

# Orientalist Ambivalence: Translating the Qur'an in the Dutch Republic

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## Abstract

This article compares the first two Dutch translations of the Qur'an printed in the Dutch Republic: *De Arabische Alkoran* (1641) published by Barent Adriaensz Berentsma and *Mahomets Alkoran* (1657) published by Jan Rieuwertsz. It builds upon previous bibliographic research by quantifying the abbreviation of the Surahs in the two editions, identifying the sources of the paratexts, and describing the different strategies for translation. This analysis reveals how different editing choices reflect contradictory ideological attitudes among the publishers and translators involved. These producers of the first Qur'an translations echoed the widespread hostility towards Islam in Western discourses while also highlighting the peaceful nature of Muhammad and the similarities between the Bible and the Qur'an. This 'Orientalist ambivalence' not only resonated in local debates about freedom of conscience among Amsterdam Mennonites, but also signalled a more fundamental epistemological uncertainty following the rise of Cartesianism in the Dutch Early Enlightenment.

*Keywords:* Early Enlightenment, Qur'an, translations, intellectual history, Cartesianism, Orientalism

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More than a thousand years after God revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad, bookseller Barent Adriaensz Berentsma became the first to publish a Dutch edition of the holy book: *De Arabische Alkoran*, printed in 1641, probably by Joost Broersz, and reprinted once before the end of the year. Sixteen years later the Amsterdam publisher Jan Rieuwertsz issued a new Dutch rendering: *Mahomets Alkoran en Tweevoudige beschrijving van Mahomets leven* (1657).<sup>1</sup> This edition was translated by the productive Mennonite translator Jan Hendriksz Glazemaker and printed by Tymon Houthaeck. Glazemaker's translation was reprinted no fewer than eight times between 1658 and 1799, before it was superseded by a more current translation in the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

This interest in Islam among Dutch readers emerged amid increasing political, economic, and scholarly interactions between the Dutch Republic and the Islamic world. As a result of the trade agreements between the Dutch and Morocco (1610), the Ottoman Empire (1612), and Algiers (1622), cultural exchanges and trade relations with Muslims became more common both within and beyond the borders of the Republic.<sup>3</sup> Islamic diplomats, tradesmen and (occasionally) students travelled to Holland, and a group of Islamic refugees from Spain (known as Moriscos) settled permanently in the Low Countries.<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile, knowledge of Islam and the Arabic language advanced after the university of Leiden appointed Thomas Erpenius as its first professor of Arabic in 1613, followed by his successor Jacobus Golius in 1625.<sup>5</sup> The Dutch publishers Louis Elzevier, Daniel Elzevier, Johannes Janssonius, and Adriaen Moetjens further contributed to the knowledge of Islam available in the Republic by reprinting André du Ryer's 1647 French Qur'an translation, in 1649 (twice), 1672, 1683, and 1685.<sup>6</sup>

New encounters between the Christian and Islamic worlds gradually caused a change in Western views on Islam. Whereas medieval thought generally represented Muhammad as

1 For a profile of Jan Rieuwertsz and his publishing activities, see Visser, 'Blasphemous and pernicious'.

2 Binark and Eren, *World Bibliography*; Den Hollander, 'The Qur'an in the Low Countries', 232.

3 Kaplan, 'Muslims in the Dutch Golden Age', 237-238.

4 Wiegiers, 'De Nederlanden en de islam', 143-144.

5 Vrolijk, 'Arabic Studies', 13. On Erpenius's appointment in Leiden, see Vrolijk and Weinberg, 'Thomas Erpenius', 36-39.

6 Den Hollander, 'The Qur'an in the Low Countries', 237-238.

a dangerous imposter and an enemy to Christianity, early modern discourses opened up to more ambivalent and less hostile attitudes.<sup>7</sup> Signs of this shift occurred in Erpenius's Latin translation of Georgius Elmacinus's sympathetic biography of Muhammad included in Erpenius's *Historia Saracenicæ* (1625), Pierre Bayle's relatively neutral entry 'Mahomet' in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697), and Adriaan Reland's *De religione mohamedica* (1705), one of the first attempts to provide an unprejudiced Western account of Islam.<sup>8</sup> Hostile representations of Muhammad and polemical refutations of Islamic doctrine continued to be published, but those accounts no longer represented a general consensus in interreligious debates.<sup>9</sup>

The first Dutch translations of the Qur'an reflected this changing discourse surrounding Islam during the seventeenth century. Scholars such as Gary Waite and August den Hollander have already established that Berentsma mostly adopted the polemical tone from his German source, although he slightly softens its anti-Islamic rhetoric.<sup>10</sup> Rieuwertsz and Glazemaker, on the other hand, maintained the animosity from their French source but also claimed to have created a more balanced account of the Qur'an and Muhammad.<sup>11</sup> While investing their time and money in this highly controversial book, each publisher and translator balanced hostility with curiosity.

In his canonical *Orientalism* (1978), Edward W. Said argued that such ambivalences about 'Other' cultures – governed by 'a battery of desires, repressions, investments, and projections' – construct images of the Self as much as they produce representations of the Other.<sup>12</sup> In this article, I propose to view the contradicting attitudes towards Islam presented in the first two Dutch translations of the Qur'an as expressions of *Orientalist* ambivalence, using 'Orientalist' in the broader sense conceptualised by Said: '[A] style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction between "the Orient" and (most of the time) "the Occident"'.<sup>13</sup> This broad 'style' is not to be confused with the term's more narrow meaning, referring only to the academic discipline devoted to 'the Orient' or Oriental languages – although the academic field of Oriental studies remains crucial to both Said's object of study and to early modern knowledge practices concerning Islam, including the translations under scrutiny here. In Said's study, which focuses on the late eighteenth and nineteenth century, Orientalism is first and foremost a modern phenomenon emerging in a post-Enlightenment imperialist era, but early modern Qur'an translations show that Orientalist ambivalences in Western discourses have a much longer history. I will use the term 'Orientalist ambivalence' to place the first two Dutch translations within a long tradition of knowledge practices fuelled by curiosity and animosity towards 'the Orient', which helps us

7 Wiegers, 'De Nederlanden en de islam', 146; Hamilton, 'The Study of Islam', 170.

8 Wiegers, 'De Nederlanden en de islam', 142; Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 615. On Reland, see Jaski, Lange, Pytlowany, and Van Rinsum (eds.), *The Orient in Utrecht*.

9 Examples of polemical attacks on Islam can be found in Hugo Grotius's highly influential *Bewys van den waren godsdienst* (1622) and in the *Anti-christus Mahometes* (1666) by the Leiden theologian Cornelis Uythage. For a history of Western perceptions of Muhammad, see Tolán, *Faces of Muhammad*.

10 Den Hollander, 'The Qur'an in the Low Countries', 217.

11 Waite, *Jews and Muslims*, 100.

12 Said, *Orientalism*, 8.

13 Said, *Orientalism*, 2.

to understand not only the specific early modern self-images projected on Islam, but also the changing attitudes among Dutch freethinkers towards knowledge itself.

This article reconstructs the Orientalist ambivalence behind the translating and editing strategies of the producers of these first editions of the Qur'an in Dutch. It proposes a new interpretation of the differences between Berentsma and the collaboration of Rieuwertsz and Glazemaker. Based on a detailed description of the sources of all paratextual material, supported by computational analysis of digital transcripts, I argue that the Berentsma and Rieuwertsz editions expressed different ideological attitudes – not just towards Islam but also regarding the reliability of knowledge mediated in text. These differences foremost demonstrate Glazemaker's Cartesian approach to uncertainty and reveal the appropriation of Islam through translation during the Dutch Early Enlightenment. Building upon the scholarly recognition of the paratext as a significant unit of analysis, my approach affirms that the most visible traces of a translator's ideology are not to be found in the body, but on the fringes of the text.<sup>14</sup>

### *The Origins of the First Dutch Translations of the Qur'an*

Representations of Arabic culture in early modern Europe relied primarily on second-hand accounts, and the first Dutch translations of the Qur'an were no exception.<sup>15</sup> Neither of the two translations was modelled directly after the Arabic source. Each rendering emerged from a different series of intermediary translations (cf. Genealogy A and Genealogy B in fig. 1).<sup>16</sup> Berentsma's edition contains a Dutch version of the German translation *Alcoranus Mahometicus, das ist Des Turcken Alcoran* (1616) by the Protestant minister Salomon Schweigger. In turn, Schweigger had translated his version after Giovanni Battista Castrodardo's Italian translation *L'Alcorano di Macometto* (1547), published by Andrea Arrivabene in Venice, which also provided the source for manuscript translations into Hebrew and Spanish.<sup>17</sup> Castrodardo translated the text after the first Latin translation by Robert of Ketton, produced between 1141 and 1143 and first printed in Basel in 1543 by Theodor Bibliander.

Glazemaker's translation had a completely different genealogy. It was based on the first full translation of the Qur'an into a European vernacular language: André du Ryer's French translation of the Arabic text, published in Paris by Antoine de Sommerville, *L'Alcoran de Mahomet* (1647). Although several errors in Du Ryer's translation evoked criticism from contemporaries, the French translator clearly made an effort to reproduce his source faithfully. He retained the regular composition of the Surahs and he was probably the first European translator who consulted the tradition of Qur'an commentaries known as the *Tafsir* to find

<sup>14</sup> The notion of 'paratext' was first conceptualised in Genette, *Palimpsests*. A well-known demonstration of the possibilities of a paratextual approach for cultural history is Grafton, *The footnote*. A more recent example of a systematic application of paratextuality is Dijkstra, *Printing and Publishing Chinese Religion*.

<sup>15</sup> See for a bibliographic description of the different Dutch editions: Den Hollander, 'The Qur'an in the Low Countries'.

<sup>16</sup> Burman, 'European Qur'an Translations'; Van Dijk, 'Early Printed Qur'ans'; Elmarsafy 'Translations of the Qur'an'; Van Gent, 'Nederlandse vertalingen van de Koran'; Larzul, 'Les premières traductions'; Bobzin 'Translations of the Qur'an'; Hamilton, *The Forbidden Fruit*.

<sup>17</sup> Tommasino, *The Venetian Qur'an*, 10; Loop, 'Introduction', 5.

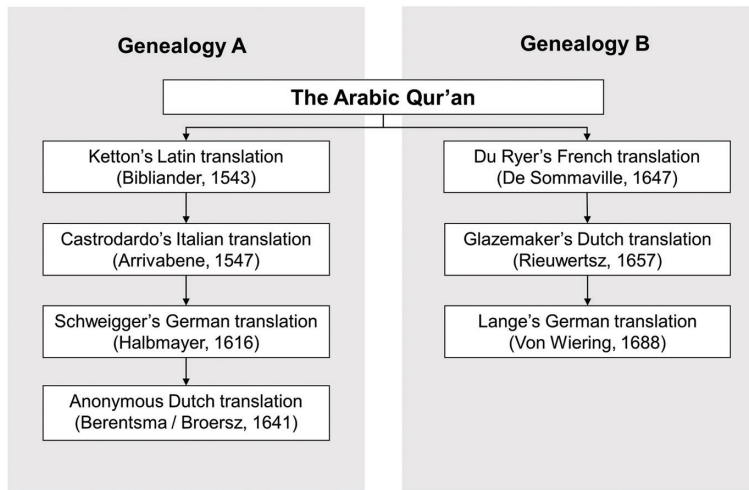


Fig. 1 Genealogies of the first Dutch translations of the Qur'an.

solutions to problems of translation.<sup>18</sup> In addition to Glazemaker's Dutch rendering, Du Ryer's version was translated into English by Alexander Ross (1649) and twice into Russian, by Petr Vasilyevic Postnikov (1716) and Mikhail Verevkin (1790).<sup>19</sup> Moreover, the chain did not end in the Dutch Republic: Johann Lange included a German translation of Glazemaker's *Mahomets Alkoran* in his 'Vollständiges Türckisches Gesetz-Buch, oder des Ertz-betriegers Mahomets Alkoran' (1688), published in Hamburg by Thomas von Wiering.<sup>20</sup>

During its journey across Europe, the translated text of the Qur'an was accompanied by a wealth of paratextual elements (fig. 2 and appendix 2). European translators and publishers usually enriched their editions of the Surahs with apologies for the need of Qur'an translations, commentaries on Islamic doctrine, ethnographic accounts of Islamic rituals, or biographies of Muhammad. Bibliander, for example, included prefaces and apologies by himself, by the twelfth-century translator Robert of Ketton, by the original commissioner of Ketton's translation Peter the Venerable, and by Philip Melanchton – whose support played an important part in persuading the authorities in Basel to grant Bibliander permission for this controversial publication.<sup>21</sup> Bibliander furthermore enriched his edition with a 'Short summary against the heresies of the Saracens', a dialogue on Islamic doctrine between a rabbi and Muhammad ('Doctrina Machumet'), a biography of Muhammad, and a history of the Saracens. In his Italian translation, Castrodardo merged the latter three parts into a separate 'First Book' of the Qur'an ('Il Primo Libro dell'Alcorano'), which was retained by both Schweigger's 1616 German translation and the anonymous translator of Berentsma's 1641 Dutch edition. Berentsma also included translations of paratextual

<sup>18</sup> Hamilton and Richard, *André Du Ryer*, 99.

<sup>19</sup> Elmarsafy 'Translations of the Qur'an', 432; Larzul, 'Les premières traductions', 153. See also Lawrence, *The Koran in English*.

<sup>20</sup> 'Vollständiges Türckisches Gesetz-Buch'.

<sup>21</sup> Loop, 'Introduction', 4.

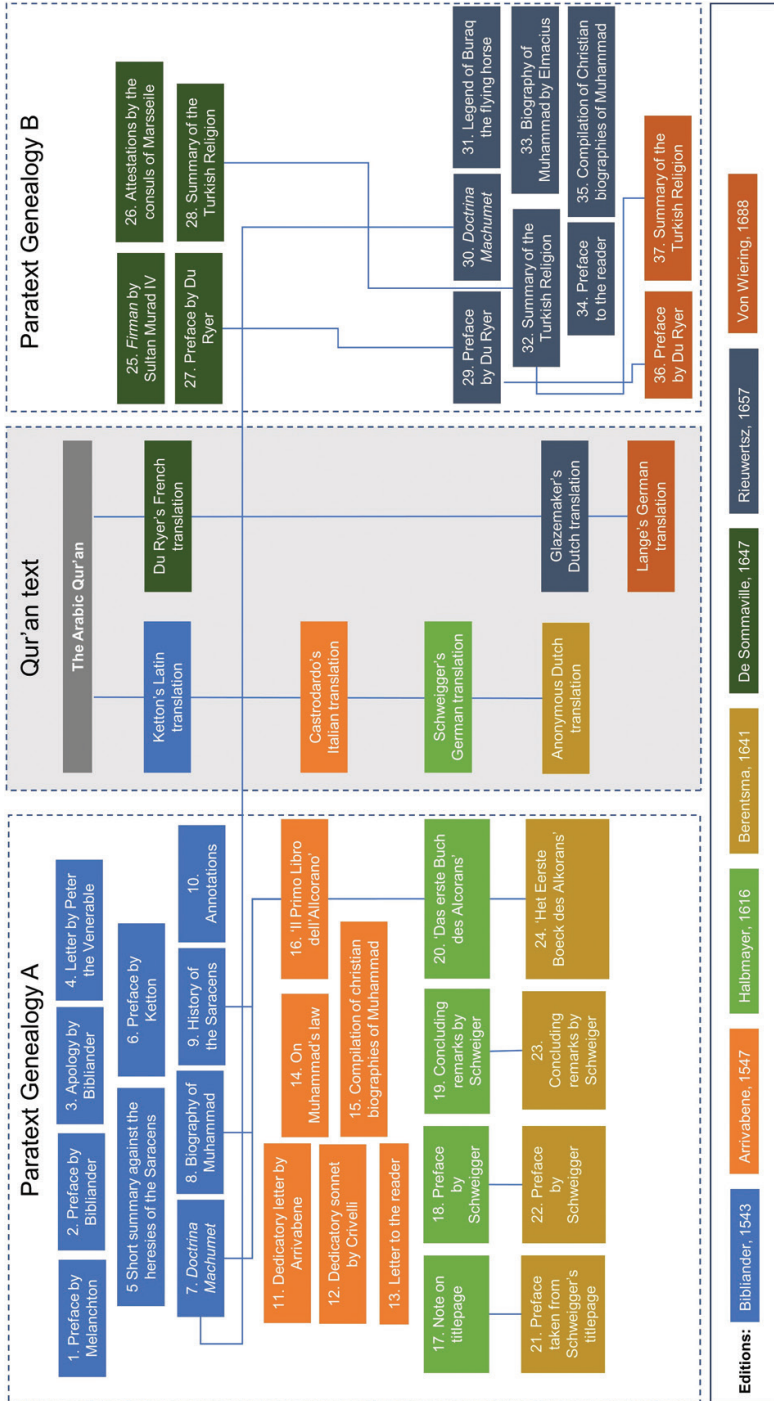


Fig. 2 Paratexts in Genealogy A and B of the first Dutch translations of the Qur'an.

elements introduced by the German intermediary edition: a brief note on the title page, a preface, and a number of concluding remarks by Schweigger ('Den Translateur besluyt').

A similar chain connects the paratexts from Genealogy B. The preface by André du Ryer and his summary of the Turkish religion ('Sommaire de la religion des Turcs') reappeared in translated form in the subsequent Dutch and German editions (fig. 2). Additionally, the 1657 Dutch edition included paratextual elements that did not originate in Genealogy B. Below, I will reconstruct the origins of these additional paratexts appended to the material from Du Ryer's edition. There was even one cross-over between the two genealogies: the edition by Rieuwertsz also contained a translated version of the aforementioned *Doctrina Machumet* introduced by Bibliander in 1543.

### *Berentsma's De Arabische Alkoran*

Ketton's translation only provided a paraphrased abbreviation of the Qur'an and significantly restructured the holy book.<sup>22</sup> It introduced a tripartite structure comprising 123 Surahs, seven more than traditional. Modern scholars have revealed numerous semantic flaws and translation errors in this early Latin representation of the Arabic source.<sup>23</sup> All translated editions that were directly or indirectly based on Ketton's interpretation – including Berentsma's – merely reproduced this heavily edited but immensely influential version. Apparently, Berentsma and his predecessors (Ketton, Castrodardo, and Schweigger) thought it sufficient to print translations of Ketton's summarised interpretation focusing on the most important disagreements between the Bible and the Qur'an.

The manipulation of the text in this genealogy was considerable: on average, 58.7% of all 'word tokens' in each Surah were removed.<sup>24</sup> Fig. 3 shows the extent of their abbreviation by Surah, generated through a computational comparison of all Surahs in Berentsma's version and the equivalent Surahs in a modern Dutch translation of the full Qur'an. For this comparison I used the digitised copy of Berentsma's translation available on the Digitale Bibliotheek voor de Nederlandse Letteren (DBNL) and a digital copy of *De Heilige Koran* (1953).<sup>25</sup> The latter edition was selected for the pragmatic reason that it was available online in a machine-readable format, but the results would be similar with any other modern Dutch edition. In fact, any edition offering a complete representation in Dutch would suffice for the goal of this analysis: quantifying the abbreviation per Surah in Berentsma's version.

It is difficult to discern an ideologically informed editing strategy behind this abbreviation, as most Surahs were abbreviated to an equal degree, except for the second and longest

<sup>22</sup> On Ketton's translation, see: Burman, 'Tafsir and Translation'; Hanne 'Transferts sémantiques'.

<sup>23</sup> Loop, 'Introduction', 6.

<sup>24</sup> Computational text analysis usually distinguishes between word 'tokens' and word 'types'. 'Tokens' refers to the total number of syntactically separable word units in a text, 'types' to the total number of unique word forms in a text, regardless of the frequency of each word form. Word tokens represent a text's length, word types the variety of a text's vocabulary.

<sup>25</sup> *De Arabische Alkoran*, [https://dbnl.org/tekst/\\_ara002arabo1\\_01/index.php](https://dbnl.org/tekst/_ara002arabo1_01/index.php) (Accessed on 6 October 2022); *De Heilige Koran*, <http://arsfloreat.nl/downloads.html> (Accessed on 6 October 2022). To harmonise the different structures of the two editions, both files were converted into an xml file in which each chapter was manually marked with the equivalent Surah number.



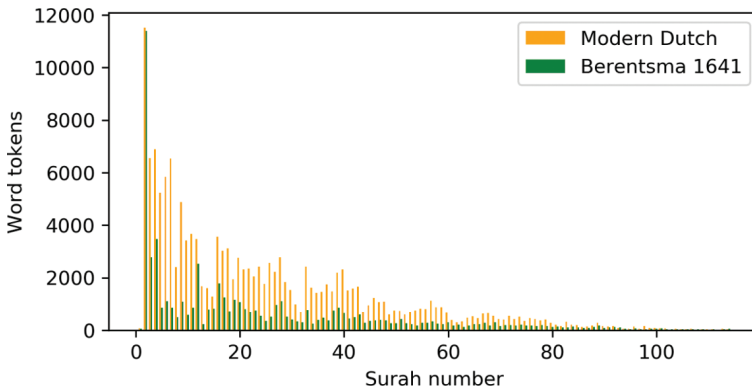


Fig. 3 The length of each Surah in a modern Dutch translation of the Qur'an compared to the Dutch translation from Berentsma's 1641 edition.

Surah, 'Al-Baqarah', which was copied in full. In general, the editors and translators from Genealogy A made sure to specifically include both outright rejections of Christian doctrine and retellings of Biblical stories about Adam, Moses, Joseph, Noah, Mary, Jesus, and others. This focus was in line with Schweigger's justification for his effort to translate the Qur'an into German. In his preface he describes how Muhammad had strategically emphasised the similarities between his revelation and Biblical tradition. With this emphasis on the agreement between the Qur'an and the Bible, the prophet was believed to be attempting to make it difficult for 'simple-minded' Christians to reject Islam without simultaneously denying a part of their own confession. This confusion could cause them to fall away from faith 'just as worm-eaten fruit falls from the tree'.<sup>26</sup> By making the Qur'an available to German and Dutch readers in a version highlighting the contradictions with Christian doctrine, Schweigger and Berentsma wished to strengthen resistance against Muhammad's presumed plot to convert Christians.

A closer look into the paratext of Berentsma's edition confirms that the first Dutch Qur'an translation mostly functioned as a summary of the Islamic holy book, presented as a means to arm Dutch readers against Muhammad's misleading message. Berentsma borrowed his apology for the publication from his German colleague by including a translation of Schweigger's 'Vorrede über den Alcoran, an den gutherzigen Leser' ('Preface about the Qur'an, to the good-hearted Reader'). The Dutch edition opens with a brief preface, 'De Arabische Translateur tot den Leser' ('The Arabic Translator to the Reader'), borrowed from Schweigger's title page, which leaves no doubt about the latter's sympathies for the 'ridiculous and foolish doctrine' in this 'fictional work', revealed by the 'false Prophet Muhammad'.<sup>27</sup> Similar condemnations of Muhammad's revelations were expressed in brief concluding statements labelled 'Den translateur beslydt' ('The translator concludes'), which Berentsma borrowed from Schweigger and printed at the end of the

<sup>26</sup> *De Arabische Alkoran*, preface, fol. \*3v: 'eenvuldighe lieden', 'gelijck het wormstekent fruyt vande boomen af valt'.

<sup>27</sup> *De Arabische Alkoran*, preface, frontispiece: 'lacherlicke ende dwaesachtighe leere', 'fabelwerck', 'valsche Prophete Mahometh'. Berentsma incorrectly assumed that Schweigger had translated from the Arabic text.



three parts from the tripartite structure of the Qur'an.<sup>28</sup> In the longer *Vorrede* following the note on the title page, Schweigger further elaborated on various blasphemies propagated in the Qur'an, such as the rejection of the Trinity and the denial of Jesus Christ as the son of God.<sup>29</sup>

Besides a justification for his translation, Berentsma adopts Schweigger's incorrect claims about the source of his translation. He identifies Schweigger as the Arabic translator ('Arabische Translateur'), following Schweigger's misleading 'Vorrede' uncritically. In that preface, the German translator states falsely that his version was based on the 'true text of the Qur'an' rather than the partial extracts once published by Bibliander, which were themselves the source of Schweigger's source, Castrodardo's Italian translation.<sup>30</sup> The other editions from Genealogy A were also unclear as to the origins of Bibliander's text. Andrea Arrivabene bluntly advertised his 1547 Italian edition as a direct translation of the Arabic source. His trick worked: Joseph Justus Scaliger, desperately looking for a more reliable translation than Ketton's, repeatedly pestered his connections in Venice to obtain a copy of Arrivabene's edition for him, only to be disappointed when the postman finally delivered yet another incomplete abbreviation.<sup>31</sup> Obscuring the true source thus became a commercial and rhetorical strategy for the Italian and the German publishers from Genealogy A. Either willingly or unwillingly, Berentsma continued that strategy by upholding their incorrect claims in his edition.

Both Schweigger and Berentsma seemed to have an interest in stating their own position regarding Islam very clearly. The fake imprint on Berentsma's title page ('Hamburg') and the omission of the translator's name demonstrate the controversial status of the Qur'an in the Dutch Republic. Berentsma may have feared repercussions: the 1618 Synod of Dordrecht had explicitly condemned the dissemination of 'heretical books', including the Qur'an. Before the end of the year, the States-General enforced the Synod's theological condemnation by accepting a resolution prohibiting the import, printing, sale, and dissemination of religiously disruptive books.<sup>32</sup> By violating this law, Berentsma risked severe penalties ranging from fines to confiscation of his goods and even banishment. Copying Schweigger's polemical and dismissive tone regarding the Qur'an probably served as an act of self-preservation, as it may have worked to conceal Berentsma's personal motives. Whatever his true intentions may have been, Berentsma effectively reinforced the hostile attitude towards Muhammad that had characterised Christian representations of Islam for centuries.

### *Glazemaker's Mahomets Alkoran*

Jan Hendriksz Glazemaker was a highly productive translator who translated more than eighty different texts from French, (neo-) Latin, Italian, and German into Dutch. He is mostly known for his translations of the collected works of Benedictus de Spinoza and René

<sup>28</sup> *De Arabische Alkoran*, 46, 104, 164.

<sup>29</sup> *De Arabische Alkoran*, preface.

<sup>30</sup> *Alcoranus Mahometicus*, preface, sig. xiii: 'den Text deß rechten Alcorans'.

<sup>31</sup> Tommasino, *The Venetian Qur'an*, 3-4.

<sup>32</sup> Van Gent, 'Nederlandse vertalingen van de Koran'.

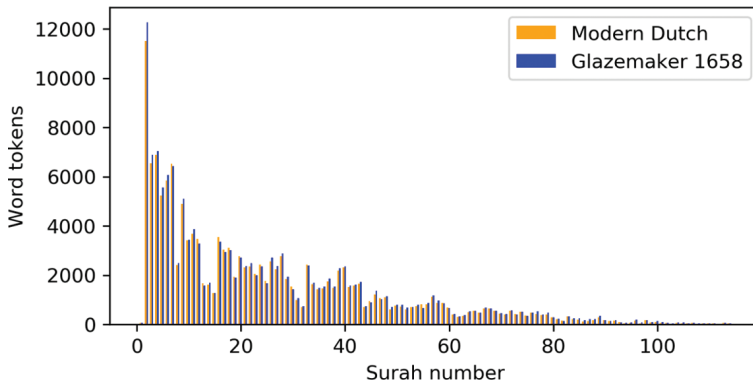


Fig. 4 The length of each Surah in a modern Dutch translation of the Qur'an compared to the 1658 edition of Glazemaker's 1657 Dutch translation.

Descartes, but he also translated Seneca, Livy, Erasmus, Montaigne, and many others.<sup>33</sup> Scholars who have studied his work agree that in general he refused to abbreviate, manipulate, or extend his sources.<sup>34</sup> In his prefaces, Glazemaker often notes with pride his insistence on source-based poetics, refusing to let the author 'speak of anything in our language that he did not say in his own'.<sup>35</sup> He was dedicated to offering reliable Dutch representations of his exemplars, enabling readers to develop their own opinion on the source.

Glazemaker did not deviate from these principles when translating his *Mahomets Alkoran*. A computational comparison with a modern Dutch translation offers quantitative evidence that he did not abbreviate any of the Surahs (fig. 4). It is likely that a major motivation behind Rieuwertsz's and Glazemaker's *Mahomets Alkoran* was the creation of a complete Qur'an in Dutch. Apparently, Berentsma's *Arabische Alkoran* had not fully satisfied the demand among Dutch readers who wished to read the full extent of Muhammad's teachings. Du Ryer's 1647 Paris edition made it possible for Rieuwertsz to meet that demand, especially after two pirated versions by Louis Elzevier and Johannes Janssonius appeared in Amsterdam in 1649.<sup>36</sup> The publication of Berentsma's edition in 1641 had allowed Dutch readers access to only 58.7% of the Arabic source in their native tongue. In 1657, Glazemaker gave them access to the entire text.

Gary Waite has pointed out that Rieuwertsz may have expected to find customers for the *Alkoran* within his own Mennonite community in Amsterdam, encouraging its members to 'use the Qur'an to reconsider the nature of their own belief system'.<sup>37</sup> Both

33 For bibliographic overviews of his production, see Keyser, *Catalogus*, and Thijssen-Schoute, 'Jan Hendrik Glazemaker'.

34 There are two exceptions. First, Glazemaker's 1652 translation of Mendez Pinto's *Peregrinaçam* (1614) – see Couto, *The marvellous travels*, which describes Glazemaker's many interventions in the source text. Secondly, in 1647 Glazemaker added a preface to his translation of Gerolamo Cardano's *Neronis Encomium* (1562), where he justified his decision to censor 'some obscene things, which are so evil, that they should remain unknown' ('enige ontuchtige dingen, die zo snoed zijn, dat zy onbekent behoren te blijven'): Van der Deijl, *A New Language*, 106.

35 Cited in Van der Deijl, *A New Language*, 105: 'dat ik den Schrijver in onze taal niets doe spreken, t welk hy niet in de zijne gezegt heeft'.

36 Den Hollander, 'The Qur'an in the Low Countries', 218.

37 Waite, *Jews and Muslims*, 99.

Rieuwertsz and Glazemaker sympathised with the radical religious tolerance propagated by the teacher of their Mennonite congregation, Galenus Abrahamsz de Haan (1622-1706). Galenus's relativist Collegiantism caused a painful conflict between the liberals and the orthodox members of their church Bij het Lam ('By the Lamb', named after a brewery known as 'the Lamb', also located on the Singel). Galenus, inspired by the inter-confessional tolerance of the Collegiants, rejected the idea that their congregation was to be based on a shared Mennonite faith among its members. The conservative members firmly disagreed. This dispute about orthodoxy versus freedom of conscience, known as the *Lammerenkrijgh* ('war of the lambs'), started in the early 1650s and eventually led to a schism within the Mennonite community in 1664. During and after those years, Glazemaker and Rieuwertsz collaborated on several publications exploring the supposed unicity of the Christian world.<sup>38</sup> While the harmony and confessional identity of the Mennonite community was at stake, they fed the discussion with translations of travelogues and ethnological accounts of foreign cultures challenging the distinctiveness of Christian beliefs. Their efforts to produce a full translation of the Qur'an should first of all be considered in the context of this anthropological interest in the non-Christian world sparked by the confessional relativism that caused the *Lammerenkrijgh*.

Glazemaker and Rieuwertsz explicitly asserted their position within the early modern discourse about Islam. In a preface 'to the Reader' they complain about the lack of neutrality in existing accounts of Muhammad's life. Friends and foes alike, they observe, produced contradictory and ideologically charged biographies of the prophet. Rather than resolve these contradictions, Glazemaker and Rieuwertsz chose to accept them as an inevitable flaw in their source material. They embraced the multitude of perspectives by including two different versions of Muhammad's biography, they explained,

without trying to correct those things, in which they differ, in order to not lose ourselves in false judgement concerning such obscure matters, as well as to allow the attentive reader to recognise the difference and contradiction in it himself, and, if he wishes, to judge it according to his own opinions.<sup>39</sup>

Glazemaker and Rieuwertsz thus tried to equalise the prejudices in their sources. By refusing to pick sides they claimed to neutralise the ideologically sensitive content of their material.

Counterbalancing animosity in a predominantly anti-Islamic discourse was, however, in itself an ideological act. But Glazemaker knew how to use the subtle politics of translation. By maintaining Du Ryer's condemning preface in *Mahomets Alkoran*, the Dutch translator first echoed the generally held attitude of hostility towards Islam. Du Ryer had dismissed the Arabic Qur'an scholars whose exegesis of the text, he suggested, remained 'as ridiculous as the text itself'.<sup>40</sup> The French translator also lamented the deception of the

<sup>38</sup> Van der Deijl, *A New Language*, 101-104.

<sup>39</sup> *Mahomets Alkoran*, preface: 'Zonder te pogen' t geen, daar zy in verschillen, te recht te brengen, zo om ons in geen verkeert oordeel in zulke duistere zaken in te wikkelen, als ook op dat d'opmerkende lezer zelf t verschil, en de strijdigheid daar in zou bemerken, en, zo' t hem lust, naar zijn eige believeen daar af oordelen.'

<sup>40</sup> Du Ryer, *L'Alcoran de Mahomet*, preface, fols. 2\*v-3\*r: 'leur explication est aussi ridicule que le texte'. See for Glazemaker's translation: Du Ryer, *Mahomets Alkoran*, preface, fol. \*4r: 'Hun verklaring is zo belachelijk, als' t werk zelf.'

'best part of this world' by the 'false prophet', preparing the reader to be surprised by the 'absurdities' in this book.<sup>41</sup> Glazemaker diligently copied Du Ryer's criticism in an attempt to be transparent about the ideological background of his source.

The Dutch translator nevertheless tried to counterbalance the hostility from his French predecessor. Besides his refusal to manipulate the text of the Qur'an, he expressed his opinions through a careful selection and editing of various sources, which he translated and combined into four paratexts printed after the material adopted from Du Ryer's edition. The first of those sources was the *Historia Saracenicæ, quæ res gestæ Muslimorum* (1625) by the aforementioned Leiden professor of Arabic Thomas Erpenius, which was based on a text by Georgius Elmacinus (Ibn Al'Amid), a thirteenth-century Coptic historian whom Glazemaker mistook for a Muslim. Glazemaker translated only 12 of the 372 pages of Erpenius's version.<sup>42</sup> He interrupted his translation mid-chapter, after a remarkable passage about Muhammad's friendly attitude towards Christians. In that passage, Elmacinus describes Muhammad's conviction that anyone who oppressed a Christian should be prepared to be punished at the Last Judgment. The prophet reportedly warned his followers that he would consider any insult to a Christian as a personal insult to himself: 'Et, Qui Christiano nocet, mihi nocet.'<sup>43</sup> By ending his translated excerpt from Elmacinus's extensive history with this statement attributed to Muhammad, Glazemaker highlighted the peaceful nature of Islam.

The second text is a compilation of various accounts of Muhammad's life, taken from no fewer than six different French and neo-Latin histories written by Western historians between the twelfth and the seventeenth century: *Illustrations sur l'histoire de Chalcondile Athenien, de la decadente de l'Empire Grec, & établissement de celui des Turcs* (1650) by the French diplomat Blaise de Vigenère (1523-1596); *Historia Arabum* by the archbishop of Toledo, Roderigo Jiménez de Rada (1170-1247), which was included in Erpenius's 1625 *Historia Saracenicæ*; *Mémoires des Gaules depuis le deluge jusques à l'établissement de la monarchie française* (1619) by the French historian Scipion Dupleix (1569-1661); *De Turcarum Origine, Religione, ac immanissima eorum in Christianos tyrannide* (1654) by the Austrian humanist Joannes Cuspinianus (1473-1529); and the second volume of the *Histoire Romaine* (1630), by the French historian Claude Malingre Saint-Lazare (1580-1653). Glazemaker credits his sources with brief bibliographic references in the margins. Moreover, he repeatedly underlines the uncertainty in his fragmented reconstruction through phrases such as: 'With regards to the time of Muhammad's birth, there are various sentiments, also among those of his own belief and law.'<sup>44</sup> Uncertainty in the historical sources is furthermore marked by Glazemaker's tendency to consistently name the historians he quotes: 'says Jiménez', or 'Joannes Cuspinianus writes as follows'. Emphasizing uncertainty thus became a remedy to prejudice.

41 Du Ryer, *L'Alcoran de Mahomet*, preface, fols. 3\*r-v: 'Tu seras estonné que ces absurditez ayent infecté la meilleure partie du Monde'.

42 Elmacinus, *Historia Saracenicæ*, from page 2 ('Caput Primum') until page 13 ('Et, Qui, Christiano nocet, mihi nocet').

43 Elmacinus, *Historia Saracenicæ*, 13: 'de geen, die een Christen beledigt, beledigt my'; *Mahomets Alkoran*, 18.

44 *Mahomets Alkoran*, 23: 'Wat de tijd van Mahomets geboorte betreft, daar af zijn verscheide gevoelens, ja ook onder de genen van zijn geloof en wet.'

Another strategy to highlight contradictions was to include multiple versions of the same story in the compilation of Christian histories. Summarising ‘various fables’ about Muhammad, Glazemaker retells a story from the *Hadith* of a four-year-old Muhammad whose chest was cut open by two men to remove a ‘black grain’ (symbolising Satan) from his body.<sup>45</sup> Elsewhere, Glazemaker provides a different version of the story, as told by Jiménez de Rada. In this version, the surgery was performed by two angels taking a black clump of solidified black blood from the prophet’s heart.<sup>46</sup> The same story also occurs in Berentsma’s edition, illustrating the overlap between Genealogy A and B as a result of Glazemaker’s eclectic selection of sources.<sup>47</sup> But in contrast to Berentsma’s version from Genealogy A, Glazemaker acknowledged that there are multiple versions of this legend, which he viewed as one of many ‘fables’ about Muhammad. The Dutch translator refrained from offering only one ‘official’ perspective on Muhammad’s life. Instead, he created transparency about the complexity and inconsistency in this contested historical tradition.

The third text Glazemaker appended to Du Ryer’s edition is a ‘tale, told by Muhammad and his followers, of a journey that he, riding the beast Alborach, made to Jerusalem where he ascended to Heaven’.<sup>48</sup> It concerns an uncharacteristically free translation by Glazemaker of a chapter from *Confusio Sectae Mahometanae* (1595, reprinted in 1643 and 1656), which was in turn a translation by Johannes Lauterbach based on a 1540 Italian translation by Dominicus de Gazelu of the Spanish treatise *Confusion de la Secta Mahomattica* (1515) by Juan Andrés.<sup>49</sup> In this chapter Andrés provides a version of the canonical stories about Muhammad’s night journey to Jerusalem (the *isrā’*) and his ascension to heaven (the *mi’rāj*), which were often combined in Islamic tradition.<sup>50</sup> The narrative of the *isrā’/mi’rāj*, in part inspired by Surah seventeen (Al-Isrā), usually starts with a scene where the archangel Gabriel visits Muhammad by night to take him on a journey riding on the mythical flying horse *Burāq*. During his journey, Muhammad climbs a ladder to heaven, where he meets key biblical figures and prophets such as Adam, Noah, and Christ. Finally, he arrives at the highest levels in heaven, where (according to Andrés’s version) God grants him unique privileges. The story legitimised Muhammad’s status in Islamic doctrine, representing him as the final and most important among God’s prophets. Muhammad’s ascension to heaven may have appealed to Glazemaker and his Mennonite readership because it stressed the similarities rather than the differences between Islam and Christianity. The ladder climbed by Muhammad symbolises his position in a long lineage originating in Christian and Jewish tradition. Muhammad’s respectful approach of the Christian prophets in heaven made it possible for readers to imagine interreligious pacifism between Christians and Muslims (or between Christians of different denominations).

45 *Mahomets Alkoran*, 28.

46 *Mahomets Alkoran*, 32-34.

47 *De Arabische Alkoran*, 17.

48 *Mahomets Alkoran*, 63: ‘Vertoning, Door Mahomet en zijn navolgers verdicht, van een reis, die hy, op het beest Alborach zittende, naar Jerusalem deē, en van daar ten Hemel opklom.’

49 Andrés, *Confusio Sectae Mahometanae*, ch. 8, starting at page 97. Cf. Buckley, *The Night Journey*, 195-197.

50 Buckley, *The Night Journey*, 6.

Glazemaker probably expected such imaginations to resonate with Galenus Abrahamasz's relativist opinion regarding Mennonite orthodoxy.

After the tale of Muhammad's night journey, *Mahomets Alkoran* closes with one final paratextual supplement: a translation of the aforementioned *Doctrina Machumet*.<sup>51</sup> This dialogue between Muhammad and the rabbi Abdias was a Latin translation by Herman of Carinthia (1110-1154) of an unknown Arabic source. The *Doctrina Machumet* became part of the collection of twelfth-century translations of Arabic texts included in Bibliander's 1543 edition. All later editions based on Bibliander's included translations of the dialogue (cf. fig. 2, Genealogy A). Glazemaker used the Latin version from Bibliander's edition as his exemplar.<sup>52</sup> Like the story of the night journey, the dialogue opens with a visit from the archangel Gabriel to Muhammad. Gabriel announces that four men of excellent wisdom are about to visit the prophet. They will question him about his teaching and about a number of obscure matters in Jewish law. As soon as they arrive, Abdias starts firing questions at his host. The questions cover a wide range of theological issues, from Muhammad's relationship to God and the status of previous prophets, to the specifics of life in heaven. Muhammad patiently answers all questions, satisfying his guest, who often states his agreement with Muhammad's explanations. At the end of the dialogue, Abdias is overwhelmed by Muhammad's wisdom and decides to convert to Islam. Glazemaker may have appreciated the *Doctrina Machumet*, like the tale of the night journey, as a story illustrating the common ground beneath Islamic and Jewish doctrine. During Abdias's barrage of questions (the *Doctrina Machumet* is also known as the 'Book of Thousand Questions') the rabbi finds no fundamental disagreements between Muhammad's answers and his own beliefs. Instead, the dialogue between Abdias and Muhammad leads to interreligious unity – although the relationship is no longer interreligious after Abdias's conversion.

This overview of the paratexts in *Mahomets Alkoran* shows that Glazemaker enriched his translation of Du Ryer's *L'Alcoran de Mahomet* with fragments collected from no fewer than seven different editions (see appendix 1). Whereas Berentsma's version was entirely based on Schweigger's anti-Islamic German edition, Glazemaker's Qur'an combines translations of texts written or translated by André du Ryer, Thomas Erpenius, Blaise de Vigenère, Roderigo Jiménez de Rada, Scipion Dupleix, Johannes Cuspinianus, Claude Malingre Saint-Lazare, Johannes Lauterbach, and Herman of Carinthia. Instead of reproducing only the hostile views propagated by his French predecessor André du Ryer, Glazemaker's *Alkoran* wove together a variety of contemporary and historical perspectives on Islam. Glazemaker's encyclopaedia of paratextual supplements offered a companion to the Qur'an text and created an ideological polyphony to counterbalance Western prejudice regarding Islam.

This philological inclusivity became an identifiable trait of Glazemaker's 'poetics of translation'.<sup>53</sup> *Mahomets Alkoran* is not the only example of Glazemaker's tendency to

51 On the *Doctrina Machumet*, see Cecini, *Masā'il 'Abdallāh ibn Salām*; Pijper, *Het boek der duizend vragen*.

52 The possibility that Glazemaker used the Italian, German, or existing Dutch version of *Doctrina Machumet* can be ruled out based on the considerable differences between Glazemaker's and the other versions originating in Bibliander's edition.

53 Cf. Burke, 'Cultures of translation', 11.



combine multiple versions of his sources into one translation. Previous scholarship has demonstrated the translator's search for what Fokke Akkerman has called the 'textual surplus': whenever Glazemaker had multiple versions of a source at his disposal, he incorporated everything he found in the variant editions.<sup>54</sup> He used, for example, four different versions of Descartes's *Discours de la Méthode* as exemplar for his second edition of that text, *Proeven der Wijsbegeerte* (1659). The 1659 edition contains traces of the original French from 1637, Glazemaker's Dutch translation from 1656, the Latin translation from 1644, and the Latin translation of *La Geometrie* by Franciscus van Schooten from 1649.<sup>55</sup> This habit of collecting and combining different text variants is also reflected in the catalogue of his library, auctioned after his death in 1683, which listed thousands of books.<sup>56</sup> It shows that Glazemaker collected several editions of the sources he translated. For example, he owned nine versions of Erasmus's influential *Annotations of the New Testament*, which he translated into Dutch in 1663: his catalogue listed two editions of *The New Testament* by Erasmus (1516), three editions of *Paraphrases of the New Testament* by the same author (1517-1524), and four different editions of the latter's *Annotations on the New Testament* (1516). Glazemaker's bookshelves also held seven editions of (adaptations of) John Barclay's prose story *Argenis* (1621), which he translated twice, once from French and once from neo-Latin.<sup>57</sup> These cases show that Glazemaker's editing strategy of the Qur'an was not exceptional: giving readers access to texts unavailable to them was more important than maintaining the authenticity and integrity of his sources.

Glazemaker's quest for ideological balance through the 'textual surplus' continued to shape Dutch encounters with the Qur'an for centuries: although Johann Lange omitted the four paratexts added by Glazemaker in his 1688 German translation of *Mahomets Alkoran*, they were maintained in each of the eight Dutch reprints to be published after 1657.<sup>58</sup> The most remarkable of these re-editions was the 1696-1698 reprint by Timotheus ten Hoorn, a controversial publisher of pornographic and dissident works located in the Nes in Amsterdam.<sup>59</sup> To finance this edition, Ten Hoorn collaborated with Adrianus van Dijk, a bookseller in Rotterdam.<sup>60</sup> Ten Hoorn would also become the first publisher to include illustrations in an edition of the Qur'an: he ordered six engravings from Caspar Luyken to illuminate the text. Four of them were printed alongside the actual text of the Qur'an, and two were inserted into the appended biographies of Muhammad. Including the engravings was probably a commercial strategy, one which met with a modicum of success, if the reprinting of the images in later editions, printed by Hendrik (II) van Damme (1707) and Jan vander Deyster (1721 and 1734), is anything to go by. Interestingly, the images in part reverse the tolerant position expressed in Glazemaker's paratexts: the engraving on

54 Akkerman, *Studies*, 123.

55 Van der Deijl, *A New Language*, 116.

56 *Catalogus instructissimae bibliothecae*.

57 On the Dutch translations of Barclay's *Argenis*, see Van Gemert and Van der Deijl, 'Not just a love story'.

58 These reprints were published by Jan Rieuwertsz (1658), Timotheus Ten Hoorn (1696 and 1698), Adrianus van Dyk (1698), Hendrik Van Damme (1707), Jan Vander Deyster (1721 and 1734), and an anonymous publisher (1799).

59 On Ten Hoorn, see Leemans, *Het woord is aan de onderkant*, 178-180, 278-281.

60 Den Hollander, 'The Qur'an in the Low Countries', 228.





Fig. 5 Caspar Luyken, Muhammad as a trickster, engraving, in: Mahomets Alkoran, Jan Hendriksz Glazemaker trans. (Amsterdam: Timotheus Ten Hoorn, 1696), fol. 496. Utrecht, University Library, Special Collections.

folio 496, for example, depicts Muhammad as a trickster who trained a dove and a bull to deceive bystanders into thinking that he was God's chosen prophet (fig. 5).<sup>61</sup> In this manner, we can see how Ten Hoorn in his turn enhanced the Orientalist ambivalence in Glazemaker's compilation.

### *Orientalism and the Rise of Cartesianism*

Besides indicating his ideological support for Galenus Abrahamsz's views on the freedom of conscience, Glazemaker's philological inclusivity also signalled a broader philosophical development: the rise of Cartesianism during the Dutch Early Enlightenment. Descartes's influential philosophical project not only resulted in a reappraisal of reason and rational knowledge, but also implied a growing scepticism regarding knowledge accumulated in books. His famous maxim 'cogito ergo sum' was an attempt to regain solid ground after he demolished the foundation of Western knowledge by abandoning the philosophical tradition entirely. Having established that philosophers fail to reach consensus on almost any topic, the French philosopher reasoned that the house of philosophy was to be rebuilt on new grounds. In his *Discours de la Méthode* he argued that 'considering how many diverse opinions learned men may maintain on a single question – even though it is impossible for more than one to be true – I held as well-nigh false everything that was merely probable'.<sup>62</sup> Disagreements between philosophers, Descartes observed, arise due to their inability to agree on the meaning of their terminology: '[I]f philosophers always agreed about the meaning of words, their controversies would almost all be at an end.'<sup>63</sup> He argued, therefore, that the axioms and assumptions of philosophy were to be anchored in mathematical logic instead of words. Although the philosophical confusion as a result of the inevitable ambiguity in language had been a topic of debate for centuries – as Lodi Nauta has recently demonstrated – it fuelled the epistemological uncertainty that was fundamental to the Dutch Early Enlightenment.<sup>64</sup>

Inspired by Descartes's radical dismissal of the knowledge preserved in books and words, various Dutch freethinkers started to re-evaluate the foundations of their own world views. Linguistic politics became a key ingredient of their Cartesian philosophy and politics. Freethinkers closely related to the diverse group of dissidents known as 'Spinoza's circle', including Glazemaker, hoped to further the Dutch arts and sciences by repairing misleading elements in the vernacular – starting with loanwords.<sup>65</sup> Radical thinker Adriaan Koerbagh and playwright Lodewijk Meijer published loanword dictionaries with a clear political goal: arming the common people against their theological and legal oppressors, those who

61 The two scenes are described in Glazemaker's compilation of Christian histories of Muhammad's life: 'Mahomets Leven; Uit verscheide Christe Schrijvers getrokken', in *Mahomets Alkoran*, 47-48. See also Steen, *Illustrated Oriëntlightenment*.

62 Descartes, 'Discourse on the Method', 115.

63 Descartes, 'Rules for the Direction of the Mind,' 54.

64 Nauta, *Philosophy and the Language of the People*.

65 On Spinoza's circle, see Meinsma, *Spinoza en zijn kring*; Klever, *Mannen rond Spinoza*; Lavaert and Schröder (eds.), *The Dutch Legacy*; Leezenberg, 'How comparative'.

deliberately used Latin and French terminology as a method of keeping them in the dark. In order to achieve this goal, the language had to be purified, purged of its foreign influences: especially Meijer's language criticism went beyond the linguistic purism that authors like Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert and Hendrik Laurensz Spiegel had been propagating since the sixteenth century. His controversial *Philosophia S. Scripturae Interpres* (1666, translated a year later into Dutch as *De filosofie d'uytleghster der H. Schrifture*), a Cartesian attempt to rebuild theology on the solid rock of philosophy instead of the sand of Protestant doctrine, opens with a long exposition of the function of language and the many ways it can lead to confusion. His survey of linguistic ambiguity – Meijer used the beautiful purist synonym *twijffelsinnigheydt* – served to support his point that theologians would never agree about the true nature of Scripture if they failed to grasp the many semantic instabilities in (biblical) language.<sup>66</sup> Pieter Balling, another member of the Bij het Lam congregation who also translated Spinoza's works, opened his pamphlet *Het licht op den kandelaar* (1662) with a similar Cartesian complaint about the endemic religious and political discord in early modern society that resulted from linguistic ambiguity.<sup>67</sup> He considered the possibility of redefining language as radically as Descartes had redefined philosophy: 'If, then, one should wish to better instil the things [i.e., concepts] into someone through words and arguments, one would be required to invent new words, and ultimately a whole new language.'<sup>68</sup>

Glazemaker's refusal to prioritise one of the various sources collected in his *Mahomets Alkoran* over the others aligns with the linguistic politics voiced by many other authors related to Spinoza's circle. Glazemaker sent his *Alkoran* to the printer at the time when his career was dedicated to translating Descartes – most of his translations of the French philosopher were first published between 1656 and 1661. It seems plausible that this immersion in Descartes's oeuvre shaped his poetics of translation while working on the Qur'an. The translator's explicit recognition of the disagreement among Muhammad's biographers echoed Descartes's criticism of philosophical discord, and anticipated Meijer's radical attack on the never-ending theological quarrels. But while Descartes and Meijer tried to resolve intellectual disagreements by a new scientific or hermeneutic method based on rational foundations, Glazemaker simply accepted the impossibility of repairing the ambiguity present in his sources. His solution was total transparency, treating the relevant sources equally regardless of their historical and ideological background.

Glazemaker's relativist hermeneutics can be read as an early example of the denial of Christianity's moral superiority, identified by Jonathan Israel as a key feature of the Radical Enlightenment and famously interpreted by Paul Hazard as a main cause of the 'crisis of the European mind' emerging in the late seventeenth century.<sup>69</sup> The radical refusal to attribute more value to Western authorities than to non-Western accounts opened the

<sup>66</sup> Meijer, *De filosofie d'uytleghster*, 12.

<sup>67</sup> On Balling, see Klever, 'De spinozistische prediking van P. Balling'; Klever, *Mannen rond Spinoza*; Buys, *Sparks of Reason*, 233-240; Fix, *Prophecy and Reason*, 199-205; Van der Deijl, *A New Language*, 135-170.

<sup>68</sup> [Balling], *Het licht op den kandelaar*, 3: 'Zoo dat dan, indien men door woorden, en redenen iemandt de zaken zelve, beter zoude willen indrukken, men van noden hadde, nieuwe woorden, en by gevolgh een heele nieuwe taal te vinden.' Cf. Van der Deijl, *A New Language*, 23.

<sup>69</sup> Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 620; Hazard, *The European Mind*; Wiegiers, 'Islam and Radical Enlightenment'. For an overview of the role of Islam in learned culture from the European Enlightenment, see Bevilacqua, *The Republic of Arabic Letters*.



door to a willingness to weigh Christian and non-Christian world views equally. These interreligious comparisons led Pierre Bayle and Voltaire to believe that the Islamic world was more tolerant than the Christian West.<sup>70</sup> Jean-Frédéric Bernard even turned the widespread stereotype of the blood-thirsty Muslim on its head by asking his readers to imagine the severe impact of having to endure the brutal violence of the crusades for centuries.<sup>71</sup> Glazemaker prefigured such provocative claims, emphasizing Muhammad's tolerant nature through his editing strategies and source selection.

Besides their tolerance, Muslims were admired by the *philosophes* because of the supposed rational superiority of Islam and the great philosophical achievements of Islamic learned culture. This representation of Islam as a 'rational' religion had a long history. It already appeared in *De rationibus fidei* (1246) by Thomas Aquinas, who mocked Muslim attempts to challenge doctrine of the Holy Trinity with rational arguments.<sup>72</sup> During the seventeenth century, this Orientalist projection turned from yet another strategy to keep Islam at bay into a source of curiosity and admiration. A formidable example was the seventeenth-century rediscovery of Abu Bakr Mohammed ben Abd-al-Malik Ibn Tufayl's twelfth-century philosophical coming-of-age story about an orphan boy named Hayy Ibn Yagzan.<sup>73</sup> In 1671 the English Orientalist Edward Pocock and his son published the Arabic text with a Latin translation, which was then translated into Dutch by the playwright Johannes Bouwmeester, a key member of Spinoza's circle. The title page of the Dutch edition from 1672, *Het Leeven van Hai Ebn Yokdhan*, summarised the story's allegorical meaning: 'Wherein is shown, how someone, without any contact with other people, or any education, could obtain knowledge of himself, and of God.'<sup>74</sup> The story's main character, who is raised on an island by a gazelle (or a goat, in Bouwmeester's version), learns about God and the natural world through reason, experimental observation, and systematic deduction. When Hai is finally introduced to human (Muslim) society on another island, he soon realises that the members of this society are unable to understand God as well as he had come to during his spiritual isolation. Disappointed, Hai returns to his island and spends the rest of his days meditating, relieving himself from all bodily and material desires and studying the nature of God without any further interruptions. Although Spinoza's role in the creation and reception of *Het Leeven van Hai Ebn Yokdhan* remains unclear, the novel's many parallels with the Cartesian quest for intellectual autonomy and the Spinozist search for the *amor intellectualis dei* were probably not lost on Spinoza's friends.<sup>75</sup> These freethinkers eagerly adapted a philosophical allegory from a five-centuries-old Islamic tradition into early Enlightened discourse.

The intellectual blend of Cartesianism, linguistic politics, and cultural relativism thus inspired new forms of early modern Orientalism projecting Western beliefs on Western representations of texts, narratives, and images from the East. Glazemaker functioned as

70 Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 618.

71 Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 620.

72 Malcolm, 'Islam as a "Rational" Religion', 17-18.

73 Israel, *Enlightenment Contested*, 628; Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*.

74 Ibn Tufayl, *Het Leeven van Hai Ebn Yokdhan*, title page: 'Waar in getoond wordt, hoe iemand buiten eenige ommegang met Menschen, ofte onderwyzinge, kan komen tot de kennisse van zich zelve, en van God'.

75 Kruk and Vrolijk, 'The First Dutch Translation', 110

a key broker of such representations. Besides travelogues of Pietro Della Valle and Marco Polo, he translated influential ethnographies of non-Western cultures such as Athanasius Kircher's *China illustrata* (1667) and Paul Rycaut's *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (1665), which included an extensive description of the 'Turkish Religion'.<sup>76</sup> These richly illustrated (and therefore expensive) editions apparently met a demand for first-hand accounts of Arabic and Asian cultures. Besides the local discussions within Mennonite communities during the 1650s and 1660s, the appeal of Glazemaker's specific approach to the Qur'an should be situated from within this growing interest in the non-Western world among freethinking circles from the Early Enlightenment.

### Conclusion

The first two Dutch translations of the Qur'an once again demonstrate how the holy book became a canvas for the projection of Western ideas. The two editions sold by the booksellers Berentsma and Rieuwertsz originated in vastly different, yet partly overlapping genealogies of intermediary translations. But a different choice of exemplar was only one of the many differences between them. In this article I have built upon existing bibliographic descriptions of the first Dutch Qur'an editions by quantifying the (absence of) abbreviation in the two editions, identifying the sources of the paratexts, and examining the differences in translation poetics. I propose to view these differences in light of two discourses that profoundly shaped Glazemaker's career: the Mennonite dispute about freedom of conscience known as the *Lammerenkrijgh* and the rise of Cartesianism. Because of this resonance of the holy book in specific local, intra-Christian discussions, the Dutch translation history of the Qur'an offers a case in point for what Jan Loop and others conceptualised as the 'European Qur'an': a textual tradition of its own that reflected 'the European self in varying religious, political, philosophical, and cultural contexts'.<sup>77</sup>

Based on paratextual analysis I furthermore argue that the differences in editing choices between Berentsma's and Rieuwertsz's Qur'ans did not just exemplify different ideological attitudes, but also different epistemologies. Whereas *De Arabische Alkoran* (1641) only included the paratextual material from its German source, *Mahomets Alkoran* (1657) contained paratexts originating in no fewer than seven discrete editions in addition to its prime source, Du Ryer's *L'Alcoran*. Inspired by a Cartesian scepticism towards the reliability of textual traditions, Glazemaker accepted ideological disagreement and linguistic ambiguity as inevitable and irredeemable features of his sources. Instead of striving for a rationalist solution to the contradictions he faced, the translator opted for philological inclusivity. He included the textual surplus in the sources he collected and refrained from giving his own interpretation, leaving such judgment to his readers. Such a relativist conception of the 'truth' represented a radical Cartesian position, because taking historical, linguistic, and theological uncertainty for granted could have serious philosophical and political consequences. Glazemaker's oeuvre can be read as a unique archive of a translator who was willing to take that risk.

<sup>76</sup> Glazemaker translated the 1670 French translation of Rycaut's book; he did not read English.

<sup>77</sup> Loop, 'Introduction', 16.

## Appendix

### Appendix 1. *The sources of the paratexts in Mahomets Alkoran.*

Paratext from <i>Mahomets Alkoran</i>	Sources used by Glazemaker
Voorreeden, Aan de Lezer, Uit het Fransch vertaalt Kort Begrip van de Godsdienst der Turken	<i>L'Alcoran de Mahomet. Translaté d'Arabe en Francois</i> , André du Ryer trans. (Paris: Antoine de Sommaville, 1647). <i>L'Alcoran de Mahomet. Translaté d'Arabe en Francois</i> , André du Ryer trans. (Paris: Antoine de Sommaville, 1647). [Original.]
Aan de Lezer Mahomets Leven; Getrokken uit de Sarasijnsche Historie van Georgius Elmacinus, in d'Arabische taal geschreven, en door Thomas Erpenius in Latijn gestelt, en daar uit door J.H.G. vertaalt Mahomets Leven; Uit verscheide Christe Schrijvers getrokken	Elmacinus, Georgius, <i>Historia Saracenicæ, qua res gestæ Muslimorum</i> , Thomas Erpenius trans. (Leiden: Johannes Maire and Elzevier, 1625).  1. Blaise de Vigenère, 'Illustrations sur l'histoire de Chalcondile Atheneien, de la decadente de l'Empire Grec, & établissement de celui des Turcs', in Laonikos Chalcocondyles, <i>L'Histoire de la Decadence de l'Empire Grec, et Etablissement de Celuy des Turcs</i> , Blaise de Vigenère trans. (Paris: Thomas Artus, 1650). 2. Roderigo Jiménez de Rada, 'Historia Arabum', in Georgius Elmacinus, <i>Historia Saracenicæ, qua res gestæ Muslimorum</i> , Thomas Erpenius trans. (Leiden: Johannes Maire and Elzevier, 1625). 3. Scipion Dupleix, <i>Mémoires des Gaules depuis le deluge jusques à l'establisement de la monarchie française</i> (Paris: Laurent Sonnius, 1619). 4. Johannes Cuspinianus, <i>De Turcarum Origine, Religione, ac immanissima eorum in Christianos tyrannide</i> (Leiden: Johannes Maire, 1654). 5. Claude Malingre Saint-Lazare, <i>Histoire Romaine</i> , 3 vols (Paris: Robert Foüet, 1630), II. Juan Andrés, <i>Confusio Sectæ Mahometanæ</i> , Johannes Lauterbach trans. (Utrecht: Johannes van Waesberge, 1656(?)).
Vertoning, Door Mahomet en zijn navolgers verdicht, van een reis, die hy, op het beest Alborach zittende, naar Jerusalem deë, en van daar ten Hemel opklom Samenspraak	<i>Machumetis Saracenorum principis, eiusque successorum vitæ, ac doctrinæ, ipseque Alcoran</i> , Robert of Ketton et al. trans (Basel: Theodorus Bibliander, 1543).

### Appendix 2. *Paratexts from Genealogy A and Genealogy B.*

Label in fig. 2	Title in source
<b>Bibliander, 1543 (Genealogy A)</b>	
1. Preface by Melanchton	Philippi Melanchton praemonito ad lectorem Christiano lectori Theodorus Bibliander S.
2. Preface by Bibliander	Ad reverendissimos patres ac dominos episcopos et doctores ecclesiarum Christi apologia pro editione Alcorani
3. Apology by Bibliander	Epistola domini Petri Abbatis, ad dominum Bernhardum Claraevallis abbatem
4. Letter by Peter the Venerable	Incipit quaedam summula brevis contra haereses et sectam diabolicæ fraudis Saracenorum, sive Ismahelitarum
5 Short summary against the heresies of the Saracens	Praefatio Roberti translatoris ad dominum Petrum abbatem Cluniacensem
6. Preface by Ketton	Incipit doctrina Machumet
7. Doctrina Machumet	De generatione Machumet et nutritura eius
8. Biography of Muhammad	Incipit chronica mendosa et ridiculosa Saracenorum
9. History of the Saracens	Annotationes
10. Annotations	

## Appendix 2. Continued

Label in fig. 2	Title in source
<b>Arrivabene, 1547 (Genealogy A)</b>	
11. Dedicatory letter by Arrivabene	Allo illustriss. Signor Gabriel de Luoës s. d'Aramon
12. Dedicatory sonnet by Crivelli	Com'il gran Re del ciel Gabriello elesse
13. Letter to the reader	Alli pii lettori
14. Compilation of Christian biographies of Muhammad	La vera vita di Macometto, tratta dall'histoire di christiani
15. On Muhammad's law	In che e' Fondata la legge Mahomettana
16. Il Primo Libro dell'Alcorano	Il Primo Libro dell'Alcorano
<b>Halbmayer, 1616 (Genealogy A)</b>	
17. Note on titlepage	Auf welchem zu vernemen/Wann unnd woher ihr falscher Prophet Machomet seinem ursprung oder anfang genommen [etc.]
18. Preface by Schweigger	Vorrede über den Alcoran, an den gutherßigen Leser
19. Concluding remarks by Schweiger	Nota bene
20. Das erste Buch des Alcorans	Das erste Buch des Alcorans
<b>Berentsma, 1641 (Genealogy A)</b>	
21. Preface taken from Schweigger's titlepage	De Arabische Translateur tot den Leser
22. Preface by Schweigger	Voor-reden van de Arabische Translateur, over der Turcken Alkoran, aen den Leser
23. Concluding remarks by Schweiger	Den Translateur besluyt
24. Het Eerste Boeck des Alkorans	Het Eerste Boeck des Alkorans
<b>De Sommaville, 1647 (Genealogy B)</b>	
25. Firman by Sultan Murad IV	A monsieur monsieur Du Ryer Sieur de Malzair, Gentilhomme ordinaire dela Chambredu Roy.
26. Attestations by the consuls of Marseille	Nous Consuls, Gouverneurs, Protecteurs & Deffenseurs des Privileges [etc.]
27. Preface by Du Ryer	Au lecteur
28. Summary of the Turkish Religion	Sommaire de la religion des Turcs
<b>Rieuwertsz, 1657 (Genealogy B)</b>	
29. Preface by Du Ryer	Voorreeden, Aan de Lezer, Uit het Fransch vertaalt
30. Doctrina Machumet	Samenspraak
31. Legend of the Night Journey	Vertoning, Door Mahomet en zijn navolgers verlicht, van een reis, die hy, op het beest Alborach zittende, naar Jerusalem deê, en van daar ten Hemel opklom
32. Summary of the Turkish Religion	Kort Begrip van de Godsdienst der Turken
33. Biography of Muhammad by Elmacius	Mahomets Leven; Getrokken uit de Sarasijnsche Historie van Georgius Elmacinus, in d'Arabische taal geschreven, en door Thomas Erpenius in Latijn gestelt, en daar uit door J.H.G. vertaalt
34. Preface to the reader	Aan de Lezer
35. Compilation of Christian biographies of Muhammad	Mahomets Leven; Uit verscheide Christe Schrijvers getrokken
<b>Von Wiering, 1688 (Genealogy B)</b>	
36. Preface by Du Ryer	Vorrede an den Leser
37. Summary of the Turkish Religion	Kurzer Einhalt des Türkischen Gottes Diensts



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