

Strategy of Dakwah in War: A Study of Muhammad Al-Fatih's Conquest of Constantinople

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Abstract: This research aims to analyze Muhammad Al-Fatih's Da'wah Strategy when conquering Constantinople in 1453, which was one of the important events in the history of Islamic Civilization and world geopolitics. In expanding Islamic territory, Muhammad Al-Fatih faced many challenges, including the very strong defense of the Byzantine Empire. To understand the role of da'wah strategies in the campaign to conquer Constantinople, this research uses qualitative methods in the form of library research. Studies that consider a variety of strategies, including military, diplomatic, propaganda, and psychological strategies. The research results show that Al-Fatih not only used military force to conquer Constantinople but also used da'wah strategies to achieve his goals. Muhammad Al-Fatih's missionary strategy included using Islamic literature and thought to motivate his troops, gaining support from ulama and religious scholars, as well as propaganda to make the enemy have a good perception. This research provides insight into the role of da'wah strategies in the success of military campaigns and how these strategies contributed to Muhammad Al-Fatih's conquest of Constantinople. These findings may inspire further research into the role of da'wah strategies in Islamic history and other important historical events.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis Strategi Dakwah Muhammad Al-Fatih ketika menaklukkan Konstantinopel pada tahun 1453 yang merupakan salah satu peristiwa penting dalam sejarah Peradaban Islam dan geopolitik dunia. Dalam perluasan wilayah Islam, Muhammad Al-Fatih menghadapi banyak tantangan, diantaranya adalah pertahanan Kekaisaran Bizantium yang sangat kuat. Untuk memahami peranan strategi dakwah dalam kampanye penaklukan Konstantinopel, penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif berjenis studi kepustakaan (library research). Studi yang mempertimbangkan berbagai strategi, termasuk strategi militer, diplomatik, propaganda, dan psikologis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Al-Fatih tidak hanya menggunakan kekuatan militer untuk menaklukkan Konstantinopel tetapi juga menggunakan strategi dakwah untuk mencapai tujuannya. Strategi dakwah Muhammad Al-Fatih antara lain menggunakan literatur dan pemikiran Islam untuk memotivasi pasukannya, mendapatkan dukungan dari ulama dan ulama, serta propaganda untuk membuat musuh mempunyai persepsi yang baik. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang peran strategi dakwah dalam keberhasilan kampanye militer dan bagaimana strategi tersebut berkontribusi terhadap penaklukan Konstantinopel oleh Muhammad Al-Fatih. Temuan ini mungkin menginspirasi penelitian lebih lanjut mengenai peran strategi dakwah dalam sejarah Islam dan peristiwa sejarah penting lainnya.

INTRODUCTION

War and da'wah are part of the history of Islamic civilization, both are interrelated. One of the most famous historical events is the conquest of Constantinople by Muhammad Al-Fatih. Muhammad Al-Fatih became famous for his success in changing the history of Europe and the Middle East. The expansion of territory carried out by Muslims has mostly been going on since the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. One of the ways the Prophet did this was by sending several letters and envoys to kings and amirs (governors) to call them to strengthen Allah and believe in the message he brought. Another way used by the Prophet Muhammad SAW was by going to war. However, war is not required by sharia, but only as an effort to defend oneself, honor, and property. Perang dan Dakwah merupakan bagian dalam Sejarah peradaban Islam, keduanya saling berhubungan satu sama lain. Salah satu peristiwa Sejarah paling terkenal adalah penaklukan Konstantinopel oleh Muhammad Al-Fatih. Muhammad Al-Fatih menjadi terkenal sebab keberhasilannya mengubah Sejarah Eropa dan Timur Tengah. Banyak perluasan wilayah yang dilakukan oleh umat islam sudah berlangsung sejak zaman Nabi Muhammad SAW. Salah satu cara yang dilakukan Nabi adalah dengan mengirimkan beberapa surat dan utusan kepada para raja dan amir (gubernur) untuk menyeru mereka agar mengesakan Allah dan beriman kepada risalah yang diembannya. Cara lain yang ditempuh oleh Nabi Muhammad SAW adalah dengan berperang. Akan tetapi perang tidak di syariatkan, melainkan hanya sebagai langkah membela diri, kehormatan dan harta benda (Kusuma and Ayundasari 2021)

Since the time of the Khulafaurrasyidin to the Abbasid Caliphate, efforts to conquer Constantinople continued, but no one has succeeded in realizing the ideals of conquering the region. Constantinople was successfully conquered by Muhammad Al-Fatih in 1453, becoming an important event in history that ended the Byzantine Empire and paved the way for the Ottoman Empire (Zaskia Siregar 2022) The conquest was also influenced by the military strategy between the Eastern Roman Empire and the Ottoman Turkish Empire. This can be seen from military preparation, diplomacy, and alliances, siege tactics, use of technology, and post-conquest government which were the keys to Muhammad Al-Fatih in conquering Constantinople (Saputra 2024)

There are quite a few studies related to Muhammad Al-Fatih and Constantinople that have been conducted by researchers, such as research conducted by Windianto, Drs. H. Marwoto Saiman, and Drs. H. Kamaruddin, M.Si that the conquest of Constantinople by Muslims is proof of the truth of the hadith conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This also confirms the truth of the prophethood of Muhammad SAW as the Messenger of Allah who must be followed by all mankind (Windianto 2021)

The second study by M. Desta Ramadoni which touches on the success of a knight in conquering Constantinople. The victory was achieved because of the renewal of military strategy carried out by Muhammad Al-Fatih without the knowledge of the Byzantine Emperor. And the weakness of Constantinople from within due to the division that occurred between the Eastern Church and the Western Church (Ramadoni 2022) Previous research explained that the conquest of Constantinople was real evidence of the truth of the hadith conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad SAW and the victory achieved by Sultan Muhammad Al-Fatih accompanied by the renewal of his military strategy.

This study aims to examine Muhammad Al-Fatih's da'wah strategy in war and how this strategy contributed to the successful conquest of Constantinople. Because many people's perspectives on da'wah must be carried out peacefully, such as standing on a pulpit to deliver a speech, it is different from the great figures of Islam who took the path of war to preach. In this study, researchers will examine various aspects of Muhammad Al-Fatih's da'wah tactics, such as how his religious understanding influenced his military, how interactions with religious groups

in Constantinople and how the conquest had a long-term impact on religion and civilization. Researchers hope to gain a better understanding of the role of da'wah strategy in the History of war and how Historical contexts such as the conquest of Constantinople can show the relationship between religion and power.

The research uses a qualitative method of the Library Research type which is sourced from books, journals, and the internet, by reviewing and collecting data sources from literature by reviewing and collecting data sources from various literature related to the Da'wah Strategy used by Muhammad Al-Fatih in conquering Constantinople.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Muhammad Al-Fatih

Muhammad Al-Fatih or whose full name is Muhammad II bin Murad bin Muhammad bin Bayazid, was born on 27 Rajab/835 H or 30 March 1432 AD in the city of Erdine (Adrianople), the capital of the Ottoman Empire. He was the son of Sultan Murad II, the 6th king of the Ottoman Empire and Huma Valide Hatun. After the death of Sultan Murad II, Muhammad II replaced his father's role as king at the age of 22. He was given the title Al-Fatih and Abu Al-Khairat because during his 30-year reign he succeeded in achieving goodness and victory for the Muslim community.

Muhammad Al-Fatih was a follower of Ash'ari and Al-Maturidi who believed that Allah SWT existed without a place and direction (Nurdin 2022). His love for knowledge was instilled since childhood. He studied the science of the Qur'an, Hadith, fiqh, and modern sciences. Studying with many scientists, both Muslim and non-Muslim (Al-Munyawati 2012)

He studied with Mahmud Bek Qushab Zadah, studied archery from Ibrahim Basya Al-Naisyany, military science from Syihabuddin Syahin Basya, also studied with Ash-Shadr Al-A'zham Sinan Basya and Mulla Sirajuddin Muhammad (who died in 1482).

Al-Fatih studied literature from the poets of his time, studied Classical Greek from Yurigiuis Emirutazs Al-Bizanthi Ath-Tharabazani, followed by studying Italian, Latin, Classical History, Geography and Archaeology from Siraco Anconitato. He got Italian and European history from Geofani Mario Angelello.

The Ulama who was very influential in shaping the mentality of a conqueror was Syaikh Aaq Syamsuddin. He not only educated Mehmed with the knowledge he had mastered, but Aaq Syamsuddin also always reminded Mehmed of the glory of the ahlu bisyaroh who would liberate Constantinople. In fact, Sheikh Aaq Syamsuddin always repeated his words to Mehmed, that he was the leader referred to in the hadith of the Prophet narrated by Ahmad. He really convinced him that Mehmed was Ahlu Bisyaroh.

Al-Fatih also studied methods of war and studied books on mechanical tricks. He succeeded in creating a large launcher, 4 moving towers and succeeded in making the first moving cannon in history. The making of giant cannons was supervised directly by him (Sauma 2023) In addition to being knowledgeable, Al-Fatih's obedience in religion deserves a thumbs up. Throughout his nights he always spent praying to Allah SWT, maintaining his prayers in congregation and never masbuq. Not fooled by his own abilities, the large number of soldiers and the breadth of his power. His tongue always mentions the test and gratitude to Allah who has given him victory. This is proof of Muhammad Al-Fatih's faith. (Rahmatullah 2022)

Da'wah Strategy

Strategy and da'wah, is a plan that contains a series of activities designed to achieve certain da'wah goals (Aziz 2024). There are two things that need to be considered in this case, namely:

a) Strategy is an action plan (a series of da'wah activities) including the use of methods and utilization of various resources or strengths, thus strategy is the process of preparing a work plan,

not yet taking action.

b) Strategy is formulated to achieve certain goals, which means that the direction of all strategic decisions is to achieve goals, so before determining the strategy, it is necessary to formulate clear goals and their success can be measured (Sanjaya 2006)

Forming the best troops is also part of the strategy. Troops are not only composed of good individual potential, but also because of their order and devotion to Allah SWT, the One who gives victory. Therefore, Sultan Al-Fatih made reforms to his military system.

Sultan Mehmed often prayed in congregation with his troops, gave sermons and reminded them of the glory of the troops who could conquer Constantinople, to maintain their level of faith and enthusiasm. Mehmed also placed clerics in each of his army barracks, to ensure the sincerity of their intentions and their closeness to the One Who Gives Victory.

One of the troops recruited since children aged 8-20 years old was the Yeniseri troops. They were gathered in special military barracks to be trained and formed into the best soldiers. Not only physical and mental training, the Yeniseri troops were also equipped with scientific knowledge and at a certain level they were directed based on their respective potentials. Studying the Qur'an was mandatory and ritual worship was one of the compulsory subjects at the Yeniseri academy.

This great expedition which became a historic momentum succeeded in gathering troops totaling 250,000 personnel. With the intention of conquering Constantinople in the shortest possible time. He was able to organize troops and logistics that many quickly, precisely, and accurately.

Sultan Al-Fatih always emphasized the importance of piety to Allah SWT and getting closer to Him was the key to victory. Also accompanied by scholars to provide encouragement in carrying out sunnah worship, such as night prayers, fasting and reading the Qur'an. The power of faith became the main foundation of their physicality, because the vision of victory from the Prophet's bisyarah became a reference to move them (Y. Siauw 2013) In securing the Bosphorus Strait, Sultan Al-Fatih discussed with his advisors. He even brought in famous geographers, applied engineering, architects and masons to build the fort desired by Sultan Al-Fatih. The planning was really matured by sending several ambassadors to each region and giving orders to the Governors to send masons and all workers in their regions, and were also asked to send the materials needed for the construction.

The fortress was named Rumeli Hisari, where the purpose of the construction was to place some of his troops on guard and prevent reinforcements from coming to Constantinople during the siege. (Zaskia Siregar 2022) As a result, the logistics of weapons and food supplies in Constantinople could be monitored by Sultan Al-Fatih.

To face the Walls of Constantinople, Al-Fatih did something unusual. As if getting an answer from Allah SWT for the prayers he had prayed, one day a man named Orban came offering his expertise in making weapons, namely cannons. So he immediately ordered his subordinates to treat Orban well and give him 4x the wages.

Within 3 months, Orban had completed the largest cannons that had never been seen by anyone in his time. Five cannons were placed in the Rumeli Hisari fortress to secure the Bosphorus Strait. The preparations made by Muhammad Al-Fatih and his troops were the result of a long effort to achieve the goals according to the target. Which later succeeded in conquering Constantinople.

Conquest Constantinople

Constantinople is known as a city with very strong defenses. Although it has been besieged several times by various nations, the city was successfully captured only in 1204 by the Latin army during the Fourth Crusade and was restored by the Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII Palaiogos in 1261 and conquered by the Ottoman Sultan Muhammad Al-Fatih in 1453.

Constantine I built a small wall around the city. In the fifth century, Theodosius II built the Theodosian Walls, which consisted of two walls that stretched about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) west of the first wall. The layout of the city above the Golden Horn and the Sea of Marmara supported the later construction of a solid fortress that covered two continents, Asia and Europe with magnificent palaces, domes and towers.

Constantinople served as the capital of the Roman Empire and a center of international trade. Its strategic location made it attractive to many countries. The Bosphorus Strait separates the two large continents, Asia and Europe. The strait originates from the Mediterranean Sea and juts into the mainland before joining the Black Sea, making it a sought-after route.

According to the promise of the Prophet Muhammad to Muslims that "The city of Constantinople will fall into the hands of Islam. The leader who conquers it is the best leader and the troops under his command are the best troops". (Narrated by Ahmad bin Hanbal Al-Musnad 4/335) (Fitriana et al. 2022)

Through this hadith, Al-Fatih became even more enthusiastic about conquering the Byzantine Empire. To achieve his goals, the strategies and theories used by Muhammad Al-Fatih in the conquest of Constantinople include:

1) Military Strategy:

- **Blockade:** Muhammad Al-Fatih blockaded the Port of Constantinople, so that the supply of food and support from outside the city was cut off. The blockade aims to weaken the city's defenses.
- **Cannons:** To destroy the city's defensive walls, Al-Fatih used heavy artillery, including cannons. The sophistication of heavy artillery gave the Muslim army a great advantage.
- **Tunnels:** The use of underground tunnels was another alternative to approach the city without being detected by Constantinople's troops. This allowed the Muslim army to move into the city without being attacked by the enemy.

2) Diplomatic Strategy:

- Muhammad Al-Fatih tried to build an alliance of groups in the area, including local Orthodox Christian tribes, hoping to get support or at least to minimize resistance from the Christians.

3) Psychological Strategy:

- This strategy was used to intimidate the enemy. Al-Fatih ordered the construction of ships on land, which were then towed to the Bosphorus Strait by the Muslim army to show the strength and determination of his troops.

4) Religious Motivation:

- Through the encouragement of faith, Muhammad Al-Fatih and his troops carried out the sacred task of expanding the territory of Islam and fighting for their religion. This religious motivation played an important role in motivating the Muslim army, instilling the spirit of jihad by continuously reminding the good news brought by the Prophet Muhammad SAW (A'yun 2023)

The preparation made by Muhammad Al-Fatih and his troops was the result of a long effort to achieve the target. Which later succeeded in conquering Constantinople. Al-Fatih's great mission was supported by the presence of 250,000 army personnel that he managed to gather. Soldiers who had been educated and trained thoroughly. The strengthening of the naval fleet was deployed by preparing approximately 400 ships, becoming a large and passive number for the Ottomans who at that time had not yet controlled the sea area. Because the sea is the only way to conquer Constantinople.

On Friday, March 23, 1453, Sultan Al-Fatih and his troops walked towards Constantinople with full confidence and spread enormous pressure on the enemy troops. Among them were war

troops consisting of scholars, always reciting prayers and verses of the Qur'an so that they would always remember Allah SWT in every situation. The Ottoman troops did not start any action before receiving orders from the Sultan.

The construction of the Romali Hishar fortress aimed to place some of his troops to prevent reinforcements from reaching Constantinople during the siege (Zaskia Siregar 2022) Failure to enter from the west wing did not make Al-Fatih run out of ideas. He turned eastward, namely the narrow strait of the Golden Horn, where this strait was stretched by a large chain, making it impossible for even a small fleet to pass through. As a result, he brought his ships to land and as many as 70 ships were carried together to the side of the strait in a short time at night. This was the beginning of the fall of Constantinople (Haikal, Harahap, and Pasaribu 2023)

On May 27, 1453, the war led by Muhammad Al-Fatih began to show victory. He gathered his military leaders to convey several directions and orders. Calling on his troops to rest and get closer to Allah by carrying out the worship that He has commanded. Increasing solemnity in prayer and asking for prayers for the victory of the Muslims to Allah SWT. (Zaskia Siregar 2022) The siege mission caused the loss of many troops, more than 30,000 lives were lost on the battlefield. became an unimaginable difficulty. While the thick walls of Constantinople that had been impenetrable for centuries had appeared before our eyes. After 53 days of siege, coinciding with the 20th of Jumadil Ula 857 H / May 29, 1453, the Ottoman troops managed to enter the defensive forts of Constantinople through the Charisian gate accompanied by the words "Masyaallah" as a form of gratitude to Allah SWT who had given him victory, the city's defenses were destroyed with the killing of the emperor and his troops. Muhammad Al-Fatih then continued the conquest of the Maura peninsula, Serbia, Albania up to the borders of Bundukia (Darmawan 2023)

CONCLUSION

Forming troops who are devout in religion and intelligent in knowledge. Sultan Al-Fatih always emphasized the importance of piety to Allah SWT and getting closer to Him is the key to victory. Also accompanied by scholars to provide encouragement in carrying out sunnah worship, such as night prayers, fasting and reading the Qur'an. The power of faith became the main foundation of their physical, because the vision of victory from the Prophet's bisyarah became a reference to move them. Thanks to the power of Allah SWT, this was able to lead Al-Fatih and his army to victory in conquering Constantinople.

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