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Amirul Hadi

Mau'izat al-Ikhwān and the Knowledge
of the Acehese Past

Abstract: *This article attempts to study a work of late nineteenth century Aceh, known as Mau'izat al-Ikhwān. The main bulk of this inquiry revolves around the question of how far the text conveys the 'historical knowledge' of Aceh at the height of its war against the Dutch within the time of its composition (1886 AD). The work, which is a short treatise with only 14 pages in length, was written by Shaykh Muḥammad 'Abbās al-Āshī, a prominent 'ālim (religious scholar) and a war leader. Its composition was initially intended as an 'exhortation' (mau'izat) for the Acehese in their efforts at waging the holy war against the Dutch, and therefore it was addressed to them for contemporary use. Yet, as a product of the past the text also encompasses some factual data which can enrich our knowledge of the Acehese past, especially that of the late nineteenth century. As such, the work plays its role beyond its initial intention as it also functions as a historical source. This study employs a 'descriptive analytical' method which will be supported by the mode of Culler's 'hermeneutics of recovery'.*

Keywords: Aceh, *Mau'izat al-Ikhwān*, Holy War, Historical Knowledge.

Abstrak: Artikel ini mengkaji sebuah karya dari Aceh akhir abad ke-19, yang berjudul *Mau'izat al-Ikhwān*. Perhatian utama penelitian ini diarahkan untuk menjawab pertanyaan sejauh mana teks ini menyajikan 'pengetahuan sejarah' Aceh di tengah memanasnya perang melawan Belanda pada saat teks ini ditulis, yaitu tahun 1886. Teks singkat ini, yang ditulis hanya dalam 14 halaman, merupakan karya Shaykh Muhammad 'Abbās al-Āshī, seorang ulama tersohor Aceh yang juga pemimpin perang. Awalnya karya ini ditujukan sebagai 'peringatan' (dorongan) bagi rakyat Aceh di tengah upaya mereka melakukan perang suci melawan Belanda, dan oleh karena itu ia digunakan untuk kepentingan saat itu. Namun, sebagai sebuah produk masa lalu, teks ini mengandung beberapa informasi faktual yang mampu memperkaya pengetahuan masa lalu kita tentang Aceh, khususnya pada akhir abad ke-19. Dalam hal ini, teks ini telah memainkan peran yang melampaui tujuan awalnya karena ia juga berfungsi sebagai sumber sejarah yang penting. Kajian ini menggunakan metode 'deskriptif analisis' yang didukung oleh model 'hermeneutics of recovery' yang dipopulerkan oleh Jonathan Culler.

Kata kunci: Aceh, *Mau'izat al-Ikhwān*, Perang Suci, Pengetahuan Sejarah.

ملخص: يحاول هذا المقال دراسة عمل علمي في آتشييه أواخر القرن التاسع عشر المعروف باسم «موعظة الإخوان». يدور الجزء الأكبر من هذا البحث حول مسألة مدى نقل النص «المعرفة التاريخية» لمنطقة آتشييه في ذروة حربها ضد الهولنديين خلال فترة تأليفه (1886م). هذا العمل، وهو عبارة عن رسالة قصيرة لم يزد عن 14 صفحة فقط، كتبه الشيخ محمد عباس الأتشي، وهو عالم بارز وقائد حرب. كان الهدف من تأليفه في البداية أن يكون بمثابة «موعظة» لسكان آتشييه في جهودهم لشن الحرب المقدسة ضد الهولنديين، ولذلك تم استخدامه لأغراض ذلك العصر. ومع ذلك، باعتباره نتاجًا للماضي، يشتمل النص أيضًا على بعض البيانات الواقعية التي يمكن أن تثرى معرفتنا الماضية عن آتشييه، خاصة في أواخر القرن التاسع عشر. وعلى هذا النحو، يلعب هذا العمل دوره بما يتجاوز هدفه الأول لأنه يعمل أيضًا كمصدر تاريخي. تستخدم هذه الدراسة المنهج «الوصفي التحليلي» الذي يدعمه نموذج «تأويل التعافي» لكولر.

الكلمات المفتاحية: آتشييه، موعظة الإخوان، الحرب المقدسة، المعرفة التاريخية.

The long and fierce resistance of the Acehese people against Dutch colonialism has been known in history; and Islam has been suggested as the main driving force behind the resistance. The war constitutes “the longest and costliest in the history of the Netherland East Indies” (Siegel 1969, 9). There is no agreement among historians as to the length of the war itself. Some suggest that it lasted for around forty years, from the 1873, when it officially broke, to 1912, when the Acehese military power was successfully destroyed by the Dutch military forces. There was no total occupation of Aceh by the European colonialists, since sporadic and individually-based attacks frequently targeted Dutch officials, known as ‘Aceh moorden’, especially from 1910 to 1937. The answer to this question would certainly depend on researchers’ perspectives (Siegel 1969, 82–83).

Many researches have been conducted on this matter, and many books and academic articles on this subject have appeared, involving both Western and Indonesian (local) scholars. In their analysis, various perspectives were applied, from Euro-centric (including the colonial) perspectives to those of the Islamic and local points of views (Alfian 1987; Brooschoof 1886; Klerck 1912; Veer 1969). Yet further inquiries into this aspect of Dutch colonial history and the Acehese experiences in resisting the colonial invasion are still very much needed in order to uncover the historical reality of this human tragedy. The Acehese indigenous standpoints on the war need to be explored. Among the most important sources revealing the Islamic Acehese perspectives on the war, known as the war in the path of God (*jihād fi sabīl Allāh*), are those included in the category of the works of the *Hikayat Prang Sabi* (the Story of the War in the Path of God) (Alfian 1987; Damsté 1928; Hadi 2011; Koningsveld 1990; Missbach 2010). This genre was composed in poetic form, and therefore it is literary in nature. Yet, work of this type is absolutely significant as it reveals substantial information about the Acehese ideology and their attitudes towards the war, based on their beliefs and worldviews; even, interestingly, it also conveys the legal rationale of the war.

There is another type of work which can also be categorized as ‘war literature’. We should mention here two works by a leading religious scholar (*‘ālim*), who was also one of the war leaders, namely Shaykh Muḥammad Abbās al-Āshī. He composed two treatises on this issue, namely *Mau'izat al-Ikhwān* (Exhortation for Brothers) and *Tadhkirat*

al-Rāqidīn (The Reminder for Those Who are Asleep). Being informative and critical in nature, no one can deny the importance of the works in an attempt at understanding the Acehese conception of the war in particular and uncovering the historical realities of Aceh in the colonial times in general. Unlike the work of the *Hikayat Prang Sabi*, which was composed in poetic form, these two works were written in prose in which the author could easily develop his ideas and arguments. For the purpose of this study, only one work by this *‘ālim* is to be explored, namely *Mau‘izat al-Ikhwān*. The emphasis will specifically be given to the inquiry of the author’s interpretation of the Acehese crisis and the extent to which it represents the real pictures of the Acehese society of the day; and this alone would enrich our knowledge of the Acehese past.

In this study, “descriptive analytical” method will be followed, that is by describing the contents and informations delineated in the work. The contemporary state of the Acehese society and the author’s perspectives of it will minutely be followed. The second step is analytical in nature, examining the issue from various approaches, including those of historical, sociological, cultural and political. This study also adopts the mode of Culler’s “hermeneutics of recovery”, which basically means reconstructing “the original context of production (the circumstances and intentions of the author and the meanings that the text might have had for its original readers” (Culler 1997, 65–67). Following the descriptive analytical method, this study then explores the extents to which *Mau‘izat* reveals the historical knowledge of late nineteenth century Aceh.

Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Abbās al-Āshī and *Mau‘izat al-Ikhwān*

Shaykh Muḥammad ‘Abbās al-Āshī, who was also known by the name of Teungku Chik Kutakarang, was one of the prominent Acehese *‘ulamā’* of late nineteenth century. C. Snouck Hurgronje (1906, 183) spoke of him as being an “active and clever but peculiar man”. This religious scholar was active in coping with the hardship that the Acehese had experienced during the Dutch military invasion, which had devastated both their religion and lives. Teungku Kutakarang made every effort in his capacity to find a solution to this problem. He brilliantly analyzed the people’s acute illnesses and provided the appropriate remedies for them; and delivered his thoughts through various means, including religious sermons, teaching activities, and

writings. He himself was engaged in the war, acting as one of its leading commanders. Snouck credited him as a “clever” gentleman as well. Teungku Kutakarang was not only known as an Islamic scholar, but also an expert in many fields, including Islamic sciences, astrology, and medicine.

Yet, this Dutch orientalist also considered him as “a peculiar man.” There are several reasons for this branding, as Snouck explicitly states. Teungku Kutakarang decreed –what was known to be a controversial–religious ruling that the Acehese should conduct the religious sermon of Friday service in their own tongue, and therefore the messages of the sermon could reach the audience. This is the idea which contradicts the tenet of Islam which obliges Muslims to deliver the sermon in Arabic. The second is that this *‘ālim* urged the Acehese fighters to wear silk clothes, and their weapons were to be encrusted with gold for the purposes of showing the Dutch fighters the greatness of the Acehese warriors. This was indeed in contrast with the Islamic tenet that men are not allowed to wear silk materials and gold. These were among the “peculiar” ideas of Teungku Kutakarang, Snouck insists (Hurgronje 1906, 183–84). However, this did not necessarily dismiss his standing as a great scholar and leader in Aceh in his days.

Teungku Chik Kutakarang lived in Ulee Susu (Great Aceh), an area located around seven kilometers on the south of the capital city, Banda Aceh. It was in this area that the tomb of a great *‘ālim*, under the name of Teungku Lam Keuneu'en, was located. This tomb was considered “sacred”, and Teungku Kutakarang was, in Snouck's words, “delighted to call himself the servant of the tomb...” (Hurgronje 1906, 183). People visited the grave on a regular basis, where they recited the Qur'an and performed prayers, followed by ritual meals (*khanduri*), allowing him to preach his thoughts and ideas about *jihād* against the Dutch (Alfian 1987, 162). We have no further details regarding his life. He died in November 1895 (Hurgronje 1906, 118).

The thoughts of Teungku Kutakarang concerning the Acehese *jihād* are to a great extent delineated in his treatise, entitled *Tadhkirat al-Rāqidin* (The Reminder for Those who are Asleep) which was written in 1307/1889 (Kutakarang, 1889). This treatise contains the discourse on the ongoing *jihād* in Aceh at that time, in which he observed that the Acehese were in serious trouble due to the intensive attacks by the Dutch military forces. To him, the Acehese were to be blamed for this

hardship, for they had gone astray from the teaching of Islam; and for this very reason God had punished them with massive calamity (*balā'ām*), covering all aspects of their lives, including famine, epidemic and hardship under the unbelievers' rule. People had abandoned their own religion and identity as being the Acehnese. After delivering his critiques, Teungku Kutakarang offered remedies for this critical condition. He proposed some urgent good deeds to be undertaken, from the acts of repentance (*taubat naşūhā*), attempts to 'unite' the Acehnese people, and to the efforts of arming the Acehnese fighters with the best weapons which were comparable to those of the Dutch's (Hadi and Aiman 2014).

The thoughts provided by Teungku Kutakarang in his *Tadhkirat* was also in line with those delineated in *Mau'izat*. Both were written for the purposes of urging the Acehnese to constantly engage in the *jihād* against the Dutch. The difference lies mainly in coverage and details. *Mau'izat* is very brief in nature (with only 14 pages length). It only provides a short discourse, focusing more on the depiction of the Acehnese at the height of the war, the remedies and advices that the Acehnese should follow, and the appeal for the Acehnese to engage in the *jihād* as well as some religious rulings (*fatāwā*) *vis a vis* the status of Aceh as 'the abode of war (*dār al-ḥarb*)'. *Tadhkirat* discusses the issue at some length (40 pages) in which his critiques of the traditional political elites (*uleebalangs*) and some '*ulamā'* are also highlighted. Based on the fact that the composition of *Mau'izat* took place earlier (1304 AH/1886 AD), it can safely be suggested that *Mau'izat* was intended as an "introduction" to *Tadhkirat*.

The text of *Mau'izat* referred to in this study was the original treatise, written by Teungku Kutakarang himself, and now available in the collection of Leiden University Library (Cod. Or. 8037a). It is believed to be a 'the genuine manuscript' by this '*ālim*' that was received by Snouck Hurgronje in 1893 (Voorhoeve 1994, 69). This means that the text was available at Snouck's disposal after around seven years of its composition. Considering its composition and dissemination that took place at the height of the war, it can be ascertained that the text represents the time when the fighting had reached its fiercest level in which both sides had suffered heavy casualties.

Indeed, in the history of the Aceh war, the period between 1876 and 1896 is known as the phase of 'people's war' in which all elements

of the Acehese were involved (Alfian 1987, 70–83; Maaten 1978). The war was under the *'ulamā'* leadership. Both Teungku Chik Di Tiro Muḥammad Saman and Teungku Chik Kutakarang were among its prominent leaders. It was during this period did the Islamic ideology of the war take its final shape. Thus, the war was believed to be 'sacred', which the Acehese called 'Prang fi Sabīl Allāh' or 'Prang Sabi' (War in the Path of God or 'holy war'). At this stage, the *'ulamā'* were indeed successful both in defining the Acehese Islamic identity and leading the war itself (Alfian 1987, 105–50; Hurgronje 1906, 172–78).

It was no accident therefore that *Mau'izat* was written within this specific atmosphere. Its composition was intended to respond to the contemporary condition of the Acehese amid the intensifying war. In the same year of its composition (1886) the first war leader from Di Tiro's family, namely Teungku Chik Di Tiro Muḥammad Amīn, passed away. His position was replaced by one of his family members, namely Tgk. Chik Di Tiro Muḥammad Saman, who was also known as Shaykh Saman. Under the leadership of this charismatic *'ālim* and war leader the Acehese military aggression against the Dutch increased significantly (Alfian 1987, 151–61; Hurgronje 1906, 177–78). The question of how far the composition of *Mau'izat* had any relation with the rise of Shaykh Saman as a leading figure in the war and the more aggressive Acehese military forces against the Dutch is not easy to gauge. Yet, it is safe to suggest that Teungku Kutakarang was well aware of the fact that the escalation of the Acehese attacks on the Dutch strongholds, in which Shaykh Saman played a significant role, signified a new hope for victory.

The Acehese *'ulamā'* indeed predicted that the Dutch would be defeated by 1881 (Kliestra 1886, 305). In this year around 1000 Acehese fighters regrouped themselves in Garut for the purpose of attacking Dutch strongholds in Sigli; and Teungku Di Tiro was among their leaders. Other Acehese fighters, around 3000 in number, also appeared in Lhok Seumawe for the same purpose (Jaspers 1943, 48). By this year, Dutch authorities observed that the Acehese consciousness of their military strength increased significantly (Alfian 1987, 75). It was in this context did *Mau'izat* insist that the help (*naṣr*) from God had come and all necessary means, including weapons and money, were accessible, and therefore it is was a 'duty' (*farḍ lāzim*) for every one of the Acehese to praise (*shukr*) God for His endless blessing (*ni'mah*). This

was to be done by going into the battle against the Dutch unbelievers to defend both God's religion and the Acehese dignity.

In its narrative, the text uses Malay language with Arabic script, known as 'Arab Jawi'. Yet, in many places Acehese and Arabic vocabularies are also employed, requiring readers to also have to master Arabic and old Acehese vocabularies. In some places, several verses of the Qur'an are quoted, with the purpose of supporting the idea raised by the author. Few *ḥadīths* of the Prophet are also cited for the same goal. For the purpose of this discussion, it is necessary to provide in the following pages the synopsis of the treatise.

The Synopsis of *Mau'izat*

By this year (1304 AH) we have been blessed by God, Who had sent us His army (*tentara Allāh*) to help us in our *jihād*; and therefore we are obliged (*fard lāzim*) to sincerely praise Him (*shukr*) for this great blessing (*ni'mah*). The help (*naṣr*) includes the needed funds (*belanja*²) and all necessary weapons. Those who denied this blessing will suffer massive calamity (*bala 'ām*) in their lives. To escape from this tragic calamity, they should sincerely repent (*tawbat nasūḥa*) for their grave mistakes and make every effort to engage in the *jihād*. The Dutch unbelievers were the sources of grave problems. Once you let them set foot in any Islamic country, massive calamity therefore occurred; they would destroy your religion, lives, and dignity. Hence, in any Muslim country there should be a group of troops (*tā'ifah*) who would go for *jihād* at any time; and they are in fact God's soldiers (*tentara Allah*).

Every corner of Aceh's lands that had been occupied by the Dutch had become "the abode of war" (*dār al-ḥarb*) or war zone. Hence, everyone living under the Dutch administration should stand up against the colonialists. Those Acehese who established businesses (*meuneukat*²) with the Dutch had become 'unbelievers' (*kāfir*), as it was in the case of those who took bribes from the Dutch for not engaging in the *jihād* were also denounced to be 'unbelievers'. Those who made any effort for the benefits of the European colonialists were also condemned to be 'unbelievers'. The same case with those who established communications with the Dutch also became 'unbelievers'. Anyone who acted as an agent (spy) for the colonists became 'unbelievers' as well. Anyone who acted as translator and spokesman for the benefits of the Dutch was condemned as an 'atheist-unbeliever' (*kāfir zindīq*); and

putting him to death was much more rewarded than killing seventy unbelievers (*kāfirs*).

In the meantime, those who still lived in the *dār al-ḥarb* were condemned to have committed the act of disobedience (*ma'ṣiyah*) and sinful (*fusūq*); and those who insisted that the Acehnese land under the Dutch occupation was in the state of peace (*ka aman*) were also considered 'unbelievers'. Those who had been occupied with their daily businesses without having any concern for the *jihād* would suffer massive calamity, a punishment that was also afflicted to those, especially the rich Acehnese, who were reluctant to make their contributions for the *jihād*. The massive calamity would also be sustained by those who ridiculed and undermined the *jihād* efforts. Those intellectuals and scholars who refused to get involved in the efforts of the *jihād* with their intellectual capabilities would also suffer the calamity; this included those who kept away from the *jihād* for their own interests.

By this year (1304 AH) a massive calamity indeed took place in Pidie in which many people had become poor, many died under Dutch gunfires, their businesses had collapsed, their farms had failed, and their lives were in jeopardy. They were also subjected to force labor (*rodilrudī*) and intimidation under the colonial rule. These all were due to their attitudes of being negligent about the *jihād* deeds and were overwhelmed by worldly matters instead.

Therefore, it is a religious obligation for everybody to engage in the acts of *jihād* in any means and forms, including participating physically in the war zone, financial supports, prayers, and even ideas and thoughts. Some 'ulamā' have shown their full commitments in supporting *jihād fi sabīl Allāh* through various means, including Shaykh 'Abd al-Wāḥid b. Zayd during the reign of the khalīfah 'Abd al-Mālik b. Marwān (d. 705 AD) and even Shaykh Muḥy al-Dīn b. al-'Arabī (d. 1240 AD). Some of them composed works on *jihād* and writings (*risālah*) on religious exhortations (*mau'izah*) that would guide Muslims to the right paths and inspire them to engage in *jihād*. Even some religious scholars after them sought to copy their works for the purposes of disseminating their scholarships and wisdoms. Up till now (1304 AH/1886 AD) we still could find this kind of work. Therefore, for those who were engaged in the war do not be discouraged by the boasts of the hypocrites.

It was to be observed that recently Acehnese society was in serious setbacks. New developments (*ḥawādith al-zamān*) occurred. The Acehnese

seemed to have been fragmented; and indeed they were far from being united, especially, with regard to their responses to the Dutch aggression. Some strongly resisted the European colonizers, while others enjoyed living under the occupation; and even some were careless about the *jihād* efforts. These weird phenomena would result in social disorder (*karu2*) and chaotic atmosphere (*haro hara*); and indeed this was what the Dutch actually had wished to happen. These all constituted clear signs (*mad}{ābir ma'lūmāt*) that acute changes (*berubah2 hal ihwal*) had taken place in society that led to moral decadence and social disorders. These were indeed serious disasters. The state of Aceh for the time being was not to compare with that of Penang. The British were considered *zimmī* under the auspices of the ruler of Rum [the Ottomans] and their hold of the land was under lease granted by the ruler (raja) of Kedah.

No matter what was happening in society, the *jihād* should continue and the help (*naṣr*) from Allah would certainly come; and for this very reason we should be patient (*beulazim sabar*) in this noble deed. Being in the state of a *dār al-ḥarb*, the only choice available for the Acehnese for the time being was to engage in the holy war (*jihād*), through which prosperity and dignity would be revived.

***Mau'izāt al-Ikhwān* and the Acehnese History**

To begin with, the main research question raised here is that how much does *Mau'izāt* convey what actually happened in Aceh during that particular time? In other word, what kind of historical knowledge of the day does the text hold? The following paragraphs attempt to briefly analyze this issue. Yet, before delving into the bulk of this inquiry, it is worth underlining here the way this issue will be examined.

As mentioned earlier, the mode followed in this study is that of “hermeneutics of recovery” developed by Culler. From this very perspective, the context in which *Mau'izāt* was produced needs to be explored, that is by reconstructing the circumstances and intentions of the author in composing the work. This is then to be followed by the inquiry into the meanings that the work had for the Acehnese at the time. This is the first major part of this research. The second major segment of this study is the inquiry into the extent to which *Mau'izāt* depicts the historical realities of the day. We will explore *Mau'izāt* from this perspective.

The Realm of Mau'izat

In the first place, *Mau'izat* explicitly states that it was written in 1304 AH (1886 AD), the time when the Acehnese war against the Dutch had reached its critical stage. The armed conflict had grown into a 'total war' or a 'people's war' throughout the region. Employing guerrilla tactics, the battle was under the leadership of the 'ulamā', and it was during this period that the ideology of *jihād* spread out throughout Aceh's soil. This work was basically an 'appeal' for the Acehnese to consistently engage in the holy war. Its main concern therefore was to deliver important messages, in forms of advice and exhortations (*mau'izat*), to the Acehnese in general *vis a vis* the ongoing holy war. This specific agenda is explicitly stated in the title of the work itself. Therefore, the work was not intended to be a historical chronicle as such, in which the accounts of events are provided in some details.

However, in delineating his thoughts, Teungku Kutakarang could not avoid providing the contemporary conditions of the Acehnese in general, which was in jeopardy. It was not at all possible to gain victory unless the Acehnese should in the first place be cured. That being the case, this 'ālim offered his remedies for the catastrophe. In order to make his remedies reliable and acceptable, Teungku Kutakarang provided some brief pictures of the society he had observed, though, again, his deliberations were not furnished with chronological details.

At this point, we have at our disposal a text that was written by an individual (a religious scholar who was also at the same time a war leader). His status as a prominent leader in society would have had an impact upon the strength of his accounts on Aceh's condition. The fact that *Mau'izat* was intended as an appeal for the Acehnese to consistently partake in the holy war, supported by the depictions of the critical condition of the Acehnese society at the time of war and the remedies for it, does not necessarily deny the possibility of the text to be valued as a work with historical contents. Past realities are not limited to the chronology of events; they also comprise a wide range of societal lives, which is the concern of social and cultural history. Indeed, what this text conveys mostly in its descriptions are the underlying social, political, economic, environmental structures and even belief systems of the Acehnese society; and all these facts are fundamental in understanding and explaining punctual events. 'Event-based' approach has been claimed to be incapable of providing us with a comprehensive

understanding of events. Investigating into the “mentality” of the people being studied will help historians in grasping in-depth configuration of historical events (Burns 2006; Munslow 2003).

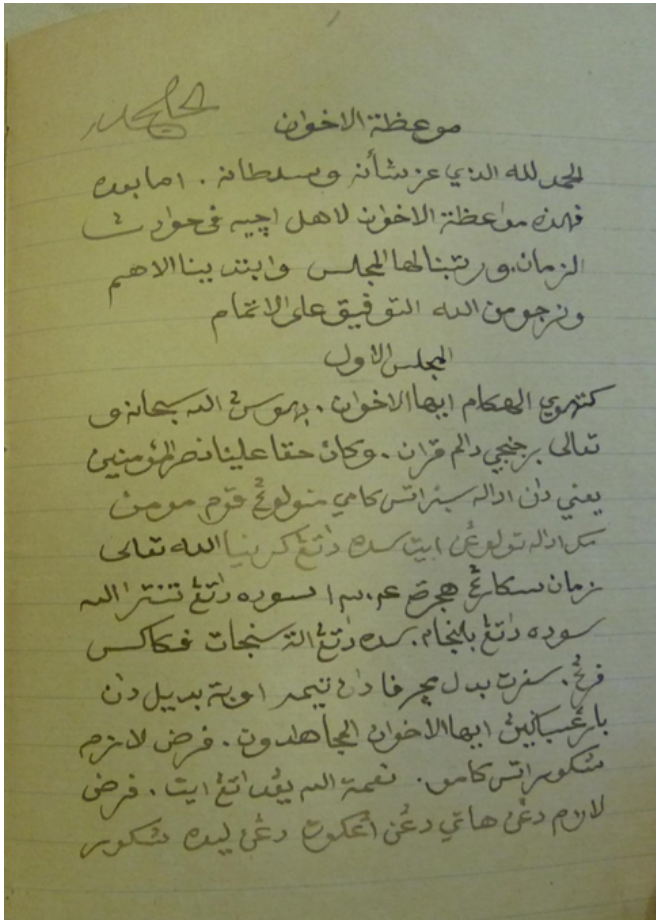


Figure 1. Copy of the first page of the *Mau'izat al-Ikhwān* by Teungku Chik Kutakarang.

There are two types of representations provided in *Mau'izat*: the first being the reality of the Acehnese society in the height of the war from the author's eyes, and the second being the remedies, in the form of exhortations, which were idealistic in nature. The realities that the author depicted were based on his own observations at that particular time; and he even himself was an actor in the history. Besides his respected position as a religious scholar (*‘ālim*), Teungku Kutakarang also acted as the leader of an armed force against the Dutch in Mukim IX, Sagi

XXV in 1889 (Alfian 1987, 81). All these experiences had eventually enhanced his knowledge about what was going on in Aceh at the time and accordingly accounted for the reliability of his depictions of the Acehese people in general. At this point, it can safely be ascertained that Teungku Kutakarang provides us with 'first hand' information.

Teungku Kutakarang insists that his work served as "exhortation (*mau'izat*)" for the Acehese brothers at present (*ḥawādith al-zamān*). In the text he also asserts that this treatise constitutes a lucid admonition (*naṣīḥah wāḍiḥah*) for the Acehese in general (Kutakarang, 1886: 1, 7, 12). He was indeed annoyed by the fact that the Acehese were still fragmented at the height of the fighting. This was a serious setback at the time when more efforts should have been made. Some of the Acehese did go to war, while many were reluctant to get involved in it and even did not give any support for its sake. Many intelligent people and knowledgeable Acehese were also hesitant to go to war or did not make any effort to encourage and lead people to wage the *jihād*. It was even an irony to find the fact that some of them, whom he called *munāfiqūn* (hypocrites), ridiculed (*peucui-peucui*) the Acehese fighters, insisting that their struggles were futile, for the Dutch were much more powerful in terms of funds and military forces (Kutakarang 1886, 5, 6, 12). Some of the Acehese maintained that they could have a normal life under the Dutch administration in which they were able to make a living, from trading to farming and even working for the European colonialists (Kutakarang 1886, 5, 6, 12). This disturbing scene, to Teungku Kutakarang, had led to acute social disorders (*karu-karu*). People were fighting one another and social disorders had become common phenomena. Custom (*urf*) and tradition (*reusam*) were neglected and even negated, and people tended to live their lives as they wished to be. This acute condition was getting worse with the Dutch policy of ruining (*peuharo-hara*) any Muslim country they invaded (Kutakarang 1886, 11–12).

It was due to these facts that the Acehese suffered massive calamity (*bala'ām*) in every aspect of their lives, from famine, pandemic, the failure of their harvests (*perhumaan*) and farming to the hardship of their daily lives. *Bala'ām* also meant a calamity that targeted the whole people, regardless of their ages, gender, profession, social and political status (Kutakarang, 1886: 3, 8, 9). The author goes further by specifically referring to a massive calamity that took place in Pidie

in 1304 AH (1886 AD). According to this *‘ālim*, this disaster was due to its peoples’ denial of supporting the *jihād* and their inclination to make a living under the Dutch administration instead (Kutakarang 1886, 1–2). In *Tadhkirat al-Rāqidīn*, Teungku Kutakarang asserts that there were three types of the calamity that the Acehnese experienced at that time: (1) the destruction of their dignity as human beings and the ‘Acehnese’, (2) the presence of the enemy against them, and (3) the devastation of their religion and their lives (Kutakarang 1889, 22).

As a religious scholar Teungku Kutakarang paid close attention to this unfortunate condition that eventually led him to issue religious rulings (*fatwās*) as provided above (Kutakarang 1886, 4–6). He even goes further by offering remedies to this acute condition. As mentioned earlier, those people who had gone astray from God’s teachings and commands, to him, should go back to the right paths by making a sincere repentance to God. This was followed by the acts of upholding the *jihād*. The efforts of engaging in the holy war did not necessarily mean that everybody should go to war. This *‘ālim* asserted that there were many ways that people could have participated in the war. One could have engaged in the war as a fighter, another could have become advisor, a brightening agent (as in the case of the intellectuals whom he calls as *zakī akal*), financial contributor for the war, and even by only making a *du‘ā* (prayer) for the triumphant of the Acehnese. On this matter, Teungku Kutakarang writes: “please make sure that you help those who go to war (*mujāhidīn*) with your bodies (*anggota*2), properties (*areuta*2), or with your prayers, or with your ideas though your homes were far away from the war fields” (Kutakarang 1886, 2–10).

This *‘ālim* also insisted on the urgent need for the role of the *‘ulamā’*, intellectuals, and even local authorities (*raja*2) and elites (*hulubalang*2) in supporting the war in their own capacities. He referred to few historical accounts of the *‘ulamā’* who were committed in supporting *jihād* in many ways. Some of them contributed in perfect way (*sempurna tulong*) in supporting *jihād* by their involvement in the chancellery of the fighters (*dewan al-mujāhidīn fi sabīl Allāh*), in which they could provide significant advices, such as in the case of al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Wāḥid b. Zayd during the reign of ‘Abd al-Mālik b. Marwān (d. 705 AD) and Shaykh Muḥy al-Dīn b. al-‘Arabī (d. 1240 AD). Some of the *‘ulamā’* also made their contributions through writings composed particularly on the subject of *jihād*. Teungku Kutakarang also insisted

on the efforts of some *'ulamā'* who wrote short treatises and councils on *jihād*, even religious sermons were also delivered for the purposes. Some of these works, according to him, were still available in that particular time (1304 AH) (Kutakarang 1886, 10–11).

This assessment was also reiterated by this *'ālim* in his *Tadhkirat* in which he deplored the fact that some of the Acehese elites, including local chiefs, and the rich refused to engage in the *jihād* for their own interests; and they were even reluctant to provide any contribution to the war efforts (Kutakarang 1889, 19–20). Further, Teungku Kutakarang insisted that the role of the intellectuals (*zakī akal*) was so vital that it could not be ignored. With their insights and knowledge these people were able to contribute much to ensure peoples' participation in the war and provide some accurate advice and strategies for the war efforts. He urged the Acehese, under the auspices of the *'ulamā'*, to enhance their knowledge with Islamic learnings (especially the Qur'an and *ḥadīth*) and history of the rulers in the past who were successful in their war endeavors. It was with this knowledge and consciousness in mind would the deliberation for the betterment of our religion and worldly lives be achieved (Kutakarang 1889, 27–28).

Teungku Kutakarang's ideas on the conduct of the war is also revealed in *Mau'izat*. As mentioned earlier, he advised that not every Acehese should go to war as a fighter. Every single person of them should had taken part in the sacred deed, including in providing financial contributions, calling his fellow Acehese to engage in the noble deed, and even deepening their knowledge about Islam and delve into the history of those who had become role models in the matters of *jihād* among rulers and *'ulamā'* in the past (Kutakarang 1886, 2–3, 10). As the work was actually not a treatise on a 'just war', Teungku Kutakarang did not provide details on the conducts of the war. However, he briefly touched upon the management of the *jihād*. He asserted that in every Muslim community or country there should be (*lāzim*) a group of professional troops (*tā'ifah*) who would be deployed at any time. He insisted that no one could prevent this group from conducting the *jihād*, for they were God's army (*tentara Allah*); and those whoever fought against God's army would perish. God's army was 'the party of God' (*ḥizb Allāh*), and therefore they were the victorious (*al-ghālibūn*) (Kutakarang 1886, 2–3).

Finally, this *'ālim* urged the Acehese to 'unite' themselves and always hold consultation (*musyawarah*) in the *jihād* efforts, keep

strong determination (*bersungguh2*) in holding the noble deed, and stay steadfast (*beulazim kamu sabar*) in sustaining it. It was through these directons, he insisted, would the Acehnese be victorious in both protecting God's religion (Islam) in Aceh's soil and preserving the dignity of the Acehnese, the massive calamity be lifted from the Aceh's soil and prosperity would become a reality (Kutakarang 1886, 13–14).

Historical Knowledge

The question of how far this treatise provides us with the knowledge of the Acehnese past is also of our concern in this study. It is important to explore the extent to which the narrative conveyed by Teungku Kutakarang contains some actual events of the Acehnese past of the late nineteenth century. As mentioned earlier, *Mau'izat* is not a work of a chronicle of Acehnese history, as it is rather a treatise intended as an appeal for the Acehnese to intensify their *jihād* efforts against the Dutch. Yet, before deliberating his ideas and thoughts on what the Acehnese should have done to gain victory and refrain from the massive calamity (*bala'ām*), the author provides the picture of the Acehnese during the critical phase of their war against the Dutch. At this point it is safe to suggest that his depiction of the Acehnese society is beyond doubt, for it was based on his own observation, and even he was an actor himself. This personal experience does make his narrative reliable. The Aceh world of this particular time is clearly depicted and therefore can easily be comprehended. The meanings generated by the text can also easily be grasped, for the author's own experience of his day helped him produce the narrative. The narrative provided by Teungku Kutakarang is not historical in a strict sense, yet it does encompass some important historical facts which can be regarded as "a form of knowledge..." (Partner 2013, 2); and indeed "historical knowledge is fundamentally narrative in character..." (Rigney 2013, 189). The depiction of the Acehnese society narrated by Teungku Kutakarang therefore bears some sort of historical knowledge. The text of *Mau'izat* should be viewed from this perspective.

In general, the historical knowledge provided by *Mau'izat* can be classified into two categories. The first is the depiction of some aspects of the Acehnese lives *vis a vis* the holy war. In this category the author assembled together all information that he observed and experienced in which his interpretation also entailed; and this can be viewed as the

realm of actuality (events). The second category involves the author's thoughts on remedies for the critical condition. This part can be claimed to be 'idealistic' in nature, based on his understanding of the Islamic teachings and the Acehese worldviews. Both categories can safely be claimed as "historical knowledge" of different nature, in which the former concerns historical events, while the latter reveals intellectual currents and belief systems of the Acehese of the day.

In the first place, Teungku Kutakarang depicted the fragmented nature of the Acehese society *vis a vis* the war against the Dutch in 1886. There was no unity among the Acehese as to the ways to respond to the Dutch military aggression. Some went to war as fighters; another provided expenses for the war, while others supplied aids in various forms. However, some of the Acehese showed no concern for the holy war, preferring to live normally by doing their daily routines and even working for the Dutch. Many even went further by trying to prevent their fellow Acehese from going to the war and ridiculing those who were engaged in the sacred deed. This acute condition is also reiterated by this *'ālim* in his *Tadhkirat* in which he addressed this issue in the early pages of the work (Kutakarang 1889, 1). We have no further details on this matter, leaving us wondering how many percentages the Acehese people actually in this position were.

There is no doubt that there were some Acehese who, for any reason, did not participate in the war in any form. It was towards this segment of the society did the *'ulamā'* turn their efforts in disseminating the ideology of the *jihād* through various means, including religious sermons in mosques and religious traditional schools (*dayah*), traditional meal rituals (*khanduri*) occasions, and—the most important—works on the *hikayat* of the war in the path of God (*Hikayat Prang Sabil*), letters and other means. Two works by Teungku Kutakarang (*Mau'izat* and *Tadhkirat*) are also to be included in the category of *jihād* literatures (Alfian 1987). Even though there are no details on those Acehese who were not engaged in the holy war, Teungku Kutakarang's accounts were indeed in line with the fragile tone of the society of his day. By this time, several Acehese elites gave up their war efforts. It has been insisted that between 1874 and 1876 there were 31 traditional elites (*uleebalangs*) surrendered and came to terms with the European authority by signing "short declaration" (*korte verklaring*) (Alfian 1987, 70–71). It was not long after this event did other prominent leaders also surrendered,

including Ḥabīb ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Zāhir (in October 1878) and Teuku Muda Baid (in 1879), followed by Panglima Tibang, Teungku Di Gle Jal, and Qāḍi Panglima Polem (Alfian 1987, 73).

Recruiting people to engage in the *jihād* as fighters necessitated extra efforts that their leaders had to focus on; and that was done, as mentioned above, through various means. Among the most effective resources were Friday sermon (*khuṭbat al-Jumu‘ah*), and works of the *Hikayat Prang Sabi* (the Story of the War in the Path of God). The appeal for the *jihād* was constantly conveyed in the sermon; and therefore, in order that the religious exhortations were to be well-comprehended by the congregation, it should be performed in their own language (Aceh language), not in Arabic. Teungku Kutakarang asserts that “Friday congregational sermon is not valid (*tiada sah*), unless it is delivered in the language that the audience understands’ (Kutakarang 1889, 4–5). To the majority of the *‘ulamā’* this ruling was controversial. Yet, Teungku Kutakarang stood firmly with this ruling, arguing that the religious exhortations should reach the whole audience (*jamā‘ah*). That being the case, this “religious pragmatism” should be considered seriously for the purposes of upgrading people’s faith (*īmān*) and religious consciousness, and eventually more people would join the *jihād*.

Being a people’s war, there was no professional troops as such found in the field; any body could go to war regardless of their gender and age, for the war was considered as “defensive” one in which every single Muslim was obliged to take part (*fard ‘ayn*). Therefore, before launching military attacks on the Dutch strongholds, the war leaders had to make sure that they had enough fighters. In an attack on Dutch military base in Great Aceh at the end of 1876, Ḥabīb Abd al-Raḥmān al-Zāhir was supported by thousands of fighters from east and north Aceh as well as from Pidie and Great Aceh regions. All Aceh’s regions became war zones and most of their men were engaged in the *jihād*. In early 1883 Teungku Chik Di Tiro Shaykh Saman was successful in attracting around six thousands young Acehnese to join him in the war. Among these young fighters were the students of traditional Islamic boarding schools (*dayah*) who were ready to be martyrs. Similar cases were also to be found in other parts of the region (Alfian 1987, 71–76).

Another point brought into light by this *‘ālim* in *Mau‘izat* concerns the war expenses. In order for the war to be victorious, there was a

desperate need for a large amount of money that was used for arming the fighters with the best weapons possible and other expenses. The vacuum of power in Aceh after the Dutch occupation of the Dalam (royal court) and the death of the Sultan in January 29, 1874, prompted the Acehese leaders, including the *'ulamā'* and traditional chiefs (*uleebalang*), to collect the expenses from the people. This money was known as *hak sabil* (literally: the rights of the war in the path of God). Teungku Kutakarang complained that some of the Acehese did not give their contributions for the sake of the *jihād* (*tiada ditasarruf belanja-belanja itu kepada jihād fi sabil Allāh*) (Kutakarang 1886, 2), and therefore he insisted that wealthy people should spent some of it for the sake of *jihād*, and it was indeed a religious duty.

The act of collecting money for the *jihād* expenses was common in Aceh during the war times. The money came either from the part for the classification (*ṣinf*) of those who are struggling in the path of God (*ibn sabil*), known as *hak sabil*, or from the alms given by the people. Teungku Chik di Tiro Shaykh Muḥammad Saman, along with other *'ulamā'*, asserted that *hak sabil* was extremely necessary for the *jihād* and it therefore became 'obligatory', and it constituted the spirit (*rūḥ*) of the *jihād* itself. That being the case, this prominent *'ālim* and war leader sought to collect the contributions and urged the traditional chiefs to also raise funds from the people under their jurisdictions, even though some of them did not go to war (Alfian 1987, 76; Hurgronje 1906, 180). After his return from Istanbul in March 1886, Ḥabīb 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Zāhir, a diplomat and a great war leader, received large amount of funds from the *uleebalangs* who collected the money from the people of the coastal areas of north and east Aceh (Alfian, 1987: 71). Right after his installation as the new sultan in 1883, the young Tuanku Muḥammad Dāwud Shāh immediately ordered the *uleebalangs* to foster and enforce the collection of the *hak sabil* funds (Alfian 1987, 78). This issue was raised by Tengku Kutakarang in his *Mau'izat*.

In general, the types of the massive calamity (*balā' ām*) conveyed in *Mau'izat* are similar, from the failure of their crops and farms, pandemic, being poor to social disorders. All these hardships were no doubt the consequences of the war and the colonial occupation. There was no normal life as such, as the destruction was massive and devastating that there was no single activity and work could be performed in its best shape. The unhealthy environments of the day were apparent. Many

Acehnese died from cholera, and even the cholera outbreak also killed Sulṭān Maḥmūd Shāh in January 1874 (Alfian 1987, 68). Another serious disease appeared at the time was Beriberi. The pandemic struck mainly the Dutch soldiers. In 1885, 35% of them were infected by Beriberi disease, and by 1886 the number of Dutchmen infected increased significantly, reaching 6008 people. The largest and the best Dutch hospital in the Dutch East Indies in Banda Aceh could not accommodate all these patients (Veer 1969, 79). Indeed, the war had generated various types of devastation, including the outbreak of many kinds of plagues.

Since the war was in fact a ‘religious’ one for protecting both ‘divine values’ (religion of Islam) and Muslim’s lives (self defense), it became ‘obligatory’ for every Muslim (*fard*’ *ayn*) to engage in it in any form, regardless of gender and age. Disregarding this duty therefore constituted a ‘grave’ sin. Based on this creed, did Teungku Kutakarang believe that the massive calamity (*balā’ ām*) in its various forms that the Acehnese suffered at the time was indeed the punishment from God. The same tone was also given in many other works, including the *Hikayat Prang Sabi* (Hadi 2011, 183–98) and *Tadhkirat* (Kutakarang 1889, 7–8).

Teungku Kutakarang’s analysis of his contemporary circumstances was basically based on both moral and religious creed, insisting on eventuality and the Islamic belief system. This was indeed in line with the Islamic intellectual currents of the day. It is important to quote here the letter sent by Tuanku Hashim, Sri Muda Perkasa Panglima Polem, Sri Muda Setia, and Sri Setia Utama to other Acehnese leaders in 18 April 1874 concerning the hardship suffered by the Acehnese people due to the fall of the Dalam (royal court) to the Dutch, the heavy casualties from the fighting among the Acehnese and the outbreak of the cholera pandemic in the region. The letter comprised the following statement:

As a matter of fact, four areas (*mukims*), i.e. Lheu and Masjid Raya, Masjid Lheung Bata, Gigieng and Lhok Gulong, and some of the Meuraksa region have been occupied. However, *insha Allah*, as our obedience to Allah and His Rasul we have to defend ourselves day and night; even if we have only a *nyiru* land we still have to wage the war. That is the agreement of the people from the regions (*sagis*), ‘*ulamā*’, *hajis*, and all the Muslims. Therefore, if you, our brothers, still obey Allah and His Prophet, still wish to establish Muhammad’s teachings, and still wish to be

friends with all of us under the banner of Aceh, you, our brothers, must fight them as hard as you can for the sake of protecting Muhammad's teachings and the religion of the Acehese (Alfian 1987, 107).

It is clear from the above statement that the thoughts that were expounded by Teungku Kutakarang were in line with the intellectual currents of the day. The fact that Teungku Kutakarang responded to the chaotic circumstances with religious rulings (*fatwās*) signified that the issue was indeed a 'religious' matter.

Conclusion

The above discussion has examined the role *Mau'izat al-Ikhwān* played in the history of the Acehese war against the Dutch in 1304 AH (1886 H). This short treatise was initially intended to be an 'exhortation' for the Acehese at the height of their *jihād* against the Dutch military aggression. Being an exhortation, it was not furnished with chronological accounts; yet, in its arguments the work necessitates the real pictures of the people under study in order to be able to determine proper remedies for the problem. In his depiction of the Acehese people of the day, the author narrates 'first hand' information, which was based on his own observations and experiences. The author's high prestige in society as an *ālim* (religious scholar) and a war leader granted him privileges in comprehending the nature of his people as well as the character of the problems that the Acehese were in. Therefore, the treatise is rich in information about what actually happened in society.

Basically, *Mau'izat* belongs to a wider genre of "war literature" of late nineteenth century Aceh. It shares with other works of war literature fundamental religious appeal for the Muslims to engage in the *jihād* and analysis of the society as the author sees it. All the arguments provided in this type of literature were supported by religious zeals and legal foundations. Yet, what makes *Mau'izat* differs from other texts on war literature, which are mostly literary in nature such as the well-known *Hikayat Prang Sabil* (The Story of the War in the Path of God), is that it was written in prose, so that its author can easily develop his ideas and arguments. This treatise is also direct in its presentation and analysis as well as free of anecdotes and imaginative stories. This distinctive character of *Mau'izat* accordingly furnishes its author more spaces to delineate his narratives and analysis.

Since the main intention of the composition of this treatise was an appeal for the Acehnese to engage in the *jihād* in any possible forms and means in the form of exhortation (*mau'izat*), the range of the author's narrative of his fellow Acehnese was confined to the realm of his main objectives. Not all aspects of factual realities are presented. Only those critical situations of the Acehnese society in relation to the war were presented. Therefore, besides its function as an exhortation the text indeed plays fundamental role in providing some 'historical knowledge.' In its narrative, this treatise has successfully delineated two kinds of historical knowledge: (1) the depiction of the realities of the day concerning the responses of the Acehnese to the Dutch aggression and their overall critical condition; and (2) the author's explanation and interpretation of the realities as well as the remedies for the critical condition. This second element pertains to the intellectual currents and the belief system of the day, and it mainly revolves around religious lines. It was within this specific circumstance did *Mau'izat* reveal the historical knowledge of the day.

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Guidelines

Submission of Articles

S*tudia Islamika*, published three times a year since 1994, is a bilingual (English and Arabic), peer-reviewed journal, and specializes in Indonesian Islamic studies in particular and Southeast Asian Islamic studies in general. The aim is to provide readers with a better understanding of Indonesia and Southeast Asia's Muslim history and present developments through the publication of articles, research reports, and book reviews.

The journal invites scholars and experts working in all disciplines in the humanities and social sciences pertaining to Islam or Muslim societies. Articles should be original, research-based, unpublished and not under review for possible publication in other journals. All submitted papers are subject to review of the editors, editorial board, and blind reviewers. Submissions that violate our guidelines on formatting or length will be rejected without review.

Articles should be written in American English between approximately 10.000-15.000 words including text, all tables and figures, notes, references, and appendices intended for publication. All submission must include 150 words abstract and 5 keywords. Quotations, passages, and words in local or foreign languages should

be translated into English. *Studia Islamika* accepts only electronic submissions. All manuscripts should be sent in Ms. Word to: <http://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/studia-islamika>.

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1. Hefner, Robert. 2009a. "Introduction: The Political Cultures of Islamic Education in Southeast Asia," in *Making Modern Muslims: The Politics of Islamic Education in Southeast Asia*, ed. Robert Hefner, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
2. Booth, Anne. 1988. "Living Standards and the Distribution of Income in Colonial Indonesia: A Review of the Evidence." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 19(2): 310–34.
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5. Utriza, Ayang. 2008. "Mencari Model Kerukunan Antaragama." *Kompas*. March 19: 59.
6. Ms. *Undhang-Undhang Banten*, L.Or.5598, Leiden University.
7. Interview with K.H. Sahal Mahfudz, Kajen, Pati, June 11th, 2007.

Arabic romanization should be written as follows:

Letters: ' b, t, th, j, ḥ, kh, d, dh, r, z, s, sh, ṣ, ḍ, ṭ, ḡ, ' gh, f, q, l, m, n, h, w, y. Short vowels: a, i, u. long vowels: ā, ī, ū. Diphthongs: aw, ay. *Tā marbūṭā*: t. Article: al-. For detail information on Arabic Romanization, please refer the transliteration system of the Library of Congress (LC) Guidelines.

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*MAU'IZAT AL-IKHWAN AND THE KNOWLEDGE
OF THE ACEHNESE PAST*

Amirul Hadi

تدابير الدولة العثمانية لحل القضايا المعقدة
لعجاج الجاوي ١٨٤٩ - ١٩١٦ م:
دراسة في ضوء وثائق الأرشيف العثماني

أسهان مصطفى توفيق خليل أحمد
