



How is the Cultural Landscape of the Acehnese Society from the Cosmology side?

Description

The landscape of Aceh has been changed according to the cardinal directions, namely: West Aceh, East Aceh, South Aceh, and North Aceh. Even more so with the presence of Southwest Aceh and Southeast Aceh. The Aceh axis was known as Central Aceh, which was later merged with Bener Meriah.

There is a history and culture of each of these cardinal areas, even in language. Finally, the Acehnese language became the national language in Aceh because of the diversity of languages that exist. If the language is different, it can be ascertained that the culture is also different from one another.

Therefore, one way to start the study of Acehnese is to look at how the language structure and cultural structure influence the Acehnese perspective.

As for the cultural landscape of the Acehnese, there are three models, namely “hill – rice field – sea,” “hill – rice field – village,” “forest – rice field – village.” in the first model, it was found in many areas of Banda Aceh, Aceh Pidie, North Aceh, and East Aceh.

Here the people start from areas close to “outside cultures,” so they are effortless to make cultural contact with outsiders. According to some opinions, social and religious social activities are also elementary, so the emerging culture is also the coastal culture, which is known to be very cosmopolis.

Several Acehnese kingdoms emerged from this “hill – rice field – sea” structure. To connect with the second cultural landscape, “hill – rice field – village” is done through the “golden triangle” relationship, namely “market-school-place of worship (mosque or *meunasah*), which is where the river (*krueng*) is very dominant for social-religious contacts and socio-economic activities.

The role of *krueng* is very strategic, especially in connecting the interests of the “hill – rice field – village” community, especially in selling agricultural, plantation, and livestock products, to the “hill – rice field – sea” community.

Apart from that, another important interest is in the world of education, where young Acehese often study *din al-Islam* outside their villages, which is found in the “hills-rice-sea-sea.” Therefore, in Aceh, almost the entire “golden triangle” area is located at a crossroads with rivers.

Thus, the meeting of the two community groups was carried out in the “golden triangle” area. The first group is *ureung baroh* (people from the north), while the second group is *ureung tunong* (people from the South). North is seen as a trading area and a place to study, while the South is considered an area of agricultural and plantation production. People from the North depend on their livelihood from the sea, rice fields, and hills.

In Aceh, this area is called the Kuta area or the city. So that in Aceh there are place names such as Kuta Raja, Kuta Melaka, Dakuta, and Kuta Alam. As the peak of the Kuta group it is known as Dar or Nanggroe. The name of the village is often used with the terms Cot (hill) and Blang (rice field). For example, Keude Blang (Kedai Sawah), Kuta Blang (City of Sawah) in Aceh Jeumpa Regency, Cot Buket in Aceh Jeumpa Regency, Cot Seurani in North Aceh Regency, Cot Tufah, and so on

. There is also the name of the village, which is the border between “hills-rice fields-sea” and “hills-rice-villages” named Ule Gle (Head of Mountains). This area is not only found in Pidie Jaya Regency but also Aceh Jeumpa.

The area close to the sea is Krueng, so villages such as Krueng Mane, Keude Krueng, Meunasah Krueng, and Krueng Simpo or village naming begins with the word river in Tamiang Regency such as the Yu River and Paoh River. The name of this area indicates that the community gathers not far from the coastal area.

Meanwhile, the village area is often named for the second area with the terms gle, bouquet, cot, and lhok. The word gle (mountain/hill) can be found in village names such as Gle Madat (Gunung Madat) or Gle Kuprai in Aceh Jeumpa Regency. Like the name of the village in Aceh, namely Cot Anoe, Cot Tufah, and Cot Seurani.

The word anoe can also be found in North Aceh, namely Tanoh Anoe. The word anoe itself is similar to the word abe, like the name of a village in Aceh Besar, namely Tanoh Abe (dusty land).

The third group, “forest – rice field – village,” rarely goes to the *tunong* area, let alone *baroh*. They live in their environment and only enjoy the *tunong* community’s goods that are brought

home on market days.

Their lives depend on agricultural and plantation products. They often sell to people *tunong* through the services of agents, on market days. This third community replaces their life from forests and rice fields/gardens/livestock.

The phenomenon of this third society has gradually disappeared, along with changes in the current modernization that occurred in Acehnese society. As for the village, small business places called *keude* or banks emerged. Here they supply the needs of *keude* or bank owners, known as the *amilan* concept.

They take whatever daily needs, then pay at harvest or after selling agricultural products on weekends. The concept built here is mutual trust. If someone is sick because they are far from the Kuta area or the second area, they often use the services of a *dukon* (shamans) or *Euleume*.

The third pattern of life seems in some areas, except in areas already with transmigrants from outside Aceh. When the process of transmigration from outside Aceh took place, the structure of this third axis cultural landscape was disrupted.

However, because Aceh is a “regional,” then, like it or not, they have to survive. Therefore, it is not surprising that this group of transmigrants was expelled from Aceh during the conflict.

Not only that, in the first society, there have also been quite significant changes. This project describes one of the critical instruments in the life of the Acehnese people, namely the existence of sea customs and *Panglima La’ot*.

The three patterns above are intentionally attached to the term *terrestrial*: the sea, rice fields, hills, forests, and villages. This is because traditional Acehnese social relations pattern occurs in these places.

In the sea then appeared all the regulations relating to how to go to sea and how they live on land. In the fields, there are also various game rules for cultivating crops and customs, thus giving birth to the term *Kejrueng Blang*.

Meanwhile, in the hills and forest areas, some customs govern how to manage the forest, which later has *Panglima Uteun* (Forest Commander). The village is the most minor unique in an Acehnese society where there are *mukim*, *geuchik*, *tuha peut*, and *tuha lapan* in it.

In contrast, the largest unit of the community is known as the Kuta (city), where Banda Aceh is usually known as the capital of the Kingdom of Aceh Darussalam and is now the capital of the province Aceh.

However, each region in Aceh has its own rules of the game. Therefore, the sultan of Aceh made a regulation known as the Qanun Syara' Aceh and Adat Meukuta Alam. In this context, almost all the kingdoms that have ever existed in Aceh's history, except the Lingge Kingdom, are on the lips of the sea.

Therefore, the sea factor greatly determines the cultural conditions of the Acehnese people. Almost all district capitals in Aceh, except for those in the Central Aceh region and its surroundings, are located by the sea. Tamiang Regency is close to the Tamiang River and not far from the seaside.

East Aceh District and Langsa City are close to Kuala Langsa and also by the sea. North Aceh Regency and Lhokseumawe City can be at sea because two bridges only connect them.

The capital city of Bireuen is not far from the shoreline of the Melaka Strait. The capital city of Aceh Jaya, namely Meureudu, is also by the sea. The capital city of Aceh Pidie is only a few meters from the shoreline of the Melaka Strait.

Meanwhile, the capital city of Aceh province, Banda Aceh, is at the tip of Sumatra Island opposite Sabang. From Aceh Jaya to South Aceh, almost all district capitals are located on the shores of the Indian Ocean.

Therefore, the factors of Aceh and the sea cannot be separated, which is why starting to understand Aceh must start from the marine cultural landscape. After the sea, in the tradition of the Acehnese people, rice fields and settlements are made.

The rice fields are made by starting from the hill's edge to approach the sea area. Because of that, expanses of rice fields and settlements always adorn the road around the beach. Settlements were made near rivers which later created "small towns" at several river mouths.

After that, small settlements were created in the hilly area, which continued to the forest area but was not far from the river. According to history, the people of Aceh more often use river services to carry out their daily activities rather than roads still full of shrubs and wild animals.

Of course, our pattern of understanding Aceh is closely related to geographical factors up to this point. Because of that, the concept of mastery of people's lives is associated with the village's name. The pattern of worldly domination is recognized by the *geuchik*, who is in charge of running the wheels of government.

In spiritual mastery, it is controlled by the ulama from the center of education, namely the dayah. As explained in the first chapter of this book, ulama play an essential role in people's lives. They are not called by their real names but by the level of mastery and authority of belief as to the father.

However, the Acehnese prefer to use Arabic terms, namely Abu, Abon, and Waled. As for the highest level using the term Tengku Chik. The nicknames Abu, Waled, and Abon, are attached to the village or area. The concept of power here is more related to the charisma and level of knowledge and level of knowledge possessed by the ulama.

So, each region has its father, such as Abu Panton, Abu Amplah, Abon Seulimum, Abu Krueng Kale, Abu Wayla, etc. At the same time, the title of Tengku Chik is often used for great scholars such as Tengku Chik di Tiro (the oldest cleric living in Tiro), one of Aceh's heroes. Or, like the titles Teungku Chik in Awe Geutah and Teungku Chik in Tanoh Abe.

These titles cannot be inherited because they are only given once in the cleric's life, so the people of Aceh can only replace their geuchik but cannot find a replacement for Tengku Chik or Abu when they have died.

There is a belief among traditional people that the aura of this ulama is still "alive" even though have died. The graves of these clerics are often visited as a form of pilgrimage.

Therefore, not a few think that the land of Aceh is the land of the aulia (plural of guardians) which shows the cosmological concept of the Acehnese people, who traditionally still believe in the hidden powers in life of their beliefs rooted in the knowledge of the saints.

It is not surprising that in the "golden triangle" tradition (markets, mosques, and dayah / diniyah schools), the ulama factor plays a significant role.

Thus, to understand the issue of Acehnology, the cosmological issues of the Acehnese can be used as a starting point for an understanding of the traditional philosophy of Acehnese life.