

Dayah Post Tsunami: From Traditional to Modern

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Abstract

Tsunami occurred in 2004 remains the various changes for Acehese. The opening of information and cooperation in national or international scope affects positively toward the development of Aceh to be better. During the reconstruction process post tsunami, The educational sector becomes one of many sectors which gains many concerns from various parties, including *Dayah* educational institution which is known well in Indonesia as *pesantren*. Does the *pesantren* educational institution transform after tsunami? How does it transform? It is interesting to be studied due to *pesantren* is the most essential Islamic educational institution for Acehese. Furthermore: *Pesantren* has the long history with its unique system. After tsunami, several *pesantren* in Aceh has been transformed. H.A.R Gibb and Snouck Hurgronjo has indicated this existence of transformation in their thesis about Islam in Indonesia. The result shows several *pesantren* in Aceh which embrace traditional system has transformed to be as modern Islamic educational institution. The transformation is formed either physically (the school building, The dormitory, and ect) or non-physically (curriculum, method, and ect). This transformation is a requirement of the harder competition in educational field and job field).

Keyword: *Dayah*, Post Tsunami and transformation

A. Introduction

Dayah is the popular Islamic educational institution in Aceh. In Indonesia, this kind of Islamic educational institution is known with various name in different region, such as *Pondok pesantren* in Java, and *surau* in Padang. *Dayah* educational type has

known long time ago before Independence era. According to Snouck Hurgronjo wrote on his "*DeAtjehers*" then translated in title "Aceh: The People and the custom", provides a lot of informations about Aceh, He stated that the Islamic educational institution like *dayah* had already existed, called *Rangkang*.¹ *Rangkangis* the Islamic educational institution which had metamorphosed to be *Dayah* as today. In Indonesia, Particularly in Java, *Dayah* is named *Pesantren* or *Pondok pesantren*. The word "*pondok*" is implemented to describe the simplicity of *pesantren's* building. It may be from Arabic vocabulary "*Funduq*" (sleep room, home, and hotel). The word "*Pesantren*" is consisted of three words with the basic word "*santri*", and the prefix "*pe*", and the suffix "*an*" which means the place, therefore it is defined "the place for student".²

When Aceh imperium, the Islamic educational institution had existed, called *Zawiyah*. According to *Lisanul Arab* dictionary, the word *zawiyah* is the stem of the word *Zaiyah*, the town in Basrah, Iraq, which was reconstructed as the place for living of *sufi* community. Another dictionary, *Mu'jam Al-Wasith* defines *zawiyah* as the home for *sufi* community and

¹ Snouck Hurgronje, *Aceh: Rakyat dan adat Istiadatnya*, (Jakarta: INIS, 1997), vol I, p. 23.

² Manfred Ziemek, *Pesantren dalam Perubahan Sosial*, (Jakarta: P3M, 1998), p. 98-99

the poor. Later on, in Islamic dissemination era, *zawiyah* was forming and functioning religiously in various way, such as as the place for islamic studying, the worship place, the place for implementing *tarekat*, and etc. Therefore the word *dayah* is known in Aceh may be from the word *zawiyah*, and it is fit to Acehnese's pronunciation to be *dayah*. Other evidence, According to Ibn Batutah, Islamic education in Aceh had ever achieved the glory, in 1345 C Ibnu Batutah started his journey from maroko to travel around the world, and he layover in Pase kingdom which was controlled by Al-Malik Az-Zahir, Ibnu Batutah was impressed in preceiving the kingdom at that time, where the king was very pious, knowledgeable about islam and about Syafi'i sect, the king often organized the islamic teaching, He was able to speak Arabic well.³

According to the history literature, Islamic education in Aceh never recedes. The islamic education continuously runs on the track through the institution called *dayah*, either the Dutch colonization era or Japanese occupation era. Later on, in Indonesia independence era, *dayah* in Aceh and *pondok pesantren* in java became the main endorser in attempting to achieve the independent, either in war era or revolution era. Until today, *dayah* still exists as the islamic educational institution which is known well by Acehnese. The alumnae of *dayah* is a lot, most of them become *Tengku* (Kyai/ustadz) in their village, as well as establish new *dayah* to disseminate Islamic teaching. In the modern era as

today, *Dayah* still become the mainstay and the reliance of Acehnese to board out their kid in the way to study Islam.

On 24 December 2004, the greatest disaster called tsunami was experienced by Aceh. That disaster transforms Aceh in various aspect, either physically or non physically. The city order migically changes, as if Tsunami never happened in Aceh. So do The social life, it changes either the social interaction or the society's paradigm. Those kind of transformation occurs in various ways and causes.

During the reconstruction process post tsunami, The educational sector becomes one of many sectors which gains many concerns and aids from various parties. The Schools were reconstructed as well as the educational institution was given the adequate help for the institution development. *Dayah* as the educational institution which is easily found in Aceh gains the concern from the helper. Moreover, the opening of communication and transportation gate into Aceh affects positively toward Aceh's development.

The existence of *dayah* is known as the islamic educational institution which is very pure and tough in accepting the transformation especially about modernity. This fact causes many *dayah* undevelop well and become stagnant as the way they are, there is no effort to develop *dayah* to be better. By opening Aceh information gate, it is possible for Aceh interacts with the society from outside, either in national scope or international scope. Therefore, This study is going to study whether *dayah* as the islamic educational

³ Zuhairini. et.al., *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*, (Jakarta: Dirjen Pembinaan Agama Islam, 1986), p. 85

institution has transformed post tsunami, and how is the occurrence of its transformation. This substance is essential to be researched because the *dayah* is one of many Islamic religious representatives. H.A.R Gibb and Snouck Hurgronjo mentioned about this Indonesian Islamic transformation in their thesis⁴. The discussion in this paper reveals whether the indication of transformation occurs in the *dayah* context in Aceh.

B. The change in denomination

Snouck Hurgronjo and H.A.R Gibb is the early researcher about Islam in Indonesia, later on continued by Clifford Geertz who results a lot of writing about Islam in Indonesia. Specific information about Islam may only know from Snouck Hurgronjo who conducted the depth research about Islam in Aceh. Snouck Hurgronjo viewed Islam in Indonesia and Aceh is really strong. Islam and the implementation of Islam is statically runs as the system. However, Snouck Hurgronjo indicated that the ideology of Islam had been transformed slowly. The transformation usually occurs step by step and little by little. As he mentioned:

“Islam in Java seems static and strongly shackled by the ideology of “the parson” in medieval, Actually, the fundamental transformation has been occurred; but, the transformation occurs gradually, complicated, and hides deeply, that is why the observer who does not know about the Islamic thought will be difficult to see this transformation, even though it happens in the sight obviously”.⁵

⁴Zamaksyari Dhofir, *Tradisi Pesantren, Studi tentang Pandangan Hidup Kiyai*, (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1984), p.2

⁵*Ibid*

H.A.R Gibb also mentioned that neither ideology in philosophy nor in religion which is static for 6 centuries.⁶ Those statement is strongly stated because it is really possible for Islam to adapt with the race and culture of the country regarding the dissemination of Islam from Arab to the other area around the world. Islamic teaching in Al-Quran is classified into two parts, namely *Qat’iverse* and *dhanniverse*. *Qat’i* verse is the verse which is obvious its meaning and the law, so there is no need more interpretation for the verse. *dhanni* verse is the verse which needs to be interpreted more because of its general.

The thesis by Snouck Hurgronjo and H.A.R Gibb may be about the religious sect or ideology which is transformed in *dhanniscope*. It is possible occurs due to the development of the science and the differences of culture in race around the world. The transformation may be about adapting with the condition there, or the showing up of the new understanding about *dhanni* verse based on principle they found. Later on, the transformation of religious sect is affected by social aspect which is needed to transform, usually it is depends on the behavior and the culture.

The transformation is part of the social change, particularly the action of social interaction in the society scope. There are some causes which create the change in social aspect, first, due to the existence of transformation aspect in the government, second because of the transformation paradigm which is used

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 1

by the government. Social change is the change of the certain condition in society. Riyadi Suprpto stated that the change in the society occurs in various life aspect, either in social values, the organizational behavior, the order of institution, the stratification in the society (social stratification) the power and authority, or the social interaction and so on.⁷

Nowadays, it has been two kind of transformation occurred in *pesantren* scope, the transformation in function and in management system. Azyumardi Azra stated that the transformation in *pesantren* is running in order to response the expansion of the general education system. It has two ways, as follow (1) revising the curriculum by intergrating the general science and even general skills. (2) Allowing the institution and its educational facility for the public education need.⁸

Universally, there are a lot of models of changes that have occurred in the religious sects in Islam. There was a change in a positive direction and there was also a change in the negative direction. Since the beginning of Islam had been brought by the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, Islam was taught in stages until the final revelation sent down by Allah to Prophet Muhammad PBUH. The teachings of Islam which were taught was the same and all the problems that had been encountered can be directly asked to the Prophet. After the Prophet passed away, the companions started finding various issues that had not

been faced before at the time when the Prophet alive. Then the companions used their diligence based on the Quran and Hadiths received from the Prophet. Furthermore, during the *tabi'* and *tabi'in*, Islam has grown and spread throughout the world, more problems of Muslims needed to be answered. Since then, there were some scholars who most of them were hadith scholars, They tried to interpret the verses of Al-Quran and Hadith into legal products which can be directly understood by all Muslims. They were then named as *mujtahid* in the science of *fiqh*, such as Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, Imam Ash-Shafi'i and Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal.

Not only in the field of jurisprudence, theology, and mysticism, the development of Islamic law and Islamic socio-cultural communities also experienced many changes and developments, partly because it was as the result of interaction with the outside countries of Arabic land. Therefore, we have different characteristics of Islam in various continents and countries until now. This is what Mark Woodward has concluded, he said that Islam was a religion which was very elastic, all people and states that he visited had become Islamic in their original shapes. So we can find the presence of Islam in Morocco, Islam in Indonesia, Islam in Malaysia, Islam in Pakistan, and others.⁹

In Indonesia, Islam has undergone many developments since the beginning of Islam that came from Aceh and it still developed until now. Especially

⁷ Binti Maunah, *Tradisi Intelektual Santri*, (Yogyakarta: Teras, 2008), p.11-13.

⁸ Mahmud arif, *Pendidikan Islam Transformatif*, (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2008), p.197.

⁹ Mark. R. Woodward, *Islam Jawa: Kesalehan Normatif versus Kebatinan*, (Yogyakarta, LKiS, 2006), p.365.

the process of assimilation with the local culture of Indonesia, which required a very long time. It was called as the apparent changes that occurred in the sects of Islam in Indonesia. So that the changes, shifts and these developments were invisible, except after we conducted a deep and thorough analysis. Similarly, the development of educational institutions in Islam, both at the level of religious and higher education had undergone many changes and developments also.

Dayah or Boarding schools as the oldest institutions of Islamic education in Indonesia also had undergone a various changes in various aspects. The changes of models and methods of learning, also the physical changes of a derelict building into a magnificent building. In Indonesia, the changes of boarding schools had begun to appear after the independence of Indonesia itself. These changes occurred slowly, very slowly over a long period, particularly in Java. In general, these changes were the influence of post-colonial onslaught of modernization from Netherlands and Japan. After struggling for Indonesian independence, many boarding schools in Java changed their nature of vision and mission. At first, they only intended to study religion, and then they opened an opportunity to learn Western languages (English, Dutch, Japanese, etc.) for the students. Furthermore, the boarding schools officially opened public schools and universities.

C. Dayah Post Tsunami: From Traditional to Modern

Boarding schools in Aceh, or better known as Dayah was the educational institution which was very easy to find in Aceh. Almost in every village or

Mukim (indigenous leadership region) has a Dayah. However, there were various levels of educational models in this Dayah. Firstly, the special Dayah for basic level in the shape of recitation hall, usually placed in a Balee (hall) or meunasah (mosque). Learners or students consisted of the children who were just learning the Qur'an and Prayer, and they also learnt some additional books called Jawi, Acehnese people call it as *Kitab Jawoe* (Malay language written with Arabic letters).

The second one was Boarding School that taught *Kitab Kuning* (Arabic book) at every level, from class I to class VII. We rarely found students who learnt to class VI or VII in this model dayah. Because this dayah was in the village, it was not known to the public from other areas, its students were the children of the village or the surrounding areas. Most of them were not settled in the Dayah, just stayed in the night and returned to their homes in the morning. This model dayah stood on the land that was not too wide, and only consisted of building named *Balee*. Some of dayah also equipped with mosques or prayer rooms. Thirdly, a famous Islamic boarding school and more or less had hundreds or thousands students. This Dayah had gained an accreditation from the Boarding School Institution of Aceh province.¹⁰ The Boarding School Institution had been divided the dayah into three categories; type A, type B and type C. The learning process in dayah had a systematic learning and education that existed ranging from class I to class IX.

¹⁰Dayah Institution is formed by Aceh Government and only found in Aceh. It is established in order to develop Dayah in Aceh. It has its responsibility to Governor directly that manages the dayah/boarding schools in Aceh.

However, most students will get a diploma of graduation if they passed the seventh grade. Only a few students continued to study in class VIII and IX, sometimes those for students who had already been given the chance to teach at the dayah.

The tsunami disaster that hit Aceh in 2004, precisely on 24th December, had brought many changes to Aceh, including the changes in educational institutions of dayah. During this time, dayah was regarded as an Islamic institution which still adhered to the traditional learning model which used the method of Halaqah and Talaqqi. In addition, the dayah was also known as slums and remote areas of technology. The students and teachers had a simple life and move away from a worldly life, they preferred not to interfere in the government. Learning in dayah was done in *balee* (hall) with students sit in a circle; they did not use the class like in the school. So that almost all the components of dayah were traditional, in terms of buildings, teaching methods, instructional media, as well as the books used were also limited only to the classic books. They rarely evaluated their curriculum or we can say it almost never.

After the tsunami in 2014, the changes of dayah seemed so obvious and began to adapt with outside the world. Some dayah had transformed, whether institutional or methodology.¹¹ The changes that occurred were vary and also different from one dayah with another dayah. There were two models of the changes that occurred, firstly: there were dayah

which still maintained the curriculum and instructional model traditionally, but they made the changes and held their transformation with adequate modern facilities. Such as providing a library, computers, internet services, sports facilities, and a mini market. This model was a general form of the changes that occurred in some Dayah in Aceh, the completeness facilities depended on the capability of dayah itself. Most dayah also relied on the help from the Government and the donor from society. Secondly, there was a dayah which did the changes in its institution. This changes model got a lot of criticism from *Tengku* (teachers who teach in dayah) who did not agree with these changes. They were more amenable to maintain what had been applied by the dayah before. One of them was dayah Al-Aziziyah Samalanga, in Bireun. This Dayah was categorized as a great dayah which has reached thousands students.

Generally, the Islamic education in Aceh was strongly influenced by the presence of dayah. There was always a small dayah (*rangkang*) or *balee* (hall) to study about Islam in each village or at least there was a dayah in one settlement. In this modern era, the dayah still survived and existed as a place of Islamic education. However, the modern era still affected the existence of dayah. The dayah had to adjust with the progress of modern era, not budge or backward.

There are two models of the effects caused by the times (modernization). First, for those who made the education of dayah as a basic education, dayah had a very important role in one's life. Each child was required to learn in boarding school education, then followed by general education schools such as MA

¹¹Mujamil Qomar, *Pesantren dari Transformasi Metodologi Menuju Demokratisasi Institusi*. (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2006), p.86.

(Madrasah Aliyah) or high school (SMA). It was customary for every child in Acehese society, first of all they were required to learn in meunasah (mosque), they usually learnt how to pray and other devotions as well as reciting and writing the Quran and Jawi books like *Masailal Muhtadi*. Then, after getting the permission from *Tengku* (ust), approximately after the children had already passed, they can continue to learn in dayah. Usually, in dayah, the learning processes were using the Arabic books (*kitab kuning*) directly. Once they have learnt at dayah, they will receive a diploma or the same level of Aliyah for continuing their education in STAI (Islamic High School) or IAIN (State Islamic Institute Of Ar-Raniry).

The second model, which made dayah education as an important school, the boarding schools and general schools have the same role in the development of human being. Children are given an education from elementary school to high school / MA. Besides, they kept learning in *meunasah-meunasah* or mosque in the afternoon or evening (these *meunasah-meunasah* had been replaced with TPA education now -Education in learning al-Quran). After their graduation in *meunasah*, they went on Islamic religious education in Islamic boarding school. They learnt at night and dawn. The learning began in the evening after sunset around 08.30 pm up to 10:00 pm. These students stayed in the dayah complex. Usually, there was several shaped dorm rooms (*bilek*) at dayah. In the morning, the learning began after dawn until 07.00 pm and after all the students returned to their own homes and got ready to go to the school again.

IAIN and STAI had already accepted a lot of students who have a diploma from dayah as qualified as Aliyah. The dayah gave the diploma for students who had passed the seventh grade level (ended classes at Boarding School). The further development emerged the models of integrated boarding school education¹². Integrated Boarding School gave two diplomas; those were high school diploma / Aliyah and diploma dayah as qualified as Aliyah. The students can use one of the diploma to enroll IAIN or STAI, and they can also use a high school diploma or equivalent to enter public universities, such as Unsyiah and other universities.

Dayah split from its original form into a unified Islamic educational institutions and Modern. These Boarding School officially opened madrasah and Islamic schools. But the traditional Islamic boarding school still has a special place to the people of Aceh. So that Dayah in Aceh was still very identical to the traditional educational institutions. However, Islamic boarding schools have a high commitment in advancing education in Aceh, it was evidenced by dayah Mudi Mesra Samalanga. In 2004, This Dayah officially opened the College, the Islamic College (STAI) Aziziyah, now has changed its name to IAI (Islamic Institute). The STAI accepted students who have completed the study in its Dayah. Although there were some who already have a diploma Aliyah from MA (madrasah aliyah).

Since long time ago, dayah has started changes in physical and non-physical. Physical

¹² Hasbi Amiruddin, *Menatap Masa Depan Dayah di Aceh*, (Banda Aceh: Pena, 2008), p.15.

changes which are clearly visible included: *First*, the shape of the building, which has adopted the modern style of buildings around it, in addition to original buildings which are consisted of traditional classrooms (*balee*). Moreover, some dayahs have started providing classroom and whiteboard same as in the public schools, and also offices, coop, auditorium, and dormitories which were shaped of grubby and dirty rooms (*bilek*), now it is replaced by modern dormitories.¹³

Second, the availability of public facilities, such as sports facilities, libraries, and canteens. Generally, the facilities are not owned by dayah in Aceh. Because some consider sports just revel and useless. Likewise the libraries, formerly there were no libraries in dayah. Students had their own book in following the appropriate classes that they occupied. Besides the growing of the awareness and openness from the Islamic theologian or the head of dayah, the emergence of the libraries can not be separated from the role of Islamic Boarding School Department of Aceh Province Government which provided Islamic and literature books.

Non-physical changes are included: *First*, the use of curriculum. Since the learning model was done hereditarily, then the curriculum was not very essential for the managements and head of dayah. However, the lessons taught in dayah, mainly “kitab kuning”, are predetermined by class from grade one to grade seven. *Second*, They already have a good

management in academic and finance. In academic, for instance the schedule of exams in a year and the report of examination result which is given in a book. The students who are succeed will get awards and prizes. In some dayahs are also held a contest (*Musabaqah*) at the end of the year. The materials used in contest are usually reading “kitab kuning”, speeches, Dalail khairat and quizzes (*fahmil kutub*). In finance, dayah also has a general treasurer and classroom treasurer. General treasurer keeps the treasury and directly responsible to the head of dayah, while the classroom treasurer only responsible to the classroom treasury. In fixing this management, the Government of Aceh province by means of Islamic Boarding School Department often providing trainings to smarten the administration in dayah.

Third, the availability of additional lessons (*extracurricular*) for students. Some extracurricular activities practiced in dayah are included Arabic and English daily speaking (*muhadatsah* and *speaking*), writing class, speech and sewing (only for female students)

Fourth, the effectuation of public school with the same level with junior and senior highschool and also Islamic highschool. Some dayahs have organized junior and senior highschool and even many of them have adopted a model of integrated Islamic boarding school. But, the dayah which has Islamic highschool is Ma’had Ulum ad-Diniyah Masjid Raya Samalanga (MUDI-Mesra).

Seems the new condition in Aceh’s education has emerged, Since dayah Mudi Mesra through Islamic Education Foundation of Al-Aziziyah

¹³In some Islamic boarding schools there are rooms like huts made by students themselves (Acehnese: *meudagang*).

established Islamic High School (STAI) Al - Aziziyah- now it has been converted into IAI (Islamic Institute) Al-aziziyah. A bold step taken in islamic theologian environment of dayah. This gets an outstanding refutation and objections from other islamic theologian since there have not been previously dayahwhich organized a modern Islamic education. The islamic theologian have never done it before because they worried that the characteristic of dayahitself might be vanished.

However, the concerns seem impossible to be occurred. With the educational rules applied now, dayahMUDI Mesra Samalanga still exist with the characteristic of dayahitself integrated with modern education. This is a novelty in Aceh, although this has been done by Islamic theologian in Java, even much earlier after the independence. For instance, dayahTebu Ireng established by KH. Hasyim Asy'ary in east Java.

The succeeded alumni of STAI Aziziyah have been prepared to become lecturers in the future. They are awarded postgraduate and doctoral scholarship. The selected are believed to continue the relay of traditional dayahwith modern system. In addition, the presence of Islamic Boarding School Department is the existence of seriousness from Government of Aceh province in developing dayah in Aceh. This department has helped Islamic boarding school in developing human resources by providing subsidies

and training related to the management in developing dayah in Aceh.¹⁴

Besides the quantity development, dayahalso has developed the quality. Making changes in order to improve scientific competence and skills, so that they can compete at national and international levels.

Most the alumni of dayahwith the assistance of the government of Aceh province continue their education to university, both in graduate and postgraduate levels. The government has begun to recruite outstanding alumni to be awarded the scholarship.

Currently, there are many alumni of dayahstudying at IAIN and STAIN/ STAI. The alumni mostly worked as teacher, lecturer, lawyer, muslim chieftain and instructor. They have organized alumni organization. They are IMADA (Association of college student from) and HUDA (Assosiation of Aceh Islamic theologian). Both of the organizations have a substantial role toward dayahalumni.

The changes occurred in dayah are caused by two factors; *First*, the demand of society and employment. As a developed country, people of Indonesia are going to be a modern community. Therefore, the existence of dayahas a part of the community and supported by the community, then dayah is required to adjust to the time being, while maintaining the characteristic of dayah itself. The

¹⁴Majelis Pendidikan Daerah Aceh, *Refleksi Setengah Abad Pendidikan Aceh*,(Banda Aceh: MPD Aceh, 2010), p.30.

alumni are expected to take part and compete in employment and participate in community building.

Second, Modernization and Globalization. These affect the leaders of dayahin organizing the school. The openness and directness in accessing information make them more flexible. The head of dayahs usually are the alumni of some other dayahs who have capability and finished their studies, and also served as teachers at the schools where they studied. Then, they build dayahin accordance with their alma mater. In recent time, due to most of the alumni of Idayah continue their studies at IAIN, STAIN, and STAI, they built more modern dayah after their graduation which then followed gradually by other dayahs.

D. Conclusion

At a glance, dayahis still in its traditional form. Although since long time ago it has begun both physical and non-physical changes to the modern direction. The clearly visible physical changes are the buildings, the rooms which have been modified to dormitories, the availability of sports facilities, libraries, offices, and canteens. Non-physical changes are the use of curriculum, academic management, administration and finance, extracurricular activities included Arabic and English daily speaking (*muhadatsah* and *speaking*), writing class, speech and sewing (only for female students), and the effectuation of public school with the same level with junior and senior highschool and also Islamic highschool.

Thus, what has been indicated by HR Gibb and Snouck Hurgronje is happened. The changes occur

slowly and subtle. They are caused by several factors included the demands of society and employment, the influence of modernization and globalization. It is also clearly seen in Aceh's and Java's dayah. Although in Aceh just apparent in recent years, after 21st century, the culmination is after tsunami in 2004.

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**5th Biannual International Conference on Aceh and Indian Ocean Studies (ICAIOS) UIN Ar-Raniry Campus, Banda Aceh,
November 17-18, 2014.**