

Bible Translations for the Majority Population from West Asia to East Asia with a Focus in Southeast Asia

Daud Soesilo

Introduction

In Bible translation there is no one size that fits all. Indeed it is only a dream to think that there is one translation that will meet the needs of everyone from all walks of life. Years ago Eugene Nida and Charles Taber even stated that the old question “Is this a correct translation?” must be replied by raising another question, “For whom?”¹⁾ Hence, discussing Bible Translations in West Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and East Asia contexts means we must consider the diverse audiences to know which Bible translations are potentially suitable to meet the needs of the majority population so that they can understand the biblical message correctly and will not misunderstand it.

Let’s take the example of the situation in one country in East Asia where the majority of the population has had wide exposure to Buddhism. William Smalley told us what an average saffron-robed Buddhist monk of Bangkok, Thailand, would understand the meaning of the translation of Jn 3:16 into Thai:

The Sacred Lord was so infatuated with the entangling world that he gave his only sacred son so that anybody gullible enough to believe in the sacred one would not die, but would have the misfortune of continuing in the endless round of suffering.²⁾

Smalley went on to say that in the orthodox Thai Buddhist view senses and

1) Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974, p. 1.

2) William A. Smalley, “Theology as Language” in *I Must Speak to You Plainly. Essays in Honor of Robert G. Bratcher*, edited by Roger L. Omanson. Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Paternoster, 2000, p. 215.

feelings (like love) create wants and anxieties which entangle us in the world of suffering. A ‘Sacred Lord’ must be far above such an emotion as loving.³⁾ Moreover, gullibility is frequently implied in Thai expressions used to translate ‘believe.’⁴⁾ Last but not least, Thai typically believe that when any creature dies it is reborn as another creature, with greater or lesser suffering. The only way to escape the endless round of suffering is to become ‘enlightened’ so as to move out of the cycle. Thus, the last thing a Thai Buddhist wants is to keep on living forever.⁵⁾

As a matter of fact, for the most part in East Asia and parts of South Asia the presentation of the 4 Gospels’ accounts of Jesus’ birth, life and death in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, could easily be misunderstood as affirming the teaching of reincarnation. In addition, Jesus sending the man with the dreaded skin disease to see the priest (Mt 8:1-4, Mk 1:40-45, Lk 5:12-16), could easily be understood as Jesus did not succeed in healing the person, hence Jesus sent this man to see a (Buddhist) priest.

Similarly in West Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia where the majority of the population has had much exposure to Islam, they will have some preconceived ideas about Bible and Bible translation which will somehow color their understanding when they hear or read the translation. Among other things, many would understand that when God put Abraham (*Ibrahim*) to the test of faith, Abraham was ready to offer his son Ishmael born of Hagar as a sacrifice following the dominant traditional view among Muslims today⁶⁾ rather than his son Isaac born of his wife Sarah following the biblical account (Gn 22:1-14).

It would hardly do justice to cover all majority audiences in West Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia and East Asia in this brief paper. Thus the discussion will be limited to a bird’s eye view of the various attempts in Bible translating for the majority population in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia and Malaysia, with some relevant references to other countries in the region.

3) Ibid., p. 216.

4) Ibid., p. 216.

5) Ibid., p. 216.

6) John Kaltner, “Abraham’s Sons: How the Bible and Qur’an See the Same Story Differently” in *Bible Review*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2 (April, 2002):16-23, 45-46.

How Do Bible Societies Serve Bible Translation Needs?

The first task for which a national Bible Society was founded is Bible translation, it has been the backbone of Bible Society ministries, and is still a key element in our mission. It is to make the Word of God available to all people in a translation that is faithful to the meaning of the original texts (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek) and in a language which is easily understood.

In the year 2000 when representatives from national Bible Societies in the fellowship of the United Bible Societies met during its World Assembly in Midrand, South Africa, they agreed on the Identity and Ethos statement of the organization which describes its common task as achieving the widest possible, effective and meaningful distribution of the Holy Scriptures and of helping people interact with the Word of God.

In line with the UBS Identity and Ethos, each member society serves the churches by translating, publishing and supplying Scriptures in the languages of the people (national and the various vernacular languages), to meet the churches' need for Scriptures for their life and worship, for spiritual nurture, for ministry, mission and evangelism.

Although basically there are five different types of Bible translations which are geared to satisfy different needs,⁷⁾ each member society will normally

7) Eugene A. Nida and Jan de Waard, *Functional Equivalence in Bible Translating: From One Language to Another*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986, pp. 40-41.

The five types of Bible translations are as follows:

(1) An interlinear translation is a "word-for-word" rendering strictly following the syntactic order in the source language (often accompanied by a literal translation). This is helpful for one who wishes to know the forms, the word order, and the literary devices in the original without having to learn this particular language oneself, but is quite awkward to be useful for the average person. For example, the NIV Interlinear Hebrew-English Old Testament; the RSV Interlinear Greek-English New Testament. Lexically speaking the words are English, but syntactically they are Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

(2) A literal translation/formal-correspondence is a traditional translation which adheres to the form wherever possible, though stylistically awkward in the target language. This is helpful for those who have had background in theological education, particularly those well-grounded in exegesis and hermeneutics. Some examples are, the King James Version (1611), the English Revised Version (1881, 1885), the American Standard Version (1901), the American Translation by Smith and Goodspeed (1923), Moffatt Translation (1924), the Revised Standard Version (1952), the Jerusalem Bible (1966), the New American Bible (1970), the New American Standard Version (1976,

1978), the New International Version (1978), the New King James Version (1979), Tanakh: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According to the Traditional Hebrew Text (1985), the New Jerusalem Bible (1985), the New Revised Standard Version (1989); Martin Luther's *Die Bibel*; *Bible de la Pleiade* (1959), *Nouvelle Version Second Revisee* (1978), *La Bible de Jerusalem* (1955, 1974), *Traduction Oecumenique de la Bible* (1975), etc.

(3) A functional/dynamic equivalent translation is a translation which is very serious in conveying the intended message of the original; though the forms have been changed, the meaning and function are preserved. Linguistic findings are fully employed in this type of translation (such as back transformation in the source language, componential analysis, making the implicit explicit, contextual consistency in the transfer, transformation in the receptor language). Moreover, this method of translation is informed and developed by the findings in the fields of communication and sociosemiotics. This type of translation is very helpful not only for theologically-trained readers, but also for laypersons who desire to read and study the Bible. Some examples are, *Today's English Version/the Good News Bible* (1966, 1976), the *New English Bible* (1961, 1970), the *Revised English Bible* (1989); the *Contemporary English Bible* (1997). *Die Gute Nachricht des Alten und Neuen Testaments* (1982); *La Bible Ancien et Nouveau Testament--Traduite de l'hebreu et du grec en francais courant* (1982).

(4) Adapted translations are "free" translations which must be adapted to an accompanying code, such as music, literary genres such as poems, and performing medias such as drama, film, video, and television. A second type of adaptation is usually prompted by different views as to the nature of translating, resulting in harmonizations and embellishments. A paraphrase is an example of the second form of adapted translations. The purpose of the *Living Bible--Paraphrased* (1971) is "to say as exactly as possible what the writers of the Scriptures meant, and to say it simply, expanding where necessary for a clear understanding by the modern reader." However, the 'translator,' or rather the adaptor feels free to inject personal opinions and even theological biases into the text, harmonizing and correcting the difficult passages. Though easy reading, we cannot rely on it for a serious study of the Bible, for its accuracy in terms of meaning and function is suspect. Notes: The good thing is that its revision, the *New Living Translation* is a much better version.

(5) Cultural reinterpretations are describing in one's own words the contents of the original text, by transferring the cultural setting from one particular context to another. These cultural reinterpretations make interesting reading materials particularly to those from the specific culture in question, but are not as useful for studying the message and function of the text in its own historical and cultural background. For example, Clarence Jordan's *Cotton Patch Version* of the Gospels transfers the context of the ancient near eastern to contemporary southern United States one. Thus, Pontius Pilate was Governor of Georgia, Annas and Caiaphas were co-presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention, Jesus was born in Gainesville, GA, and without trials Jesus was put to death by a mob in Atlanta, GA. Similarly Roger Parmentier's French rendition of Amos using the contemporary political setting of modern world. An Indonesian of North Sulawesi gave this rendering of John 15:1-8 as "I am the true clove, nutmeg,

provide at least one meaning based translation in a target language, and in many instances two different translations in the same language, being a formal correspondence translation and a functional equivalent translation. In addition, in some situations, an interlinear translation may be produced to meet a specific need. On top of these, a Study Bible may be prepared, along with Bible Study Materials, Scholarly Editions, Handbooks, Diglots, and other Scripture products such as Children's Scriptures, Braille Scriptures, as well as Audio and Video Scriptures, etc.

What are the Guidelines for Preparing Scriptures for Majority Population?

Kenneth Thomas has come up with a very helpful set of guidelines to assist Bible Societies that are located in countries where the dominant religion is a non-Christian faith in preparing Scripture materials for people of other faiths,⁸⁾ as follows:

1. There is to be respect for people of other faiths as fellow human beings created and loved by God who share with Christians common human concerns.
2. There is to be respect for people of other faiths as ones who are sincere in their religious convictions and have a right to share their faith with others in the same way Christians do.
3. There should be sensitivity to the symbols, customs, and convictions which are valued by people of other faiths so as not to offend them and create barriers to communication.

and copra". Or, a certain Captains J. Rodgers' reinterpretation of Ps. 23 following the style of King James Version:

"Seamen's Version of the Twenty-third Psalm. The Lord is my pilot, I shall not drift. He lighteth me across the dark waters: He steered me in the deep channels. He keepeth my log; He guideth me by the Star of Holiness for His Name's sake. Yea, though I sail 'mid the thunders and temptests of life, I shall dread no danger; for Thou art with me; Thy love and Thy care they shelter me. Thou preparest a harbour before me in the homeland of eternity; Thou anointest the waves with oil; my ship rideth calmly. Surely sunlight and starlight shall favour me on the voyage I take; and I will rest in the port of my God forever."

8) Kenneth J. Thomas, "People of Other Faiths" in *Communicating Scriptures: The Bible in Audio and Video Formats*, edited by Viggo Sogaard. Reading, England: United Bible Societies, 2001, 13:1-4.

4. There is to be recognition of the respect that people of other faiths have for their own scriptures and the Scriptures of Christians.
5. It is recognized that the Abrahamic faiths come out of a common cultural milieu and share some of the same historical background, religious concerns, and theological language.
6. It is possible to have good relations with people of other faiths while each witnesses to one's own faith.
7. The relationship of the indigenous Christian community with people of other faiths should be respected as primary in any given situation.

Which Bible Translations were Available in Indonesia and Malaysia?

Long before we got Bible translations in other Asian languages, we already had Matthew's Gospel translated into Malay by a Dutch tradesman named Albert Cornelisz Ruyl. The following is a sketch of the history of Bible translations in Indonesia and Malaysia.

In 1600 just six years after the first Dutch ship sailed to Indonesia, Ruyl, an employee of the Dutch East Indies Company sailed to what is now Indonesia. He studied the Malay language and started translating the Gospel of Matthew. Ruyl finished his translation in 1612, just one year after the King James version was published. In 1629 Ruyl's translation was published in the Netherlands. It was a diglot version with parallel texts in Malay and Dutch entitled IANG TESTAMENTUM BAHARU: EUANGELIUM ULKADUS BERSURATNJA KAPADA MATTHEUM. It is now found at the Public Library of Stuttgart, Germany and in the British Museum in England.

The British and Foreign Bible Society and the United Bible Societies note this historic event as follows:

The first Malay Gospel, printed in 1629, is significant as the earliest example of the translation and printing for evangelistic purposes of a portion of the Bible in a non-European language.⁹⁾

Ruyl completed the Malay translation of the Four Gospels and Acts with the assistance of Jan van Hasel and Justus Heurnius. This edition of the Four Gospels plus Acts was printed in 1651. A year later van Hasel and Heurnius

9) Eugene A. Nida, ed. *The Book of a Thousand Tongues*. 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1972, p. 269.

had their Malay translation of Psalms printed.

Further important work was undertaken by Rev. Daniel Brouwerious. His translation of Genesis was published in 1662 and the complete New Testament in 1668. Unfortunately, this translation borrowed too many Portuguese words, e.g. *Spirito Sancto* “Holy Spirit”, *crus* “cross” and some Portuguese spelling.

It was a Dutch medical doctor with theological training named Melchior Leijdecker who, with the assistance of a review committee, gave us the very first complete Bible in Malay. At first Leijdecker went to East Java as a military chaplain in 1675. But in 1678 he became the minister of the Malay congregation in Batavia (now Jakarta). In 1691 he started translating the whole Bible into high Malay, which was used as the language of literature at that time. He translated from the original biblical languages.

Leijdecker, with the assistance of a review committee consisting of Pieter van der Vorm, George Henric Werndly, Engelbertus Cornelius Ninaber and Arnoldus Brants, completed the New Testament which was printed in 1731. They produced the first Malay Bible ELKITAB, IJA ITU SEGALA SURAT PERDJANDJIAN LAMA DAN BAHARUW printed in Amsterdam in Roman script in 1733. Twenty-five years later a 5-volume Malay Bible in Jawi (Arabic) script was printed in 1758.

The following is a list of those who were involved in the effort of revising Leijdecker’s Malay Bible translation, some of them were carried out in what is now called Indonesia, while others were carried out in what is now called Peninsular Malaysia (marked by an asterisk):

William Robinson (Matthew, 1815; John)

*Robert Hutchings and J. McGinnis (NT, 1817 Serampore; OT, 1821) in Pulau Pinang

*Claudius Thomsen of London Missionary Society (LMS) + Munsyi Abdullah (Matthew, 1821)

*C. Thomsen and Robert Burns + Munsyi Abdullah (Four Gospels + Acts, 1832)

Johannes Emde, D. Lenting, Walter Henry Medhurst (NT, 1835; Psalms) in Surabaya

C. T. Hermann (Matthew, 1850) in Minahasa

J. G. Bierhaus (Mark, 1856)

Nathaniel M. Ward (Genesis, 1856) in Padang

B. N. I. Roskott (NT) in Ambon

*Benjamin Keasberry of LMS + Munsyi Abdullah completed the revision of the New Testament that was published in Singapore in 1852 (Roman script edition), and in 1856 (Jawi/Arabic script edition).

A Dutch Mennonite missionary named Hillebrandus Cornelius Klinkert came to work in Jepara, Central Java with Rev Pieter Jansz, a translator of the Bible into Javanese. Klinkert saw the need for a translation more easily understood than Leijdecker's because his Indonesian wife only understood Javanese and low Malay. Klinkert translated the New Testament into the Semarang dialect of low Malay. The four Gospels were printed in 1861 and the complete New Testament in 1863. This "market Malay" translation was very popular and was still being reprinted in 1949.

The systematic distribution of the Bible in Malay only began after the employment of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) staff in Singapore in 1880. In 1890 Bishop Hose from the Anglican Church in Singapore complained to the BFBS that the New Testament revision done by Keasberry was difficult to understand. He quickly prepared a translation of Matthew and the person who became the main translator was an LMS missionary by the name of William Girdlestone Shellabear. Shellabear gave us the first Malay Bible translation specifically in the Malay of what is now called Peninsular Malaysia.

The following is a list of those who collaborated with Shellabear in the effort of Malay Bible translation and revision:

*Anglican Bishop Hose (Matthew)

*William Girdlestone Shellabear, Hose, W. H. Gomes (Matthew, 1897)

*W. G. Shellabear, H. L. E. Leuring, Hose + Datuk Dalam of Johor (NT, 1910; OT in Jawi/Arabic script, 1912; in Roman script, 1927-29) Malaka and Singapore

*W. G. Shellabear + Chew Chin Yong + Suleiman (NT in Baba Malay, 1913).

In 1929 the Netherlands Bible Society, the BFBS and the National Bible Society of Scotland combined to produce a Malay Bible translation that would meet the needs of both Indonesia and Peninsular Malaya. This new translation

was supposed to be a replacement for the previous Bible translations by Leijdecker (1733), Klinkert (1879) and Shellabear (1912). So a German missionary named Werner August Bode who was then teaching Theology in Tomohon, Minahasa, worked on a new Malay translation of the New Testament with the assistance of A. W. Keiluhu of Ambon, Mashohor of Perak, Abdul Gani, W. Shellabear and Hendrik Kraemer.

It is interesting to point out that in order to meet the needs of the Indonesian Christians in an independent Indonesia, the Indonesian Bible Society (*Lembaga Alkitab Indonesia*) printed the so-called *Terjemahan Lama* (Old Translation) comprising Klinkert's Old Testament (1879) and Bode's New Testament (1938). (In the preface to this 1958 Bible edition it was noted that since 1952 a Translation Committee had been working on a more modern translation). This edition was meant to meet the needs of those who wanted both the Old Testament and the New Testament in one volume. So it was basically produced as an interim measure until a fully Indonesian Bible translation became available.

Meanwhile Father J. Bouma of the Catholic Church in Indonesia produced a new Indonesian translation of the New Testament published by Arnoldus of Ende, Flores in 1964 and the revised edition followed in 1968. Father Cletus Groenen worked on the translation of the Old Testament books until 1968 when the Catholic Church agreed to work with the Indonesian Bible Society in a joint Bible translation program. Consequently they discontinued their own translation project.

Work on the Indonesian New Translation was begun in 1952 by the Netherlands Bible Society and in 1959 it was taken over by the Indonesian Bible Society. The committee consisted of experts from the Netherlands, Switzerland and various parts of Indonesia such as North Sumatra, Java, Minahasa and Timor. The team was chaired by a Dutchman Dr. J. L. Swellengrebel from 1952 till 1959. Later an Indonesian Dr. J. L. Abineno chaired it from 1962 to the completion of the project. The team members include C. D. Grijns, P. S. Naipospos, Dr. Chr. F. Barth, E. I. Soekarso, Dr. R. Soedarmo, M. H. Simanungkalit, O. E. Ch. Woewoengan, Dr. Liem Khiem Yang, J. P. Siboroetorop, Dr. A. de Kuiper, J. Koper and Rikin-Bijleveld. The New Testament was published in 1971 and the Bible was finally released by the Indonesian Bible Society (LAI) in 1974 with the Deuterocanonical edition

also made available. Thus this version called *Terjemahan Baru* “New Translation” was the first truly ecumenical Bible translation used by all Christians in Indonesia. This version is also used by some churches in Malaysia.

It is helpful to point out that in October 1997 the Indonesian Bible Society launched the newly revised New Testament called *Perjanjian Baru Terjemahan Baru, Edisi Ke-2* “New Testament: New Translation, Second Edition.” This was prepared by a team of biblical scholars who were experts in biblical Greek and Indonesian language to take care of the following:

a) Changes in Indonesian Language

Just as all living languages change, so has Indonesian. Some words have become obsolete, some new ones have entered the language, and others have changed meaning. Time and usage determine which new terms are accepted and which are not. As a matter of fact unless our translations reflect the current usage, there is a good chance of communicating wrong or unintended meaning to the readers. Examples of words no longer in common usage are:

Mt 24:17 *peranginan* housetop

Mt 13:33 *sukat* measure

Lk 13:21 *khamir* leavened

1 Tim 1:10 *pemburit* homosexual

b) Developments in Biblical Research

Today’s translators have access to better Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts from which to translate. Discovery of more ancient manuscripts, increased use of lexicons, dictionaries and commentaries have all affected the translation process. Philologists have studied more ancient manuscripts and more modern translations have been based on their work.

c) Developments in Linguistics and Translation Methods

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century and the modern missionary movement many missionaries have translated the Bible. However in modern times more use has been made of translation theory and native speakers. Findings in the fields of linguistics and communication have given us a better

understanding of the translator's task.

In fact in the final stage of this Indonesian New Testament Revision numerous biblical scholars and heads of churches from all over Indonesia gathered in Cipayung, West Java to discuss the remaining issues before finalizing this revised edition.¹⁰⁾

With respect to translation methods up to late 1960s, most translations were based on the Formal Equivalence translation method which, as much as possible, attempts to retain the form of the original languages. It was generally thought that each of these translations will be able to be used for worship and liturgical use all the way to mission and evangelism, somewhat like one size fits all. Then a new translation method was introduced by Dr. Eugene A. Nida.¹¹⁾ It is called the Dynamic Equivalence (later known as Functional Equivalence) method and it emphasises the transfer of the meaning and function of the original biblical languages rather than retaining the form. This new Bible translation method was applied to both modern Malay and Indonesian Bible translations.

Not long had the first edition of Today's Malay Version (TMV, 1987) been distributed, when the Bible Society of Malaysia was asked to consider revising this translation. A meeting was held with the Bible Society of Malaysia Language Committee. It was then decided that the revision will be carried out to take care of the following (references are based on the TMV):

- (1) Spelling errors or misprints, for instance, the word for *mengikut* 'to follow' was printed as *mengikat*, meaning 'to tie up' (Dan 3:21); *Allan* instead of *Allah* (Is 40:9).
- (2) Patterns which follow the English Good News Bible (GNB) too closely -- often word-for-word, such as in Mk 1:7 *Aku tidak layak bahkan*

10) Daud Soesilo, "Revisi Perjanjian Baru Terjemahan Baru" in *Forum Biblika* No. 7 (1998):15-28. See also Daud Soesilo, "Malay Bible Translation: What's in Store for Malaysian Churches" *Christian Reflections within an Emerging Industrialised Society*, edited by Thu En Yu, David R. Burfield, Romeo L. del Rosario and Chong Tet Loi (Kota Kinabalu: Seminari Teologi Sabah, 1998), pp. 77-97.

11) Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Helps for Translators, No. 8. Leiden: E J Brill for the United Bible Societies, 1969. See also Eugene A. Nida and Jan de Waard. *Functional Equivalence in Bible Translating: From One Language to Another*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1986. As it's been cited earlier the other translation methods are (a) interlinear, (b) paraphrase and (c) cultural adaptation.

menunduk dan membuka tali kasutnya “I am not worthy even to bow down and untie his thongs”

(3) Usage which reflects more Indonesianism rather than Malay one, for example, *barangsiapa* rather than *sesiapa* ‘whoever’ (Mk 3:29); *mulai* instead of *mula* “begin” (Mk 1:21).

(4) Mistranslations, for instance, *Sabtu* ‘Saturday’ instead of *Sabat* ‘Sabbath’ (Ex 20:8); a worse example is found in 1 Sam 24:4 *berehat* ‘took a rest’ rather than *membuang air besar* ‘to relieve himself’.¹²⁾

To Use Allah or Not to Use Allah?

Since the time of William Shellabear we already faced the question of which set of names and terms to use in Bible translation. Shellabear, who was then stationed in Singapore, began translating the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes and a few hymns into Malay.¹³⁾ Shellabear was really keen to spread God’s Word in Malay, so he resigned from the military in 1890 and began to serve as a Methodist missionary. In 1899 he was appointed by the Bible Society as the main translator for the New Testament in Malay. The New Testament was finished in 1904 and printed in 1910. His revision of Klinkert’s Old Testament was finished in 1909 and published in Jawi (Arabic) script in 1912. In 1927-29 the Roman script version was printed, one based on English spelling for the Malay Peninsula (now Malaysia) and the other based on Dutch spelling for the East Indies (now Indonesia).

Shellabear initiated work among the Malays. He and his wife began mission work and as a result, a small Malay congregation was formed. Unfortunately,

12) Daud Soesilo, “Focus on Translators: Revising the Malay Bible” *The Bible Translator*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (October 1997): 433-42. Cf. Daud Soesilo “Malay Bible Translation: What’s in Store for Malaysian Churches” in *Christian Reflections within an Emerging Industrialised Society*, edited by Thu En Yu, David R. Burfield, Romeo L. del Rosario and Chong Tet Loi (Kota Kinabalu: Seminari Teologi Sabah, 1998), pp. 77-97.

13) Shellabear is also known for his editions of classical Malay. He also translated Bible stories into Malay poetry *syair*. He also attempted a translation of the Qur’an into Malay, but he died before completing it. For a more complete list of Shellabear’s works in Malay and in English, see Robert Hunt, The Legacy of William Shellabear in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 26, No 1 January 2002, p. 31.

this tiny Malay congregation that he had started disintegrated just as he began his Malay Bible translation.¹⁴⁾

One unique feature of Shellabear's translation was the use of the word *Isa* for Jesus and *Isa al-Masih* for Jesus Christ. The previous Malay translations used *Yesus*, as did those after World War II. To Shellabear's way of thinking *Isa* and *Isa al-Masih* would be a bridge between the contents and the readers, as *Isa* is the Arabic form for Jesus which is a form of the Hebrew name *Yehoshua* "Joshua", while *al-Masih* is the Arabic form for the Greek *Christ* and the Hebrew *Messiah*.

In the early 1990's a Christian organization in West Java approached the Indonesian Bible Society and requested a special Indonesian Bible version with Arabic names and terms for their ministry among the majority population. After serious consideration, the Indonesian Bible Society suggested that a revision of the Shellabear Malay Bible translation be prepared since this translation had already used the Arabic names and terms.¹⁵⁾

a) Text and Exegesis

Shellabear NT does not have the longer ending of the Lord's Prayer. It is not part of the text (Mt 6:13), the insertion in Acts 8:37 is missing, and the so-called Trinitarian proof text (1 Jn 5:7-8) is not part of this translation. However, the longer ending of Mark (Mk 16:9-20) was kept as part of the text without any indicators such as square brackets and there is a shorter ending of this gospel. Similarly the passage Jn 7:53-8:11 is included without any indicators of its status in the older Greek manuscripts.

In addition, there are some renderings that reflect wrong exegesis such as 1 Sam 24:2 *Maka masuklah Syaul ke sana hendak tidur* "Then Saul went there (i.e. into the cave) to sleep." Obviously the translator did not understand the actual meaning of the biblical euphemism "to cover his feet" which means relieving oneself.

There are also modifiers which are not part of the meaning of the text or they now convey different meaning, e.g. *dalam negeri Bait Lahim di tanah*

14) Robert Hunt, Lee Kam Hing and John Roxborough. *Christianity in Malaysia. A Denominational History*. Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1992.

15) Daud Soesilo, "Revising the Shellabear Bible: Reviving an Old Translation for a Special Audience" *The Bible Translator*, Vol. 45, No. 4 (October, 1994):426-34.

Yahudiah “in the state of Bethlehem in the land of Judah” (Mt 2:5), and *di benua Syam* “in the continent of Syria” (Mt 4:24).

b) Language Usage

1. Old Language - The Shellabear Bible used certain Malay vocabulary, phrases and syntactical constructions which were probably correct in Shellabear’s time, but are no longer in use or have changed in meaning. Consider the following examples:

Griek “Greek” (Acts 11:20): nobody uses it in Indonesia -> becomes *Yunani* “Greek”

Syam Syria (Mt 4:24); archaic -> *Siria* Syria

Bini wife (1 Cor 7:4): colloquial and not very polite -> *istri* wife

tasik lake (Jn 6:1): common in Malaysia, but not in Indonesia -> *danau* lake

alamat sign (Is 7:14; Jn 3:2): today’s unmarked meaning is address-> *tanda* sign

sidang Allah God’s council (Acts 20:28): usually legal council -> *jemaah Allah* God’s group of devout people

alam barzakh “abyss” (Rom 10:7) -> *alam kubur* “abyss”

Some Malay syntactical constructions used in the Shellabear Bible also need to be updated. This is because they follow Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek constructions too closely. Today they sound very archaic and even ridiculous, such as the following:

Karena kita kejadiannya juga “For we (are) the event also” (Acts 17:28b)

Maka perahu itu pun sudah penuh air ruangnya “Then the boat was full of water its space” (Lk 8:23)

Setelah petanglah hari, karena itulah hari kelengkapan, yaitu malam hari perhentian “After the evening had come, that was the day of completeness, i.e. the evening of stopping” (Mk 15:42)

Inilah surat keturunan Isa al-Masih “This is the letter of the descendant of Jesus the Christ” (Mt 1:1)

Ibrahim beranakkan Ishak “Abraham gave birth to Isaac” (Mt 1:2)

Hai perempuan, apakah yang kena mengena di antaraku dengan dikau? “O woman, what is the relationship between me and you?” (Jn 2:4)

In terms of discourse, the use of *adapun* “as for, as regard to, concerning” to begin a narrative is now very outdated (e.g. Gn 3:1 ff). Moreover in the whole of Gn 3 which consists of a total of 24 verses, every verse begins with either *maka* “then” (19 times) or *lalu* “then” (4 times). It will need to be revised so that it will read as naturally as any typically good Indonesian prose.

Similarly old spelling will have to be revised to reflect the present spelling system, for instance:

Sorga “heaven” (Mk 8:11) -> *surga*

korban “sacrifice” (Lk 2:24) -> *kurban*

Rohu'lkudus “Holy Spirit” (Lk 4:1) -> *Ruh Allah*

Baharu “new” (Jn 2:10; Acts 17:21) -> *baru*

Thus in this revision work as in any other, old language, spelling, vocabulary, syntax and discourse have to be replaced by contemporary usage.

2. Arabic Loan Words - Since this is a special edition designated for a special audience, Arabic loan words and terms would be retained in as much as they still reflect current usage, e.g.:

arasy “throne” (Rev 5:11)

mahzab “sect, party” (Acts 15:5)

Insya Allah “God willing” (Acts 18:21; 1 Cor 4:19)

bani (Israil) “children of (Israel)” (Jn 12:13)

However, when the loan words or terms convey wrong meaning then these will be revised in line with present usage. For instance the word *Ka'abah* is used for the Temple (e.g. Lk 24:53; Acts 21:28; Rev 11:19). However in today's Indonesian usage *Ka'abah* only mean one thing, i.e. the holy rectangular building situated in Masjid Dlharam in Mecca. It has been decided that occurrences of *Ka'abah* will be revised to read *Bait Tuhan* “house of the Lord.” Revisers will of course be careful not to change it throughout. Rather they will first check the original texts to make sure which words are used in the original, i.e. the Hebrew *hyekal*, or *miqdas*, or *debyr*, or the Greek *hieron*, or *naos*, etc.

Some Arabic loan words which were not used in the Shellabear Bible but have been used in other Malay Bible translations (e.g. M. Leijdecker, 1733; H. C. Klinkert 1879; or W. A. Bode 1938) are incorporated in the revised

edition provided they still represent the present usage, e.g.

Perkataan Allah “Word of God” (Jn 1:1) -> *Kalam Allah* “Word of God”

Lawan al-Masih “Opponent of the Savior” (1 Jn 4:3, 2 Jn 7) -> *Si Dajal* “Anti Christ” or “the Devil who will descend to earth before the Day of Judgment”

al-Masih yang dusta “the deceiving Savior” (Mt 24:24; Mk 13:22) -> *Al-Masih palsu* “the false Savior.”¹⁶⁾

3. Euphemism - In most cases the Shellabear translation keeps the form in translating biblical euphemism, i.e. the use of mild, delicate, indirect terms to hint at an unpleasant matter instead of saying it plainly. As a result, however, the translation sounds strange, as in:

Maka dikenal oleh manusia itu akan isterinya Hawa itu maka mengandunglah ia lalu memperanakkan akan Kabil Then Eve his wife was known to the man; and she conceived, and bore Cain (Gn. 4:1).

The same euphemism is maintained in similar fashion in Gn. 4:17, 25. In the revised version, a straight forward Indonesian word that is decent and acceptable in polite conversation is used, namely *bersetubuh* “to become one body,” i.e. to copulate.

The following are other instances of euphemism related to the genitals and one referring to death. These were translated literally and thus obscured the intended meaning:

Bubuhlah tanganmu di bawah pahaku “Lay your hand under my thigh” (Gn 24:2)

Tuhan akan mencukur ... roma di kaki “The Lord will shave ... fine hair of the legs and feet” (Is 7:20)

Maka Abia pun beradulah di depan segala nenek moyangnya “Then Abia went to sleep in front of all his forefathers” (2 Chr 14:1)

Since this literal rendering of biblical euphemisms sometimes produces unintelligible translation, it has been decided that if the form misleads the reader, even though it is a formal translation, then the euphemism will be translated meaningfully.

16) However, the Indonesian Bible Society rejected the request of the team to introduce new Arabic terms in the revision of Shellabear NT. E.g. *Hawari* instead of *murid*, *pengikut* “the followers of Jesus”, or *Maulid Isa Almasih* instead of *kelahiran Yesus Kristus* “the birth of Jesus Christ” (cf. Natal).

c) Names

1. Proper Names - Keeping in mind this special target audience, as much as possible the Arabic forms of proper names would be kept, e.g.

Isa Al Masih Jesus Christ, Jesus the Savior (Mt 1:1; 1:18; Acts 10:36 ff)

Syaul Saul (Acts 9:1 ff)

Yahya John (Mt 3:1 ff)

Maryam Mary (Lk 1:27 ff)

Yusuf Joseph (Mt 1:19 ff)

Jibrail Gabriel (Lk 1:26 ff)

Ibrahim Abraham (Mt 1:1 ff)

Daud David (Mt 1:6 ff)

There has been a long debate on the use of *Isa* rather than *Jesus* for Jesus. Subsequent to the Shellabear Bible translation, all Malay/Indonesian Bibles have used *Jesus* (cf. Today's Arabic Version also uses a form of Jesus.) The heads of churches in Indonesia and Malaysia believe that *Jesus* covers a wider meaning than *Isa*. Nevertheless a few Bible translations in the regional languages maintain the use of *Isa*. Having considered the historical use of *Isa* in the Shellabear Bible and having taken into account the special needs of this specific target audience, the Indonesian Bible Society agreed to the continued use of *Isa* rather than *Jesus* in this particular revision.

2. Names of God - In the present Shellabear edition, the Tetragrammaton is usually translated as *Allah*, the revealed name of God. This is quite acceptable to the Muslim audience, especially because it is in keeping with the Islamic creed *la ilaha illa allah* which is usually rendered into Indonesian as *Tiada Tuhan selain Allah* "There is no other Lord beside God" (a more correct translation would be "There is no other deity beside God" since "the Lord" is the equivalent of the Arabic word *Rabb*). This usage as reflected in the existing Shellabear version is in direct conflict with the other Indonesian Bible translations both formal and common language versions.

Moreover, the Christian practice of saying *Allahku* "my God" *Allahmu* "your God" or *Allah kami* "our God" is quite offensive to the Muslim audience who have some knowledge of Arabic. In Arabic *Allah* is short for *al Illah* "the God" (cf. Hebrew *ha eloah*, Greek *ho theos*), so one cannot say *Allahku* since it would be construed as awkward as is the English construction

“(*) my the God”. In contrast to the different meanings and functions of the generic Hebrew word *elohim*, *Allah* is specific. It is only the revealed name of God (whereas the revealed name in the Hebrew Bible is *YHWH*). So those who feel more Arabic than Indonesian cannot say “my God,” “your God,” “our God” or “the God of the Philistines,” etc. Similarly it would be offensive to say *Allah Ibrahim, Ishak dan Yakub* “God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” One can say *Allah Tuhanku* “God my Lord,” but not *Tuhan Allahku* “the Lord my God.”

Most Indonesian speaking Christians have no problems with these expressions. In fact they write and say them all the time. However since this revision is being prepared for an audience of the Muslim background who may have strong feelings about this specific use of the language, it has been decided to find a way out. Such a rendering would need to be both faithful to the meaning and function of the original biblical texts, and faithful to the form in the socio-religious dialect of the receptor’s language.

After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that it is important and preferable to preserve the Old Testament usage of *YHWH* and its translation tradition in the Septuagint. This has been the long term practice of the Indonesian speaking churches (i.e. following the widely circulated Indonesian Bibles). The names will not be reversed to conform to their commonly known creed. However, special accommodation will be made for this special need especially when dealing with the possessive pronoun and the genitive form.¹⁷⁾

That is how they have done it in the **Revised Shellabear New Testament** (see appendix 3):

Sabda Isa kepadanya, “Perintah yang terutama ialah, ‘Dengarlah hai orang Israil, Allah, Tuhan kita, adalah Tuhan Yang Maha Esa.’ ”

Isa said to him, “The most important commandment is, ‘Listen, O Israel: God is our Lord, the only one Lord.’ ” (Mk 12.28)

Other names of God are to be handled as follows:

Yahweh -> **TUHAN** “LORD”

17) Cf. Kenneth J. Thomas. “Allah in Translations of the Bible” in *The Bible Translator*, Vol.52, No.3 (July, 2001):301-306. See also Daud Soesilo. “Translating the Names of God: Recent Experience from Indonesia and Malaysia.” *The Bible Translator*, Vol.52, No. 4 (October, 2001):414-423.

Adonai -> *Tuhan* "Lord"

Yahweh Zebaoth -> *TUHAN yang Maha Kuasa* "the LORD Almighty"

Elyon -> *Allah yang Maha Tinggi* "Most High God"

So, this has been an attempt to prepare a special translation for the majority population.

Translations Which Try Not to Use Allah

Unfortunately, Bible translation is often utilized as a vehicle to justify a certain ideology or theology, as the following cases illustrate. It is indeed sad and unfortunate that the Scripture Union of Malaysia has been quoting from the Indonesian Bible translation *Terjemahan Baru* "New Translation" and acknowledges the use of the texts in their Malay publication. However, each time the word *Allah* "God" occurs, it has been consistently changed to *Tuhan* "Lord" without the consent of the copyright holder, namely the Indonesian Bible Society.

As a matter of fact this Malaysian organization published *Alkitab Kanak-Kanak: Kisah Teragung di Dunia Diceritakan Semula untuk Kanak-Kanak* (2000) which is a Malay translation of the English Lion publication. In this publication, the word *Allah* was also dropped so there is now no difference between *YHWH* and *Elohim*. This was partly done due to a certain fear on the part of the leadership of this organization after some states and the federal government prohibited the use of *Allah* by non-Muslims.

In response to this kind of challenge the Heads of Malaysian Churches met in Kuala Lumpur in 1985 (sponsored by the Bible Society of Malaysia) as well as in the 1989 Kuching Consultation of the Heads of Churches (sponsored by the Christian Federation of Malaysia). Considering the unanimous decision of both meetings to keep the name *Allah*, the Bible Society of Malaysia as the servant of the Malaysian churches is obliged to honor this decision in the Malay Bible and Deuterocanonical Books (*Alkitab Berita Baik*, BSM 1996).¹⁸⁾

After all, the Arabic loanword *Allah* is the cognate of the Hebrew names of God *El*, *Elohim*, *Eloah* in the Hebrew Old Testament. Arab Christians from before the dawn of Islam have been praying to *Allah* and *Allah* was used by

18) "Documents on the Kuching Consultation of the Heads of Churches" (1989).

Christian theologians writing in Arabic. So the Christian usage of *Allah* predates Islam. In addition *Allah* is the name of God in the old Arabic Bible as well as in the modern Arabic Bible (Today's Arabic Version). Thus, Christians in Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei and other places in Asia, Africa, etc., where the languages are in contact with Arabic, have been using the word *Allah* as the Creator God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Finally in Malay and Indonesian the word *Allah* has been used continuously since the very first printed edition of Matthew's Gospel in Malay (Ruyl, 1629), then also in the first complete Malay Bible (Leijdecker, 1733) and in the second complete Malay Bible (Klinkert, 1879) up to the present.¹⁹⁾

Some have tried to argue that there should be two versions in Malay, one using *Allah* God and the other *Tuhan* Lord, just as Chinese Bible translations have one Catholic and two Protestant versions with their respective sets of names for God, Holy Spirit and prophets, etc. However, this argument cannot be used as justification for two Malay versions. The different Chinese versions reflect three distinct communities who refer to God by different names. In contrast there is no genuinely Malay speaking church that is using only *Tuhan* and all Malay speaking churches use *Allah* when referring to the Creator God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is worth pointing out that unlike Malaysia, in Indonesia *Allah* is accepted as the supreme being for all, thus there has never been a prohibition such as the one in Malaysia. See also the all inclusive definition of *Allah* in the Indonesian Dictionary *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*. *Allah — Nama Tuhan dalam bahasa Arab, pencipta alam semesta yang mahasempurna; Tuhan yang Maha Esa yang disembah oleh orang yang beriman* "The name of the Lord in Arabic, creator of the universe who is most perfect; the Lord, the one and only God who is worshipped by people of faith."²⁰⁾

19) Olaf Schumann. "Mengenal Kata Allah." in *Berita Oikoumene* (October, 1992):28-30. See also Daud Soesilo. "Translating the Names of God: Recent Experience from Indonesia and Malaysia." *The Bible Translator*, Vol.52, No. 4 (October 2001):414-423.

20) Cf. The struggle of the choices for the Name of God in Mongolian Bible translation, namely whether to use *Burhan* ("Bur" means "burhesen" or covered, everything, the whole universe; and "han" means king/ruler) or "Orchlongiin Ezen" ("master of universe"). For helpful articles, see Practical Papers for *The Bible Translator*. Vol. 43, No. 4 (October 1992) which was a special issue devoted to the

A couple of years ago 30,000 copies of *Kitab Suci: Torat dan Injil* (Jakarta: Bet Yesua Hamasiah, no date) was published in Indonesia where the text of the Indonesian formal translation *Terjemahan Baru* “New Translation” published by the Indonesian Bible Society has been systematically changed here and there without the permission of the copyright holder (see appendix 4). It’s very likely that whoever did this one got the idea from David Stern’s *Complete Jewish Bible* which is a translation intended to show the Jewishness of the Scriptures. Stern undertook the translation after his conversion to Christianity.²¹⁾ It seems that this *Kitab Suci: Torat dan Injil* has been prepared by using some kind of computer assisted consistency table. Hence, Jesus is written as *Yesua* “Joshua”, Jesus Christ is rendered *Yesua Hamasiah*, the tetragrammaton (YHWH) is transliterated as *YAHWE*, and God is transliterated as *Eloim* (rather than the Hebrew *Elohim*). Interestingly this form *Eloim* is also used for “God” in the New Testament (Greek *Theos*); therefore readers find *Eloim* all over the Old and New Testaments. It was explained in the brochure distributed by the organization behind this edition that in a

topic of translating the names of God, especially “How to Translate the Name - UBS Statement” *The Bible Translator*, Vol. 43, No. 4 (October 1992): 403-406.

21) David H. Stern did both *The Jewish New Testament* (1989) and *The Complete Jewish Bible* (Jerusalem and Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1998). This is a mixture of a formal correspondence and functional equivalent translation prepared for the rather limited need of those who refer to themselves as Messianic Jews primarily in North America. Its stated purpose is to express its Jewishness among other things by transliterating several keywords such as Torah, and phrases such as *Shalom aleikhem* for “Peace be with you” (Jn 20:19), as well as proper nouns such as *Yitz-chak* for Isaac, and *Ye-shu-a* for Jesus. The tetragrammaton in the OT and the OT quotes in the NT is translated *ADONAI*, while *Elohim* is translated “God” when it stands alone, or as compound words *Adonai Elohim* for *adonai YHWH*, *ADONAI-Tzva’ot* for “Lord of Hosts,” *Elyon* or *Ha’Elyon* for “the Most High”. In 3 Jn 7 the Name is rendered *HaShem*, however, in the Old Testament it is translated the Name. Cf. Philip E. Goble’s *The Orthodox Jewish Brit Chadasha* (New York: AFI International Publishers, 1996, 1997). This English translation of the New Testament (*Brit Chadasha*), which is copyrighted by Artists for Israel International, uses the Hebrew form of the names. The form for Jesus is *Yehoshua* and the form for Messiah is *Moshiach*. In addition, it contains many Hebrew words in transliterated forms, so unless one reads and understands Hebrew, this English translation is very difficult to comprehend. The situation would be very similar if one were to come up with an Indonesian translation that contains numerous Arabic words in Romanized scripts. Here is an example: “*Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach* answered, *SHEMA YISROEL ADONAY ELOHEINU ADONAY ECHAD is harishonah.*” (Mk 12:29).

nutshell Allah is a pagan god, the god of the Arabs, thus Christians cannot use Allah. This organization is also working among the majority population. Fortunately, the Indonesian Department of Religious Affairs has issued a strong statement against this pirated edition.

Some examples from the text of this *Kitab Suci: Torat dan Injil* are:

Dengarlah, hai orang Israel: YAHWE itu Eloim kita. YAHWE itu esa!
 “Listen O nation of Israel: YAHWE is our Eloim. YAHWE is one!”
 (Dt 6:4)

Jawab Yesua: “Hukum yang terutama ialah: Dengarlah, hai orang Israel, YAHWE Eloim kita, YAHWE itu esa.”

Joshua replied, “The most important commandment is: ‘Listen, O nation of Israel! YAHWE is our Eloim. YAHWE is one.’ ” (Mk 12:28)

Yesua Hamasiah, anak Dawid, anak Abraham
 “Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham” (Mt 1:1)

... *di bubungan Bet Eloim*
 “... on the pinnacle of the Bet Eloim” (Mt 4:5)

Roh Eloim “Spirit of Eloim” (1 Cor 12:3)

Yesua adalah Tuhan “Joshua is Lord” (1 Cor 12:3)

The Holy Gospel: Study Edition

Although there is an attempt to prepare a special translation for the majority population, Bible Societies in Asia Pacific have prepared a special Study Edition commenting on the text of a functional equivalent English translation *Today’s English Version* (TEV) also known as *The Good News Translation* (GNT).

There are various reasons and needs that call for the preparation and publication of a Study Bible. Although most Study Bibles are meant for members and leaders in the Christian community, there is also a need for a special Study Edition for seekers and new believers. Study notes are meant to guide and assist readers to understand the message as intended by the author.

A team of Translation Officers in the Asia Pacific region started working in the early 1980’s on preparing Scripture materials suitable for the majority

population in West Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia. The fruit of their labor of love was **The Holy Gospel: Study Edition** published in 2001. As stated in the introduction:

The Study Edition of the New Testament has been prepared for those interested in learning about the life and teaching of Jesus the Messiah (Isa Al Masih) and his followers. Since the various parts of the New Testament were written almost two thousand years ago, several types of information have been provided to help the readers understand the situation and culture of that time.²²⁾

This Study Edition is now available in English (see appendix 1) and Urdu (see appendix 2), and it will soon be available in Indonesian and a few other languages.

Among other things, this Study Edition features the introduction to the New Testament, and introduction to each part of the New Testament with information about its history, language, translation, major themes and emphases, more specifically:

1. Themes of each paragraph
2. Meanings of particular words and phrases
3. Explanation of cultural customs
4. Historical references
5. Religious background and practices
6. References to other parts of the Bible(the Torah, Psalms and Prophets).²³⁾

Another helpful feature of this Study Edition is its glossary. Recurring words and phrases are marked with an asterisk (*) to indicate that there are entries in the glossary at the end of the text which explains these recurring words and phrases. In addition, it has maps and plates of sample Bible manuscripts.

Based on the report of the UBS Regional WASAI Consultant,²⁴⁾ a draft translation of the Urdu Study Edition was prepared by an experienced professional Christian translator. A basic principle involved in preparing the

22) *The Holy Gospel also called The New Testament: Study Edition*. Brisbane: UBS Asia Pacific Region, 2001, p. vii.

23) *Ibid*, p. viii.

24) Kenneth J. Thomas' report on WASAI NT Urdu Translation Review Workshop, dated July 31, 2000.

translation was to produce material acceptable to both church and majority audience so as not to offend either that would lead to the rejection of the notes. Prior to the review workshop, the draft was checked for spelling and grammatical errors. The corrected draft was then reviewed by thirteen people in a workshop setting. The participants included two women, one a professor and head of the department of Urdu literature and the other a member of the diocesan staff with primary responsibility for adult literacy education. The men included two ministers, a professor of OT, a lecturer of linguistics who is a Bible translator, a member of the training staff for the Asia region of the Far East Broadcasting Corporation, the retired head of the Salvation Army in Pakistan, a retired principal of a church-related high school, and an evangelist among the majority audiences, among these were two converts. Most of the issues faced in the review had to do with insuring the use of correct Urdu terminology that had the right nuances of meaning. However, some notes had to be expanded (e.g., Glossary note on “Samaritans” was expanded to include more historical information that is otherwise unavailable in Urdu) and some additional notes were included where the text of the Urdu Bible was not clear (e.g. “righteous” and “fellowship with God”) and where the TEV did not reflect the Urdu literal translation of the Greek (e.g. Hosanna). It is interesting to point out that these notes are primarily for the majority audience but the church is watching over the shoulder at all times ready to criticize and object. It was discovered in the process of reviewing the translation that the notes will be very valuable to the Christian community which has almost no study materials. After all this is the first study New Testament published in the Urdu language.²⁵⁾

The Indonesian Study Edition has been prepared along the same principles

25) It is worth mentioning that Pakistan Bible Society has just begun a new project preparing an “Interlinear Greek and Urdu New Testament with Interpretation.” It is an important new venture and probably one of the most important projects ever undertaken by this society. This project has three major target audiences. It will enable seekers and scholars from both Christian communities and the majority population see clearly the original Greek from which the NT has been translated. Moreover, Christian students who want some help in learning biblical Greek will find this edition an important resource. Last but not least, the Urdu speaking people will get great assistance in understanding the text of the Urdu formal translation because the accompanying Interpretation will present the meaning of the text in language that is natural and closer to today’s Urdu speech.

and procedures as the Urdu. It should be published later this year.

We now have the Study Edition of the New Testament *Injil Sharif (Ahd Jadid)*, however, we do not have the Study Edition of the Old Testament (*Ahd Atiq*) which include the Torah *Tawrat*, the Prophets *Anbiya*, and the other writings such as the Psalms *Zabur* and the Proverbs *Amsal*).

At this moment we do not have a Study Edition for the majority population of East Asia and parts of South Asia. Perhaps it is high time for Bible Societies in this part of the world to start thinking and planning along this line so that what is now available for majority population in West Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia, may also be made available for the majority population of East Asia and parts of South Asia.

Conclusion

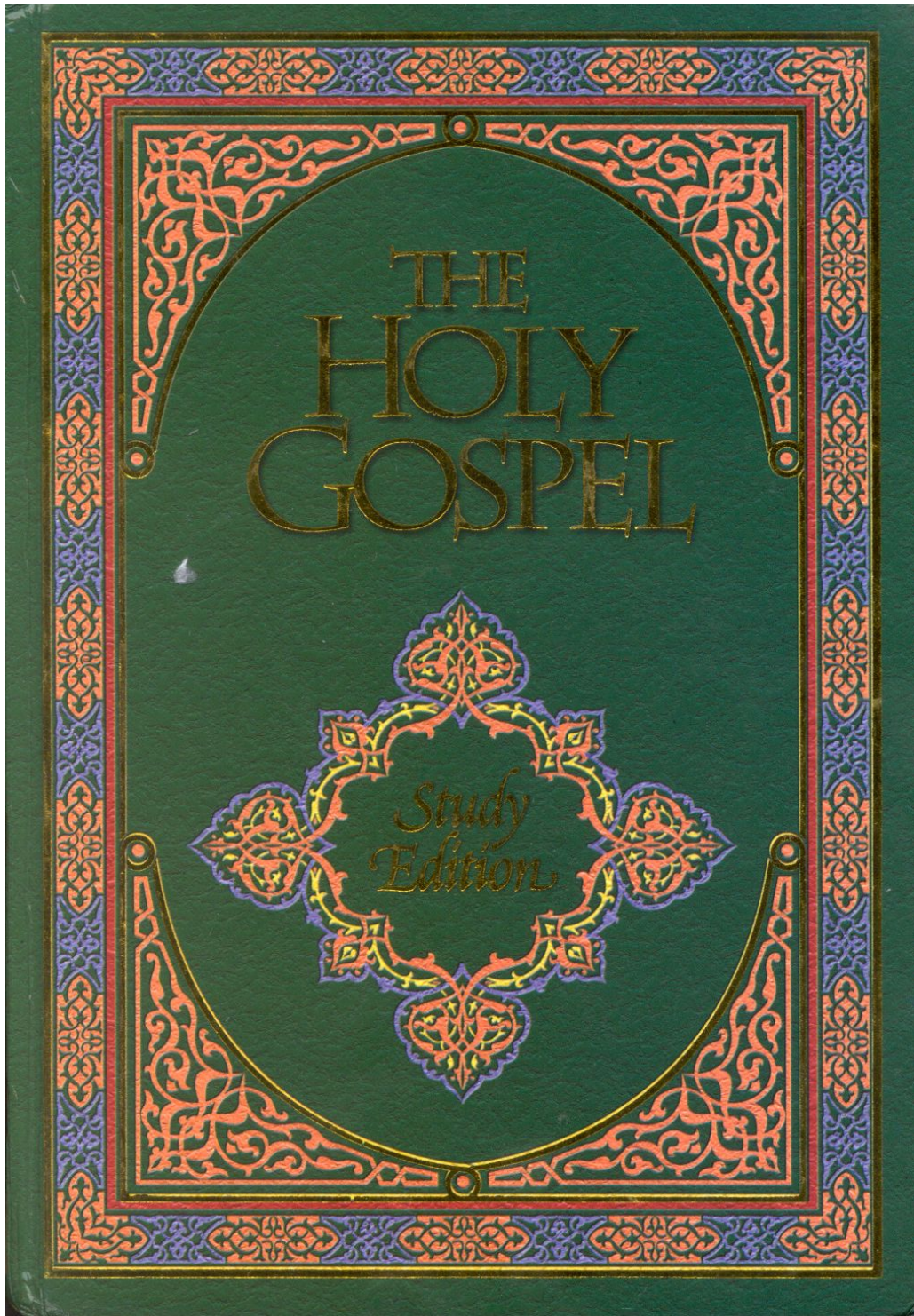
To sum it up, Bible Societies have committed themselves to achieving the widest possible, effective and meaningful distribution of the Holy Scriptures and of helping people interact with the Word of God. What concrete programs are needed to achieve our common task?

Yes, we have prepared special translations, and we have prepared a New Testament (*Ahd Jadid*) Study Edition with special notes for seekers and new believers, but we still need the Study Edition of the Old Testament (*Ahd Atiq*). Moreover, we need to have the Study Edition of both the New and the Old Testaments for the majority population of East Asia and parts of South Asia.

To that goals, we need more Bible translators and translation officers who are well trained and well equipped in biblical studies, linguistics, anthropology and translation studies. They must be deeply committed to preparing meaning based Bible translations following the guidelines of responsible, biblical scholarship which is most up-to-date, as well as the most up-to-date usage of the national and regional languages, and at the same time being respectful and sensitive to the needs of the majority population.

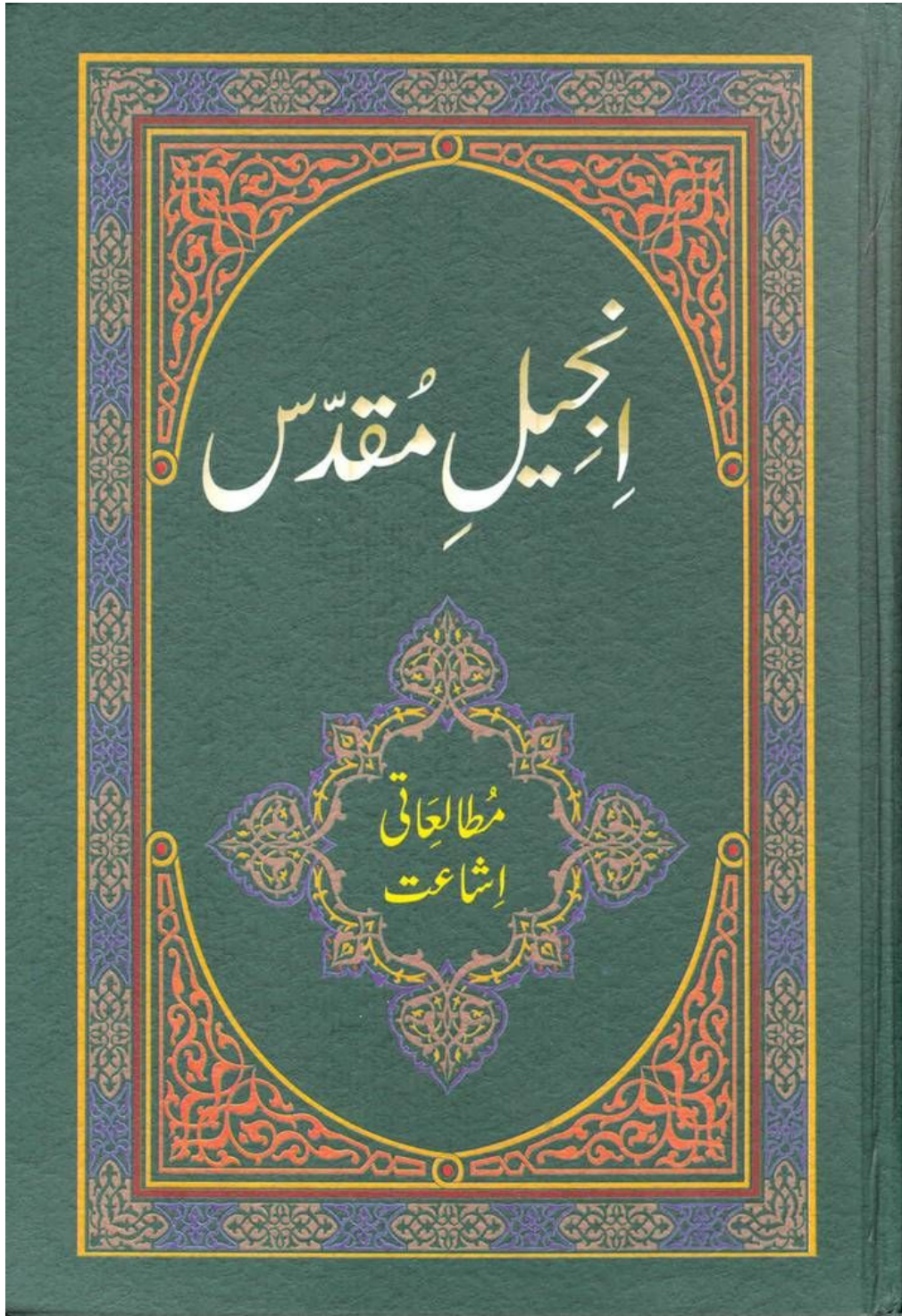
APPENDIX 1

The Holy Gospel: Study Edition — in English (2001)



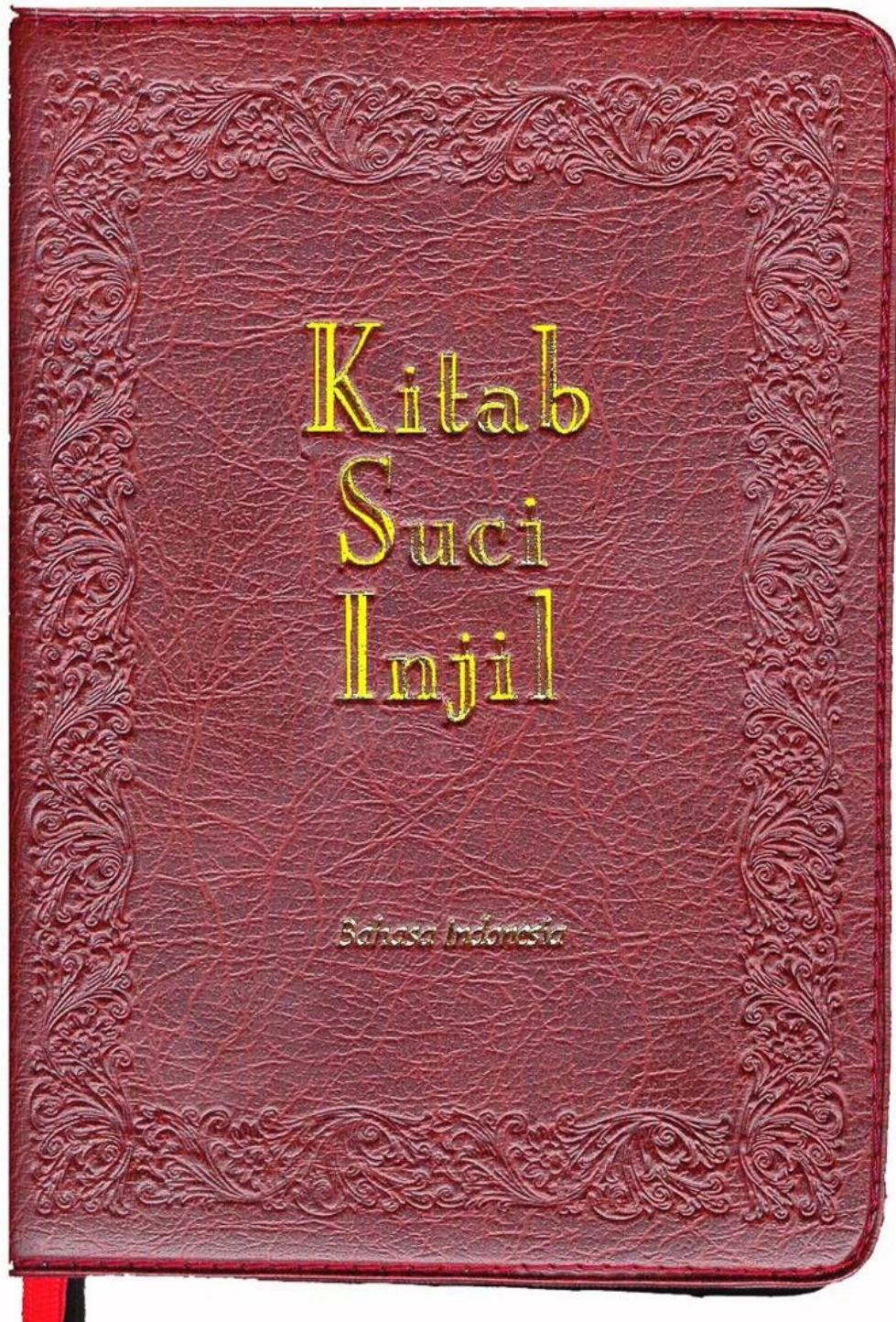
APPENDIX 2

TAZI New Testament with Study Notes — in Urdu (2001)



APPENDIX 3

Revised Shellabear New Testament — in Indonesian (2000)



APPENDIX 4

Kitab Suci: Torat dan Injil — in Indonesian (no date)

