

## **PERGURUAN THAWALIB PADANG PANJANG IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATIONAL HISTORY 1912 - 1926**

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### **Abstract**

Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang has contributed greatly to the nation. The history of its establishment cannot be separated from *Surau* Jembatan Besi. To uncover this problem the authors conducted research under the title "Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang in the Perspective of Educational History 1912-1926". This research aims at revealing the history of Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang, and its work in education. it is qualitative research through library studies. After conducting research, it was revealed that *Surau* Jembatan Besi, is used to implement the traditional education system, turned into Thawalib Padang Panjang, It implements a modern education system. The modernization of education is motivated by the demands of the people who need a noble, intelligent, critical, skilled generation. The renewal efforts carried out is to encourage the students with critical thinking, independent in opinion and skilled the organization, implementing classical system education, establishing teacher handbooks, and developing curriculum. The main figure in the modernization of education in Thawalib Padang Panjang is Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, a charismatic cleric who has been in touch with modernization movements in the Middle East.

**Keywords:** Thawalib, *Surau*, Modernization, Education, Abdul Karim Amrullah

### **Abstrak**

*Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang telah berkontribusi besar untuk bangsa. Sejarah berdirinya tidak dapat dipisahkan dari Surau Jembatan Besi. Untuk mengungkap masalah ini penulis melakukan penelitian dengan judul "Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang dalam Perspektif Sejarah Pendidikan Tahun 1912-1926". Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap sejarah berdiri Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang, serta kiprahnya dalam pendidikan. Penelitian ini bersifat kualitatif dengan penelitian kepustakaan.*

*Setelah melakukan penelitian, terungkap bahwa Surau Jembatan Besi, yang dulu menerapkan sistem pendidikan tradisional berubah menjadi Thawalib Padang Panjang yang menerapkan sistem pendidikan moderen. Modernisasi pendidikan dilatarbelakangi tuntutan masyarakat yang butuh generasi berakhlak mulia, cerdas, kritis dan terampil. Usaha-usaha pembaharuan yang dilakukan, yaitu mendorong lahirnya siswa berpikiran kritis, merdeka dalam berpendapat serta terampil berorganisasi, menerapkan pendidikan sistem klasikal, menetapkan kitab pegangan guru, dan pengembangan kurikulum. Tokoh utama modernisasi pendidikan di Thawalib Padang Panjang adalah Syekh Abdul Karim Amrullah, ulama kharismatik yang pernah bersentuhan dengan gerakan modernisasi di Timur Tengah.*

*Kata Kunci : Thawalib, Surau, Modernisasi, Pendidikan, Abdul Karim Amrullah*

## INTRODUCTION

*Surau* is a place where various kinds of knowledge are taught such as religious knowledge, martial arts, culture or customs, and also political knowledge and science. At this stage there is no known division of class in learning (classical system). The main purpose of teaching is that students can understand Islam correctly and apply it in everyday life (Azra, 2003: 30). The lessons given in the mosque are not in a well-organized class, instead the teacher alternates with individual students in the midst of the low levels of other children who are repeating their studies (Ramayulis, 2005: 239). Naturally, the progress of student education depends solely on their own will, perseverance and skills in learning.

*Surau* education is an education system that cannot be separated from the life history of the Minangkabau people. Because *surau* education is the first semiformal education, which had begun before the arrival of the Dutch colonial in Minangkabau (Haidar Putra Daulay, 2009: 49). *Surau* is a building that is used as a place of prayer, reciting, a place of deliberation and serves as a place of transferring of knowledge, religious values that are realized in the life of education through recitation given by teachers or scholars using Arabic-Malay letters (Nizar, 2013: 7-9).

Among the *surau* existed in Minangkabau during the Dutch colonial period was *Surau Jembatan Besi* in the city of Padang Panjang. At first the education system in this mosque was halaqah with the main material provided was fiqhi and interpretation of the Qur'an. However at the end, *Surau Jembatan Besi* developed into a madrasa system after the coming of Haji Abdullah Ahmad and Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, popularly called Haji Rasul from Mecca (Ramayulis, 2005: 178-179).

The arrival of Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah has brought significant changes to *Surau Jembatan Besi*. The first target of Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah is the educational curriculum of this institution. In the initial period of his arrival, the focus of the lesson was to master the Arabic language and its branches, while maintaining the fiqh lessons, the science of the Qur'an and its interpretation (Seno, 2010: 27). Stressing in Arabic lessons and their branches is intended to enable students to learn the books themselves so that they can gradually get to know Islam from the two main sources, the Qur'an and the Hadith. Over time, *Surau Jembatan Besi* changed to Sumatra Thawalib Padang Panjang, in which today it is called Perguruan Padang Panjang Thawalib (Daya, 1990: 81). The change of the name coincides with efforts to modernize various matters related to education, such as teaching methods, education systems, and curriculum development that are relevant to the needs of the times and the development of human thought. Learning patterns are carried out in ways that can stimulate students to think creatively and innovatively. They are not only equipped with religious knowledge but also with general knowledge and skills that are useful for their lives in society. According to Nurcholis Majid, as quoted by Mahmud Syafi'i, modernization in Islam as a ratio of analysis which means the process of changing the mindset of the old system that is not 'aqliyah to new aqliyah thought patterns and work procedures (Syafi'i, 2016: 66).

Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah (Haji Rasul) was the main pioneer in reforming the education system at *Surau Jembatan Besi* Padang Panjang until it finally became Sumatra Thawalib. He actively taught at this institution after

returning from Mecca on the pilgrimage and deepening religious knowledge. It seems that he was inspired by the reform ideas carried out by Muhammad Abduh and Jamaluddin al-Afghani in the Middle East. The two figures see that one of the causes of underdeveloped Muslims is very alarming is the loss of intellectual traditions which in essence is freedom of thought (Maskuroh, 2017: 29).

Regarding educational activities in *Surau* Jembatan Besi, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah is of the view that the education system which was initially only focused on the lecture method was considered ineffective. Because the lecturing method is considered not to make student creativity toward more advanced, and unable to provide solutions to every problem faced by students in the learning process. The learning process relying on the lecture method is not ideal for student development because students only receive knowledge from the teacher alone without given enough space to analyze, let alone refute the teacher's opinion. On this basis Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah was motivated to carry out a renewal of the learning system that began by applying more modern methods such as the discussion method. The application of this method is an attempt to demand that students play an active and critical role in the learning process. It is also expected that with this method students are trained to be able to solve problems.

In addition, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah is of the view that there are several aspects of education that need to be improved gradually, such as subject matter, education systems and learning methods. All of which are always oriented towards the educational goals to be achieved. However, the renewal efforts that he did were not all welcomed by the Minangkabau community, even the Muslims in general at that time (Zulmuqim, 2002: 139).

Efforts of Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah to shift the traditional education system to modern education system by using a discussion method consisting of blackboards, desks and benches as Western education had triggered opposition among Muslims at that time. Therefore, it is not surprising that the renewal efforts developed by Sheikh Abdul Karim

Amrullah in Thawalib Padang Panjang received a stumbling block, both from the Dutch colonial government and traditionally minded people. Even in bringing up his renewal ideas, he often gets insults. However, it all does not make his spirit fade in voicing renewal ideas (Nizar, 2008: 90-91).

Based on the above conduct, the writer will explore about Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang in the perspective of educational history. Regarding the understanding of educational history, Ramayulis said that educational history is a record of education relating to the past which is enshrined in written reports and in a broad scope. There is also information about the growth and development of education from various social circles, from time to time, from one country to another, and from various periods (Ramayulis, 2011: 2).

The study in this paper is limited to several things, namely, the history of the founding of Perguruan Padang Panjang Thawalib, the background of educational modernization in Perguruan Padang Panjang Thawalib in 1912-1926, the efforts made in the modernization of education in Perguruan Padang Panjang Thawalib in 1912- 1926, and the curriculum vitae of the pioneers of the modernization of education at Perguruan Padang Panjang Thawalib.

The purpose of this study was to determine the history of the establishment of Perguruan Padang Panjang Thawalib, to find out the background of educational modernization carried out in 1912-1926, to study the forms of education modernization efforts carried out in 1912-1926, to know the life history of the pioneers of educational renewal at the institution, and as a contribution to the advancement of science and human civilization.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

Researcher uses library research (library research), namely research conducted by reading various papers related to the problem being studied (Zed, 2007: 5). The foundation that the author uses as a main source is a book by Daya, 1990, *Gerakan Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam: Kasus Sumatera*

*Thawalib*, Yogyakarta : Tiara Wacana Yogyakarta, book by Djamal, 2002, *Dr. H. Abdul Karim Amrullah Pengaruhnya Dalam Gerakan Pembaharuan Islam di Minangkabau Pada Awal Abad Ke-20*, Jakarta: Perpustakaan Nasional, and a book by Kamal. 2006, *Purifikasi Ajaran Islam Pada Masyarakat Minangkabau Konsep Pembaharuan HAKA Awal Abad ke-20*, Padang: Angkasa Raya. While additional resources is a book by Zulmuqim, 2002, *Pembaharuan Pemikiran Islam di Indonesia Pada Abad XX*, Padang : Baitul Hikmah Press, book by Nizar, 2008, *Memperbincangkan Dinamika Intelektual dan Pemikiran Hamka tentang Islam*. Jakarta: Prenada Media Group, a book by Nata, 2004, *Tokoh-tokoh Pembaharuan Pendidikan Islam di Indonesia*. Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, and a book by Syamsuddin, 2006, *Pembaharuan Islam di Minangkabau Awal Abad XX*, Jakarta Barat : The Minangkabau Foundation. The steps in this research are heuristics, source criticism, synthesis and historiography. Data collection techniques are: a. Editing, namely checking the data about the modernization of the education system in Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang 1912-1926, especially in terms of completeness, clarity of meaning and coherence of meaning between one and the other. b Organizing, which is compiling data about the modernization of the education system in Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang 1912-1926. c Research findings, namely conducting further analysis of the results of the preparation of data using the rules, theories and methods that have been determined so as to obtain conclusions about the modernization of the education system in Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang 1912-1926 which is the answer to the formulated problem. Data analysis was performed using descriptive analysis methods, namely describing and analyzing data with the intention of finding the subject matter and its relationship between parts to obtain a proper and comprehensive understanding of the subject (Suryabrata, 2006: 40).

## **DISCUSSION**

### **History of Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang**

The history of Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang is inseparable from the history of *Surau* Jembatan Besi located in the western part of the city of Padang Panjang because *Surau* Jembatan Besi is the forerunner of Perguruan Thawalib. This *Surau* is called *Surau* Jembatan Besi, or in the local language of *Surau* Jembatan Basi, because it is located near a small river that has a bridge made of iron (Daya, 1990: 81).

The education system in *Surau* Jembatan Besi since its establishment until it was transformed into Perguruan Thawalib, is not different from other *surau* in Minangkabau at that time, namely adopting the traditional system or halaqah system (Nizar, 2005: 101). The Halaqah system is a system of recitation or education in which students sit cross-legged around the teacher who teaches, free classless, held morning to afternoon, afternoon to evening, or even the night after Mahgrib prayer until bedtime. Often the students are divided into groups of children and adolescents. They are constantly looked after by teacher aids, under the coordination of Teacher Tuo who is responsible to student's parents.

According to Burhanuddin Daya, after Abdullah Ahmad returned from Mecca in 1899, he immediately taught at *Surau* Jembatan Besi. This means that this *surau* stood at that time. Abdullah Ahmad is the son of H. Ahmad, a respected cleric and successful trader in Padang Panjang. Abdullah Ahmad used this *surau* to devote his knowledge and thoughts diligently, acted as parents, educating children, both those from the *surau* environment and those who came from outside the area because the name Abdullah Ahmad, who had just returned from performing the pilgrimage, began to smell good at society. The *surau* was then named *Surau* Jembatan Besi, after the wooden bridge connecting the two banks of the small river that flows beside the *surau* was replaced with iron (Daya, 1990: 81).

Abdullah Ahmad carried out education in *Surau* Jembatan Besi following the tradition. He was assisted by the siblings Sheikh Abdul Latif

and Sheikh Daud Rasyidi. In 1909 Abdullah Ahmad was replaced by his friend Daud Rasyidi because he moved to the city of Padang (Lestari, 2018: 2). Sheikh Daud Rasyidi who was entrusted with responsibility then began to develop education and teaching in his way. He did not only teach his students to recite Koran, but also teach them in the community and leads worshipers, especially the people of Padang Panjang who have also been enlivened by trading activities.

In 1906, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah returned from Mecca. At first he settled and taught religion in his own village in Maninjau, his hometown. At that time Daud Rasyidi went to Maninjau, studying with Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah. For almost two years he traveled back and forth between Padang Panjang-Maninjau, teaching and learning. Finally he went to Mecca and the leader of the Iron Bridge *Surau* handed over to his brother Abdul Latif Rasyidi, until the end of his life (Lestari, 2018: 2).

At the same time Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah himself was asked by Abdullah Ahmad to advance the study of *Surau Jembatan Besi*. The duty was received by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah by way of going back and forth from Maninjau to Padang Panjang. Although his busy schedule in Maninjau is quite dense because in addition to teaching the Koran, he has also begun to face the authority of the adat, but Abdullah Ahmad's request is still fulfilled. Not long after the Maninjau-Padang long commute, because Abdullah Ahmad had begun to successfully establish HIS Adabiah in Padang, then Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah was also asked by Abdullah Ahmad to move to Padang. This request was fulfilled by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah. Therefore he moved to Padang, taught and together Abdullah Ahmad took care of Al-Munir magazine (Fauzan, 2011: 41). At the same time, the assignment to go back and forth to Padang Panjang continued. At this time, it was not from Maninjau to Padang Panjang anymore. In terms of carrying out tasks in Padang Panjang, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah together with Abdul Latif Rasyidi tried to increase the intensity, quantity and quality of education in *Surau Jembatan Besi*. When Abdul Latif Rasyidi died, the component of



the Islamic ummah in Padang Panjang agreed to ask Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah to live in Padang Panjang fully and lead *Surau Jembatan Besi*. Upon Abdullah Ahmad's blessing, this community's request was granted so that since 1912, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah settled in Padang Panjang as well as being the leader of *Surau Jembatan Besi*. Under the leadership of Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, *Surau Jembatan Besi* progressed, established *Persatuan Muslimin Indonesia (PERMI)*. Besides that, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah was also an advisor to the organization of *Persatuan Guru-guru Agama Islam (PGAI)* in 1920.

Since being led by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah starting in 1912, *Surau Jembatan Besi* is increasingly crowded with students. They did not only come from West Sumatra but also from Aceh, Tapanuli and even from Malaysia. A few years after that *Surau Jembatan Besi* was transformed into the largest education center in West Sumatra. Even though it has become the largest education center, the education system still applies the halaqah system. While on the other hand, learning material has begun to be developed, students are taught to discuss, think freely, read, gather and organize (Djamal, 2002: 21). After that, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah gradually made various efforts to renew education in this institution.

In 1919 students of *Surau Jembatan Besi* agreed to form an association with the name Muzakaratul Ichwan (Daya, 1990: 81). The main purpose of establishing this association is to hold discussions, practice dialogues and debate and to practice thinking quickly and accurately. It was this Muzakaratul Ichwan Society that eventually turned into Thuwailib. The word thuwailib comes from Arabic, which is a plural form of the word "thaalib" which means student. Thus, the word thuwailib means the association of students (Yunus, 1973: 238). This name was later refined to become Sumatra Thawalib or what we know today as Perguruan Thawalib.

### **Background on the Modernization of the Education System at Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang in 1912-1926**

The modernization of the Education System at Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang carried out by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah began when he became the leader of *Surau* Jembatan Besi in 1912. According to Fauzan, the reform was motivated by several things, namely: a. The low level of santri thinking in achieving learning goals, and b. The existence of a teacher's business in facing the changing demands of the times (Fauzan, 2011: 41). Meanwhile, according to Syamsuddin, the background to the renewal of the education system in Thawalib Padang Panjang is due to community requests in an effort to advance Sumatera Thawalib.

The history of modernization of the Education System at Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang cannot be separated from the history of the life journey of Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah. After Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah returned from Mecca in 1906 AD, many people came to his hometown on Sungai Batang Maninjau to study him from various parts of the Minangkabau. To provide recitation, the *Surau* Muaro Pauh was established in Sungai Batang Maninjau by mutual cooperation. Seeing how influential he was in trying to advance human thought patterns through educational activities, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah was asked by Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad to help advance *Surau* Jembatan Besi Padang Panjang. After a long period of teaching at *Surau* Jembatan Besi, various components of the Padang Panjang Muslim community agreed to ask Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah to settle in Padang Panjang to lead the *Surau* Jembatan Besi which eventually turned into Sumatra Thawalib Padang Panjang (Syamsuddin, 2006: 190). Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, with his authority, changed the educational system at this institution. Muhammad Baidlawi was of the view that the change in the education system carried out by a number of reformers in Indonesia during the colonial period had a truly pragmatic motivation, namely how to compensate for the rapidly developing public education which was merely oriented to meeting the needs of colonialism (Baidlawi, 2016 : 67) .

But the authors see the reform movement carried out by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah is the answer to the needs of the times, where Islam is believed to be a universal religion, that is, religion which contains various demand concepts and guidelines for all aspects of human life, as well as that Islam is always in accordance with the spirit era. Based on the universality of Islamic teachings, the reform movement is intended as an effort to implement Islamic teachings in accordance with the challenges of the development of Muslim life (Muhaimin, 2004: 15). Thus, the movements and thoughts of Islamic education reform become an important part of Islamic tradition throughout the history of its development. The pioneers of modernization, including Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, were present to renovate the beliefs, knowledge, and religious practices of Muslim communities (Musthafa, 2017: 68)

### **Efforts in Modernization the Education System at Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang in 1912-19126**

The personality of Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, who was so strict in his family's education on education, especially Islamic education, was very influential in his efforts to reform. He was really prepared by his father Muhammad Amrullah who had the title Tuanku Kisai, to become an ulama and teacher of the people (Tamrin Kamal, 2006: 43). According to Murni Djamal, the modernization efforts undertaken by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah in Thawalib Padang Panjang aimed at the following matters: a. Giving birth to a thought so that students think freely and are willing and able to organize, b. Organizing learning with classy education (Murni Djamal, 2002: 64. While Ramayulis and Nizar, mentioning the broader efforts undertaken by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah in the modernization in Sumatra Thawalib consists of several parts including: a. Curriculum, b. Learning systems and methods, c. Student Organizations, and d. Teacher handbooks (Ramayulis, 2005: 236 -246).

From some of the opinions above the author underlines that the efforts made by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah in the modernization of the Islamic education system in Thawalib Padang Panjang include: Encouraging the creation of students who think critically and independently in opinion and are interested in organizing, organizing education with the system classical, establishing teacher handbooks, and develop curriculum. To make it clearer the efforts made by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah in modernizing the education system in Thawalib Padang Panjang, it is worth describing one by one, namely as follows:

a. Encourage the creation of students who think critically and independently in opinion and are interested in organizing

In an effort to renew the education system at Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah encouraged the implementation of a learning system that could stimulate students to think freely, discuss, dialogue, debate and involve in organization. The idea to train students in the organization arose when he witnessed the Muhammadiyah organization in Yogyakarta (Kamal, 2006: 124). Therefore he suggested to his students to form an organization. For this reason, it was agreed to form an organization called *Persaiyoan*. The main purpose of this organization is to make it easy for students to get their daily needs at low prices and loose payments. Persaiyoan organization is an organization engaged in the socio-economic field (Djamal, 2002: 64). Later this organization experienced rapid development.

b. Carry out education with a classical system

After Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah returned from his visit to Java in 1917 where he met with famous reformers on the island such as HOS Cokroaminoto, Chair of *Persatuan Sarikat Islam Indonesia (PSII)* and KH Ahmad Dahlan, Chair of Muhammadiyah, a non-political Islamic organization, he began launching new ideas for using classical systems in education. He was impressed with the Muhamadiyah education system in

Java, where his students received lessons from their teachers in the classroom. Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah began to change the traditional lines of his school and emulate the system in Java. Initially he divided students into three levels by introducing a ticket system to distinguish low-level students from the highest. The first level is given a green ticket, the second level is given a yellow ticket and the third level is given a red ticket (Daya, 1995: 113). Then, he carried out the classical system of education by dividing students into 7 classes, according to their age and level of education. In the beginning, the class was only assigned to 3, namely classes 1, 2 and 3. After being implemented, class 1 was divided into four levels namely classes 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D. Class 2 is divided into 2A and 2B. While grade 3 is only one level. In the end, class 1 with four levels was changed to class 1, 2, 3 and 4. Whereas class 2 which had been two levels changed to class 5 and 6. And class 3 which had only one level changed to class 7. In implementing this system he was assisted by a teacher named Zainuddin Labay el-Yunusi (Daya, 1995: 113).

Regarding the application of the classical system in Thawalib Padang Panjang, according to Hamka, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah has a different way of teaching with other teachers. Each lesson is told to read to one of the students present, and told to interpret. After that, they were told to explain which ones were difficult to solve together. It was there that the exchange of thoughts occurred. Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah himself participated in the exchange of thoughts (Hamka, 1999: 120).

#### c. Establish teacher handbooks

In an effort to reform, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah improved the implementation of education in Thawalib Padang Panjang by establishing the books that were used as the basis for developing education (Ramayulis, 2011: 308). This is done so that the education process is more patterned, directed and more systematic. The books used by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah in teaching at Thawalib Padang Panjang, are: *Fiqh al-Wadhih*, *Hidayatu al-*

*Mujtahid, Usul al-Ma'mul, al-Mu'in al-Mubin / al-Hazzab, Mabadi al-'Arabiyah, Mantiq al-Hadith, Balaghah al-Wadhihah / Jawahir al-Balaghah* (Kamal, 2006: 131). During this educational activities in Thawalib Padang Panjang It is focused on the study of religious knowledge by not setting a handbook, but as demands for change, the teacher's handbook needs to be determined in accordance with the disciplines developed.

d. Modernize the curriculum

The education reform effort undertaken by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah at Thawalib Padang Panjang also taught on aspects of the curriculum. During this time education has been focused on fiqh studies and interpretations of the Qur'an. Thawalib needs to be developed by incorporating various disciplines into the object of study (Djamas, 2009: 197)). The science of religion and language included in the educational curriculum reaches twelve subjects and uses a variety of books. The subjects are: *Ilmu Nahwu, Ilmu Sharaf, Ilmu Fiqih, Ilmu Tafsir, Ilmu Tauhid, Ilmu Hadits, Ilmu Mantiq (logika), Ilmu Ma'ani, Ilmu Bayan, Ilmu Badi, Ilmu Ushul Fiqih* (Ramayulis and Nizar, 2005) : 236-237). All of the above subjects become an obligation that must be learned by every student studying at Thawalib Padang Panjang.

The compilation of the educational curriculum by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah was carried out based on grade levels. In addition, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah also used a reference book which he himself wrote and was also written by Zainuddin Labay el-Yunusi, who was a teacher when he was still teaching at *Surau Jembatan Besi*. Thus, even though the educational curriculum is still purely Islamic religious sciences, but the Islamic sciences incorporated into its educational curriculum have evolved, and the books used as references have also been updated (Ramayulis, 2005: 236-237) .

In addition to the reform efforts as mentioned above, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah also has other renewal ideas, including inviting Muslims to

return to al-Qur'an and Hadith, eradicate heresy and *khurafat*, mobilize literacy, conduct broadcasting religion by giving speeches and recitals for the public, and others (Yunus, 1992: 151-152).

By looking at the various efforts made by Syekh Abdul Karim Amrullah, it can be understood that the reforms that he did were not only about transferring the status of *Surau* Jembatan Besi to Perguruan Thawalib, but more than that changing the style of education and changing the paradigm of education. The graduates are not only prepared as people of good character, but also intelligent in solving life problems, nimble and skilled in working and active in organizations.

### **Biography of the Pioneer of the Education System Reform in Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang**

The main figure who did the education system reform in Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang was Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah. He was known by the nickname Inyik De-er (Dr) or Haji Rasul. He was born on 17 Safar 1296 H, to coincide with February 10, 1879 in a small village called Kepala Kebun, *Jorong* Betung Panjang, *Nagari* Sungai Batang Maninjau Tanjung Raya District, Agam Regency, West Sumatra Province (Edwar, 1999: 123). When born named by his parents Muhammad Rasul, then after performing the pilgrimage his name was changed to Abdul Karim and his father's name became Abdul Karim Amrullah. From the lineage of his father and mother, Syekh Abdul Karim Amrullah was a descendant of a great religious or ulama who was respected in Minangkabau at that time. His father was named Sheikh Muhammad Amrullah (title Tuanku Kisai), who came from Pariaman, while his mother was named Siti Tarwasa who came from Muara Pauh *Kenagarian* Sungai Batang Maninjau (Syamsuddin, 2006: 85).

As a cleric, Abdul Karim Amrullah is highly expected by his family to become a cleric, continuing the family tradition in the future. Since childhood, his parents have given an introduction to the basics of Islam. Even at his relatively young age of around 10 years, he had been told to recite by

his parents to the famous scholars at the time, such as Tuanku H. Hud and Tuanku Pakih Samun Sa'id at a *Nagari* in Koto XI Tarusan district Pesisir Selatan (Edwar, 1999: 123). In addition, after the age of 13, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah also studied with Tuanku Muhammad Yusuf in the Sungai Rotan Pariaman. The ideals of his father who wanted Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah to become a cleric like him never subsided.

Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah got an introduction to the basics of religious knowledge from his father and several teachers in Sungai Rotan Pariaman. In 1312 H (1894 AD), he left for Mecca to be escorted by his father to perform the pilgrimage at the same time to learn to deepen religious knowledge for 7 years. In this holy land he learned to deepen his religious knowledge with a teacher whose influence at that time was that of Sheikh Ahmad Khatib Al-Minangkabawiy. In addition, he also studied with several other teachers including Sheikh Thaher Djalaluddin, Sheikh Muhammad Djamil Djambek. These three scholars came from Bukittinggi. Of the many teachers, Sheikh Ahmad Khatib is a teacher who is highly admired and respected. In studying Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, known as an intelligent student, he was never satisfied with the information given by his teachers, so he liked to ask questions (Syamsuddin, 2006: 124). This was also expressed by Hamka: In his study time there were many that caused the hatred of his other friends to him. He likes to ask the teacher and if necessary, he likes to argue. At that time such things were very abstinence. If you ask or refute the teacher, labeled seditious. Sheikh Ahmad Khatib was very fond of him because of his brilliant brain, even though he felt offended by the questions raised by him (Hamka, 1982: 56-57). Furthermore Hamka said that his father told him: "Once father learned with a teacher, where when explaining the lesson the teacher was wrong in conveying because the study was not studied first at home before teaching. The other students only bend (silence), the teacher denied it. Thus, my friends were surprised and looked at him with fiery eyes and the teacher was angry. But father is not afraid. Daddy let the teacher check the textbook again. Incidentally what the father said is true. so



with a rather embarrassed feeling, the teacher confirmed my opinion. " (Hamka, 1982: 56-57).

After Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah studied in Mecca, then in 1319 H / 1901 AD, he returned to his native land. In the village he was welcomed by the people around him happily, not only by the *surau* people but also by the *ninik mamak*. However, the speech was only brief because his soul was hard in opposing heresy and all the *khurafat* that developed at that time. Then he taught in Sungai Batang Maninjau. The approach used by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah in teaching and delivering Islamic teachings is hard, and he criticizes and eliminates all *khurafat*, heresy and witchcraft (Syamsuddin, 2006: 124).

To calm the anxiety of his soul, he was then married to a beautiful girl named Raihanah. He himself called his wife as the *hatik* blooming flower. With this wife he was blessed with a daughter named Fatimah. Not long after his marriage finally in 1322 H / 1904 AD, he was told to return to Mecca by his father to take his younger siblings Abdul Wahab, Muhammad Nur, and Muhammad Yusuf to study there. His wife was also taken and finally his wife died in Mecca. After a long stay in Mecca he tried to teach at Masjidil Haram, but was faced with a great challenge from Muhammad Sa'id Basil, who was a descendant of Mecca. Then after various trials which befell him, in 1324 H / 1906, Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah returned to his hometown for the second time from Mecca to Sungai Batang Maninjau. When he returned from Mecca for the second time, he remarried Safiyah (the younger brother of the late Raihanah), his first wife. From this second wife, Abdul Malik Karim Amrullah was born, or popularly known as Hamka (Edwar, 1999: 124).

People's concern for Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah is clearly seen from his second return from Mecca, many people came to Sungai Batang in Luhak Agam, (Agam Regency) of West Sumatra, to study and study with him from various parts of Minangkabau.

With more and more people studying with him, so he often takes the time to preach at the same time in an effort to develop Islamic teachings to

various regions in the country and even abroad. In addition to Mecca which was carried out twice, and Egypt, in 1916 he also traveled to Malaysia in da'wah. Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah gained a lot of experience in his trips to various regions in Java in 1917 in contact with ulama networks such as Hos Cokrominoto, and K.H. Ahmad Dahlan. Even meeting with K.H. Ahmad Dahlan has a deep impression, especially with the struggle of the Muhammadiyah organization he leads. Thus, Sheikh Abdul Krim Amrullah was determined to bring and broadcast Muhammadiyah in Minangkabau. In 1926 he also traveled to Egypt to attend an Islamic congress, so he returned successfully carrying the title of honors and honors "Doctor Honoris Causa" from Al-Azhar University in Cairo (Kamal, 2005: 39).

Judging from the length of time taken by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah to study, it turns out that most of the study time is spent in Minangkabau. While studying in Minangkabau Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah only received traditional education. The touch of the idea of modernization only came after he studied in Mecca. After returning from Mecca he long served in his hometown, Minangkabau. Although he has forgot traditional education system, but he managed to obtain his identity by getting the title "Doctor Honoris Causa", which was awarded by Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt in 1926. An award like this is something very prestigious in his day. This award is given because he was very brave in expressing his opinion in an effort to purify the teachings and implementation of Islamic worship rather than elements that are not in accordance with the instructions of the al-Qur'an and Sunnah (Syamsuddin, 2006: 124).

For about 40 years, he struggled to develop religion in his native land of Minangkabau, so on January 12, 1941 he was stopped by the Dutch government when he wanted to go preaching to Lubuk Basung-Agam. From Maninjau he was taken to Bukittinggi for an examination and in the same year he was exiled to Sukabumi, West Java. At the end of his life he had preached to several areas in Java. Several times he was attacked by an illness,

but he recovered again and continued his da'wah. On June 2, 1945, when he experienced his latest illness, he died peacefully in Jakarta (Kamal, 2005: 40).

## **CLOSING**

The embryo of Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang originated from a traditional mosque called *Surau* Jembatan Besi located in the western part of Padang Panjang City. This *surau* is called Jembatan Besi because it is located near a small river that has a bridge made of iron. As is common in other Minangkabau *surau*, *Surau* Jembatan Besi functions as a means of learning for the younger generation. In this place they learn the science of religion, martial arts, customs and others. Over time, *Surau* Jembatan Besi eventually turned into Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang, a well-known educational institution in the archipelago that had given birth to many great people.

This status change is inseparable from the various renewal movements undertaken by its managers. The presence of the *surau* is too small to apply their ideas and ideas, and too small to accommodate the many students who arrive. The modernization of education in this institution is motivated by the demands of the people's needs in life. Where society does not only need people of good character, but also people who are intelligent in their thinking and skilled in their work. Among the educational reform efforts undertaken at this institution are changing the education system from halaqah to classical, encouraging students who are critically minded and independent in opinion, establishing teacher handbooks, and developing an education curriculum.

This idea was a smart and brave step for the moment considering the Minangkabau community at that time did not know much about the movements of modernization and instead many were still trapped by traditional culture. Thus Perguruan Thawalib Padang Panjang played a pioneering role in the modernization of Islamic education in Minangkabau, even Indonesia. The idea of modernization education in this institution cannot be separated from the existence of Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah, a charismatic cleric from Sungai Batang Maninjau, Agam Regency. After

studying traditionally in Minangkabau he continued his education to Mecca. There he studied with several famous scholars at the time. The ideas and movement of reforms carried out by Sheikh Abdul Karim Amrullah might motivate the next generation to do better and more for the advancement of the nation's civilization.

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