

Regrettably, Dagiev does not discuss the bibliographic literature more thoroughly, at least to indicate previous bibliographies that may benefit his readers. These would include first and foremost Yuri Bregel's three-volume *Bibliography of Islamic Central Asia* (1995), which contains sections on the Isma'ilis, and on Tajikistan and the so-called 'Pamir Tajiks' more broadly. Obviously, every bibliography has lacunae, and Dagiev's is no exception. Here one may note the absence of works by Yayoi Kawahara. However, these criticisms in no way take away from the overall usefulness of Dagiev's contribution, which should raise the profile of Russian, Soviet, and Tajikistani scholarship on Tajikistan's and China's Isma'ilis among specialists in both Central Asian and Isma'ili studies.

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<https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etad047>

Published online 27 September 2023

Under Empire: Muslim Lives and Loyalties across the Indian Ocean World, 1775–1945

By MICHAEL FRANCIS LAFFAN (Columbia, NY: Columbia University Press, 2022. Columbia Studies in International and Global History), xii + 464 pp. Price PB £30.00. EAN 978–0231202633.

In the century and a half covered by this dense study, the Indian Ocean world was the arena of fierce competition between the rival Dutch and British empires (with a minor role for the French and memories of Portuguese domination of the seas). One by one, the Muslim polities in Southeast and South Asia lost their independence during this period and had to submit to Holland or Britain or, on the Malay Peninsula, Siam. Some of the beleaguered Muslim rulers appealed to the Ottoman sultan for support; others, in the final decades of the period, came to look upon Japan as a possible ally against the West and liberator of Muslims. In this complex field of forces, men (and women) of many different backgrounds—sailors and traders, administrators and adventurers, pilgrims and students, soldiers and enslaved people—crossed the Indian Ocean, by choice or coercion, and spent parts of their lives at different shores, contributing to changing the societies where they settled and being transformed themselves by the experience. This book privileges the lives of these individuals over the grand narratives of imperial expansion, resistance, emergence of new ethnic and national identities, and revolution, which are here and there audible as background music but more often submerged under the noise of many individual voices speaking of their own more immediate concerns.

The Cape of Good Hope and Ceylon were major stages on the naval voyage from Europe to the Indies, strategic holdings of the Dutch with significant

numbers of settlers by the late eighteenth century and conquered by the British during the nineteenth. The Dutch deported various sorts of undesirables—insurgents, dissident members of indigenous ruling houses, and criminals—as well as soldiers and enslaved people from the Indies to these outposts. The first of the book's three parts focuses on these Muslim sojourners on the Cape and in Ceylon and the various European travellers and settlers who interacted with them. Based on the perusal of a wide range of published material as well as archives in South Africa and Ceylon, Great Britain and the Netherlands, Laffan reconstructs the lives of leading personalities of the Muslim communities in these abodes of exile: the famous Shaykh Yusuf of Makassar (who had died at the Cape in the previous century and whose bones had been repatriated but whose empty shrine remained an important holy site), the more elusive Tuan Guru ('Lord Teacher'), Sayyid 'Alawi, and community leaders with such names as Frans van Bengalen and Jan van Bugis. We read in some detail of the rivalries and conflicts between the protagonists and their followers, and of their accommodations with Dutch and British authorities. Laffan also devotes much attention to the (mostly European) men who produced knowledge (and in some cases, misunderstandings) about these communities.

Throughout the text there are hints that the Muslim sojourners from various parts of the Archipelago—the Moluccas, Celebes, Madura, Java, Sumatra, and the Malay Peninsula—were gradually merging into a new ethnic collectivity named Malay or at least classified as such by the Dutch and especially British travellers, officials, and adventurers whom Laffan cites. Many of them were brought to Ceylon and the Cape as slaves, as becomes clear from numerous passing references to slavery, manumission, anti-slavery societies, and, in Part 3, Arab resistance to the abolishment of slavery. Soldiers whom the Dutch had recruited from Madura and sent to Ceylon represented another form of bonded labour; when the British replaced the Dutch in Ceylon, most of these soldiers remained there and loyally served their new overlords. Many of the British authors Laffan extensively cites held very positive views of these 'Malays' and perceived them as natural allies of the empire, loyal and capable soldiers rather than the treacherous men prone to run amok as they had allegedly been in Dutch eyes. The situation was further complicated in that 'Malay' soldiers also ended up in the service of Buddhist polities in the region, Kandy (Ceylon), Ava (Burma), and Siam (Thailand).

In Part 2, new actors appear. The Ottoman Empire assumes a more prominent presence as a distant place of appeal, while developments in Egypt and other parts of the Arab world are perceived by the exiled communities of the Cape and Ceylon as well as in Southeast Asia. Among the travellers and sojourners, there are remarkable men of substance such as the Kurdish *'ālim* Abu Bakr Efendi, whom the Ottoman sultan sent to South Africa in response to a request from the Cape Malay community, and the Egyptian revolutionary 'Urabi Pasha, who after his failed uprising was exiled to Ceylon by the British (with Ottoman connivance). Western consuls and adventurers such as Wilfrid Scawen Blunt appear as self-appointed spokesmen for Arab or other Muslim interests. And the first pioneers of a vernacular press appear, such as Baba Ounus Saldin in Colombo, who

in 1869 published the first ever Malay-language newspaper, well before the better-known pioneers in Southeast Asia itself. Laffan is by no means the first to write about these men, but he has dug up more detailed information about them than can be found in existing biographies.

In Part 3, the author comes closer to a traditional linear historical narrative, focusing on Southeast Asia's Arab community and their relations with the Arab world and the Ottoman state, the attempts of Ottoman consuls to project Ottoman soft power, the emergence of Pan-Islamism, the mediating roles of Indonesians studying in Egypt and the Hijaz, and the growth of Indonesian nationalism in the early twentieth century. Besides the Ottoman Empire and Turkey, Egypt and the new Saudi state, another power that appears increasingly present in the chief actors' minds is Japan.

This final part expands the author's narrative in his first book, *Islamic Nationhood and Colonial Indonesia: The Umma below the Winds* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003). As in the first two parts, however, the lives and activities of selected individuals are taken to stand for the larger social and political developments and are reported in great detail. Among the most remarkable of these individuals are the Tunisian Muhammad bin Hashim, who became a prominent publisher and active participant in debates setting Muslim reformists against the authority of the Hadrami sayyids in Indonesia, and the very Javanese Mas Mansur, a long-time resident of Makka and Cairo, who upon returning to Java joined nationalist circles as well as the Muslim reformist association Muhammadiyah and in 1943 called for jihād alongside Japan against the colonial powers. Numerous others briefly share the limelight as Laffan relates an anecdote about what they did or said, or speculates about what they might have thought.

This is not a book that will be read from cover to cover: the information is too dense, and it requires some effort to keep track of all the different actors that appear in these pages. While reading, I often felt torn between admiration for the author's perseverance in looking for every single scrap of information on the often-elusive personalities that inhabit the book and irritation at the noise, the sheer volume of often less than relevant *faits divers* that obscure the larger view. It is as if the author has inserted every bit of information he uncovered into the text, without much concern for its relevance to any sustained argument. As a result, I sometimes felt overwhelmed by the sheer mass of detail, which I found hard to process because the background and context of all the little facts and the author's aims in presenting them often remained unclear. Carefully read and properly arranged, the numerous passages referring to slavery and other forms of bonded labour and involuntary migration could constitute a significant contribution to the present academic and political debate on this issue, but Laffan clearly had no such ambition and does not even refer to the literature on the subject.

The strongest reason for reading or browsing through this book is the many fascinating cameos of individuals who found themselves voluntarily or involuntarily displaced and caught up in the larger events of the period, who carved out a

place and a role for themselves and, as the most interesting of them did, contributed to the leading ideas of their time and that of the following generations.

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<https://doi.org/10.1093/jis/etad059>

Published online 27 December 2023

The Official Indonesian Qur'ān Translation: The History and Politics of Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya

By FADHLI LUKMAN (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2022), xx + 341 pp. Price PB \$32.95. EAN 978–1800643987.

Revered by over a billion Muslims and studied by generations of scholars, the Qur'ān has been translated from classical Arabic into several dozen languages for over half a millennium. No translation can fully capture the aural quality, sublime nuance, and stylistic potency of the Qur'ān. All translations reflect the presuppositions, beliefs, and interpretations of the translators. Such is the case with translations of the Qur'ān into Bahasa Indonesia, a language spoken by close to three hundred million Muslims. In this highly-stimulating and thoroughly-researched book, Fadhli Lukman explores the circumstances spurring the Indonesian postcolonial state to translate the Qur'ān in its own image and the contestations surrounding that ostensibly religious pursuit. What emerges from this complex analysis is how a holy book can be rendered in ways that served the interests of the powerful. Translation is more than a conveyance of meaning or transferral of words. It is a process imbued with ideological ends. Or, as Fadhli argues, the translations of the Qur'ān by modern states such as Indonesia were 'driven by political interests and the resulting translation reflects such interests' (p. 6).

Fadhli places into sharp relief an ambitious translation programme commissioned by President Sukarno (1901–70) and improved upon by succeeding post-colonial state departments. Dubbed as *Al-Qur'an dan Terjemahnya* (Al-Qur'an and its Translation, or QT) project, the underlying intent of this undertaking was to marry the messages of the Qur'ān with government nation-building campaigns. The QT was a highly-politicized translation movement, where knowledge, power, and faith intersected through the medium of the Qur'ān. In all three phases of Indonesian history—broadly termed as the Sukarno, Suharto, and post-Suharto periods—new versions of the QT were produced, each reflecting the policies of specific regimes. In effect, the QT project, as Fadhli expertly explains, complemented the mainstreaming of Bahasa Indonesia as the common language of all Indonesian Muslims as part of the state's effort to construct a national identity. It was the 'promotion of Indonesian as the unifying, official language of the state, alongside the language policy pursued by the post-colonial governments, which gradually drove the practice of undertaking Qur'anic scholarship in regional languages into extinction' (p. 86).

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