotiation with local linguistic norms, where *perempuan* is considered more polite and culturally and religiously neutral than *batino*. This negotiation process also highlights the translators' sensitivity to the sociolinguistic dimensions of the Jambi Malay language.

b. Qiwamah: Between Protector and Leader

The translation of the term *qawwāmūn* in the verse "*Ar-rijālu qawwāmūn 'alā al-nisā' bimā faḍḍalallāh ba'dahum 'alā ba'd...*" (Qur'an, Surah al-Nisā' (4):34), rendered in QTBMJ as "*Laki-laki (suami) adolah pananggung jawab bagi paro perempuan (bini) kareno Allah lah malebihkan sabagian orang-orang tu (laki-laki) atas sabagian nang lain (orang-perempuan)...*", has long been a point of contention among Qur'anic exegetes. Scholars debate whether the word *qawwāmūn* should be translated as "protector/responsible guardian" or "leader," since each carries distinct semantic implications and consequences.⁴⁶

If *qawwāmūn* is translated as "protector/responsible guardian" within the context of household affairs, the relationship it establishes between husband and wife is one of cooperation. Such a cooperative model indicates equality between male (husband) and female (wife), without placing one gender in a superior position over the other. In this model, both parties are seen as equal in status, although their roles may differ: a woman may manage domestic matters while the man works outside the home, or vice versa, depending on their agreement and individual capabilities.⁴⁷

In contrast, translating *qawwāmūn* as "leader" tends to reinforce patriarchal connotations. Many traditional exegetes have interpreted Qur'an 4:34 as a normative justification for male leadership over women, particularly within marriage. Some scholars even extend this interpretation to other leadership domains such as national leadership (*al-ra'īs al-'uzmā*) arguing that men are suited for roles like head of state, minister, governor, or judge, while women are deemed fit only for leadership roles aligned with their "natural" physical disposition, such as in healthcare or education.⁴⁸

In the QTBMJ translation of Qur'an 4:34, the team renders *qawwāmūn* as "*pananggung jawab*" (responsible guardian) rather than "*pamimpin*" (leader). On one hand, this choice of wording carries a more gender-just linguistic nuance. However, the subsequent phrase "*Allah lah malebihkan sabagian orang-orang tu (laki-laki) atas sabagian nang lain (orang-perempuan)...*" ("God has favored some of those (men) over others (women)")

⁴⁶ Abida Hassan, Samza Fatima, and Muhammad, "The Issue of Qawamah in Traditional and Modern Legal Discourse," *The Scholar: Islamic Academic Research Journal*, Vol. 8, no. No. 1 (n.d.): 1–15, <https://doi.org/DOI: 10.29370/siarj>.

⁴⁷ Rachel M. Scott, "A Contextual Approach to Women's Rights in the Qur'an: Readings of 4:34", *The Muslim World*, Vol. 99, No. 1, (2009): 60-85.

⁴⁸ Kementerian Agama RI, *Tafsir al-Qur'an Tematik: Kedudukan Dan Peran Perempuan...*, 69-72; Karen Bauer, "Traditional" Exegesis of Q. 4:34," *Comparative Islamic Studies* Vol. 2, no. No. 2 (2006): 129-142.

reveals that the QTBMJ translators still retained a patriarchal tone that lacks gender progressiveness.⁴⁹

This translation implies that the superiority mentioned in the verse belongs exclusively to men, suggesting that women are inherently inferior. The rendering of *faḍḍalallāh ba‘dahum ‘alā ba‘d* as God favoring only men gives the impression that males are intrinsically more valuable than females. However, the Qur’anic verse does not specify any particular gender, allowing for the interpretation that God may favor some men over other men, or some women over other women, or even women over men. Therefore, the QTBMJ translation of Qur’an 4:34 still contains a strong patriarchal bias.

The debate among translators over whether to render *qawwāmūn* as “protector/responsible guardian” or “leader” reflects an underlying negotiation process in QTBMJ’s translation approach. Choosing one of these alternatives reveals a tension between reinforcing patriarchal ideology and reinterpreting the text in light of gender-equal values. Consequently, the use of “protector/responsible guardian” in QTBMJ signals an attempt by the translators to adopt egalitarian values and move away from patriarchal perspectives.

The implication of QTBMJ’s translation is a vision of marital relationships based on equality. The relationship between husband and wife is portrayed as a partnership rather than one of subordination based on male dominance. This, in turn, suggests an ongoing process of contextual negotiation in the translation of the Qur’an into Jambi Malay. Additionally, this vocabulary choice reflects the translators’ awareness of cultural realities and the lived experiences of the local community.

c. The Creation of the First Woman (Hawa/Eve)

One of the key critiques raised by feminist scholars concerns the origin of the creation of the first woman, Hawa (Eve). In classical tafsir (Qur’anic exegesis) literature, it is widely believed that the first woman (Hawa) was created from a man (Adam). To support this view, exegetes typically refer to extra-Qur’anic sources such as *Isra’iliyyat* (narratives of Jewish or Christian origin) and classical tafsir works like al-Ṭabarī’s *Tafsīr al-Ṭabarī* and Ibn Kathīr’s *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm*. These sources generally describe Hawa as having been created from Adam’s upper right rib, which was taken while he was in a state of sleep.⁵⁰

This interpretation has been strongly contested and criticized by feminist scholars. From their perspective, the arguments and sources used by traditional exegetes lack solid evidence and foundation. The hadith that claims Hawa was created from Adam’s rib is considered by feminists to be of *Isra’iliyyat* origin. Furthermore, they argue that such a narration contradicts the Qur’anic text itself. For feminists, no Qur’anic verse explicitly states that a woman was created from Adam’s rib. On the contrary, several Qur’anic verses such as Surah al-‘Alaq (96): 1-5 indicate that human beings, including women, were created from substances like earth and water, not from Adam’s rib.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur’an dan Terjemahnya*..., 30-31.

⁵⁰ Ibnu Kathir, *Tafsīr Al-Qur’an al-Azīm*, juz II (Kairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 2010), 150–54; Ibn Jarir At-Tabari, *Jami’ al-Bayan Fi Ta’wil al-Qur’an*, Juz II (Kairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 2012), 175–79.

⁵¹ Seher Özsert, “A Distinctive Reading of the Creation Story: Adam, Eve and the Serpent in the Traditional Accounts from the Feminist Perspective,” *The Journal of Academic Social Science Studies* 16, no. 96 (2023): 79–90, <https://doi.org/10.29228/JASSS.72235>; Amina Wadud, *Qur’an and Women: Rereading the Sacred Text from a Women’s Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 19–23.

Based on this reasoning, feminists argue that the interpretation of woman's creation from a man's rib stems solely from the opinions of mufassirūn (exegetes) and from *Isra'iliyyat* traditions. In the methodology of tafsir, if a hadith of *Isra'iliyyat* origin contradicts a more authentic hadith or is inconsistent with the wording of the Qur'anic verse, that hadith must be rejected.⁵² Therefore, feminist scholars do not accept the claim that the first woman (Hawa) was created from Adam's rib. They regard this interpretation as inherently gender-biased.⁵³

In the *Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi* (QTBMJ), gender-biased translation appears in the Qur'anic texts related to the creation of women. The QTBMJ translates the phrase *nafs al-wāḥidah* as "Adam" and *zawjahā* as "Hawa." This can be seen in the translation of Surah al-Nisā' (4):1:

"Yā ayyuhā al-nās ittaqū rabbakum alladhī khalaqakum min nafsin wāḥidah wa khalaqa minhā zawjahā wa baththa minhumā rijālan kathīran wa nisā'..."

Which is rendered as:

"Oi sakalian manusio, batakwalah kapado Tuhan-mu nang lah menciptokan kamu dari diri nang sikok (Adam) dan Dio menciptokan darinyo pasanggannyo (Hawa). Dari kaduo-nyo Allah mamparkem-bangbiakkan laki-laki dan perempuan nang banyak...."

("O humankind, be mindful of your Lord who created you from a single self (Adam), and from it created its mate (Hawa). And from the two of them, God spread forth many men and women.")⁵⁴

This translation inserts interpretations that are not explicitly stated in the Qur'anic text, reflecting a gender-biased approach by identifying *nafs al-wāḥidah* specifically as Adam and *zawjahā* as Hawa, even though the original Arabic does not name them directly. Feminists critique this as an example of how interpretive traditions can reinforce patriarchal assumptions not grounded in the textual language of the Qur'an itself.

Classical and modern *mufassirūn* (Qur'anic exegetes) have often used the narrative of woman's creation as a basis to justify the view that women inherently possess characteristics of imperfection. They are frequently likened to a rib, meaning that if treated harshly, a woman will "break," while if treated too gently, she will become "unruly." Exegetes have also viewed women as a complement to men's lives. They are considered like a missing rib of a man; thus, their presence is seen as a form of completion for Adam.

This kind of interpretation is reflected in the QTBMJ translation, revealing the translation team's lack of sensitivity toward feminist critiques regarding gendered language. The use of such translations appears to stem from the translators' tendency to ignore the broader context of feminist debates and criticisms concerning the creation of Adam and Hawa (Eve). Instead, they adhere to the traditional opinion that Hawa was created from Adam. Similarly, in the official Qur'an translation by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Indonesia (Kemenag RI), the term *nafs wāḥidah* is interpreted as "Adam" and *zawjahā* as

⁵² 'Abd al-Wahab 'Abd al-Wahab Fayed, *Ad-Dakhil Fi Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim* (Kairo: Matba'ah al-Hadarah al-Arabiyyah, 1980), 5–10.

⁵³ Amer Ali, "A Brief Review of Classical and Modern Tafsir Trends and the Role of Modern Tafsirin Contemporary Islamic Thought" 3, no. 2 (2018): 39–52; Wadud, *Qur'an and Women*, 20–21.

⁵⁴ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*..., 40–41.

"Hawa."⁵⁵ The QTBMJ team merely referred to this interpretation and rendered these terms into the local Jambi-Malay language, without undertaking a reinterpretation or consulting alternative tafsir sources.

However, in various tafsir works classical and modern term *nafs wāḥidah* has been interpreted in diverse ways. Many of these interpretations offer more gender-just perspectives. For example, in *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm* by Ibn Kathīr, *nafs al-wāḥidah* is not interpreted as Adam but rather as an essence or element (such as soul or earth) from which both men and women were created.⁵⁶ A similar interpretation is found in *Tafsīr al-Mīzān* by Muhammad Husayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī, who understands *nafs wāḥidah* as another form of essence, specifically the soul, and not as Adam, making it the origin of human creation.⁵⁷

These interpretations by Ibn Kathīr and Ṭabāṭabā'ī better reflect a gender-just perspective compared to other exegetes. Translating *nafs wāḥidah* as "soul" or "earth" represents a more gender-neutral approach. Nonetheless, such perspectives are noticeably absent from the QTBMJ. There is no significant revision of the translation compared to the Kemenag RI version. QTBMJ simply translates the terms literally into the local Jambi-Malay dialect without deeper engagement or interpretive effort.⁵⁸

The QTBMJ translation demonstrates that the choice of translated text is heavily influenced by the translators' ideological stance and the prevailing societal understanding. Although feminist scholars have offered numerous critiques of such translations, the QTBMJ translators appear to favor interpretations that are more widely accepted and familiar to the local community. This, in turn, suggests an ongoing process of ideological negotiation between the translators and the evolving moral and cultural understanding of the society.

d. Voluptuous and Graceful Girls

The translation of QS. *Al-Naba'* (78):33 has been one of the more hotly debated verses among translators. In the 1965, 1971, 1990, and 2002 editions of the *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* (The Qur'an and Its Translation), the phrase "*wa kawā'iba atrābā*" was rendered as "voluptuous girls of equal age." However, in the revised 2019 edition, the word "voluptuous" (*montok*) was replaced with "graceful" (*molek*). This revision was made because the term *montok* was deemed too vulgar. Additionally, feminists raised objections to the use of *montok* as the translation of *atrābā*, arguing that it sexualized women.⁵⁹

In response to these concerns, the 2019 revision team of the Ministry of Religious Affairs (Kemenag RI) employed euphemistic language to soften the expression. They argued that the term *montok* was too explicit and risked portraying women as mere sexual objects. Therefore, in the second revised edition of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*, Kemenag RI changed the translation to one considered more gender-sensitive.

⁵⁵ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahannya: Edisi Penyempurnaan 2019* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf al-Qur'an, 2019), 104.

⁵⁶ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an al-Azim...*, 218–220.

⁵⁷ Muhammad Husain Al-Tabaṭabā'i, *Al-Mizan Fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*, juz IV (Beirut: Mu'assasah al-A'lamī li-al-Matbu'ah, 2001), 110–112.

⁵⁸ Kementerian Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnyo...*, 871.

⁵⁹ Hamam Faizin, "Sejarah Penerjemahan Al-Qur'an Di Indonesia: Studi Kasus al-Qur'an Dan Terjemahnya Kementerian Agama RI" (Disertasi, UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, 2021), 274-276.

In *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya: Bahasa Melayu Jambi*, the phrase "*wa kawā'ibā atrābā*" is translated as "gadis-gadis molek nang sabayo" ("graceful girls of equal age"). The use of *molek* instead of *montok* reflects the influence of the 2019 Kemenag RI revision. Since the QTBMJ team closely followed this edition, their translation adopted the more gender-friendly vocabulary.⁶⁰

These examples of Qur'anic verses related to women in the QTBMJ indicate a shift in translation practices, adjusting not only to the broader evolution of religious thought but also specifically to the development of gender-aware translation approaches. The shift moves from patriarchal interpretations toward more gender-sensitive translations. Many of the QTBMJ's translations of verses related to women reflect a more responsive stance toward gender equity. This gender-responsiveness is likely due to the translators' reliance on the 2019 edition of *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* by Kemenag RI. In contrast, the editions from 1965, 1971, 1990, and 2002 exhibit stronger patriarchal language, making the 2019 edition, and by extension the QTBMJ translation by the UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi team, appear more equitable and gender-conscious.

These four translation choices demonstrate an ongoing negotiation between the translators' ideology, the state, and local cultural moral values. Thus, translating the Qur'an into local languages is not merely a linguistic task based on textual analysis. Rather, it is a complex process shaped by the dynamic interaction between textual elements and contextual realities. Consequently, the choice of translated terms is often heavily influenced by extra-textual considerations, ranging from the translators' ideology, the socio-political context of the translation, and the prevailing public moral climate at the time of the text's production.

C. Conclusion

This article argues that the translation of the Qur'an into a local language is fundamentally the result of a negotiation process involving the translator's ideology (religious beliefs), the public demands or moral values of the local majority, and the translator's living context. This study indicates that it is challenging for a translator to avoid the dialectical interplay among these three elements. Ideological negotiation refers to the interaction between the translator's own beliefs and the prevailing moral standards of the community. The moral ideology of the community compels translators to render the Qur'an in alignment with the beliefs of the majority of local communities. Therefore, the individual or groups of translators do not possess complete authority to incorporate their personal opinions and interpretation into the translation of the Qur'anic text. Meanwhile, the translator's context encompasses the circumstances, conditions, and events in which the translator lives.

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⁶⁰ Departemen Agama RI, *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya*..., 871.

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