

TAFSIR HIKAYATI AS A RESISTANCE HERMENEUTICS

Hikayat Prang Sabi's Contribution to Holy War Literature and Quranic Studies

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Abstract

This article will elaborate on the model of interpreting the Quran in Hikayat Prang Sabi. Guided by the text by Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu, the author analyses the data by Hans Georg Gadamer's ideas about "Preunderstanding", "Fusion of Horizons", and "Historical Consciousness". This research shows that Hikayat Prang Sabi has introduced a unique model of interpreting the Quran by adopting hikayat instruments in Acehnese culture. The author identifies this interpretation model in this research with Tafsir Hikayati. Tafsir Hikayati has contributed to constructing the Acehnese's resistance to Dutch colonialism by bringing together two very influential spirits in Acehnese society: religion and culture. Through Tafsir Hikayati, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu constructs a "Resistance Hermeneutics" by interpreting Islamic religious texts (the Quran) using the Acehnese cultural language (hikayat). Combining these two spirits has helped the Acehnese people accept and capture the message of resistance conveyed by Hikayat Prang Sabi so that it succeeded in awakening the spirit of ideological struggle against Dutch colonialism.

[Artikel ini mengelaborasi model penafsiran Al-Quran dalam Hikayat Prang Sabi. Dengan berpedoman pada teks karya Teungku Chiek Pante



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Kulu, penulis menginterpretasi data dengan meminjam gagasan Hans Georg Gadamer tentang “Pra-Pemahaman”, “Perpaduan Horizon (cakrawala)”, dan “Kesadaran (keterpengaruh) sejarah”. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Hikayat Prang Sabi telah memperkenalkan model penafsiran Al-Quran yang khas dengan mengadopsi instrumen hikayat dalam kebudayaan Aceh. Dalam penelitian ini, penulis mengidentifikasi model penafsiran tersebut dengan istilah Tafsir Hikayati. Tafsir Hikayati telah berkontribusi dalam mengkonstruksi perlawanan orang Aceh terhadap kolonialisme Belanda dengan mempertemukan dua spirit yang sangat berpengaruh dalam masyarakat Aceh: agama dan budaya. Melalui Tafsir Hikayati, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu mengonstruksi tafsir perlawanan (resistance hermeneutics) dengan melakukan interpretasi teks keagamaan Islam (Al-Quran) menggunakan bahasa kebudayaan (hikayat) yang berkembang di Aceh. Perpaduan dua spirit tersebut telah membantu orang Aceh dalam menerima dan menangkap pesan perlawanan yang disampaikan oleh Hikayat Prang Sabi sehingga berhasil membangkitkan semangat perjuangan ideologis dalam melawan penjajahan Belanda.]

Keywords: Aceh, *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, Holy War, Resistance Hermeneutics, *Tafsir Hikayati*

A. Introduction

After declaring war on the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam on 26 March 1873, the Dutch faced an unexpected political reality where their enemies continued to wage resistance. They wondered why the Acehnese never wanted to withdraw from the battlefield. Even with inadequate weapons and war equipment, it can be said that the Acehnese are like people who are laying their lives in the hands of the enemy. This phenomenon is what makes the Dutch then give a term that is quite phenomenal: *Atjeh Moorden!*¹

Snouck Hurgronje, an advisor to the Dutch East Indies government, explained this Dutch anxiety well. Hurgronje said, “*De Achebers gevoelig te slaan en zón hun superioriteitswaan te ontnemen*” (The Acehnese must be beaten as painfully as possible to injure their bodies and feelings to

¹ David Kloos, “A Crazy State: Violence, Psychiatry, and Colonialism in Aceh, Indonesia ca. 1910-1942”, *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 170, no. 1 (2014); Eric Eugene Morris, *Islam and Politics in Aceh: A Study of Center-Periphery Relations in Indonesia* (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1983).

destroy their feelings of high self-esteem).² The Acehnese feel themselves to be very noble and consider themselves more noble than the Dutch *kaphe* (infidels). Their Islamic identity is seen as higher than the *kaphe* people who are trying to colonize. They always feel high self (superiority complex), so to beat it, the Dutch drop their pride and strike them until they feel humiliated (inferiority complex).³

Since its inception, the Islamic spirit has been deeply intertwined with Aceh's identity. Islam profoundly shapes the social fabric of Aceh, permeating daily life and cultural practices. This influence is particularly evident in the region's historical resistance against colonialism, as exemplified by *Hikayat Prang Sabi*. This work blends religion and culture, translating the teachings of the Quran into a format familiar to Acehnese traditions. Written by Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu, *Hikayat Prang Sabi* is a poetic account of *jihad fi sabilillah* (holy war) against Dutch colonial forces. It vividly portrays how Aceh, as a sovereign nation, should stand firm against foreign intervention and occupation. This literary piece played a crucial role in the resistance movement, fueling efforts to drive out invaders from the Nusantara, with a particular focus on Aceh.

Several scholars who studied *Hikayat Prang Sabi* were quite helpful in tracing and understanding the *Hikayat* in the context of colonialism. H.T Damsté made an effort in his study to present preliminary data regarding the existence of the *Hikayat*.⁴ Damsté, who studied from a linguistic approach, appears objective in presenting the data he obtained; he was a reasonably senior outsider in introducing *Hikayat Prang Sabi* to the scientific community. In contrast to Damsté, Snouck Hurgronje, who was assigned as an advisor to the colonial government, tended to study from a socio-anthropological perspective.⁵ Both contributed to the Dutch government mapping the sources of Acehnese resistance.

Many scholars have considered *Hikayat Prang Sabi* a significant literary work that contributed to the Aceh War. For example, Ali Hasjmy dared to equate this *Hikayat* with Ilias Odyssey.⁶ For Hasjmy, *Hikayat Prang Sabi* was the reason Aceh could survive the colonial war for a long

² Snouck Hurgronje, *De Achebers* (1906).

³ Hasan Muhammad Tiro, *Atjeh Bak Mata Donja* (New York: Institute Atjeh di Amerika, 1968), p. 6.

⁴ H.T. Damsté, "Hikajat Prang Sabi", in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 84 (1928), pp. 545–609.

⁵ Snouck Hurgronje, *The Achehnese*, vol. II (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1906).

⁶ Ali Hasjmy, *Apa Sebab Rakyat Aceh Sanggup Berperang Puluhan Tahun Melawan Agressi Belanda* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1977).

time. Ibrahim Alfian⁷ and Imran Teuku Abdullah also expressed the same thing.⁸ Both saw *Hikayat Prang Sabi* as a work that significantly influenced the war and resistance to the Dutch. Researchers, especially local researchers, have studied literary aspects because they are emotionally close and live in the same culture.

In contrast to most other local researchers, Amirul Hadi focuses more on studying the jihad content in *Hikayat Prang Sabi* rather than exploring the literary aspects. Hadi looked historically at how the Acehnese were involved in the battlefield and how much they valued peace. His study of the meaning of jihad shows that the messages in *Hikayat Prang Sabi* went beyond its initial purpose as a call for holy war against the Dutch.⁹ This research model is typical of contemporary researchers. Several other researchers then developed the study using a more varied reading. Contemporary researchers tend to develop studies in a more conceptual form. That is, the concepts contained in the *Hikayat* are explored more profoundly using various theories and approaches.

James T. Siegel, for example, clearly describes that *Hikayat Prang Sabi* had played a significant role in hypnotizing the Acehnese to fight against the Dutch. He saw that the role of the Quran in *Hikayat Prang Sabi* was quite dominant in moving people to war, especially in describing god's promises to those who were martyred.¹⁰ Indirectly, it became a propaganda tool to fight Dutch colonialism. The study of Eric Eugene Morris shows that *Hikayat Prang Sabi* has a strategy of using specific language to influence the reader's psychology. He argued that the Acehnese Ulama, formerly familiar with Arabic literature, had

⁷ Ibrahim Alfian, *Perang di jalan Allah: Perang Aceh, 1873-1912* (Jakarta: Pustaka Sinar Harapan, 1987); Ibrahim Alfian, *Sastra Perang : Sebuah Pembicaraan Mengenai Hikayat Perang Sabil* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 1992); Ibrahim Alfian, "Aceh and the Holy War (Prang Sabil)", in *Verandah of Violence*, ed. by Anthony Reid (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2006); Teuku Ibrahim Alfian, "The Aceh Sultanate under Sultan Mohammad Daud Syah and the Dutch War", in *Profiles of Malay Culture: Historiography, Religion and Politics*, ed. by S. Kartodirdjo (Jakarta: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1976).

⁸ Imran Teuku Abdullah, "Hikayat Perang Sabi Satu Bentuk Karya Sastra Perlawanan", Pidato Pengukuhan Jabatan Guru Besar pada Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogyakarta (2008); Imran Teuku Abdullah, "Ulama dan Hikayat Perang Sabil dalam Perang Belanda di Aceh", *Humaniora*, vol. 12, no. 3 (2000).

⁹ Amirul Hadi, "Exploring Acehnese Understandings of Jihad: A Study of the Hikayat Prang Sabi", in *Mapping the Acehnese Past* (2011), pp. 183–97.

¹⁰ C. S. Kessler, "Review of The Rope of God, by J. T. Siegel", *Man*, vol. 5 no. 2, pp. 343–344; James T. Siegel, *Shadow and Sound: The Historical Thought of a Sumatran People* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), pp. 229-267.

intentionally left Arabic and Malay in composing *Hikayat Prang Sabi*. Using the Acehnese language as a political propaganda tool is nothing but a means for all levels of society to understand the message in the *Hikayat*.¹¹

Hikayat Prang Sabi has a significant role in shaping identity as a spirit of resistance to Dutch colonialism and evoking a spirit of war against the Dutch *kaphe*.¹² So do not be surprised when this motif is known by the Dutch, *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, to be a forbidden “red book.”¹³ People who have a copy of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* will be arrested. Those who are caught keeping *Hikayat Prang Sabi* will be eliminated because it will become a poison that awakens the spirit of nationalism to fight the forces of Dutch colonial imperialism.

As an author, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu did not write a *tafsir* as in the traditional understanding. However, *Hikayat Prang Sabi* contains messages from the Quran that can move the soul.¹⁴ His narrative can influence the psychology of the subconscious of many people to be resistant. In this way, his work in the form of “resistance hermeneutics” has generally taken on the role of the book of *tafsir*, which has a high spiritual value. *Hikayat Prang Sabi* presents an interpretation of the Quran in the form of epic poetry. The values it conveys are deeply rooted in Quranic teachings, reflecting the core principles and spirit of the holy text. As a work of war literature, *Hikayat Prang Sabi* explores verses related to jihad and offers insights into concepts of leadership and property ownership within the framework of conflict. Despite its focus on warfare, it remains firmly anchored in the enduring values of the Quran. *Hikayat Prang Sabi* can also be classified as an aesthetic interpretation of the Quran because of its literary style of reading, which is typical in Acehnese culture. The word “*hikayat*” refers to the meaning of narrative

¹¹ Morris, *Islam and Politics in Aceh*; Eric Eugene Morris, “Aceh: Social Revolution and the Islamic Vision,” in *Regional Dynamics of Indonesian Revolution: Unity from Diversity*, ed. by Audrey R. Kahin (Honolulu: Universit of Hawaii Press, 1985), p. 83–110.

¹² Paul Van’t Veer, *Perang Aceh: Kisah Kegagalan Snouck Hurgronje* (Jakarta: Grafiti Press, 1985), p. 92.

¹³ Edwin P. Wieringa, “The Dream of the King and the Holy War Against the Dutch: The Kôteubah of the Acehnese Epic, *Hikayat Prang Gômpeuni*,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 61, no. 2 (1998), pp. 299–308; Edwin P. Wieringa, “Islam and Paradise Are Sheltered under the Shade of Swords: Phallogocentric Fantasies of Paradise in Nineteenth-Century Acehnese War Propaganda and Their Lasting Legacy,” in *Islamic History and Civilization*, ed. by Hinrich Biesterfeldt and Sebastian Günther, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 403–406; Damsté, *Hikajat Prang Sabi*, p. 545.

¹⁴ H.C. Zentgraaff, *Aceh* (Jakarta: Depdikbud, 1982).

stories in the form of *naẓam* and rhymes.¹⁵ *Hikayat* in Aceh Culture is a poetic composition whose lines consist of several syllables and have the same sound at the end of the line. The writing of the lines in the *hikayat* usually goes hand in hand, not separated into stanzas.¹⁶

Amer Latif has applied a similar approach in his hermeneutical readings of Quranic values and spiritual themes within Jalaluddin Rumi's poetry.¹⁷ While Rumi did not author a dedicated book of tafsir, Latif has examined Rumi's interpretative perspective through his literary works. Renowned for his poems infused with Sufi spirituality, as seen in *Fibi Ma Fibi* and *Masnawi*, Rumi's writings provide a rich context for exploring his hermeneutical insights. Latif particularly focuses on Rumi's interpretation of the character of Pharaoh, analyzing how these views reflect broader spiritual and ethical dimensions within Rumi's thought.

In this article, the author tries to read *Hikayat Prang Sabi* within the framework of *Tafsir Hikayati*. *Tafsir Hikayati*, as a model for the critical interpretation of the Quran during Aceh's struggle against Dutch colonialism, is something new that needs to be studied more. The author uses Hans Georg Gadamer's ideas about preunderstanding, historical consciousness, and fusion of horizons to analyze *Hikayat Prang Sabi*. These ideas are essential to see the thought construction process of Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu in composing *Hikayat Prang Sabi*. Reading *Hikayat Prang Sabi* today requires us to understand the development of the socio-political context at the time it was written. Geopolitically, it is also essential for readers to know to whom that literary work is directed, including its culture and civilization. Gadamer's hermeneutic ideas serve to help gain a more comprehensive understanding. This article sees that combining religious elements (the Quran) and cultural elements (*hikayat*) became a weapon of resistance that raised the Acehnese people's war spirit against the Dutch. Therefore, this research will examine the relationship between the scriptures presented in *Hikayat* form and the public's reception of the *Hikayat*.

¹⁵ Aboe Bakar et al., *Kamus Aceh Indonesia* (Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1985), p. 290.

¹⁶ Mahjiddin Jusuf, *Al-Quran Al-Karim dan Terjemahan Bebas Bersajak dalam Bahasa Aceh* (Banda Aceh: Pusat Penelitian dan Pengkajian Kebudayaan Islam (P3KI) Pemerintah Daerah Istimewa Aceh, 1995), p. xiv.

¹⁷ Amer Latif, "Qur'anic Narrative and Sufi Hermeneutics: Rumi's Interpretations of Pharaoh's Character", Ph.D. Thesis (Stony Brook University, 2009).

B. The Role of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* in the Aceh War

Understanding *Hikayat Prang Sabi* requires the reader to go deeper into the historical phase of Aceh and the socio-political realities at the time the *Hikayat* was being composed. Being not born in a vacuum, the *Hikayat* emerged as a response to Dutch colonialism, which openly declared war on the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam on 26 March 1873.¹⁸ As a sovereign sultanate over its territory, Aceh, under Sultan Mahmud Syah's leadership, responded to the declaration of war by deploying the royal army to defend its independence. The Dutch lost in the first war period (1873-1874). One of their military leaders, General Rudolf Kohler, was shot dead in the courtyard of the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque on 14 April 1873.¹⁹ A year later, Sultan Mahmud Syah died on 26 January 1874. Prince Muhammad Daud Syah replaced the reins of leadership.

When he served as Sultan, Muhammad Daud Syah was very young, nine years old. The conditions of war that were increasingly raging caused "Aceh Tiga Sagi" to be pushed back by the Dutch attack. In 1880, the resistance in Aceh Besar reached its lowest point. The people have begun to despair and lose their fighting spirit because they have lost combat equipment compared to enemy forces. This despair was compounded by the betrayal of Uleebalang, who signed the "Korte Verklaring" agreement with the Dutch.²⁰ This condition prompted the ulama to renegotiations, which required a structured resistance under the command line. In these conditions, Teungku Muhammad Saman, a charismatic ulama from Tiro, Pidie, was approved and elected as the warlord who led the command against the Dutch.²¹ He led the war for years till he died from being poisoned by Dutch minions in 1891.²²

Hikayat Prang Sabi was written during the leadership of Teungku Muhammad Saman, who was later better known as Teungku Chiek di Tiro. He asked Teungku Haji Muhammad or later better known as Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu, one of his friends, to write a *hikayat* that could inspire

¹⁸ Mohammad Said, *Aceh Sepanjang Abad* (Medan: Waspada Medan, 1981); p. 754; Hasjmy, *Apa Sebab Rakyat Aceh Sanggup*, p. 30.

¹⁹ Ibrahim Alfian, *Wajah Rakyat Aceh dalam Lintasan Sejarah* (Banda Aceh: Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Aceh, 1999); Tiro, *Atjeh Bak Mata Donja*.

²⁰ J. Jongejans, *Land en Volk van Atjeh Vroeger en NU* (Hollandia Drukkerij N.V. Baarn, 1938); P.J. Carmejoole, *Atjeh* (Groningen-Den Haag-Batavia: Uitgevers-Maatschappij N.V, 1931).

²¹ Ismail Jacob, *Teungku Tjibik Di Tiro: Hidup dan Perjuangannya* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1960), pp. 47-50; Tiro, *Atjeh Bak Mata Donja*, p. 36.

²² Jacob, *Teungku Tjibik Di Tiro*, pp. 142-3; Tiro, *Atjeh Bak Mata Donja*, p. 38.

the Acehnese to go to war. They have had a kinship relationship since studying at the Dayah Tiro led by Teungku Muhammad Amin. So, *Hikayat Prang Sabi* was born in Aceh's socio-political context, which was raging in the war against the Dutch.

Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu's real name is Muhammad. He was born in Pante Kulu, Tiro, Pidie in 1836 AD/1251 H. He spent his youth studying religion at Dayah Tiro, led by an influential ulama in Aceh, Teungku Haji Muhammad Amin Dayah Cut. After being equipped with sufficient knowledge, he continued his studies in Mecca with the permission of the dayah leader. At that time, he already had the title of Teungku Rangkang, a scientific degree in the Acehnese tradition, which, compared to today, is at the level of a teaching assistant. He studied literature, philosophy, *mantiq*, history, and other scientific fields in Mecca. In addition, he used his presence in Mecca to build networks with leaders of the Islamic movement, especially the Wahhabi group, which controlled the Islamic movement in Saudi Arabia.²³

The spirit of the Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu movement was heavily influenced by the thoughts of Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab (1701-1793) and Jamaluddin Al-Afghani (1838-1897). The discourse on the purification of Islamic aqidah and the eradication of shirk and disbelief they voiced helped move Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu to contribute to Aceh. When he was studying in Mecca, the two men were being excellent for Islamic movements in the Middle East. At that time, the Arab world was voicing Islamic reformism as a form of resistance to Western political and economic domination. In the field of literary arts, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu was much inspired by the Arabic poetry he studied, such as the works of Hasan ibn Thabit, Abdullah ibn Malik, and Ka'b ibn Zubair. The influence of the book *dirānu al-syi'r* combined with his knowledge of the history of Islamic warriors during the Prophet Muhammad, such as Umar ibn Khattab, Khalid ibn Walid, Hamzah, Tariq ibn Ziyad, Usamah ibn Zaid, and other Islamic figures.²⁴

In his further education, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu spent ten years wandering away from Aceh. During that time, he lived in Mecca to study until he got the title of Teungku Chiek, which today is equivalent to the title of Professor. After that, he returned to Aceh to fight in the holy war with his childhood colleague, Teungku Chiek di Tiro. It was on this

²³ Hasjmy, *Apa Sebab Rakyat Aceh*, p. 49.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

way home that he composed *Hikayat Prang Sabi*.²⁵ Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu died during the war against the Dutch in Lam Leuot, Indrapuri, Aceh Besar, and was buried in the same place.²⁶ It is not easy to trace the intellectual imprints of Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu in detail. Apart from being unable to trace his identity at that time, the socio-political conditions in Aceh, which continued to rage at war, did not allow scholars and intellectuals to spend time in systematic study, research, and documentation of traces of Aceh's civilization. Most of their time is taken up by upheavals and responding to more critical phenomena for resistance to colonial imperialism.

C. *Tafsir Hikayati* as a Resistance Hermeneutics

1. *The Nature of Tafsir Hikayati*

In the tradition of interpreting the Quran, literary interpretation is known as *tafsir bayāni*.²⁷ Some works focusing on linguistic and social aspects are also called *tafsir adabi-ijtimā'i*. *Tafsir bayāni* tries to explain the literary aspects contained in the Quran. The study of the language contained in *tafsir bayāni* is then used as the basis for asserting that the Quran is a miracle that is incomparable in terms of language and meaning. The choice of certain words and consideration of their historicity towards certain verses are the characteristics of literary interpretation to show the power of language and literature in the Quran. The *tafsir adabi-ijtimā'i* also has the same tendency by adding a social portion in its interpretation.

Tafsir Hikayati is something new because it is different from other literary interpretations. There is a fairly basic difference between the *tafsir bayāni* or *tafsir adabi-ijtimā'i* and the *tafsir hikayati*. Suppose *tafsir bayāni* and *tafsir adabi-ijtimā'i* perform the interpretation by revealing the literary values contained in the Quran. In that case, the *tafsir hikayati* conveys the

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

²⁶ Ali Hasjmy, *Kebudayaan Aceh dalam Sejarah* (Jakarta: Beuna, 1983), p. 211-2.

²⁷ Amin al-Khuli, *Manāḥij al-Tajdid fī al-Naḥw wa al-Balāghab wa al-Tafsīr wa al-Ādāb* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1976); Aishah 'Abdurrahman Bintu Shāthi', *Al-Tafsīr al-Bayāni li al-Qur'ān al-Karīm* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, n.d.); Nasr Hamid Abu Zayd, *Mafhūm al-Naṣ: Dirāsah fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Markaz al-Thaqāfah al-'Araby, 1998); Issa J. Boullata, *Al-Quran Yang Menakutkan* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2008); Andrew Rippin, *Muslim, Their Religious Beliefs and Practices: The Contemporary Period*, vol 2. (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); Muhammad Shahrur, *Al-Kitāb wa al-Qur'ān: Qirā'ah Mu'āshirah* (Damaskus: al-Ahālī, n.d.).

interpretation of the Quran in a literary language.²⁸ The first style tries to reveal the literary values in the Quran, while the second conveys them in literary language. *Tafsir hikayati* is a distinctive and new in the gradition of the Quranic interpretation.

So far, the pattern of interpretation of the Quran in the Islamic tradition has been described by many scholars. *Al-Dhababi*, for instance, divides the pattern of Quranic interpretation into: *fiqhi*, *falsafi*, *sufi*, *ilmī*, *ilhadī*, *madhhabī*, and *adabi-ijtimā'i*.²⁹ The existence of *tafsir hikayati* in the realm of literary interpretation does not lie in revealing the meanings and values of the Quran but in the process of meaning using literary language.

Tafsir Hikayati is the elaboration of the meanings of the Quran by using *hikayat* as the language of communication. The *hikayat* is used as a model for critical reading of reality by considering cultural aspects. The *hikayat* that has lived and been influential in Acehnese culture is used as a communication and propaganda strategy. *Hikayat* becomes a bridge for the message of resistance that connects the writer and the audience. The author of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* sees this strategy as more effective than interpreting the Quran about jihad as traditional interpretations in general.

Hikayat in Acehnese culture differs from *hikayat* or literary traditions in other parts of Nusantara, such as *pantun*, poetry, and other literature. *Hikayat Aceh* has its unique rhyme and rhythm patterns. Rhymes and rhythms in Acehnese *hikayat* are known as *pakhok/anthok* and *bubu*,³⁰ which are unique compared to patterns found in other Indonesian literary treasures. Acehnese literature has two rhymes: rhyme based on sound and rhyme based on line layout. In Acehnese *hikayat* literature, rhyme is not tied to the sound equation at the end of the line but by using a zig-zag pattern, namely the relationship between the end of an odd line and the sound of the end of the word in the middle of an even line. Meanwhile, rhythm in Acehnese literature refers to the number of syllables in a line.³¹

The following is the example of the zig-zag pattern in *Hikayat Prang Sabi*:

Bek ta ingat keu Uleebalang

²⁸ H.B. Jassin, *Al-Quran Al-Karim Bacaan Mulia*, 3rd ed. (Jakarta: Djambatan, 1991).

²⁹ Muhammad Husein al-Dhababi, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn* (Cairo: Maktabah Wahbah, n.d.), p. 9-10.

³⁰ Bukhari Daud and Mark Durie, *Kamus Basa Aceh Kamus Babasa Aceh Acehnese-Indonesian-English Thesaurus* (Canberra: Pacific Linguistics Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies The Australian National University, 1999), p. 20, 123.

³¹ Mohd. Harun, *Pengantar Sastra Aceh* (Bandung: Citapustaka Media Perintis), pp. 319-32.

Ka jipasang le Jen Pari
Wabe Teungku Cut donya ka akbe
Agama tan le sigala nanggroe
 Bandum Ulama narit tan le
 Keu prang Kapbe hana peuduli
 Gadob akai dum babeh klo
 Tan le hiro but Prang Sabi
Melaenkan yang na ngon izin po
Teungku Chiek di Tiro tauladan nabi
Ulama laen jeup-jeup Nanggroe
 Peuseungap *droe* hana peuduli³²

Hikayat in Aceh civilization is a poetic composition (rhyme) in which each line usually consists of 8 to 12 syllables (*bubu*/rhythm). A similar sound (*pakhok*/rhyme) is at the end of the line.³³ This pattern distinguishes it from the Malay *pantun* and poetry, which generally have A-B-A-B and A-A-A-A patterns. This pattern tries to combine the equations of rhyme at the end of each line with the two models.³⁴ Rhymes in Acehnese *hikayat* are divided into two categories: rhyme based on sound and rhyme based on the location of the words in the line. The rhyme in the Aceh *hikayat* is not only seen at the end of the line in the stanza but also how the relationship between the end of the odd line and the sound of the end of the word in the middle of the even line (A-B-B-A or A-B-B-C pattern). Usually, these lines are written side by side and not separated in the form of stanzas.³⁵

In general, a *pantun* consists of two parts in four lines. The first two arrays are *sampiran* with no meaning related to its message, while the last two are called *isi* (content). In contrast, *Hikayat Prang Sabi* does not have the *sampiran* because every array is part of the content, as all arrays of Acehnese *hikayat* are contents that have a related meaning. The Acehnese *hikayat* also considers the position of the line, called *rungkebe*. *Hikayat Aceh* has several kinds of models when viewed in terms of *rungkebe*: two lines in a stanza (*rungkebe dua*), four lines in a stanza (*rungkebe peuti*), six lines in a stanza (*rungkebe nam*), eight lines in a stanza (*rungkebe lapan*), twelve lines

³² Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu, *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, ed. by Abdullah Arif (Kutaradja: Penerbit & Pustaka Darussalam), p. 4.

³³ Mohd. Harun, "Karakteristik Pantun Aceh", *Lingua: Journal of Language, Literature and Teaching*, vol. 12, no. 1 (2015), pp. 39–58, p. 57.

³⁴ Annabel Teh Gallop, "Malay Manuscript Art: The British Library Collection", *The British Library Journal*, vol. 17, no. 2 (1991), p. 19.

³⁵ Jusuf, *Al-Quran Al-Karim*, p. xiv.

in a stanza (*rungke duablah*), and merging model.³⁶ Viewed from this perspective, *Hikayat Prang Sabi* is the merging model.

Tafsir Hikayati underscores the importance of applying the Quranic teachings to social realities. During the conflict with the Dutch, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu interpreted the Quran in a way that addressed contemporary needs and challenges. For him, the Quran was not just a sacred text but a source of guidance that could alleviate people's anxieties. His approach to interpretation was driven by the desire to ensure that the Quranic values were practically relevant and beneficial for the people at that time. Thus, he tailored his exegesis to reflect his era's practical needs and circumstances, aiming to make the Quran's teachings actionable and meaningful in the context of ongoing resistance. The knowledge production carried out by Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu is a critical and contextual reflection on the text and the audience.

The critical side and contextualization in *Hikayat Prang Sabi* can be seen from how the author inserts religious spirits already rooted in society. For example, the enemy mentioned in the Quran is interpreted as the Dutch, who have been the enemy of Aceh since the 1873 War. Although the Quran does not explicitly address the Dutch, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu interpreted certain verses as a call to fight against them. In addition, he embedded the word "Jews" to the Dutch in order to clarify the identity of the enemy, though the Jews had nothing to do with the Aceh War declared by the Dutch. Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu only took advantage of existing sentiments and sentiments against Jews that have been rooted in the imagination of the Acehnese as a strategy to arouse the spirit of resistance in the souls of the Acehnese.

The sentiments above can be interpreted as framing and propaganda strategies that can form the reader's political beliefs and enthusiasm to fight the Dutch.³⁷ The choice of words such as Jewish, Dutch, and *Kaphe* means raising the spirit of the Acehnese in fighting the enemy. The narrative of the Quranic interpretation framed by Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu in *Hikayat Prang Sabi* is part of the discourse construction he built to present the Quran as a response to the reality that the Acehnese is facing.

³⁶ Harun, "Karakteristik Pantun Aceh", p. 42.

³⁷ Murray Edelman, "Contestable Categories and Public Opinion," *Political Communication* 10, no. 3 (1993), pp. 231-42.

2. *Tafsir Hikayati* in the Resistance to Colonialism in Aceh

In the construction of *Tafsir Hikayati*, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu offers a universal concept of jihad, including war, leadership, and wealth (property ownership). These three points of view are described in one broad framework of the Dutch anti-colonial political movement. These three elements are interrelated, each mutually reinforcing one another.³⁸ This section will explain how the *Tafsir Hikayati* was applied to revive the resistance movement against Dutch colonialism.

● War

In this section, I will show how the author of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* constructs his interpretation. *Hikayat Prang Sabi* was formed based on the author's experience by following the *bikayat* rules in Acehese literature. For example, provoking war by citing verses from the Quran as the legitimacy of jihad. The people are called upon to immediately rise to the battlefield to fight the infidels (*kaphe*), who are the enemies of Allah. In *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu used several verses of the Quran related to the advice and obligation to fight the enemy (*kaphe*). For example, the interpretation of Al-Baqarah: 216 below:

Bek taduk le wabe Teungku
Neujak laju bak mideun prang
Beu na ikot suroh Tuhanu
Ta prang mandum kaphe suwang
Lom firman he bangsawan
Lam Quran Tuhan peu trang

(Do not sit down anymore, O Teungku/go immediately to the battlefield/Follow God orders/fight all wretched infidels/god says O nobles/in the Quran God explains)

كَتَبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْقِتَالَ وَهُوَ كَرِهٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَن تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَن تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

He saudara bek taduk le
Jak prang kaphe wabe abang
Ikot suroh Rabbul Qade
Hana senabe pahala meuprang
Peu chit ta kbeun droe na mita Tuhan
Suroh na tan tatem julang
Syurga nafsu payah bek na
Taduek lam donya mantong senang

³⁸ Fadhli, "Tafsir Hikayati dan Perjuangan Suci di Aceh: Studi Atas Hikayat Prang Sabi", Master Thesis (UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2021).

Han ta ikot jalan sebena
Buet agama ta peunwayang
Ingat-ingat be bob hate
*Bek taduk le meusenang-senang*³⁹

(O brother, do not sit anymore/fight the infidels, O brother/Follow the orders of Rabbul Qadir/there is no match for the reward of fighting/Do not claim to be seeking god pleasure/if we do not want to carry the order/Want heaven but do not want trouble/life in the world is still fun/Not following the proper path/religious orders we underestimate/Remember, my son/no longer sitting having fun)

The above interpretation emphasizes the obligation to fight for all Muslims as God commands them to defend religion. Heaven as a reward becomes bargaining for those who will be martyred. Heaven promised by God cannot be obtained immediately, but one must be willing to struggle with difficulty. Sitting revelling in war in no way reflected his desire for heaven's reward. The author shows the legitimacy of his orders and suggestions by including a verse from the Quran.

In addition, the author also points out the socio-political context in which most religious authorities are in a state of uncertainty because they do not advocate a holy war against the enemy. At that time, most *ulama* and community leaders preferred to remain silent, not caring, rather than educating the public to fight. He is here to fill the space left for a long time.

Ben le ta ikot ulama jabe
Sajan kaphe duem sibarang
Geukbeun senang hukum kaphe
Han geutem le bak but meuprang
Bek that jent kaphe dalam awan
Bek pateh nyan Ulama suwang
Bek tatung qiyas ngen ibarat
*Ulama sabat ka jen pasang*⁴⁰

(Do not follow ignorant scholars/they are all with the infidels/They are happy with the law of infidels/no longer want a holy war/Though unbelievers can fly in the clouds/do not believe them woeful ulama/Do not accept their fatwas and teachings/because the devil has tempted the ulama)

The author of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* continues the above interpretation

³⁹ Kulu, *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, pp. 9-10.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

as a critique of the existing religious authority. According to him, scholars who sit quietly and do not advocate resistance are ignorant. In some parts, they are described as deaf and “lost mind scholars” due to submitting to the colonialist agenda. This anxiety is the reason for resistance to their existence. Rejection of the fatwas of ignorant scholars because the devil’s whispers tempt them.

The statement of ignorant ulama above shows the existence of a cluster within the ulama group; there are pros and cons to the struggle for a holy war. However, there is no clear explanation as to what is meant by ignorant ulama other than those who do not want to call for jihad against the Dutch. This labelling cannot be separated from the stagnation of resistance in the *Aceh Lhee Sagoe* area as the sultanate’s capital and surroundings. Until 1880, the Dutch managed to control the areas in Aceh Besar. At the same time, the people’s resistance has dramatically decreased (by not saying they are resigned and desperate) except for some community groups in the outskirts who are still hiding in the forest.⁴¹

Previously, there had been a betrayal by the *Uleebalang* group against the Aceh sultanate by signing the *Korte Verklaring* (short statement) with the Dutch in 1874, which contained the recognition of Dutch sovereignty over the Sultanate of Aceh. *Korte Verklaring* was then perfected again in 1889.⁴² The betrayal of *Uleebalang* became an excruciating decision for the people and caused them to slowly lose their passion for war. As an *ulama*, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu showed his religious authority in this condition. Psychologically, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu looks very emotional when he expresses his ideas. This attitude is inseparable from his anger towards social reality. The *ulama* and *uleebalang* were expected to lead the resistance at the forefront and seemed indifferent and submissive to colonial rule. Therefore, frontal and resistant interpretations and expressions were born.

To strengthen the basis of his argument, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu added another theological legitimacy in the form of verses from the Quran relating to the glory of jihad, such as Al-Taubah: 20, 24, 38, 39, 111, and Al-Anfāl: 65. This is done so that the Acehnese as the audience of the *Hikayat* are more convinced by the suggestion. Aceh, closely related to Islam, becomes very relevant if it is encouraged by the Quran. To explain the glory of those who want to fight, Teungku Chiek

⁴¹ Jacob, *Teungku Tjibik di Tiro*, pp. 36-43.

⁴² J. Jongejans, *Land En Volk van Atjeh*, pp. 285-6; *Revolusi Desember '45 di Aceh* (Pemerintah R.I. Daerah Atjeh, n.d.), p. 11.

Fadhli; Moch Nur Ichwan; Machasin

Pante Kulu uses Al-Nisa': 95-96.

*Lam Quran geukbeun hadharat
Mulia **that** ureung meuprang
Nyoe lom lon kbeun saboeh **ayat**
Ingat **benthat** he buleun trang*

(In the Quran, Allah says/very noble people who fight (jihad)/Here I mention one more verse /remember well, O my son)

لَا يَسْتَوِي الْفَعْدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُولِي الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْفَاعِدِينَ دَرَجَةً
وَكُلًّا وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَىٰ وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْفَاعِدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا (٩٥)
دَرَجَاتٍ مِنْهُ وَمَغْفِرَةً وَرَحْمَةً وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا (٩٦)

*Segala na dum ibadat
Yang leubeh **that** tajak meuprang
Le **that** rahmat ngon derajat
Tinggi pangkat tuban pulang
Bek tasungka he budiman
Tajak keuman mate rijang
Sitegok ie mantong minuman
Mate teuh **han** wabe abang
Meung gob troh had habeh rezeki
Baranggakri nyawong han hilang
Bek teumakot wabe akhi
Prang Yabudi Belanda sumang⁴³*

(Of all existing worship/more noble is fighting (jihad)/Abundant grace and degree/high-rank God gave/Do not hesitate, dear/follow there and die soon/Just take a sip of water/you will not die, brother/ If you have not reached the limit of sustenance/after all, life will not be lost/Do not be afraid, brother/fight the damn Dutch Jews).

In this section, the author of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* explains the virtues of *jihad fi sabilillah*. As a continuation of the command to fight at the beginning, he emphasizes this obligation by elevating the degree of those who want to do jihad. Those who are willing to risk their lives for the sake of Allah and His religion are promised glory because jihad is the best of worship among existing worship. In jihad, the issue of life is entirely god absolute authority. Even if it has not died, humans will never die.

Interestingly, the author inserts a sentiment to arouse resistance at the end. The sentiment is the mention of “damn Dutch Jews”. As is

⁴³ Kulu, *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, p. 12.

well known, the Jews and the Dutch are not mentioned at all in the verse being interpreted. Including the narrative in its interpretation is an effort to contextualize it with the conditions faced. The Dutch were an enemy figure faced by the people of Aceh. With it, the enemies referred to by the Quran in the above verse are clarified by their interpretations as Jews and Dutch. However, in the “Jews” context, it can be seen as another sentiment that has long lived in the Acehnese imagination. The Jews were not the real enemy being faced at that time. Jews were not involved in the Aceh war. The declaration of war on 26 March 1873 was purely a war between the Dutch and the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam. However, to multiply the spirit of resistance, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu considers the participation of the Jews as an imaginative enemy in his work.

- Leadership

Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu plays a narrative of co-leadership as a form of resistance to the Dutch occupation, which wanted to take over power in Aceh. The leadership verses quoted by Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu are specifically intended to delegitimize the existence of the Dutch. The Dutch were depicted as an enemy of religion and god that must be fought. The mention of the Dutch is a critical and contextualist Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu’s interpretation responding to the socio-political realities of the time of authorship. The Quran does not explicitly address this verse to the Dutch. However, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu used this verse as legitimacy for resistance against the Dutch. This sentiment is deliberately used to activate the imagination of the enemy and ideal leadership for the Acehnese.

To delegitimize Dutch rule in Aceh, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu confronted them with verses about leadership in Islam. Leadership is never about friendship and cooperation with the infidels, which allows them to rule in these relations. For this purpose, *Hikayat Prang Sabi* forbade building relations and called for resistance to the Dutch. For example, in the interpretation of Al-Mumtahanah: 1,

Wafent Nabi Sayyidil Insan
Woe bak Tuhan Rabbul ‘Ala
 Neukeubah ayat lam Quran
Neuyu lawan biek Belanda
Han neubre meuget dengon kaphe
Susah sabe berangjeun masa
Nabi gentanyoe he boeh hate
Lam prang kaphe suntok masa

Bek merakan dengoen kaphe
He boeh bate dum na gata
Beu ta ingat awai akebe
Uroe pagi azeub siksa
Hana ta ingat wabe sampe
Kepenghule Nabi gata
Benci ji that kaphe ase
Kaum sitre bieek celaka
Habeh lage dipelaku
Tuhan yang tabu duem perkara
Nabi meusom lam-lam bate
neumusile dalam guha
Nyandum benci kaphe syaitban
Keu janjongan Nabi musthafa
Digata nyoe kajeut rakan
Bekle meuman poe bintang⁴⁴

(The Death of Prophet Muhammad/to the presence of Allah/
Leaving a verse in the Quran/ordering against the Dutch/Does not
allow making up with infidels/always difficult forever/Our Prophet,
O my son, fight against infidels for all time/Do not be friends with
infidels/O my son, remember the beginning and the end/day and
night doom and torment/Don't we remember again/to our prophet/
Who hates dog infidel/wretched enemy of the invaders/Various
ways he tries/God knows all about everything/The Prophet hid in
the rocks/looked for safety in the cave/That is how I hate the infidel
shaitan/to the lord of the Prophet Musthafa/Enough is enough,
friends/let us not be like that).

The content of the interpretation above is a form of resistance to the Dutch with the history of the Prophet Muhammad's struggle as the basis. Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu cites the pursuit of the Prophet Muhammad by the Quraysh infidels who had to hide in the Cave of Thur. The quote is to show the eternal hatred of hostility between the infidels and Muslims. Therefore, the prohibition of friendship against infidels is seen as current and cannot be tolerated. Moreover, the Dutch colonial imperialism is a natural and actual proof of the reality that is being faced by the Acehnese, who are predominantly Muslim. Having a relationship with the Dutch infidel is described as an act of denying the Prophet's struggle. So that nothing is worthy of them except punishment on the Last Day.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

The rationalization of resistance to infidel leadership is also explained in the following interpretation. Unbelievers, according to *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, cannot at all determine the fate and future of the Muslim Acehnese. Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu emphasized the following:

Bek neupateh kapbe Yahudi
Han ek jibri rugoe laba
Manfaat mudbarat han ek jibri
Kapbe Nasrani asoe neuraka
 Nyandum di Nabi ke gata nyoe
 He samlakoe pakre lupa
 Oh neuingat Nabi neumoe
 Sebab gata nyoe le that dosya
Han ta sayang mengsigutu
He Teungku ta tinggai guna
Leubeh nibak ma dengan ku
Pakon be Teungku that talupa
 Han ta pateh wahe taulan
 Peu yang neukbeun le meukuta
 Neukbeun ngen kapbe han neubre merakan
 Jinoe be taulan kajent syedara⁴⁵

(Do not believe in Jews/can not afford to give profit and loss/
 Likewise with the benefits and harms/ Christian the inhabitants of
 hell/That is how the Prophet fought for you/why did you forget/
 When remembering, the Prophet cried/because you all sinned/Does
 not love even though we are fleas/O Teungku, we have to use it/
 Exceeding mother and father/why, O my brother, you forget/No
 longer believe, brother/what the king said/He advised not to make
 friends with infidels/now you make them as your brothers).

In this section, the words Judaism and Christianity are mentioned in the author's interpretation. Whereas the verse mentioned below only mentions "the enemy of Allah" and "your enemy" (humans). The mention of Jews and Christians here is an interpretation of the identity of the enemy faced by Muslims. Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu explained that Jews and Christians should not be trusted at all. The incident with the Prophet Muhammad in the Cave of Thur became a compelling reason not to make them a trusted partner. However, the author's disappointment is seen in the Aceh war situation. People who are forbidden from being friends with them look like brothers.

After giving the opening sentence, the Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

inserts the intended Quranic verse. This confirmation is the basis for strengthening the statements previously stated. This kind of interpretation model belongs to the section on hermeneutics. The previous explanation is the entrance to the explanation in the following verse:

يَأْتِيهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا عَدُوِّي وَعَدُوَّكُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ تُلْقُونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ وَقَدْ كَفَرُوا بِمَا جَاءَكُمْ مِّنَ الْحَقِّ يُخْرِجُونَ الرَّسُولَ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَن تُؤْمِنُوا بِاللَّهِ رَبِّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ خَرَجْتُمْ جِهَادًا فِي سَبِيلِي وَابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِي تُسِرُّونَ إِلَيْهِم بِالْمَوَدَّةِ وَأَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا أَخْفَيْتُمْ وَمَا أَعْلَنْتُمْ وَمَن يَفْعَلْهُ مِنكُمْ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ سَوَاءَ السَّبِيلِ

Wabe Mukmin sekalian

Wajib iman kalam Rabbuna

Ngen kaphe bek ta meurakan

Hana mentaulan mesunaya

Mese nekbeun oleh Tuhan

Bek meurakan ngon pihak Belanda

Sitre Allah sitre Nabi

Wajib ta benci he saudara

Soe meusababat dengoen kaphe

Uroe pagi leubeh that hina

Leubeh hina nibak kaphe

Mate geunbloeb lam neuraka

Neuraka yang diyub tujuh lapeh

Azenb peudeh tempat digata⁴⁶

(O all believers/must believe in the word of God/Do not be friends with infidels/they can not be relatives/If god has said/do not be friends with the Dutch/Enemy of Allah and enemy of the Prophet/ we must hate, O brother/Whoever becoming friends with the disbelievers/day and night is very lowly/Worse than unbelievers/death will be included in hell/hell at the bottom of the seventh layer/a painful punishment where you are)

The above interpretation obliges all believers to believe in Allah's commands through His verses. The command is not to make friends with the Dutch infidels. They are seen as enemies of Allah and enemies of the Prophet. Therefore, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu concluded that infidels must be hated. People who are willing to have a relationship with them are very lowly, even more despicable than the infidels themselves. So that their recompense is nothing but an excruciating punishment of hell, this interpretation can be read as a threat to individuals and community

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

groups in Aceh at that time who were willing to help the enemy in the success of their colonial imperialism mission.

Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu reiterates the refusal of this infidel leadership in two other verses, namely with Al-Nisā': 140 and Al-Taubah: 23. This delegitimization of infidel leadership is carried out in the context of the Acehnese people, who have lost their spirit of struggle against their enemies. Some parties have allegedly surrendered and helped the enemy's agenda. A vital reason supporting this argument is the signing of *Korte Verklaring* by Uleebalang with the Dutch in 1874. So, based on these concerns, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu tried to revive the spirit of resistance by using the narratives in the Quran. To strengthen his argument, he also chimed in with the following verse (Al-Taubah: 23):

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ ءَامَنُوْا لَا تَتَّخِذُوْا ءَاۡبَاءَكُمْ وَاِخۡوَانَكُمْ اَوْلِيَآءَ ۚ اِنۡ اَسْتَحَبُّوْا الْكُفۡرَ عَلٰى
الْاِيۡمٰنِ وَّمَنۡ يَّتَوَلَّهُمْ مِّنۡكُمْ فَاُوۡلِيَآءِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُوْنَ

He Budiman ta peucahya

Bek merakan he boeh hate

Ngen bieik kaphe sitre gata

Ikot suroh wabe akhi

Mese Nabi Sayyidil Anbiya

Bek ta ikot jih ke wali

Pihak Yahudi ngon Belanda

Peu jipeugah bek tapateh

Syaithan paleh ceubeh daya

Tapeuniet Nabi he bob hate

Uroe pagi neubre syurga

Bek ta ikot raja kaphe

Azeub pagi lam neuraka

Hana khilaf tiep-tiep kenenbah

Hanjent meusahabat ngon Belanda

Beuta takot wabe sahabat

Chiet meukarat that akhe masa⁴⁷

(Believe me, my dear, Do not be friends/with your enemy's infidels/
Follow orders, O brothers/like the Prophet of the world/Do not take
part in making them as leader/the Jews and the Dutch/Do not believe
what they said/cursed shaitan who deceives/Intend for the Prophet,
O my son/day and night given heaven/Do not follow the infidel
leaders/punished every morning in hell/There is no mistake for every
leave/cannot be friendly with the Dutch/Be afraid, O Teungku/very
poor at the end of time).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

The explanation above strengthens his idea of rejecting the infidel's leadership. The Dutch who came to Aceh had no other reason than to rule in Aceh. With it, he can dredge the results of spices and all natural resources in Aceh. So, all forms and efforts that lead to control must be resisted to save Aceh from natural dredging and Dutch colonialism. The consequence of their leadership is that the people must obey every policy they issue, which can threaten property, life, and religion. So, ideological and theological spirits dominate every narrative of resistance constructed in *Hikayat Prang Sabi*. The arrival of the Dutch, who intended to control Aceh, became the reason for the people's resistance against them. Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu ignites resistance through literary works to influence the mass base at the grassroots.

- Wealth (Treasure)

The conception of jihad in *Hikayat Prang Sabi* is concerned with more than just the armed war. Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu realizes that *jihad* needs not only war troops with adequate physical strength but also financial needs to support logistics, war equipment, and other needs. Therefore, in the context of *jihad*, everyone must spend their treasures to help with war financing. In emphasizing the obligation to spend treasure for war financing, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu inserted Al-Baqarah: 261 to generate war solidarity with the promise of a reply seven hundred times over the treasure given. The verse about "rewards for spending treasure" was used to legitimize war financing.

Wabe Teungku dumna akhi

Bekle lanti be saudara

Jak be Teungku bak prang sabi

Serta neubri ngen belanja

Saboeh belanja na ruwah keunan

He budiman le that laba

Nibak Tuhan meunan firman

*Soe na keunan bre belanja*⁴⁸

(O Teungku and all brothers/do not wait anymore/Let you go to the holy war/also give your treasure/Just one treasure you give/is very much profit, O my brothers/It is like God promise in the Quran/for who gives treasure)

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ أَمْوَالَهُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنْبَتَتْ سَبْعَ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ
سُنْبُلَةٍ مِائَةٌ حَبَّةٌ وَاللَّهُ يُضْعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ وَسِعَ عَلِيمٌ

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<i>Nyan ban kalam firman Tuhan</i>	<i>Saboh cabeung boh sireutob</i>
<i>Dengoe taulan lon boh makna</i>	<i>He Teungku boh dumna laba</i>
<i>Najeut tatueng pengajaran</i>	<i>Saboh belanja keuman na rob</i>
<i>Perbandingan ngon umpama</i>	<i>Tujoh reutob pulang keugata</i>

<i>Mese tapula kaye sibak</i>	<i>Wabe dalem Tjut rakan boh hate</i>
<i>Jroeh that rampak hana tara</i>	<i>Bek takriet le be syedara</i>
<i>Teubit cabeung tujoh teuratak</i>	<i>Nyankeuh harta yang meusampe</i>
<i>Jroeh meusigak tujoh tangga</i>	<i>Uroe pagi ta eu nyata</i>

(That is the promise of God/listen, I interpret/So that we make lessons/as comparisons and parables/Suppose we plant a tree/then beautiful trunks are incomparable/Grow branch seven layers/how handsome seven levels/One branch bears one hundred/O Teungku, that is profit/Just one treasure we spend/seven hundred replies to you/O my brothers and all children/do not be stingy/That is a valuable treasure/day and night looks real)

In the advice for war financing, Teungku Chick Pante Kulu uses the parable of the verse to spend the property to be repaid 700 times. In his interpretation, he gave a parable with a tree that fostered seven branches. Every existing branch grows by 100 pieces so that the profit obtained by those who spend their property in the way of Allah is 700 pieces. Teungku Chick Pante Kulu interprets it more clearly by describing a tree that has grown with a beautiful trunk. He translates the word *habbah* as a tree, not a seed or fruit. At the same time, the word *sanabil* is translated with the branches of the trees. This parable is done to simplify the audience's understanding and illustrate God's undoubted promise. The profit of 700 times is a benefit that can be seen and imagined every time.

After explaining the multiplication of the assets that have been *waqf*, Teungku Chick Pante Kulu related it to the holy war that Aceh was facing.

Wabe Teungku Tjut tajak prang kaphe
Bek taim le poe bintara
Ikut suroeh Rabbul Qade
Bek sayang le duem perkara
Bable tinggai kampung laman
He budiman bek takira
Aneuk ngon judoe bable Sinan
*Tuhan dhaman duem perkara*⁴⁹

(O my brother, let us fight the infidels / do not be silent anymore,
 O nation's soldiers / Follow Allah's orders / do not love anyone other

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

than Him / Let us leave our hometown / O wise, do not hesitate /
Let your children and wife stay there / God guarantees everything is
safe):

The above interpretation is a form of contextualization that follows the needs when the text is interpreted. It directs the assets that have been *waqf* for war financing. The war against infidels is a necessity that must be faced and should not be ignored. This God's commandment must be obeyed so that humans, as creatures of God, need to give their wealth to defend His religion. To strengthen the legitimacy of the above, the author adds several other legal bases such as Al-Baqarah: 195, Al-Şaf: 10-13, Al-Nisā': 95-96, and Al-Taubah: 20, 34-35. This addition, apart from being a recommendation to endow property in the way of Allah, is also a threat to those who deliberately keep their wealth under the threat of painful torment.

After explaining the three essential parts of the concept of *jihad*, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu narrowed it down to two logical consequences of jihad: life and death. The people who took to the battlefield had only those two choices. Those who live after jihad are depicted as they will gain glory in this world. At the same time, those who die get the status of martyrdom (*shahīd*). The Acehnese used to call it the *Udep Mulia Mate Syahid*.

Death is an essential spotlight for Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu because death is one of the consequences of jihad. The description of death is explained heroically by saying that those who are martyred do not die but live with Allah. This conception is based on Ali Imran: 169. Death is an instrument to show other pleasures, such as the promise of angels and rewards for heaven in the hereafter (Al-Baqarah: 214, 281). On the other hand, those who are reluctant to carry out jihad are threatened with the punishment of hell on the last day (Al-Nisā': 56).⁵⁰ Death seems to be an opening door for enjoyment in a more authentic life, namely the afterlife. Therefore, when the Acehnese fighting against the Dutch were deliberately indoctrinated not to be afraid of death because there would be a much greater reward in the afterlife. So, with this doctrine, the Acehnese forgot themselves, later known by the Dutch as *Atjeh Moorden*.⁵¹

⁵⁰ About *Shahīd*, the author cited the Quranic verses: Al-Nisā': 78, Al-A'rāf: 34, Luqmān: 34, Al-Jumu'ah: 8; *Ibid*.

⁵¹ Kloos, "A Crazy State; Zentgraaff, *Aceh*, p. 381; Veer, *Perang Aceh*, p. 82.

D. Concluding Remarks

The Aceh War prompted the birth of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* as an instrument of resistance against Dutch colonialism. In this precarious and urgent condition, *Hikayat Prang Sabi* brings together two essential elements that are influential in Acehnese culture: religion and arts culture. Combining these two elements aims to attract the audience's attention to convey a message of resistance to the enemy. *Hikayat Prang Sabi* succeeded in evoking the jihad spirit of the Acehnese by combining the understanding of the Quran with *hikayat*, which is a literary art in Acehnese culture.

Hikayat Prang Sabi is an interpretation of the Quran, although not in the form of traditional practice. The author of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* has elaborated on the meanings of the Quran in the form of *hikayat*, which has long been developed in Aceh. *Hikayat Prang Sabi* was written differently than other tafsir books in general. Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu interprets the Quran in *Hikayat Prang Sabi* as *hikayat* or *nazam*, which have special provisions in rhyme and rhythm. In his writing, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu uses the Quran as the essential spirit of resistance to Dutch colonialism.

This research shows a new interpretation style of the Quran initiated by one of the Acehnese scholars, Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu, in the form of *Tafsir Hikayati*. It is the elaboration of the meanings of the Quran by using *hikayat* as the language of communication and as a model for critical reading of reality by considering cultural aspects. The *hikayat* that has lived and been influential in Acehnese culture is used as a communication and propaganda strategy bridging the message of resistance that connects the writer and the audience. Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu sees this strategy more effective than interpreting the Quranic verses about jihad, as traditional interpretations are generally known.

Tafsir Hikayati, which the author offers, is an interpretation that makes the story (*hikayat*) a medium for conveying the meaning. *Hikayat* is not just an ordinary story or essay but a story that considers the suitability of rhyme and rhythm. This model of interpretation is unique because rhyme and rhythm are the benchmarks for interpreters writing *hikayat*. This means that the author of *Hikayat Prang Sabi* must be guided by the rules of the *hikayat's* literature in his writing.

In *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, diction and the choice of specific words greatly influence the process of meaning. Authors often use specific

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words to convey sentiment in the reader's soul. Sentiments built can be interpreted as framing and propaganda strategies that can form the reader's political belief and enthusiasm to fight the Dutch. The choice of words such as Jewish, Dutch, *kaphe*, and others has the meaning of raising the spirit of the Acehnese in fighting the enemy. The narrative of the interpretation of the Quran that Teungku Chiek Pante Kulu frames in *Hikayat Prang Sabi* is the side of the discourse construction that he is building to present the Quran as a response to the reality that the Acehnese is facing.

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