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Minahasa:
A Land Gazed at by Early European Explorers*

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[*Abstract*]

The present study explores and examines the socio-cultural landscape of Minahasa, North Sulawesi during a period of transition and significant transformation, as depicted by early European explorers, particularly following the advent of the Dutch Missionary Society (NZG; *Nederlandsche Zendeling Genootschap*) in the 1820s. Despite the paucity of primary sources from this period, the study examines the descriptions of three notable European explorers: Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913), Francis Henry Hill Guillemard (1852-1933), and Nicolaas Graafland (1827-1898). In fact, hitherto, Minahasa, North Sulawesi has received limited scholarly attention, in particular concerning the profound transformations that impacted from the 1820s onward. This study attempts to revisit early European explorers' accounts as an alternative form of ethnographic data to reimagine the intricate socio-cultural fabric of Minahasan society during this transformative historical period. Such an attempt is intended to offer an invaluable ethnographic case study that contributes to Indonesian and Southeast Asian Studies,

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especially in examining the interaction between global and local communities shaped by colonialization since the 17th century. While furnishing a broad overview of the socio-cultural landscape of Minahasa, this study primarily focuses on the second half of the 19th century, whence the accounts of the three European explorers were written and subsequently published. Furthermore, the study situates these descriptions within the broader framework of early European exploration, offering insights into the global phenomenon of European expeditions as well as the individual backgrounds of the three explorers respectively.

Keywords: History, European Explorers, Southeast Asia, Minahasa, North Sulawesi, Indonesia

Ⅰ. Introduction

The present study explores and examines the socio-cultural landscape of Minahasa, North Sulawesi during a period of transition and significant transformation, as depicted by early European explorers, particularly following the advent in the 1820s of the Dutch Missionary Society (NZG; *Nederlandsche Zendeling Genootschap*). Despite the paucity of primary sources from this period, the study examines the descriptions of three notable European explorers: Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913), Francis Henry Hill Guillemard (1852-1933), and Nicolaas Graafland (1827-1898). In fact, hitherto Minahasa has received limited scholarly attention, in particular concerning the profound transformations that impacted from the 1820s onward. This study attempts to revisit early European explorers' accounts as an alternative form of ethnographic data to reimagine the intricate socio-cultural fabric of Minahasan society during this transformative historical period. Such an attempt is intended to offer an invaluable ethnographic case study that contributes to Indonesian and Southeast Asian Studies, especially in examining the interaction between global and local communities

that has been shaped by colonialization since the 17th century. While furnishing a broad overview of the socio-cultural landscape of Minahasa, this study primarily focuses on the second half of the 19th century whence the accounts of the three European explorers were written and subsequently published. Furthermore, the study situates these descriptions within the broader framework of early European explorations, offering insights into the global phenomenon of European expeditions as well as the individual backgrounds of the three explorers respectively.

The term "Minahasa" ethno-linguistically indicates the north-eastern portion of the long peninsula of North Sulawesi (Map 1). At the same time, it is widely accepted as an ethnic umbrella nomenclature and perceived as a unified social category notwithstanding spatially the territory is divided into seven administrative units (Map 2). Distinguished from other Indonesian areas in which Islam is dominant, the major socio-cultural marker of Minahasa is Christianity (Henley 1996; Schouten 1998; Jacobsen 2002).

<Map 1> Minahasa, North Sulawesi

Source: Wikipedia (2024)

<Map 2> Administrative division of Minahasa

Source: Minahasa Net (2024)

There is a traditional lyrical song "O Ina Ni Keke" that one can easily hear while walking down the streets of Minahasa.

O ina ni keke mangewi sako? [Oh girl, where are you going?]
Mangewa ki Wenang tumeles Baleko! [I'm going to Wenang[1] to buy *Baleko*[2]!]
Weane weane weane toyo! [Give me, give me, give me some!]
Daimo siapa ko tare makiwe! [Nothing left, but you now ask for it!]
(Revised from Kim 2003: 1)

It has been revived and given a new lease on life by Minahasan singers that even non-Minahasans know of it, at least its title. This song could be interpreted in various ways. Javanese composer R. C. Hardjosubroto (1905-1986) composed the song, circa between 1950s and 1970s, and as is interpreted below, is a children's song featuring a conversation between a mother and child

[1] Wenang is the old name for the coastal city of Manado, currently the provincial capital of North Sulawesi.
[2] Fruit-stuffed biscuit

(see Daniel Sema 2017; Abdul Hadi 2022).

> Oh mother, where are you going?
> I'm on the way to Wenang to buy Baleko!
> Give me, give me, give me some!
> It's all gone, and now you (daughter or son) ask for it!
> (Revised from Kim 2003: 1 and Daniel Sema 2017: 1)

On the other hand, most Minahasans proudly claimed that this song is based on a Minahasan lyrical rendition that has been passed through oral tradition long before the Dutch colonial period. Also, this song could be interpreted as a dialogue between a maiden and a young man.[3]

> One day, a girl named *Keke* went to Wenang. On the way, she ran into a young guy named *Tole*. He asked her where she was going, and she said she was heading to Wenang to buy some *Baleko*. Maybe that was her real reason for going, or maybe she just wanted something fun and lively (*ramei*) instead of spending time at the boring farm. It could have been her way of "escaping" (*lari akang*) or "tricking" (*tipu akang*) the guy. […] On her way back, she passed by *Tole* again, and he asked her for some of the biscuits. She told him she had none left. Maybe she really didn't have any because she'd given them all away earlier. But if she really went to Wenang to buy *Baleko*, it doesn't add up. It's possible she lied because she was worried she'd have nothing left or because she didn't want him to know she went to Wenang just to wander around and window shop [*cuma pasiar*]. (Revised from Kim 2003: 1)

When one hears the interpretation of the Minahasan song, some complicated questions of the socio-cultural landscape in Minahasa may arise. What if the girl was a real person in Minahasa? How was she allowed to go to Wenang on her own? Or, in other words, what on earth made her so brave and daring as to travel to Wenang without permission? Was it to avoid housekeeping chores at home or work on the farm? Or had she actually received permission

[3] Personal communication from local informant.

to go? Did she decide on her own to make the trip? What was her intention to buy Baleko? Was it for herself, her family, or to sell? And how did she end up giving away all the biscuits? Could she be lying about what happened? What exactly had she been doing in Wenang? And, finally, what consequences awaited her upon her return home? Whatever the answers or responses, as ethnographic data, the song is at least a riddle or even a socio-cultural puzzle of Minahasan society. This song provides us with a window into the ambiguous socio-cultural accounts of Minahasa in the context of Minahasan cultural values and expectations. Had they encountered this song during their journey to Minahasa, the three European explorers might have pondered similar questions. In particular, they might have envisioned the exotic socio-cultural landscape of Minahasa through the narrative of the imagined Minahasan girl (*Keke*), which invites comparisons to the socio-cultural context of Europe, East Asia and other regions.

Considering all of the foregoing, this study aims to explore another alternative form of ethnographic data: the observations of Minahasa as documented by three early European explorers. Through this examination, the present study revisits and reimagines the socio-cultural landscapes of Minahasan society during a period of significant transition. This study consists of four sections. Following the "Introduction," a brief historical sketch of Minahasa from the time of the first European arrivals is presented as a background setting. Following it is an examination of the broader context of European explorations, and from there, an explication of the work of three early European explorers. The concluding section reflects on the socio-cultural landscape of Minahasa as observed and documented by the three explorers.

Ⅱ. Minahsa: Encounter with the West

The ancestors of the Minahasan people belong to the Austronesian ethno-linguistic group. Scholars such as Bellwood (1995) propose that migrants from continental East Asia, arriving via the Philippines, settled the Minahasan region during the second millennium BCE. In subsequent generations, these populations spread out over the central highlands (Watuseke 1968:13; Schouten 1998: 12-13). Linguistically, the Minahasan people are classified within the Austronesian language family and also closely related to the populations of the Philippines, especially those of the Sulu Archipelago (Tryon 1995: 25; Makaliwe 1981: 247; Jones 1977: 4-5; Kennedy 1935: 636).

People in Minahasa maintain a nostalgic attachment to their imagined ancestral homeland through a creation myth known as "To'ar dan Lumimu'ut," which I will introduce in Section IV. The myth serves to establish a shared origin for the Minahasans. According to the Minahasan myth, the original ancestor was *Lumimu'ut*. She later married *To'ar* who was identified in the myth as her own son. The couple is said to have settled in the region referred to as Minahasa. Various sources concur that the descendants of the ancestors were originally divided into four sub-ethnic groups, each migrating in four different directions: Tombulu [north-western], Tonsea [north-eastern], Tontemboan [south-western] and Tondano [south-eastern] (Taulu 1978:33-48; Makaliwe 1981:246; Graafland [1869] 1987: 91). Over time, the arrival of non-Minahasan groups [Bantik, Ponosakan, and Bentenan (Ratahan)] in the region, combined with internal development, is believed to have led to the division of Tontemboan, ultimately resulting in the emergence of eight territorial groupings [Tombulu, Tonsea, Tontemboan, Tondano, Tonsawang, Ponosakan, Bantik, Ratahan].

Prior to contact with the West, the Minahasans were subsistence swidden cultivators who planted banana, taro, rice, and cassava. Minahasan society was divided into endogamous and self-sufficient political and ritual units, known as *walak*, which were organized based on common descent. Portuguese traders were the first Europeans to visit the Minahasan area in the 1520s. Four decades later, in 1563, Portuguese Jesuit missionaries, such as Father Peter Diego de Magelhaens, initiated contact with Minahasan society, introducing them to Christianity (Godée Molsbergen 1928: 9; Henley 1996: 23). However, such early contacts with Europeans had little impact on Minahasan society. Meanwhile, the Sultanate of Ternate also had a modest impact on Minahasa although its influence was notable through trade or occasional military actions. Southern Mindanao's influence was more peripheral and limited to occasional contacts. Minahasa's mountainous geographic conditions, the internal cohesion power of *walak*s, and early alliance with the West such as Dutch helped it maintain relative autonomy from both Islamic sultanates and other regional powers (Wigboldus 1987; Henley 1993; Henley 1996).

The Spanish arrived in the 16th century whence they introduced crops such as tomatoes, chili peppers and maize, as well as horses. Several Spanish Catholic priests arrived in Minahasa in the early 17th century, like. Father Blas Palomino in 1619. Father Palomino's tenure, however, was short-lived, as he was reportedly killed by the Minahasans in 1622. In 1639, Catholic priest Father Juan Jvanzo and his assistant, Francisco de Alkala, settled in Tomohon for about five years (Kojongian 1989: 75). However, tensions escalated in 1644 when a Spanish soldier injured the head of a Tomohon *walak*. This incident ignited a war between the Spanish military and the Tombulu ethnic group, which included the Tomohon, Sarongsong, and Kakaskasen *walak*s. According to local historian Watuseke (1968: 20-21), a Tombulu force of approximately

10,000 attacked the Spanish, resulting in 19 deaths and 22 captures of Spanish soldiers. The conflict severely damaged Spanish-Minahasan relations, leading to a decline in Spanish influence and paving the way for Dutch dominance in Minahasa in the 1650s. The bloody war also delayed the adoption of Christianity in Minahasan society until the NZG began its work in the 1820s. The NZG was reputedly the first fully Dutch Protestant missionary society established by Johannes Theodorus van der Kemp in 1797 in Rotterdam. Van der Kemp and pastors from the Dutch Reformed Church intended that members were trained to carry out not only missions domestically but also abroad in foreign lands, notably in the Netherlands East Indies and Qing China.

The Dutch made their initial contact with Manado in 1608. Subsequently, the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC; *Vereenigte Oost-Indische Compagnie*) replaced Spanish influence from the 1650s onward. The Dutch established their first settlement in Minahasa in 1653, followed by the construction of Fort Amsterdam in Manado two decades later (Wigboldus 1987: 69). Shortly thereafter, they began influencing Minahasan society. In 1679, a treaty was concluded between Dutch Governor Robertus Padtbrugge and Minahasan chiefs (Godée Molsbergen 1928: 53-59). The Minahasan people cultivated a longstanding special relationship with the Dutch, engaging in enthusiastic trade with the VOC to such an extent that Minahasa was dubbed *Twapro* (Twaalfde Provincie) or Twelfth Province of the Netherlands (Cribb and Brown 1995: 6). Following the bankruptcy of the VOC in 1799, the Dutch colonial government implemented the *Cultuurstelsel* (1830-1870), a coercive cultivation system that compelled Minahasans to dedicate one-fifth of their land to the production of export crops, such as coffee. These crops were then forcibly delivered to the Netherlands Trading Company at unfavorable prices (Penders 1977: 7).

Meanwhile, the introduction of Christianity laid the foundation

for the dramatic transformation of Minahasan society. The arrival of the NZG in Manado in the 1820s marked the beginning of a significant Christianization process that dramatically transformed Minahasan society. Protestant missionaries Johann Friedrich Riedel (1798-1860) and Johann Gottlieb Schwarz (1800-1859), both affiliated with the NZG, settled in the highlands of Minahasa, specifically Tondano and Langoan, in 1830 (Buchholt 1994: 14). In 1837, Joan Adam Mattern (1807-1842) and his wife, Johanna Jacoba Oudshoff arrived and stayed in Manado to undertake missionary work. A year later, the Matterns were reassigned to the Tomohon area (Kojongian 1989: 69). The Matterns baptized 16 young people. Mattern passed away in 1841. When Nicolaas Philip Wilken (1813-1878) came to the Tomohon area, there were only eight Christians. He served as a minister in the Tomohonese region, encompassing the Tomohon, Sarongsong, and Kakaskasen *walak*s. A significant breakthrough occurred in 1842 when Waworuntu II, the head of Sarongsong *walak*, was baptized, followed by Mangangantung II (Ngantung-Palar), the head of Tomohon *walak*, in 1843.

The conversion of the Tomohonese region accelerated after the baptism of the *walak* heads. By 1847, 959 of the 15,000 people had embraced Christianity (BPWGT 1989: 18-19; Kojongian 1989: 69). However, the Kakaskasen *walak* was slower to adopt the faith, with only five people from Tinoor (a village in Kakaskasen *walak*) baptized by Wilken in 1860 (Sondakh 1998: 6). Despite this, by 1869, the Tomohonese region had 20 congregations with 8,584 Christian members. In response to this expansion of Christianity, Wilken also prioritized education in the Tomohonese region. By 1847, there were 11 *Sekolah Zendeling* (primary-level Mission Schools) with around 500 students (BPWGT 1989: 19). To further develop local leadership, Wilken established KIL (*Kweekschool voor Inlandsche Leeraars*) in Tomohon in 1868. This school later evolved into STOVIL Tomohon (*School tot Opleiding voor Inlandsche Leeraars*) in 1886 and

eventually became UKIT (*Universitas Kristen Indonesia Tomohon*) in 1965 (BPWGT 1989: 20). Meanwhile, in 1881, the Dutch missionary Jan Louwerier (1840–1933) founded the *Meisjeschool* in Tomohon, a pioneering institution offering both boarding and day-school education for young teenage girls. As the first institution to provide extended education for Indonesian girls, it commenced operations with an initial enrollment of 17 boarders and 10 external pupils (Kim 2016: 11).

In 1880, the GHB (*Gereja Hindia Belanda*; Dutch Colonial Church) or *Indische Kerk* (Dutch East Indies Church) succeeded the NZG missions owing to the latter facing financial problems in the course of managing the rapid expansion of Christianity in Minahasa. Instead of financial assistance, the colonial government assigned the missions in Minahasa to the GHB, with the exception of KIL in Tomohon and some NZG schools (Kojongian 1986: 71). It was then that Wilken had a successor, J. Louwerier (1840-1909) who ministered as a mission coordinator in Minahasa (*Hulpprediker*), and the head of STOVIL (*Opleider*) until his passing in 1909. The Dutch Colonial Church concentrated its efforts on the Tomohon area, subsequently transforming it into the center of Christian missions in Minahasa (Lundström-Burghoorn 1981: 12). It was a justifiable move not only because the Tomohonese region was near Manado; it was also in a location geographically important for future missions. In 1934, the Minahasan Protestants established an autonomous Christian organization within the framework of the GHB. This organization subsequently evolved into the established people's church known as the GMIM (*Gereja Masehi Indjil Minahasa*; Minahasan Evangelical Church) (Lünnemann 1994: 30).

The Dutch missions played a crucial role in the significant progress of Christianization in Minahasa. In fact, a complex interplay of several factors such as systematic institutionalization of mission work and strategic engagement in local cultures and

tradition contributed to their success. However, the most significant factor was the fact that the Dutch missions operated closely with the support of the Dutch colonial administration which viewed Christianization as a "civilizing" mission that complimented colonial governance. The Minahasan people's acceptance of Christianity was shaped by this close collaboration between the Dutch missions and the Dutch colonial administration. In this context, the increasing number of Minahasan people adopted Christianity as part of a broader response to colonial modernity, opportunities for modern education, and the transformation of local society.

Ⅲ. Early European Explorers

Presenting a broader context of European exploration of the world enables the contextualization of descriptions of Minahasa by the three European explorers, thereby offering insights into the global phenomenon of European expeditions at the local level.

Explorations in discovering new territories for sustenance could be as old as mankind in seeking new lands for food and settlement. Pioneering world travelers who traversed from the West to the East, and *vice versa* across the continents (landward) or crisscrossed the seas and oceans (maritime) who had clear historical records include the Chinese Buddhist monk and translator Faxian (Fa Hsien; 337-422 CE), Venetian merchant, explorer and writer Marco Polo (1254-1324), Maghrebi (Moroccan) traveler, explorer and scholar Ibn Battuta (1304-c.1369) as renowned examples [see Faxian (Fa-Hsien) 2023; Polo 1958, 2008; Ibn Battuta 2023]. Turning to European explorers *per se*, Marco Polo, precisely his father and uncle Niccolò and Maffeo Polo, jewel merchants who preceded him, traveled from Venice, the greater part, overland along the famed Silk Road to Cathay (China) then under the Mongol Yuan dynasty (1271–1368).[4]

[4] *The Travels of Marco Polo* is presumably the manuscript from about 1,350, arguably

What particularly motivated Europeans from Europe in the west to begin to venture to the east was a desire to seek out for themselves the gastronomic spices of the "Spice Islands" of the Moluccas (Maluku) in present-day Eastern Indonesia, and the fabulous silk of China. Primarily for these two invaluable trade products, hitherto brought from the east to the Italian trading cities of Venice and Genoa, history witnessed the launching of the Age of Discovery (or Exploration), a century-long era from the mid-fifteenth century to the mid-sixteenth CE that literally transformed the world and geographical knowledge, of human travel and communication, and contributed in ushering in the modern contemporary world (Goldin and Kutarna 2016; Pyne 2021;).[5] This tumultuous century produced positive as well as negative impacts, the former mainly in generating navigation and mapping information and skills, the latter, the wholesale decimation of entire indigenous peoples, and generations of colonized populace, who even in post-independence times remained impoverished and backward. While Europeans benefited in accruing enormous wealth from trade and commerce in the "discovered" lands, non-Europeans, the indigenes, suffered enslavement and colonization that had grave impact that remained apparent in contemporary parts of Africa, South America, and Asia. As observed as bellows:

> The arrival of Europeans [in non-European lands] led to dramatic cultural exchanges, often resulting in conflict. The spread of diseases like smallpox decimated indigenous communities, leading to a sharp population decline. [….] the darker side of exploration, where the pursuit of new lands and riches often came at a great human cost.

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one of the oldest extant copies of *Les Voyages de Marco Polo*, the account by Marco Polo of his travels and adventures through Central Asia and China during the late thirteenth century. See The Library of Congress (n.d.). Other contemporary copies and versions include Polo (1958), Polo (2008), Polo and Rustichello of Pisa (2022). On Marco Polo, for instance, see Towle (2021) and Kinoshita (2024).

[5] Nonetheless, other voyages continued thereafter, famously the expeditions of English seaman James Cook (1728-1779) to Australasia in the late eighteenth century (see MacDonald and MacDonald 2024).

> The economic repercussions of the Age of Exploration are … [brought forth] the establishment of trade routes ... The mercantilist policies of European nations and the colonization of new territories fostered the globalization of trade. These economic shifts not only reshaped global markets but also laid the groundwork for the modern economic system, illustrating the enduring legacy of this transformative period (Snee 2024: blurb).

Two concurrent developments led to the onset of the Age of Discovery. From the mid-fourteenth to the early fifteenth century, the large land mass of Eurasia stretching from Vienna to Samarkand then under the Mongols were on the decline, increasingly breaking up as their military supremacy waned for want of capable leaders, military reverses, and the immense logistics of maintaining a vast territory mainly by force (Rossabi 2012). As the Pax Mongolica that had maintained stability, upheld order and peace during the greater part of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries gradually crumbled, consequently implied that the overland Silk Route traversing Europe and China reverted to treacherous routes with marauding raiders harassing every caravan. Meanwhile, the Ottoman Turks beginning from the fourteenth century had carved an empire comprising the greater part of southeast Europe and eastward across West Asia, and westward encompassing North Africa (Baer 2021). Hence, the Ottomans and the Venetians between them controlled the Mediterranean and the traditional sea routes from the east, notably the Red Sea and Persian Gulf literally excluding Western Europeans from partaking in the eastern trade (spices, silk) except as consumers enduring the vicissitudes of the market and the high prices (Crowley 2012).

The Portuguese initiated the Age of Discovery when Dom Henrique of Portugal, Duke of Viseu better known as Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), impressed on his seamen to go beyond the ancient trade routes. Spurred by the Three Gs (God, Gold,

Glory), early Portuguese explorers such as Dinís Dias (Sénégal), Alvise Ca' da Mosto (Gambia and the Cape Verde Islands), and Diogo Cão (Congo River) successfully colonized the Madeira Islands and the Azores, and the African coast to Sierra Leone (see Crowley 2015; Pyne 2021). Portuguese monarch King John II (r. 1481-1495) was convinced that the sea route to India was along the African coasts. The sea route round the southern tip of Africa was finally achieved by Bartolomeu Dias, who in 1487 navigated around the Cape of Storms. It was reckoned then that the seaway northeastwards appeared to be the viable route towards India.

Meanwhile, the Italian Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) sailing under the Spanish flag attempted a westward sea passage to reach India (Bergreen 2011). Instead, in 1492 he reached the islands of San Salvador (present-day Bahamas) and Hispaniola (today's Haiti and Dominican Republic). It was the West Indies, not India, that Columbus discovered. Then in 1497, Portuguese Vasco da Gama (d. 1524) reached Calicut, on the west coast of India having rounded the Cape of Storms, later renamed Cape of Good Hope. Another Portuguese Pedro Álvarez Cabral (1467-1520) with a fleet in 1,500 sailed southwestward in the attempt to reach Calicut; instead, Brazil was discovered. Fortified *feitorias* (factories, trading outposts) were established at strategic locations along the western coast of Africa, entrances to the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. Malacca (1511) on the Strait of Malacca, and Macao (1557) on the southwest China coast were strategically located *feitoria*s. Malacca, not only oversaw the strait but also commanded the sea passage to China, and equally important, from Malacca the Portuguese could access the famed "Spice Islands," the Moluccas, and also Java en route. Macao was the first gateway into the Chinese mainland. Shortly, the Portuguese ventured to Japan with a factory at Nagasaki from 1571 (Boxer 1986). As historian A. J. R. Russell-Wood explains insightfully,

> Of greater import than celebration or commemoration is examination

> of the aftermath and ramifications of landfall, or "discoveries." So intense was the human and emotional dimension of initial contacts or encounters between peoples of different nations, races, and religions that it is easy to forget that these were contextualized to a degree probably not fully appreciated by the participants. [….] Regardless of differing levels of expectations, aspirations, reluctance, or rejection, such contacts between Europeans and non-Europeans inexorably heralded a new transcontinental, transoceanic, and transnational age of globalization which was to be characterized by interdependence, interaction, and exchange (Russell-Wood 1998: xiv).

Within a century, the fabulous richness of the East, of spices and silk, were accessible to Europeans, and marked the decline of the Italian command of the Eastern trade. The close of the sixteenth century witnessed the flourishing seaborne empire of Portugal marked by *feitoria*s from Lisbon to Nagasaki that commanded the Maritime Silk Route. From the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Protestant nations of the Netherlands and England, and later Catholic France reaped enormous benefits initially from trade and commerce, and subsequently wealth from colonies and empires.

Ⅳ. Early European Explorers in Minahasa

Building on the broader context of early European exploration, the discussion narrows to three European explorers who visited Minahasa following the commencement of work by the NZG in the 1820s: Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913), Francis Henry Hill Guillemard (1852-1933) and Nicolaas Graafland (1827-1898). The background of these explorers are examined, and thereafter, their socio-cultural observations of Minahasa.

4.1 Alfred Russel Wallace (1823-1913)

Alfred Russel Wallace was a British naturalist and pioneer in biogeography. He was born on January 8, 1823 in Usk, Monmouthshire, Wales. Although better known as a naturalist, he

was also a humanist, geographer, and social critic. The Wallace Line, an imaginary dividing line running from the east of Java and northwards along Borneo demarcating fauna species eastwards of Australasian region, and westwards of Asian area, is owed to and named after him.

Wallace's formal education was a mere six-year stint at the one-room Hertford Grammar School due to his family's poverty. Although born into a family of the Church of England, as a fourteen-year-old apprentice carpenter living with his brother John, and being exposed to secular teachings at a mechanic's institute in London, the so-called "Hall of Science" off Tottenham Court Road, his socialization with tradesmen and laborers made him less than a devout Anglican. Like his working-class social circles, self-education seemed to be the best avenue in improving himself and in acquiring knowledge. Wallace read natural history and political economy, two fields that drew his intellectual interest.

Then in 1848, together with a like-minded companion, Henry Walter Bates, who had introduced him to entomology, he went to Brazil as self-employed specimen collector. From this initial sojourn in the Amazon River basin, Wallace spent four years embarking on traveling, collecting, mapping, drawing, and writing, besides learning the language and studying the indigenous peoples he encountered. His inquisitive inquiry revolved around the question of the origin of the fauna and the flora he came across. Two scholarly volumes were produced, *Palm Trees of the Amazon and Their Uses* (Wallace 1853a) and *A Narrative of Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro* (Wallace 1853b). Both publications were acknowledged for their scholarly input, and moved the Royal Geographical Society to support Wallace on his next research sojourn, namely the Malay Archipelago (present-day Malaysia and Indonesia).

Traversing the more than 3,000 islands of the Malay Archipelago as a naturalist at large, Wallace made a breakthrough

observation of the diverse varieties of animal life during fieldwork (1854-1862). Drawing from this thought, he begun further inquiries.

> The problem then was not only how and why do species change, but how and why do they change into new and well-defined species, distinguished from each other in so many ways; why and how they become so exactly adapted to distinct modes of life; and why do all the intermediate grades die out (as geology shows they have died out) and leave only clearly defined and well-marked species, genera, and higher groups of animals? (Wallace's autobiography quoted in Hirschman n.d.)

Then in dramatic fashion, while almost in a delirious state having recovered from a feverish ailment, it dawned on him a lightbulb-type of fresh thought.

> One day in 1858, while feverish and confined to his hut on the island of Ternate—now in Indonesia—Wallace had a realisation. He came to understand how species evolved—*they changed because the fittest individuals survived and reproduced, passing their advantageous characteristics on to their offspring* (McNish n.d., emphasis added).

In 1858, Wallace shared his thought with Charles Darwin (1809-1882), who had spent the last two decades pondering along the same line of inquiry. Darwin discussed with his colleagues, Charles Lyell (1797-1875), a geologist, and Joseph Dalton Hooker (1817-1911), a botanist. Amply encouraged, Darwin and Wallace presented their ideas to the Linnean Society, and jointly published a path-breaking study, "On the Tendency of Species to form Varieties; and on the Perpetuation of Varieties and Species by natural Means of Selection" (August 1858) in the *Journal of the Proceedings of the Linnean Society* (reproduced in Beccaloni n.d.). Wallace's section is termed the "Ternate Essay," as he was still in the Malay Archipelago. Interestingly, as the published study revealed, "All of the components of the theory [of evolution] were stated by both men [Wallace and Darwin], though the wording is

different," as one would undoubtedly expect emerging from different pens (Beccaloni n.d.). Then on November 24, 1859, Darwin's ground-breaking treatise, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, or *the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859) was published in which the theory of evolution by natural selection was introduced into the scientific and public discourse.

Wallace returned to England in 1862 as an established naturalist and geographer boasting a collection of more than 125,000 animal specimens (Camerini 2024). Furthermore, he published in two volumes a travelogue, *The Malay Archipelago: The Land of the Orang-Utan, and the Bird of Paradise* (1869), and rather belatedly, *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection* (1870). Later, he produced two other significant publications, *The Geographical Distribution of Animals* (1876), which came in two volumes, and *Island Life* (1880); both became standard text in zoogeography and island biogeography.

During his fieldwork, Wallace visited Minahasa, a region undergoing cultural transformation following the commencement of work by the NZG from the 1820s. In *The Malay Archipelago* (Wallace 1869), he provides a socio-cultural description of Minahasa, illustrating how European culture had influenced Minahasan society by 1859.

> It [the house of the major, the head of the Tomohon *walak*] was furnished in European style, with handsome chandelier lamps, and the chairs and tables all well made by native workmen. […] The Major's father, who was chief before him, wore, […], a strip of bark as his sole costume, and lived in a rude hut raised on lofty poles, and abundantly decorated with human heads. […] the chiefs all take a pride in adopting European customs, and being able to receive their visitors in a handsome manner (Wallace 1869: 188).

Wallace apparently visited Tomohon *walak* and met the Major

(head) of Tomohon *walak*, Mangangantung II (Ngantung-Palar) in 1859 who was living in European style. According to Wallace's description, the Minahanas actively accommodated European cultures and underwent fundamental changes. At the same time, Mangangantung II's father (Wurimbene) steadfastly held to Minahasan traditions and customary life-styles (Kim 2003: 79; Kim 2015b: 235). Another insightful observation from Wallace was of Rurukan (a remote mountainous Minahasa village) in June 1859.

> Just opposite my abode in Rurukan was the school-house [...]. School was held every morning for about three hours, and twice a week in the evening there was catechising and preaching. There was also a service on Sunday morning [...]. They always wound up with singing, and it was very pleasing to hear many of our old-psalm-tunes in these remote mountains, sung with Malay words. Singing is one of the real blessings which Missionaries introduce among savage nations [...]. (Wallace 1869: 194).

It seemed that remote Rurukan had already adopted Christianity, making Christian activities a part of everyday life in the village. Given the two revealing descriptions by Wallace, it was not until the head of Tomohon *walak*, Mangangantung II, was baptized by Wilken in 1843 that the Minahasans actively accommodated Christianity and European cultures, and in turn underwent fundamental societal changes.

By 1859, the number of Christians in the Minahasan area was gradually increasing, marking a critical turning point in the colonial encounter between European missionaries and local communities. In response to this religious expansion, the NZG initiated its efforts to entrench Christian values through a Christianized education system, exemplified by the establishment of *Sekolah Zendeling* (primary-level Mission Schools). Such missionary efforts reflected an Orientalist framing of Minahasans as noble pagans in need of "civilizing" refinement according to European middle-class norms

(Kim 2016: 10-12). However, local responses were not merely passive; through mimicry, Minahasans selectively adapted European customs and practices, negotiating their position as subalterns within the transforming matrix during the colonial period. As I will describe the phenomenon of re-localization in Minahasa in details in section 4.3, this process generated cultural hybridity, blending indigenous and European elements, and placed Minahasan society in a state of liminality, suspended between traditional identities and colonial ideas. Rather than simple assimilation, these encounters produced complex, dynamic reconfigurations of Minahasan cultural and socio-cultural life (see Said 1978; Spivak 1988; Bhabha 1994).

4.2. Francis Henry Hill Guillemard (1852-1933)

Described as an intrepid traveller, writer, and naturalist, Francis Henry Hill Guillemard was a younger contemporary of Wallace. Guillemard gained scholarly recognition in the field of zoology, and even co-authored with Wallace on a work relating to the fauna of the Malay Archipelago and Australasia (see Wallace and Guillemard 1893-1894), and of Malaysia and the Pacific Archipelagos (see Guillemard and Wallace 1894).

Guillemard was born on September 12, 1852 at Eltham, Kent, England. His poor constitution disqualified him for Rugby; he was home-schooled by a private tutor. He later enrolled in a cram school (tutoring center) in Richmond, and subsequently, Gonville and Caius College, University of Cambridge. Even as a teenager, he exhibited attention to natural history, writing a piece on pigeons for *Boy's Weekly* (1866). His undergraduate years saw his interest in ornithology developed with field trips to Orkney, and afar to the Balkans, Lapland, and southern parts of Africa.

Following graduation with a BA in 1874, he served at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London. Thereafter, he decided on medical studies, graduating in 1881 with a thesis on schistosomiasis,

(bilharzia). His travels in Africa could have sparked his interest in schistosomiasis, a parasitic worm infection prevalent in freshwater bodies of subtropical and tropical regions. Fresh with a medical degree, he served in the First Boer War (1880-1881). Upon his return, he published a 61-page treatise (1882) on the endemic haematuria of hot climates caused by the presence of bilharzia haematobia with 68 illustrations. He recollected his paper's antecedent: "This study was written as a thesis for an Act for the degree of Doctor of Medicine in the University of Cambridge, and was read at Cambridge in June 1881" (Guillemard 1882: iii).

Being a medical doctor was not to be his calling. Instead, a career as a naturalist seemed more consistent with his childhood interests in natural history and ornithology. Thereby, when an opportunity offered itself, he immediately seized it, becoming a member of a two-year (1882-1884) zoological expedition on a 420-ton schooner yacht *Marchesa*,

> [….] traversing Kamschatka, visiting New Guinea and most of the chief islands of the Malay Archipelago, and passing by the east coast of Formosa in 1882 with landings near Hualien, Keelung and Tamsui. While on Formosa, he took an overland trip between Keelung and Tamsui (Stephenson n.d.).

Besides amassing a sizeable trove of zoological specimens, Guillemard wrote of his adventure (Guillemard 1886). In his Preface, he expressed his purpose of simply "confining myself entirely to an account of the less-known lands and islands in which our time was chiefly spent" (Guillemard 1886 I: vii-viii). Zoological studies proved his forte and preoccupation, and carried his interests to Cyprus where he initiated the Cyprus Exploration Fund in 1887, becoming one of the pioneer explorers of the island's natural history. Then in 1892, he accompanied Sir Charles Euan-Smith (1842-1910) on an official visit to the court of Morocco at Fez (see Bonsal 1893). In the 1890s, he published three books, viz. *The life of Ferdinand Magellan,*

and the first circumnavigation of the globe, 1480-1521 (1890), *Malaysia and the Pacific Archipelagoes* (1894), and *Australasia* (1893-1894). His last book-length publication, *Wanderings in the Great Forests of Borneo; Travels and Researches of a Naturalist in Sarawak* (1904) was a co-authored volume.

About a decade after Wallace visited Minahasa, Guillemard undertook extensive naturalistic explorations that subsequently fed into his *The Cruise of the Marchesa to Kamschatka, and New Guinea* (Guillemard 1886). Therein features a brief but significant description of a Minahasan region, Tomohon whence he wrote of his observations of a living room.

> The sitting-room was furnished just as a Swedish post-house might be with white painted walls and floor, white muslin curtains, a duplex lamp, two sofas, a circular table with books, a portrait of the King of the Netherlands, and a large six-tune musical-box (Guillemard 1886: 170).

Guillemard's observations reveal a greater depth of European cultural influence in Minahasan society than those of Wallace almost three decades prior. Guillemard was hosted probably by the son of the head of the Tomohon *walak*, Rondonuwu (Roland Ngantung) in the late 1870s. His admiration for European culture exceeded of his father, Mangangantung II, as demonstrated by the portrait of the Dutch monarch proudly displayed in his residence. At the time when Guillemard visited Tomohon, Christianization was steadily increasing. It seemed that a rise in European influence was accompanied by an increase in conversion to Christianity (Kim 2003: 79; Kim 2015b: 235).

By 1869, the number of Christians in the Tomohon area had significantly increased, with 20 congregations and 8,584 members (compared to 959 in 1847), signaling profound shifts in the cultural and religious landscape. In response to this growth, European

missionaries, including Nicolaas Philip Wilken, made substantial efforts to develop the Christianized education system in the region, as evidenced by the establishment of Mission Schools such as KIL (*Kweekschool voor Inlandsche Leeraars*) in 1868 and STOVIL Tomohon (*School tot Opleiding voor Inlandsche Leeraars*) in 1886. Jan Louwerier also established *Meisjeschool*, the pioneering Mission School providing extended education for Indonesian girls in Tomohon. These Mission Schools became central sites where European values, religious teachings, and educational ideas were systematically introduced. Meanwhile, the Minahasans actively accommodated Christianity and European cultures in their lives, and the local society underwent deeper fundamental changes.

However, the process was not one of unilateral cultural replacement. Rather, Minahasan society engaged in a complex negotiation between preserving indigenous traditions and adopting new European-Christian norms. As Guillemard observed in Minahasa, by the late 1870s, many Minahasans assimilated Christianized practices and European cultures into their daily lives. Nevertheless, as I will describe the phenomenon of re-localization in Minahasa in details in section 4.3, indigenous value system and practices continued to persist, often in adapted or syncretic forms. Thus, what emerged was not merely the erosion of indigenous culture and traditions, but a dynamic coexistence, where cultural assimilation and indigenous resilience coalesced. Christianity and European customs became integrated into the Minahasan socio-cultural fabric, yet often reframed according to indigenous value system and worldview, generating a uniquely Minahasan form of modernity that bridged indigenous and colonial contexts (see Henley 1996).

4.3. Nicolaas Graafland (1827-1898)

Evangelist, school official, and writer Dutchman Nicolass Graafland

was well-known as a missionary in Minahasa. Born on March 2, 1827, prior to ordination in 1849 by the Netherlands Army, he worked as a schoolteacher in Rotterdam.

Graafland's missionary work begun in 1849 when the NZG sent him to the Netherlands East Indies. In 1850, his initial year in Minahasa, Graafland established a KIL at his base in Sonder, predating Wilken who opened one in Tomohon in 1868. His past experience as a school teacher helped him to conduct pedagogical training for native teachers, but more importantly, imbued in them the missionary zeal to nurture their young chargers as converts to become good Christians. From Sonder, his teachers were sent across Northern Sulawesi. Later, in 1886 KIL moved to Tomohon. Four years later, Graafland himself was assigned to Tanawangko; later in 1878, Tanawangko came under the *Protestantsche Kerk in Nederlandsch-Indie* (Protestant Church in the Dutch East Indies).[6] For some three decades, Graafland carried out missionary activities and established himself as a diligent and driven evangelist among Minahasans.

The Netherlands Indies government decided to engage Graafland in uplifting native education in Ambon in the Moluccas (Maluku). Meanwhile, he was assigned to Tondano, the capital of the Minahasa region. Between 1883 and 1895, Graafland served at the inspectorate of native education overseeing. Drawing from his experiences at KIL, he assisted the teaching staff in improving their pedagogical skills in the classroom that in turn benefited the schoolchildren. "The spread of education in the Minahassa in second half of the 19th century," as was observed, "was largely the result of dedication and hard work of Graafland" (Ahmat B. Adam

[6] *Protestantsche Kerk in Nederlandsch-Indie* was established in 1817; better known as *Indische Kerk* (Dutch East Indies Church). It was a compromise union of several denominations, viz. Reformed, Lutheran, Baptists, Armenian and Mennonite (see Aritonang and Steenbrink 2008).

1984: 63). In the late 1880s, Graafland extended his missionary activities to Central Sulawesi with initial work in Gorontalo and Poso (Noort 2006: 29). He not only urged the NZG to send missionaries but also requested the *Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap* (Dutch Bible Society) to have an individual in Poso readily conversant in the local language to conduct proselytizing activities.

Finally, at the age of sixty-eight, Graafland retired. He decided on Depok, south of the capital-city of Batavia to devote efforts in encouraging popular education among native peoples. He wrote school textbooks, and constructed maps of Minahasa. He maintained ties with Minahasa, sustained through penning books, and as editor of *Tjehaja Siang* [The Light of Day], a monthly Minahasan newspaper with an inaugural issue in 1868. The contents in simple Malay combined educational materials with religious messages, viz. essays on Christianity, proverbs, also practical subjects such as "about the harvesting of coffee and regarding how to extract sago from the sago palm and articles concerning hygiene" (Ahmat B. Adam 1984: 64-65). In fact, *Tjehaja Siang* "was widely subscribed to by the intellectual elite, but also reportedly filtered out into the wider community through translation and public readings" (Schouten 1998: 113).

As a member of the NZG, Graafland carried out missionary work in Minahasa contemporaneous with Wallace. Drawing on his experiences, Graafland provided extensive documentation of Minahasa following its adoption of Christianity. He published *De Minahasa: Haar verleden en haar tegenwoordige toestand* [Minahassa: Its Past and Its Present State] (Graafland 1867-1869) in 1869, a work that offers detailed records of Minahasa's traditions and culture during that era.

In *De Minahasa*, Graafland observed and documented two significant socio-cultural practices. The first is a phenomenon of socio-cultural re-localization in relation to the origin myth of

Minahasa, *To'ar dan Lumimu'ut*. Based on the origin myth of *To'ar dan Lumimu'ut*, the Minahasans proudly trace their lineage to this divine couple, *To'ar* and *Lumimu'ut*, whom they believe to be their common ancestors. The concept of re-localization elucidates a dynamic process of reconstructing or reconstituting locality, which involves the reinvention of local cultural patterns and the creation of novel forms of local attachment. Consequently, it necessitates a reinterpretation of the local-global theme (Hobsbawm 1983; Kahn 1993; Long 1996; Kim 2022). Through the Minahasan origin myth, Graafland observed this phenomenon of re-localization in Minahasa in the late 19th century. In fact, the detailed narratives of the origin myths varies from narrator to narrator, as they have been passed down orally and subject to recursive processes of alteration across time (Supit 1986:18-19; Siwu 1997:15). Furthermore, the precise origins and subsequent modifications of these myths remain obscure. In *De Minahasa*, Graafland introduced a broadly common plot of the origin myth as follows:

> In the ancient realm near the majestic Wulur Mahatus mountain, a woman of mystery, *Lumimu'ut*, lived together with *Karema*, a revered *walian* (religious leader). With *Karema*'s fervent prayers, *Lumimu'ut* was blessed with a son, conceived by the gentle caress of the western wind. This child, named *To'ar*, grew into a striking young man. As *To'ar* matured, *Karema*, with her wisdom, sensed the time for love and partnership. She bid *Lumimu'ut* and *To'ar* farewell, entrusting them with identical staffs and a solemn decree: they were to wander the world until they found their destined mate, one whose staff did not match their own in length. Thus, *Lumimu'ut* and *To'ar* embarked on their separate quests. Years turned into seasons as they traversed distant lands. After many years and journeys, *To'ar*, in his wanderings, encountered a woman of ethereal beauty. Unbeknownst to him, this woman was none other than his own mother, *Lumimu'ut*, whose timeless beauty defied the passage of years. Drawn to her grace and spirit, *To'ar* sought her hand in marriage. Before sealing their union, he remembered *Karema*'s sacred wish. He placed his staff beside hers, only to discover that his, worn by countless miles, had shortened. So there was nothing to prevent their

> marriage. United in matrimony, *Lumimu'ut* and *To'ar* lived a life of harmony and bliss. They were blessed with several children, who would later become the ancestors of the Minahasan people (Graafland [1869] 1987: 89-91).

Besides *To'ar dan Lumimu'ut*, Graafland documented another version of the creation myths, a Christianized version which was constructed or modified during the colonial period under the influence of Christian teachings. When Graafland visited the Minahasan areas (probably, Kakaskasen *walak*) in 1859, the head of the *walak* presented him with a creation myth that suggests the presence of Christian influences on Minahasan cultural patterns and traditions. Remarkably, this individual, head of the *walak* had yet to embrace Christianity.

> In the beginning, there existed only *Empung Wailan Wangko* (God the Rich), the Divine One, and a solitary coconut tree named Mahawatu. This majestic tree stood on a small, isolated island. One day, the Divine One cleaved the Mahawatu in two. From the Mahawatu emerged a man whom the god named *Wangi*. *Wangi* was alone, a solitary soul adrift in a vast, empty world. Yearning for companionship, *Wangi* approached the Divine One and inquired, "Why am I alone upon the earth?" Moved by *Wangi*'s plea, the Divine One instructed him to shape two figures from the fertile earth. With careful hands, *Wangi* molded the clay, bringing forth a man and a woman. Though these beings could walk and move, they were silent, their minds a blank slate. To infuse them with life and language, the Divine One had *Wangi* breathe the essence of *gambier* (yellowish catechu used in betel chewing) into their ears and skulls. With this divine breath, the man and woman could hear and speak. The Divine One then bestowed the names *Adam* upon the man and *Ewa* upon the woman. (Graafland [1869] 1987: 86-87).

The exact origins and development of this story remained shrouded in mystery. However, it might resonate with Christianized Minahasans and presumably Christian missionaries alike. It offered a new socio-cultural identity, positioning the Minahasan people as descendants of *Adam* and *Eve* (*Ewa*) from the Hebrew Scriptures.

Interestingly, the head of the *walak*, who had not yet embraced Christianity, proudly shared this narrative with Graafland suggesting that such modified versions were already popular even among the non-Christianized population. Significantly, this Christianized version stands in contrast to the origin myth of *To'ar dan Lumimu'ut* which portrays a matriarchal society. In the Christianized version, a more Europeanized, patriarchal image of gender emerges. Similar to the male figures "God" and "Adam" are in the Hebrew Scriptures, *Empung Wailan Wangko* (the Minahasan god; God the Rich) and *Wangi* (the miraculous creation) are also male figures. Conversely, *Karema* (the goddess) and *Lumimu'ut* (the first human being) are both female figures in the *To'ar dan Lumimu'ut* myth (Kim 2003: 111-112; Kim 2015b: 239-240).

A more insidious "patriarchal" influence in Minahasa came through the introduction of female education primarily focused on passing domestic skills and household tasks to Minahasan women (Kim 2016: 10); not only in Minahasa *per se* but across the Netherlands East Indies (Andaya 2006; Zinoman 2014: 47). Christian missions in Minahasa promoted European middle-class notions of gender roles, reinforcing a patriarchal structure (MacMillan 1981: 9; Simonton 1998: 87-88; Kim 2016: 8-12; Kim 2017: 4). Through the teachings of Christian missions, the European middle class-based notion of womanhood was disseminated throughout the Minahasan regions. In this context, a significant shift occurred in Minahasa, with a greater emphasis placed on patriarchal societal structures. Additionally, Graafland detected a yawning gap between the preoccupations of the Christian mission and the socio-cultural landscape of ordinary Minahasan women in community life. He recorded Minahasan women telling riddles in a Minahasan village in 1859.

> When someone begins to recite riddles, the audience quickly falls silent in rapt attention. A bunch of women, observing from upstairs,

> silently pay attention. Intrigued by the riddles, some women descend to the ground floor to participate or simply listen. Some riddles are not respectful, amoral, or risqué. Notably, women are never outwitted by men when they present riddles of their own (Graafland [1869]1987: 144).

His observation reveals an interesting paradox, namely that the public image of Minahasan women contradicted the patriarchal ideas of womanhood promoted by the Christian mission. Although it was never traditionally entirely egalitarian in Minahasa, the indigenous notions of gender emphasized complementarity rather than hierarchy between men and women, aligning with Minahasan cultural values, ideas and expectations (Ratu Langi 1913: 243; Kim 2015a; Kim 2017: 5).

Ⅴ. Conclusion

On reflection, the Age of Discovery presented several discerning characteristics of the generations of European explorers, from Portugal's Prince Henry the Navigator who from his arm-chair initiated the early exploratory voyages (1419) to England's Captain James Cook who chartered Australia's eastern coastline (1770). The Age of Discovery was borne of developments from within as well as from without Europe, drawing upon a combination of necessity, creativity and resourcefulness, institutional support, and inquisitiveness, and interests of the unbeknown. Consequent of the Age of Discovery, the early 16th century witnessed the intrusions and interactions of Portuguese and Spanish traders, thereafter followed by 360 years of Dutch colonial rule which paved the way for substantial cultural European influence on Minahasan society. In particular from the onset of work by the NZG in Minahasa from the 1820s, the majority of the inhabitants embraced Christianity which in turn led to fundamental changes in their indigenous socio-cultural milieu.

Following the baptism of Mangangantung II (Ngantung-Palar), the head of the Tomohon *walak* by Nicolaas Philip Wilken in 1843, Christianity spread rapidly across Minahasa. Traditional indigenous beliefs and customs which were regarded as pagan elements were proscribed by both Christian missionaries and the Dutch colonial government. For instance, *fosso*, the Minahasan sacrificial ritual ceremony was banned because it incorporated pagan elements such as the dance of *maengket* that symbolized the worship of *opo* (the indigenous deity), headhunting practices, and shamanistic rituals performed by indigenous shamans known as *tona'as* or *walian* (Schouten 1988:117). Besides Christian missionaries blamed *fosso* for facilitating the Minahasa elite to exploit the labor and resources of the lower classes for extravagant ceremonies. For these reasons Christian missionaries requested from the Dutch colonial government to ban *fosso* (Kiem 1994:53). Meanwhile, as mentioned in section 4.3, the indigenous culture of Minahasa hitherto based on matrilineal or bilateral worldviews began to adopt and adapt to patriarchal perspectives under European influence.

In this dynamic historical context of the mid- to late 19th century, three European explorers, Wallace, Guillemard, and Graafland, visited the Minahasan regions, and each left ethnographic records that provide us with a glimpse into the ambiguous socio-cultural accounts of Minahasa in the Christianized and colonial contexts. As mentioned previously, by 1859, the growing number of Christians in Minahasa prompted the NZG to expand Christianized education through institutions such as *Sekolah Zendeling*. These Mission Schools were not merely sites of religious instruction but instruments of Orientalist discourse, framing Minahasans as noble pagans in need of 'civilizing' refinement according to European middle-class norms. At the same time, rather than passively assimilating, many Minahasans engaged in mimicry, selectively adopting European customs, languages, and Christianized

practices, not simply to imitate but to reinterpret and negotiate their own agency within the transforming matrix during the colonial period. As I described the phenomenon of re-localization in Minahasa in details in section 4.3, this mimicry produced a form of hybridity, wherein indigenous and European cultural elements merged, creating a new, ambivalent identity that was neither wholly traditional nor entirely Western.

Moreover, the experience of Christianization and education placed the Minahasans in a state of liminality between the colonial binary of "civilized" and "primitive," Within this in-between liminality, traditional belief systems, socio-cultural structures, and socio-cultural norms were rearticulated in ways that both resisted and accommodated colonial contexts. While European missionaries envisioned a thorough transformation of Minahasan society, the outcome was less about cultural replacement and more about the production of a hybrid cultural formation. Thus, the encounter between European and Minahasan cultures during this period should be seen not merely as a one-way process of Europeanization but as a dynamic negotiation. In this manner, Minahasa was a decolonial space where notions of identity, belief system, and gender were continuously contested and reimagined.

In contrast to other parts of Indonesia where Islamic culture is predominant, more than 90 percent of Minahasans today are Christians, the majority belonged to the GMIM. Drawing from the observations of the three European explorers, neither could a case be made Minahasa's indigenous culture has been entirely Europeanized and/or Christianized, or that the culture passively disappeared resulting from European or Christian influences. Instead, as Graafland attested, the Minahasans actively embraced European and Christian influences according to their socio-cultural context, reinterpreted these external influences, and constructed a "re-localized" culture rooted in their native culture and traditions.

Through this process of reinterpretation and re-localization over time, specific cultural elements of Minahasa contributed to the formation of new cultural forms, whilst other elements gradually weakened and subsequently receded. Examples inter alia pagan elements like the worship of *opo*, headhunting, and shamanistic rituals diminished under the influence of Christian worldviews. On the other hand, Minahasa people attempted to comprehend the Christian concept of God utilizing indigenous frameworks, for instance, they tried to equate *opo* with the Christian God, or perceive *opo* as "the creator of the earth and the heavens (*Sinimema' tana so langit*)." In this manner, Minahasans incorporated indigenous elements into Christian rituals. In present-day Minahasa, visitors observe Christian ceremonies known as *Ibadat Inkulturasi* (religious services of enculturation) which integrated indigenous elements. An illustrative practice is *maengket*, once used to worship *opo* has been transformed into a performative art to worship the Christian God. Similarly, Christian clergy have been associated with indigenous shamans (*walian*), exemplifying the 're-localized' culture and traditions of Minahasan society (Also see Kim 2003:81-87; Kim 2015b: 241-245).

As observed by Graafland in the Kakaskasen region in 1859, the Minahasans incorporated Christian values and worldview into their indigenous creation myths, thereby creating a new version of Christianized origin myth. This reinterpretation of Christianity, based on Minahasan indigenous culture and traditions, led to the construction of a "re-localized" Christian cultural pattern. In this way, the Minahasans living in the socio-cultural contexts of the present, continue to reinterpret diverse cultural elements to construct new forms of indigenous culture and traditions. The evolving reconstitution of Minahasan indigenous culture depends on how the indigenous people perceive and embrace the on-going socio-cultural contexts, shaping its future forms. This could suggest

another potential avenue for future ethnographic research, offering insight to further explore and expand upon the early European explorers' accounts as an alternative form of ethnographic data.

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