

REFORMATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN ACEH (STUDY OF MADRASAHs IN 1915-1946)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the dynamics of the renewal of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh in the period 1915-1946. The focus of the study lies on the emergence and development of madrasahs as a form of transformation of Islamic education from a traditional system to a modern model that is more relevant to the needs of the times. By using the approach of social institutional theory and modernization theory, this study explains the role of madrasahs in improving access to education, teaching quality, and contributions to Acehnese society. The research method used is a historical study, which includes four stages: heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Data were obtained from primary sources such as archives, colonial documents, works of scholars, and physical artifacts of madrasah buildings. The criticism process was carried out to ensure the validity, objectivity, and relevance of the data. Interpretative analysis was used to understand the social, political, cultural, and religious influences on the development of madrasahs in Aceh. The results of the study show that the renewal of Islamic education in Aceh encouraged the development of madrasahs as educational institutions that not only teach religious knowledge but also general knowledge. This renewal improves the quality of madrasah graduates who are able to contribute as scholars, educators, community leaders, and government officials. In addition, madrasahs expanded access to Islamic education to remote areas, including for women, and played an important role in maintaining the religious and cultural identity of the Acehnese people amidst the pressures of colonialism.

Keywords: Reformation, Islamic Educational, Aceh, Madrasah

INTRODUCTION

Education occupies a strategic position in the attention of Muslims, both in countries with Muslim majorities and minorities. In Islamic teachings, education has a very important and noble value. Therefore, the implementation of education is the main focus in efforts to build the future of Muslims (Asrorah, 2001; Dalimunthe et al, 2023). The great attention to education is based on the awareness that education in Islam is truly an effort to maintain and develop human nature and the potential of human resources in order to produce Muslim intellectuals (*insan kamil*) based on the principles of Islamic law. The goal of education is to improve the quality of human life, form a just and prosperous society, and build a civilization rooted in Islamic values (Sikumbang et al., 2024; Humaizi et al., 2024).

Hendro Puspito emphasized that Islamic education has an inseparable significance from the social structure of society. He argues that the Islamic education system is an integral part of a broader social system, namely society itself. As a social institution, Islamic educational institutions have the function of meeting the basic needs of society while playing an important role in encouraging the progress of the Muslim community. In line with this view, Hasbullah added that Islamic educational institutions also play a role as the main means in implementing the Islamic education process that is in line with the development of civilization. This institution must be able to adapt to the dynamics of the times in order to remain relevant to the needs of society, and continue to develop through curriculum updates that are in line with advances in Islamic education, social sciences, and modern technology and knowledge (Irwan et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, Islamic education has been one of the main priorities for Muslims since the beginning of the spread and development of Islam in the archipelago. This is in line with the growth of Islamic education activities that have taken place along with the progress of Islam in the country (Indainanto et al., 2023). In addition to the importance of education as previously explained, the process of Islamization also encourages Muslims to spread religious teachings, although it is done in an informal form and with a simple system (Mukti, 2017). However, the role of Islamic education and teaching remains consistent at every stage of its development, running according to its function in educating and disseminating Islamic values (Mailin et al., 2023; Dalimunthe, 2022).

Historically, according to Abudin Nata, this kind of teaching method developed rapidly in mosques at that time. He argues that the form of teaching applied at that time was the *halaqah* or *zawiyah* system. In the *halaqah* system, adults sit in a circle around the teacher in the corner of the mosque to listen to lectures and discuss various issues that arise. This teaching was so

popular among the people, even the King of Pasai, Malik al-Saleh, often attended the meeting every Friday after prayer. Not only adults, children also participated in this halaqah. This condition created the need for a special place for children's education, thus encouraging the community to establish Islamic educational institutions in Aceh (Rubino et al., 2023). This tradition continued until the era of the Sultanate of Aceh Darussalam, especially during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda, who had great attention to the development of science. At that time, Islamic educational institutions were centered in meunasah, rangkang, and dayah or Islamic boarding schools. The rapid progress of Islamic educational institutions at that time made the Acehnese people almost entirely free from illiteracy, as stated by the French explorer, Beaulieu. However, this condition began to be disrupted towards the end of the 19th century AD/12 H due to the prolonged war between the Acehnese people and the Dutch Colonial (Susilo, 2020).

This conflict caused the management of Islamic educational institutions, which were previously centered in meunasah, rangkang, and dayah, to be less than optimal, although the existence of these institutions remained widely known by the community. Although many Islamic education centers in Aceh were destroyed and devastated by the war, the faith and spirit of jihad of the Acehnese people remained intact thanks to Islamic education that had been forged for hundreds of years. This is evident from the educational process that continued even in very emergency situations, for more than half a century of war, both by scholars and women. prominent who was a descendant of the Sultan of Aceh. Through his letter dated October 22, 1915, he submitted a request to the Military and Civil Governor of Aceh, H.N.A Swart, to establish a madrasah in Kuta Raja. Finally, the first Islamic educational institution in Aceh was realized in early 1916 AD/1334 H and Teungku Syekh Muhammad Saman Siron was appointed as its leader (Zuhri, 2014).

The emergence of madrasah educational institutions in Aceh was not only a response to the political policies of the Dutch East Indies, but also reflected the differences in views between the modernist and traditionalist Muslim groups. The modernist group encouraged the application of modern science and disseminated new ideas through publication media and journalism. In contrast, the traditional group maintained traditional educational methods (Ritonga et al., 2024; Hefner, 2009). The traditional group was led by the charismatic figure Abuya Muda Wali (Syekh Muda Wali al-Khalidy), while the modernist group had the influential figure Abu Daud Beureu'eh (Teungku Muhammad Daud Beureu'eh) (Nur, 2021).

The growth of madrasahs as Islamic educational institutions reached its peak with the establishment of the All Aceh Ulama Association (PUSA) in 1939 AD/1357 H. PUSA, which

is an organization of ulama in Aceh, played an important role in innovating and encouraging the progress of madrasahs in the region. Although at that time other modern organizations had been established in Aceh, such as Muhammadiyah, Syarikat Islam, NU, and others, PUSA had stronger ties with the Acehnese people (Anis, 2015; Solihin, 2018). PUSA leaders were also open to the benefits of modern education, so that this organization received wider support compared to other organizations (Wijaya, 2020). From the explanation above, it can be seen that madrasahs as Islamic educational institutions were born as a result of the transformation of the traditional education system, along with the influence of Islamic modernization that occurred in Indonesia in general and Aceh in particular (Kahar, 2021). The presence of this madrasah has made an important contribution in educating the nation's young generation and has played a role as a counterbalance to the colonial secular education system that was previously present and developed in Aceh (Mulyani, 2013).

The rapid development of madrasahs in Aceh since the early 20th century has been a catalyst for significant changes in the landscape of Islamic education in this province. The transformation from a more rigid traditional education system to a modern education model has brought a breath of fresh air. Madrasahs, as the first modern Islamic educational institutions to emerge, played a central role in driving this change (Mariana, 2022). The shift in the educational paradigm that was previously heavily influenced by dayah scholars was inevitable (Drajat, 2018). This phenomenon indicates an interesting dynamic in the history of Islamic education in Aceh. Based on the author's interest in this phenomenon, this study will specifically analyze the period of the rise of madrasahs between 1915 and 1946. The researcher chose this time span because in 1915 AD/1333 H, madrasahs were first established in Aceh with full management by the community (Kurniawan, 2019; Mukhtar, 2020). Meanwhile, in 1946 AD/1364 H, the period of madrasah management by the community reached its end. After that, the management of madrasahs was transferred to the government, along with the establishment of the Ministry of Religion which integrated madrasahs into state schools (Saerozi, 2013). All madrasah teachers were appointed as civil servants and began to receive salaries from the government (Fauzan et al., 2023). Therefore, the period from 1915 to 1946 has an important meaning in the early history of the growth and development of madrasahs as modern Islamic educational institutions in Aceh. During that period, madrasahs were able to develop despite facing various challenges, including pressure from Dutch colonialism and the Japanese occupation (Mukhtar, 2015).

Based on the background of the problem described above, it can be concluded that research on the renewal of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh in the period 1915-1946 is

an effort to understand more deeply the history of the development of Islamic education in Aceh. This research has several significances to be carried out. First, this research will make an important contribution to understanding the dynamics of Islamic education in Indonesia, especially in Aceh. By understanding the dynamics of renewal in the past, we can identify best practices that can be applied in the context of contemporary Islamic education. Second, this research will enrich the treasury of knowledge, especially in the field of the history of Islamic education and Islamic studies and can be used as a reference for further research that wants to explore the same or related topics. Third, this research will also help us understand the social and political context behind the renewal of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh. Thus, we can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of Acehnese history.

METHODS

The research method used in this writing is the historical study method. The historical study method is a research method used to study past events. This method uses several stages in constructing past events, namely: Heuristic stage, critical stage, interpretation stage, and historiography stage (Abdurrahman, 2011; Sukardi, 2003). The heuristic stage is the stage of searching for data and information related to the research problem. The data and information can be obtained from primary sources, namely; books and writings written by those directly involved in the renewal of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh, including: Teungku Muhammad Hasbi Ash-Shiddiqy, A. Hasymy and Teungku H. Ismail Ya'qub. Then in the form of madrasah building artifacts that still exist today including: the architecture of the Sa'adah Abadiyah Madrasah building founded by Teungku Muhammad Daud Beureu'eh in Blang Paseh Sigli. Then the location of the Al-Muslim Peusangan Matang Geulempang Dua Madrasah and the Nahdhatul Islam Madrasah (MADNI) in Idi. All of these artifacts can provide clues about the development and characteristics of madrasahs at that time. At the critical stage, it is carried out with (1) accuracy of content, whether the information provided in the source reflects the real situation and conditions during the renewal of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh, for example data on the number of madrasahs, curriculum, or education policies are in accordance with existing historical facts, (2) objectivity of the source, for example: colonial government documents may have a bias towards Islamic educational institutions, while local ulama documents may have a different perspective. (3) contextual relevance, whether the source provides information that is relevant to the theme of the renewal of Islamic education in Aceh, especially about madrasahs in the period in question. At the interpretation stage, researchers interpret data and information that has been criticized to produce a new understanding of the

renewal of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh in the period 1915-1946, for example: (1) researchers interpret how social, political, cultural, and religious conditions in Aceh in the period 1915-1946 influenced the formation and development of madrasahs. This interpretation helps explain why and how the renewal of Islamic educational institutions emerged during that period, (2) Researchers interpret the factors behind the renewal, such as the influence of Dutch colonialism, Islamic reformist movements, or the needs of the Acehnese people for education that is more relevant to the challenges of the times, (3) Interpretation of documents, archives, and other data focuses on the changes that occurred in the madrasah education system. For example, how the curriculum, teaching methods, or institutional structure of madrasahs in Aceh developed during that period, (4) Interpretation also includes the roles of figures, scholars, and institutions involved in the renewal, and how they contributed to the changes that occurred, (5) Researchers analyze the impact of this madrasah renewal on the Acehnese people, both in the fields of education, social, and culture, and how the legacy of the renewal can be felt to this day. The final stage, or historiography stage, is the stage of writing the research results. This stage is carried out by compiling data and information that has been interpreted into a coherent and systematic narrative.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Improving the Quality of Islamic Education

Broad and in-depth mastery of knowledge is essential in improving the quality of graduates and plays a major role in the history of Islamic education renewal. By integrating various disciplines and modern learning methods, Islamic education can produce graduates who are not only superior in religious knowledge but also have relevant skills to face the challenges of the times. Continuous renewal in Islamic education is key to ensuring the relevance and quality of education in a constantly evolving society.

The emergence of madrasahs in Aceh in the 20th century marked a new chapter in the history of education in the region. As a result of efforts to renew Islamic educational institutions, madrasahs played an important role in encouraging the advancement of modern science. These madrasahs were not only centers of religious learning, but also places for students to study various general disciplines such as geography and scouting skills. Thus, madrasahs have contributed significantly to advancing education in Aceh.

Islamic educational institutions have succeeded in producing madrasah graduates who later played important roles as religious and community figures in their hometowns. For example, what Husein & Yacob put forward shows that before 1939, alumni of Madrasah

Sa'adah Abadiyah in Blang Paseh Sigli generally returned to their hometowns to teach or trade. However, after 1939, some of them chose to continue their studies to a higher level at the Normal Islam Institut Bireuen founded by PUSA. In addition, many alumni of the madrasahs at that time became important people or officials. According to Badruzzaman Ismail's research, several graduates of Madrasah Sa'adah Abadiyah have achieved important positions in society. Among them is Amran El Zamzami, who once served as a member of the Indonesian House of Representatives. In addition, there is Teungku Usman Yahya Tiba who continued his studies in Egypt and later became a lecturer at IAIN Ar-Raniry. Not to be missed, Tengku Haji Zaini Bakri who once served as the Regent of Aceh Besar is also an alumni of this madrasah. The success of these alumni shows that Madrasah Sa'adah Abadiyah has succeeded in producing quality leaders for Aceh. In fact, the influence of this madrasa has expanded with the establishment of branches of Jami'atud Diniyah Blang Paseh in various regions of Aceh, making it a source of pride for the Acehnese people at that time.

Thanks to the positive influence of religious education organized by Jam'iyyatuddiniyah, the enthusiasm to establish madrasahs has grown among the people of Aceh, especially in the areas of Pidie, North Aceh, and East Aceh. The modern education system introduced by Jam'iyyatuddiniyah not only advances the management of education, but also encourages the development of a more comprehensive understanding of Islam among the people.

The Sa'adah Abadiyah educational institution in Pidie has succeeded in producing quality graduates who have had a significant influence on the development of Acehnese society. Many of the alumni who have studied at this madrasa have continued their studies to a higher level, such as the Normal Islam Institute of Bireuen. After completing their formal education, they returned to their respective regions of origin and actively contributed in various fields. As educators, they play an important role in transferring knowledge and new values to the younger generation. In addition, they also hold various important positions in government and society, so that they can drive regional progress. In fact, some of them have succeeded in having careers in the military and reaching the rank of officer, expanding their reach of influence. Thus, it can be concluded that alumni of Sa'adah Abadiyah have given a distinctive color to the lives of the Acehnese people.

This is inseparable from their comprehensive mastery of knowledge, both religious and general knowledge, which they obtained while studying at the madrasah. Likewise, in the 1930s, the establishment of the al-Muslim Madrasah in Matang Geuleumpang Dua, according to Daud Remantan, changed the map of education and religion for the people of

North Aceh. Peusangan has also become a center of progress in the region. This madrasah not only produces scholars, but also produces community leaders who bring positive changes to their respective hometowns (Asari, 2020). The success of the al-Muslim Madrasah is supported by visionary leadership and competent teaching staff. In addition, the full support of Teuku Chik H. M. Djohan Alamsyah, the ruler of Peusangan, was an important factor. He, who understood the aspirations of the people very well, provided the protection and facilities needed for the progress of the madrasah.

The renewal of Islamic thought originating from outside Aceh has had a complex impact on the local community. On the one hand, the establishment of religious schools is a positive step that is welcomed. However, on the other hand, new ideologies have also emerged that have shaken established religious beliefs and practices. These reformers have tried to purify religious teachings by eliminating practices that are considered to deviate from the true teachings of Islam. This effort has of course triggered a strong reaction from the community who are accustomed to old traditions. Customs and habits that have been passed down from generation to generation are difficult to change, especially if they involve religious beliefs. Ulama as religious leaders also tend to maintain existing traditions, making it difficult for new ideas to enter. This shows that the Acehnese people highly uphold traditional values and tend to be resistant to change, especially in matters of religion. The issue of khilafiyah in religion often triggers divisions in society. Because they greatly admire certain ulama, many lay people blindly follow the opinions of these ulama. They will firmly reject different views, even from other ulama. Fanatical attitudes like this make it difficult for dialogue and deeper understanding between religious communities to occur.

Improving Access to Islamic Education

One of the positive impacts of the reform of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh in the period 1915-1946 was the increase in the equality of Islamic education. Before the reform, Islamic education in Aceh was still limited and could only be accessed by a handful of people, especially those living in big cities or close to Islamic education centers. However, with the reform, Islamic education began to be expanded and reached by a wider community, including in remote areas.

The reform has encouraged the establishment of new Islamic schools (madrasah) in various regions of Aceh. This allows people from various social and economic backgrounds to access Islamic education. In addition, the reform has also increased women's access to Islamic education. Before the reform, women in Aceh generally did not have the opportunity

to study in Islamic schools. However, with the reform, more women have the opportunity to receive Islamic education.

The reform has also improved the quality of teachers in Islamic schools in Aceh. With the provision of training and education for religious teachers, the quality of teaching has improved, so that students can get a better education (Muthahharah, 2015). This has also encouraged increased interest among the community in enrolling their children in Islamic schools. Overall, the renewal of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh has had a positive impact on increasing the equality of Islamic education. With new schools, wider access for women, and better quality teaching, Islamic education has become more accessible to the Acehnese people.

When the Dutch colonial government introduced a modern education system in Aceh, the uleebalang class was the first group to be given the opportunity to access this education. The children of the uleebalang were given priority to enter Dutch-language schools and continue their studies to a higher level. In contrast, children from ordinary people, even though they were financially able, often faced discrimination and were denied access to these schools. These circumstances and conditions illustrate the very striking inequality of access to education during the Dutch colonial period in Aceh. The education system implemented by the Dutch at that time was very discriminatory and unfair. Only the nobility or uleebalang had full access to modern education, while ordinary people, even though they had financial ability, were still limited. The injustice in the colonial education system encouraged the Acehnese people to take their own initiative by establishing schools or modernizing existing traditional educational institutions.

Thus, the rapid growth of madrasahs during that period had a significant impact on the Acehnese people. Madrasahs were not only centers of religious education, but also a place to strengthen the sense of unity among the Acehnese people. Through madrasahs, Islamic values and Acehnese culture could continue to be preserved amidst colonial efforts to assimilate the Acehnese people. In the context of the history of the Indonesian people's struggle, the establishment of madrasahs in Aceh was part of the resistance against colonialism in the field of education. Madrasahs were not only places to study, but also became a basis for the struggle to maintain the identity and dignity of the nation.

The existence of madrasahs has made a very large contribution in shaping the character of the Acehnese people who are religious, tenacious, and persistent. The emergence of madrasah educational institutions during the colonial period was a response to the injustice in the discriminatory Dutch education system (Kurdi, 2011). Madrasahs were not only an

alternative education for the Acehnese people, but also a stronghold of Acehnese culture and identity. Through madrasahs, Islamic values and Acehnese culture could continue to be preserved amidst colonial efforts to assimilate the Acehnese people. Thus, madrasahs have made a huge contribution in shaping the character of the Acehnese people to be religious, tenacious and persistent, as well as strengthening the spirit of struggle of the Acehnese people in fighting colonialism.

Increasing the Role of Islamic Education in Society

The reform of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh in the period 1915-1946 has had a significant impact on increasing the role of Islamic education in society. One of the most visible impacts is the increase in public awareness of the importance of Islamic education. Before the reform, Islamic education in Aceh was still limited and unsystematic. However, with the reform, people began to realize that Islamic education could help them understand religion better and improve their quality of life.

The reform of Islamic educational institutions has also improved the quality of Islamic education in Aceh. The updated Islamic education curriculum covers various fields of science, such as fiqh, tafsir, hadith, and Islamic history. This allows students to gain broader and deeper knowledge about Islam. In addition, the reform has also improved the quality of teachers, with training and education for religious teachers.

Another impact of the reform of Islamic educational institutions is the increase in the role of ulama in society. Before the reform, ulama often only played a role as spiritual leaders. However, with better Islamic education, ulama became more educated and were able to make greater contributions in various areas of community life, such as education, social, and politics. Ulama also became more active in spreading the message of Islam to the wider community (Masrorah, 2011).

Overall, the renewal of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh in the period 1915-1946 has had a positive impact on increasing the role of Islamic education in society. Better Islamic education has helped people understand religion better, improved their quality of life, and strengthened the role of ulama in society. Thus, it can be concluded that the increasing role of Islamic education in Acehnese society before Indonesian independence not only affected religious education itself, but also had an impact on the quality of human resources as a whole by improving the quality of education, skills development, women's empowerment, reducing the level of analphabetism (illiteracy), and increasing leadership capacity.

The renewal of Islamic educational institutions in Aceh in the period 1915-1946 has made a significant contribution to the development of Aceh. One of the most visible contributions is the increase in quality human resources. Renewed Islamic education has produced a better educated young generation with the skills needed for development. This has driven Aceh's economic growth and improved the quality of life of the community.

In addition, the renewal of Islamic education has also increased public awareness of the importance of development. Renewed Islamic education has emphasized the importance of economic, social, and cultural development. This has encouraged the community to actively participate in the development of their region.

The renewal of Islamic education has been a significant catalyst in the transformation of the role of ulama in the context of development. The emergence of modern Islamic educational institutions has not only produced graduates who have mastered religious knowledge, but also equipped them with general knowledge and skills that are relevant to the challenges of the times. This has given birth to a new generation of ulama who not only master the yellow books, but also have a deep understanding of social, economic, and political dynamics.

Modernist ulama who emerged from these new educational institutions have an increasingly strategic role in development. They no longer merely act as religious leaders, but also as public intellectuals who are actively involved in various social issues. With a strong educational background, they are able to synergize Islamic values with the demands of development. These modernist scholars are often used as references in various public policies, especially those related to education, social, and culture.

The contribution of modernist scholars to development is very diverse. In the field of education, they play an active role in formulating Islamic education curricula that are relevant to the needs of the times, as well as developing innovative teaching methods. In the social field, they are involved in various social community activities, such as community empowerment, disaster management, and promotion of tolerance between religious communities. Meanwhile, in the political field, they act as input providers to the government in formulating policies that support the interests of the community.

Before the renewal of Islamic education, the role of scholars was indeed more focused on the spiritual aspect. They became spiritual leaders who guided the community in carrying out worship and understanding religious teachings. However, along with the development of the times and increasing access to education, the role of scholars has undergone a significant transformation. Scholars are not only spiritual leaders, but also intellectuals who have

extensive knowledge in various fields, including social sciences, economics, and politics.

With a more solid educational background, ulama are able to make a greater contribution to national development. They no longer just deliver sermons from the pulpit, but are also actively involved in various social, economic, and political activities. Ulama become critical thinkers who are able to analyze contemporary issues and offer solutions that are relevant to Islamic values. In addition, ulama also act as a bridge between religion and modernity, showing that Islam is not in conflict with progress and development.

The role of ulama as disseminators of development messages is increasingly important in the context of modern society. They have a strong influence on the community, so they are able to motivate the community to actively participate in development. Ulama can also be agents of change who encourage the community to abandon bad habits and adopt more productive behavior. Thus, ulama not only act as spiritual leaders, but also as social leaders who are able to bring positive change to society.

CONCLUSION

The emergence of madrasahs in Aceh in the early 20th century was a response to various factors, including the socio-political conditions during the Dutch colonial period, the influence of the Islamic renewal movement in the Middle East, and the need for a more modern Islamic education system that was relevant to the demands of the times. Madrasahs in Aceh experienced rapid development, especially in the period 1915-1946. This development was marked by an increase in the number of madrasahs, an expansion of the curriculum that included religious and general knowledge, and an increase in the quality of teaching. In the early 20th century, along with the renewal of Islam, Islamic educational institutions emerged that followed the flow of renewal, namely madrasahs. Madrasahs grew in Aceh, starting from Madrasah Al-Khairiyah Masjid Raya Baiturrahman, Madrasah Saadah Abadiyah in Blang Paseh Sigli, Madrasah Jadam Montasik, Madrasah Al-Muslim Matang Geulumpang Dua, MADNI in Idi and others. The renewal of Islamic education in Aceh cannot be separated from the influence of colonialism and nationalism. On the one hand, the colonial government attempted to control Islamic education through various policies. On the other hand, the nationalist movement encouraged Muslims to develop independent Islamic education that was oriented towards the interests of the nation. Madrasahs had a significant impact on the Acehnese people, including increasing access to education, strengthening religious identity, and encouraging social and intellectual progress. The development of madrasahs in Aceh was not without challenges, especially during the

Japanese occupation and early independence. However, madrasahs were still able to survive and develop into one of the important pillars of Islamic education in Aceh. Meunasah, Rangkang, Dayah and Dayah Teungku Syik (Dayah Manyang). These Islamic educational institutions developed rapidly until the war between the Aceh Sultanate and the Dutch and at that time experienced a drastic decline due to the prolonged war. Madrasahs emerged as educational institutions that bridged the gap between traditional and modern education systems. Madrasahs not only taught religious knowledge, but also general knowledge, so that graduates were expected to have sufficient provisions to face the challenges of the times. Acehnese scholars have a very important role in driving the renewal of Islamic education. They were not only the initiators and founders of madrasahs, but were also active in developing more modern curricula and learning methods. The Acehnese people gave great support to the renewal of Islamic education. This can be seen from their enthusiasm in sending their children to madrasahs and participating in the development of madrasahs. The renewal of Islamic education in Aceh did not always run smoothly. There were several challenges faced, such as resistance from traditional groups, limited resources, and intervention from the colonial government.

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