

# Tracing the Footsteps of "Minahasa Unity": Movements of Struggle and Supporting Factors for Changes in National Insight

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to examine the supporting factors that caused the regional organization "Persatuan Minahasa" to change its outlook to an Indonesian national outlook during the national movement. This research uses the historical method according to Marc Bloch. There are four stages conducted in this research: problem formulation and historical observation of sources related to the Minahasa regional organization, historical criticism or data testing of the historical sources found, generalization of data in accordance with the problem under study, and search (analysis) of cause-and-effect related to the problem under study. The results of this study show how the national movement brought about a change in focus and scope, away from a regional perspective and towards the foundation of independence and popular sovereignty. Both inside and outside the Manado (Minahasa) region, Minahasan people commemorated the era by organizing their fellow citizens through regional groups throughout the Indonesian national movement. Through the ideas of Sam Ratulangi, the Union of Minahasa initiated the expansion of the Minahasan people's national outlook. In the early 20th century, both the military and intellectuals influenced the change in

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orientation of tribal insight to Indonesian national insight. This research shows that a deeper understanding of the transition of the Minahasan people's outlook from tribalism to nationhood is not only relevant for historical studies, but also important to inform cultural and social identity policies in the context of a multiethnic Indonesia. This research highlights that linguistic, religious and cultural diversity should be seen as a strength in building nationhood. Thus, policymakers can take a more open approach in integrating the concept of archipelagic insight, given that Indonesia's diversity can enrich national values.

**Keywords:** *Unity of Minahasa; National Insight; Regional Organization; National Movement*

**Abstrak:** Tujuan artikel ini adalah untuk mengkaji faktor pendukung yang menyebabkan organisasi daerah "Persatuan Minahasa" mengubah wawasannya menjadi wawasan kebangsaan Indonesia selama pergerakan nasional. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode sejarah menurut Marc Bloch. Ada empat tahap yang dilakukan dalam penelitian ini: perumusan masalah dan pengamatan historis terhadap sumber-sumber yang terkait dengan organisasi kedaerahan Minahasa, kritik sejarah atau pengujian data dari sumber-sumber sejarah yang ditemukan, generalisasi data sesuai dengan masalah yang diteliti, dan pencarian (analisis) sebab-akibat terkait dengan masalah yang diteliti. Hasil studi ini menunjukkan bagaimana gerakan nasional membawa perubahan fokus dan cakupan, menjauh dari perspektif regional dan menuju

pada landasan kemerdekaan dan kedaulatan rakyat. Baik di dalam maupun di luar wilayah Manado (Minahasa), masyarakat Minahasa memperingati era tersebut dengan upaya mengorganisasikan sesama warga negaranya melalui kelompok-kelompok daerah sepanjang pergerakan nasional Indonesia. Melalui gagasan Sam Ratulangi, Persatuan Minahasa telah memprakarsai perluasan wawasan kebangsaan bagi masyarakat Minahasa. Pada awal abad ke-20, baik militer maupun intelektual mempengaruhi perubahan orientasi wawasan kesukuan ke wawasan kebangsaan Indonesia. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pemahaman yang lebih mendalam mengenai transisi wawasan masyarakat Minahasa dari kesukuan ke kebangsaan tidak hanya relevan untuk studi sejarah, tetapi juga penting untuk menginformasikan kebijakan identitas budaya dan sosial dalam konteks Indonesia yang multietnis. Penelitian ini menyoroti bahwa keberagaman bahasa, agama, dan budaya seharusnya dipandang sebagai kekuatan dalam membangun kebangsaan. Dengan demikian, para pembuat kebijakan dapat mengambil langkah yang lebih terbuka dalam mengintegrasikan konsep wawasan nusantara, mengingat keragaman yang ada di Indonesia dapat memperkaya nilai-nilai kebangsaan.

**Keywords:** *Unity of Minahasa; National Insight; Regional Organization; National Movement*

## Introduction

Entering the 20th century, Indonesia, then still part of the Dutch East Indies, began to develop and enter a dynamic era. The colonized native people began to rebel against colonialism and imperialism. This era was marked by the emergence of the national consciousness of the Putera people as a nation. Both internal and external factors contributed to the emergence of this movement. The internal factor that triggered the spirit of resistance against the colonizers was the continuous suffering and pressure. The external aspect was education. In 1902, the Western education system was applied to ethical politics, resulting in a variety of knowledge and insights for the country's students. Politically, the bumiputera implemented a new strategy to deal with Dutch colonialism. Bumiputera did this by creating movement organizations. The emergence of new concepts of movement organizations and understandings of national identity were the most significant and distinctive developments during the Indonesian national movement (Ricklefs, 2010).

As a collection of individuals with a common goal, an organization can develop into a movement with clear values and goals. Awareness as a nation, ideals of freedom and independence can be channeled through organizational activities. The organization also allows the indigenous population to engage in mass politics. Thus, the native people became active participants in the political dynamics in the Dutch East Indies. Therefore, the native population began to actively participate in the political process of the Dutch East Indies. The Dutch colonial government's Ethical Policy, which established schools for native children, was the first step in the Indonesian youth's struggle for independence. However, the children of the local nobility (the native elite) made up the majority of those who were allowed to attend school. Subsequently, young people who had completed medical, engineering and other programs also contributed to the struggle of Indonesian youth, especially those from the educated class.

With the emergence of regional and religious youth organizations, the youth played an important role in the national movement. After this time, the youth had begun to engage in political activities. However, it is important to realize that the organizations that were first established were tribal or regional in nature and sought to help the community as a whole. Therefore, there were associations or organizations engaged in social, cultural, religious, and economic fields. But along with the times, the associations or organizations formed in each region in Indonesia also changed their goals to suit the times. Among them is the transformation from being peaceful, compact, and involved in the socio-economic realm to being organized and plunging into the political realm. Awareness of the country inspired young people to pursue education in various ways. Young people started various political and socio-cultural movements. This was marked by the founding of Budi Utomo in 1908 by young STOVIA students. Budi Utomo sought to improve the cultural and educational experience of the people (Hatta, 1980). After the establishment of Budi Utomo, many other organizations were active in various fields, including women's, youth, religious and political organizations. The first youth organization involved in the struggle of the Indonesian people was Tri Koro Dharmo, which later changed its name to Jong Java. Besides the Javanese youth, other regional organizations such as Jong Sumateranen Bond, Jong Minahasa, Jong Celebes, Jong Ambon, Jong Batak, Betawi youth, Sekar Rukun, and Timorese youth also emerged. The purpose of these organizations was to foster brotherhood and promote the culture of each region, as well as nationality-based organizations such as PI, PPPI, and Indonesian youth (Pringgodigdo, 1994).

In this case, regional associations were also formed by Minahasa people from both inside and outside Minahasa such as, "Perserikatan Minahasa" established in Magelang in 1909, and "Rukun Minahasa" in Semarang in 1912. The associations and rukuns formed had branches in cities in Java, and the region (Manado). Later, in 1927, Sam Ratulangi founded the nationalist political party "Persatuan Minahasa" (Henley, 2007). In its development of "rukun" or "perserikatan," the Minahasa regional organization evolved into "Persatuan Minahasa," which was political in nature (Leirissa, 1997). The Persatuan Minahasa, considered the most important political party, continuously fought for the establishment of an autonomous federal state in Indonesia. Besides being active in Batavia and among the Minahasan diaspora, which included white-collar workers and soldiers in various parts of Indonesia, Persatuan Minahasa controlled the *Minahasaraad* (Minahasa Council) in the 1930s (Henley, 2007).

Movement organizations that initially tended to highlight tribal characteristics eventually shifted to a more general philosophy of struggle, namely the interests of Indonesia. The organizations established in Minahasa in the 20th century were no exception, they have shown their dynamics during the struggle period, which increasingly highlighted their distinctiveness as Minahasan people. Along with the development of the Minahasa national movement, there was also a sense of national identity shared by people in other areas of the Dutch East Indies. The increasing awareness of Minahasa and other ethnic groups of their national identity was shown by the existence of political parties, the participation of several Minahasa people in the 1926 youth congress and the second youth

congress, which resulted in the Youth Pledge on October 28, 1928, along with a number of other national figures from Minahasa.

The development of the Minahasa movement organizations was in line with the changes in the organizations in Java. This shows that the changes that took place in political organizations also took place in Manado and Minahasa, in the Indonesian national insight. The expansion of nationalism for Minahasa people has actually been started by the Minahasa Association through the thoughts of Sam Ratulangi. The interest of the educated people seeks to realize the same view of fellow people starting from their own tribe towards the formation of Indonesian nationalism. Indonesian nationalism, which offers space and opportunity for the development of increasingly sophisticated and independent regionalism, is based on the fact that this is a very large country with a population of diverse ethnicities, languages, religions, customs, and so on. Tribal nationalism was seen in the "Perserikatan Minahasa" movement, but in the Minahasan context, the military and education played an important role in transforming tribalism into Indonesian nationalism.

Persatuan Minahasa and "Minahasa Raad", two Minahasa organizations that had been established and managed to survive until the Japanese occupation, were found to be similar in their understanding of the fate of Minahasa in the Dutch East Indies system. This was based on the decentralization law passed in 1903, which, among other things, made the Minahasa *Raad* a political goal for Minahasa in the Dutch East Indies order. At the same time, Minahasa identity was a value that needed to be upheld. The founding of the Persatuan Minahasa in 1927 by Sam Ratulangi, who served as Secretary of the *Minahasaraad* from 1924 to 1926, gave rise to this new view. The new organization gained a new perspective on the future of Minahasa. In contrast, Persatuan Minahasa viewed the fate of Minahasa within the framework of Greater Indonesia or the national movement. Persatuan Minahasa, influenced by the concept of decentralization, strongly emphasized the importance of Minahasan independence under the new system. On the other hand, Persatuan Minahasa believes that Minahasa identity is an ethnic identity value that must be preserved. Even the concept of autonomy is seen as a political tool to maintain it.

The issue of regional social organizations or tribal organizations that emerged in the 20th century has been raised by a number of sources such as M. C. Ricklefs (2010) in the context of Modern Indonesian History. However, Ricklefs (2008) only mentions tribal organizations and does not elaborate specifically. Another source that describes Minahasa regional organizations is David Henley (1996). The Minahasa Association (1909-1927) described by David displays tribal nationalism, which he calls "Minahasa nationalism". Regarding the change from tribal insight to Indonesian national insight in society, according to R. Z. Leirissa (1997) influenced two dominant social categories in the early 20th century, namely the military and intellectuals. In this study also mentioned about *Minahasaraad*, as studied by Max Tamon (2000) in his research entitled: *From Mina'esa to Minahasaraad (Minahasa Council) Late 19th Century to Early 20th Century*", which concluded that before the establishment of *Minahasaraad* by the Dutch East Indies government in Minahasa, there was already a tradition that was a manifestation of

democracy formed by Minahasa government leaders and traditional leaders.

To fulfill its social ambitions, the organization operated as a "parliament" known as the "council of trustees" (*raad der Doopshoofden*) (Tamon, 2000). There were also other works that were part of the colonial politics of the Dutch government to control Minahasan society. As a result, some people tried to fight for Minahasa as part of the colonial government's life order in the Netherlands. This event has been researched and discussed by Meity Najoan (2001) with the title: "*Twapro* in the Political Upheaval in Minahasa (1946-1949)". The problems discussed were: "The motivation of the leaders of the *Twapro* movement, and its impact on the pro-Indonesian independence group in Minahasa". From the discussion, it was found and concluded that the *causal factor* of this movement was the interest of a group of Minahasa people who wanted to fight for the welfare of life and their status as former members of the *Koninklijk Nederlands Indische Leger* (KNIL), and Dutch government employees. This motivation caused them to join an association called "*Twaafde Provincie*" abbreviated as "*Twapro*". In order to realize their interests, *Twaafde Provincie* became a party ideology and aimed and hoped to become Minahasa as the 12th province of the Netherlands (Najoan, 2001). The emergence of regional organizations that fought against Dutch colonialism also occurred in Ambon through the Sarekat Ambon (SA) organization. As studied by Hetreda Terry (2001) with the title: "The Struggle of A. J Patty in Ambon (1920-1924)". This study concluded that Sarekat Ambon during the leadership of A. J Patty had an ideology that originated from the *Indische partij* ideology of Douwes Dekker, namely the struggle for the independence of the Indies from colonialism. However, A. J Patty's main goal with Sarekat Ambon was not independence but the improvement of the people's economy.

These sources often discuss the dynamics of the national movement as a whole, and pay little attention to the local situation in Minahasa. An overview of local political parties is provided by Leirissa (1997) and Sari et al. (2024), but they are less successful in examining the social impact of the shift in the Minahasan context from ethnicity to nationality. As for Anderson's (1988) paper, which highlights the central role of nationalism in the movement, it does not sufficiently underscore the challenges faced by individuals and groups in embracing the concept of nationhood amidst diversity. In addition, the role and influence of other local intellectual communities who may not have been directly involved with organizations such as "Persatuan Minahasa." While Leirissa (1997) touches on the role of the military and intellectuals in changing social consciousness, this paper does not fully examine the dynamics of interaction between these groups.

Given this gap, the novelty of this study lies in the analysis that links the transition of Minahasan insights to the broader historical context of the transition from tribalism to nationhood. While references such as Suebu (1994) and Henley (1996) discuss various aspects of nationalism and local culture, this paper provides a more specific focus on the internal dynamics of the Minahasan people and how they contributed to the framework of the Indonesian independence struggle.

This research also seeks to situate the Minahasa community within the larger stage of the national movement, showing that despite local tendencies, national discourse is still able to reach out and embrace differences. This creates a space to see how national consciousness can grow from diverse and complex ethnic roots, which is something that has been new in previous studies.

Based on the sources that have been reviewed, the author is interested and tries to explore the movement of the Minahasa regional social organization, especially about the movement of struggle and supporting factors that led to a change in orientation from tribal insight to Indonesian national insight. This is interesting because the organizations that were initially formed with regional orientation, but in the process of history then developed with the Indonesian national insight of Ir. Soekarno.

## Methods

The research method used in this study is the historical method according to Marc Bloch (1988). In the historical method of Marc Bloch (1988), there were four stages carried out by researchers and historical writers, namely: *first*, formulating the problem, and conducting historical observations of sources related to the Minahasa regional organization; *second*, conducting historical criticism or testing data from historical sources found; *third*, generalizing data according to the problem; and *fourth*, searching (analysis) for the cause and effect of the problem being studied and written (Bloch, 1988). This research data collection used literature or document studies, namely studying the results of research and books that had been published related to the problem under study. This research step in the historical method of Marc Bloch (1988) was called historical observation and criticism or data testing of the sources used. So, the data collection technique applied the first and second steps in the historical method of Marc Bloch.

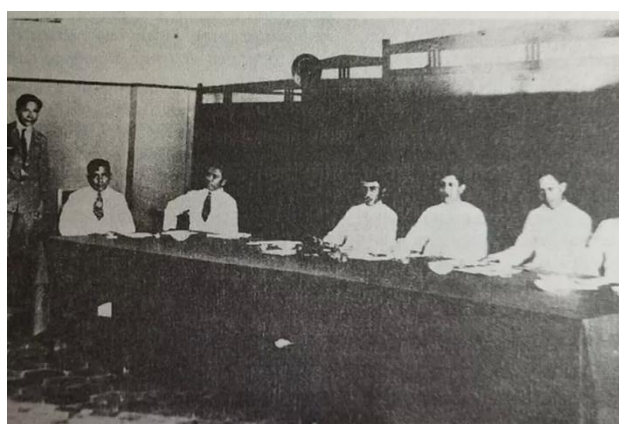
## Results and Discussion

### Minahasa Unity

Minahasa experienced a dynamic political balance between colonialism and nationalism in the early 20th century. Representative institutions allowed for the expression of discontent, but economic success, educational advancement, and significant indigenous participation in government reduced the likelihood of war. The organizations founded by Minahasan people both inside and outside Manado (overseas) were dedicated to the welfare of the Minahasan people and the advancement of their homeland. Like other ethnic regional organizations during the Indonesian national movement, Minahasa regional organizations also fostered social unity among its members. In the context of the Indonesian national movement, Minahasa regional organizations such as "Rukun Minahasa" and "Persatuan Minahasa" have shifted from social solidarity-based groups to political groups since the 1920s. Other ethnic groups residing in Manado and Minahasa were also affected by this national realization in their goals and actions. Persatuan Islam, Partai Nasional Indonesia, Pergerakan Indonesia, and Partai Indonesia Raya were national insights that influenced the goals and movements of Minahasa regional groups in Manado

(Minahasa) and overseas. However, in the later movement, the perspective of Minahasa regional organizations was heavily influenced by the national insight of Ir. Soekarno. Sam Ratulangi, the main figure of the Minahasa Association, illustrates this. Nonetheless, Minahasa identity remained distinctive and needed to be upheld and maintained within the framework of Dutch colonial control.

Minahasan people, both inside and outside the region, attempted to gather together through regional organizations during the Indonesian national movement. A Minahasa organization known as "Perserikatan Minahasa" was established among the troops, according to records in Magelang in May 1909 (Leirissa, 1997). The organization was formed with the aim of holding a formal conference to discuss their future. As a result, the



organization established branches in other cities in Java. Although it was formed by military personnel, a large number of Minahasa civilians joined as members. A.L. Wawaruntu, former Chief Justice of the Tondano Supreme Court, was appointed as its chairman even in 1918 (Leirissa, 1997).

Figure 1: Figures of Jong Minahasa

Meanwhile, "Rukun Minahasa" was founded in Semarang in 1912 by former journalist J.H. Pangemanan. The organization worked to improve the standard of living of the Minahasa people by promoting education and teaching, offering mutual aid, and developing the community's economy. Three years later, in 1915, A.M. Pangkey and J.U. Mangowal in Tomohon took the initiative to form a group of Christian educators in Minahasa called "Pangkal Setia". The aim was to promote Christian education in the Manado Prefecture, as well as to care for its sympathizers. Later, the group decided to establish a self-governing church in Minahasa (Suak, 1992).

Sam Ratulangi was the main organizer of the "Persatuan Minahasa" which was established in Jakarta in 1927. The organization was a splinter of the Rukun Minahasa, another name for the Minahasa Association. The Dutch government at the time prohibited military personnel from attending meetings with civilians. Thus, this organization was established to cater to the needs of Minahasan people who were not members of the military, or who were civilians. This meant that citizens were included in the Persatuan Minahasa, but military personnel remained in Rukun Minahasa (United Minahasa).

Prioritizing the Minahasan land and people was a common goal shared by both organizations. However, the objectives of the Union of Minahasa were expanded in 1928 to include progress towards an independent Indonesia (Watusseke, 1968). Both organizations agreed that the Minahasa land and people should come first. But in 1928, the goal of the Union of Minahasa was expanded to include the development of an independent Indonesia.

Sam Ratulangi, who served as Secretary of Raad Minahasa from 1924 to 1926, founded Persatuan Minahasa in 1927, which brought this new perspective to the fore. This new organization proposed an alternative plan for the future of Minahasa. Unlike the United Minahasa, the Persatuan Minahasa viewed the future of Minahasa in relation to the larger Indonesian or national movement. Persatuan Minahasa placed a strong emphasis on Minahasan autonomy under the new regime, drawing inspiration from decentralization theory. On the other hand, Persatuan Minahasa also shares the same view, which views Minahasa identity as an ethnic identity value that must be preserved. In fact, Minahasa identity is considered as a political tool to defend autonomy (Henley, 1996; Leirissa, 1999).

The growth of various political organizations and mass organizations that began to establish branches in the Minahasa area, seemed to inspire the Dutch colonial authorities to create branches of government in line with the realities that emerged in the lives of the people. In 1918, the *Volksraad* was established in Batavia, where A.L. Waworuntu, chairman of the Minahasa Association, and Ph. Laoh were elected to represent the Minahasa people in the council (Leirissa, 1997; Ingleson, 1988). The Dutch colonial government established the *Gemeenteraad* (City Council) for Manado and the *Minahasa Raad* (Minahasa Council) for the Minahasa region. The *Minahasa Raad* had a majority of indigenous members, while the *Gemeenteraad* had a higher proportion of immigrant members. The public has the opportunity to raise complaints about shortcomings in their area through these two councils. As full representatives of the people, these two councils completely failed in their duties (Depdikbud, 1983; Watusseke, 1986; Kartodirdjo, 1990).

As a result, around the beginning of the 20th century, branches of Java-centered political groups began to appear in Manado. Sarekat Islam was the first, followed by the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), which had a sizable following in Manado. However, the PKI after its failed rebellion in 1926, its followers were exiled to Boven Digul (West Irian). Thus, in Minahasa, Mr. Iskak Tjokrohadisurio was one of the links in the network of spreading ideas of Indonesian nationhood and independence. In the early 1920s, his presence was associated with his work as a jurist in Tonsea (North Minahasa). He succeeded in raising awareness of Indonesian nationhood by engaging a number of young people in Tonsea in a relatively short period of time. G.E. Dauhan, Max Tumbel, Max Lindu, Many Lengkong, and Hein Lengkong were the main members of the group that was formed through meetings at Wensen Tengker's family home in Girian-Tonsea. The group was not political in the true sense of the word, but more along the lines of a "*studieclub*", like many formed in Java and Sumatra at that time.

According to the memoirs of W. J. Kereh (1996) and the writings of R. Z. Leirissa (1997) who documented the developments at that time, similar study groups were also

formed in several locations around Minahasa. However, due to the colonial political climate in the Minahasa region, they were never able to coordinate. When Bandung's famous *Algemeen Studieclub* changed its name to the Indonesian National Party (PNI), the majority of the movement's supporters in Minahasa joined the PNI branch, chaired by Max Tumbel and G.E. Dauhan. This is an example of Minahasan intellectuals spreading the concept of the Indonesian national struggle in Minahasa after using Java as the focal point of the conflict. As the Dutch colonial government kept a close watch on the state of the youth movement in Minahasa, the Minahasa intelligentsia at that time had to take calculated action. Apart from the people, newspapers and publications in Minahasa were also subjected to surveillance, which prevented them from covering issues related to the Indonesian national movement. Nonetheless, the Minahasan intelligentsia still had opportunities to interact.

During the national movement, the first *volunteer* organizations among the Minahasa community were formed as an effort to maintain the conditions that had been formed due to the growth of regional organizations. Especially the *moral community* from the *zending* period became the ideal to be maintained. This would naturally blend with other primordials where in 1900 the insight of "love of country" had emerged. The first *volunteer* organization emerged among the soldiers in Magelang in 1918 called the Minahasa Association with the leader of a prominent former *pamong praja* in Minahasa, A.L. Waworuntu. When the Dutch East Indies established a council, the *Minahasaraad*, in Manado a year later (1919), the political situation then began to extend to the entire Minahasa population. Although it initially only had the power to set taxes, it could be considered representative of popular opinion as its 36 members were freely elected by the people. In fact, at the time, it was the most democratic council in the entire Dutch East Indies. Moreover, its elected membership increased and its powers were eventually expanded to include social and welfare issues. Comparatively, the *Volksraad*, which was established in 1916, had 38 members, of whom 15 were "bumiputra" and half were appointees.

The development of Minahasa organizations shows similarities in understanding the fate of Minahasa in the Dutch East Indies system, as both the Minahasa Association and the "Minahasa Raad" were able to survive until the Japanese occupation. The decentralization law of 1903, which among other things established the Minahasa Council, which became the political goal of Minahasa in the Dutch East Indies system, was the basis for this. However, the Minahasan identity was an ideal to be maintained. Thus, it can be said that the development of Minahasan regional organizations into political organizations was influenced by the changes of Indonesian nationalist-minded political organizations such as the PNI, but the issue of "Minahasa" as a distinctive ethnic identity was maintained and fought for existence in the context of Greater Indonesia.

By taking a more holistic approach to social issues and local movements, this research has an advantage over some previous references, such as the work of Leirissa (1997), who examines colonial politics and the impact of Dutch policies. Leirissa mainly focuses on the political consequences of colonial policies, whereas this research seeks to

place history and culture more thoroughly in a national context.

However, although the author has presented relevant information related to the organization, the limited sources make the analysis less in-depth in exploring the relationship between the factors that influenced the transition from tribalism to Indonesian nationalism. The addition of more varied and up-to-date references could strengthen the arguments, providing a more solid foundation for the claims made. With the support of a wider range of literature, the authors can present a richer and more relevant context, as well as provide a better perspective on the level of national consciousness developing among Minahasan people and its impact on local organizations

### **Youth Struggle in the National Movement**

In building national consciousness, the Minahasa Association was heavily influenced. The organization taught its members the value of national identity and solidarity through various activities. Members of Persatuan Minahasa showed their dedication in supporting the struggle for Indonesian independence by actively participating in national organizations such as Budi Utomo and Sarekat Islam.

Raising national consciousness within the movement was one of Jong Minahasa's important roles. This became clear, when on November 15, 1925, a youth conference was held in Jakarta. The purpose of the meeting was to consider organizing a youth meeting that would involve many organizations. After that, the youth organizations decided to form a committee in order to prepare for the First Youth Congress or the Great Density of Youth (Makkelo, 2023).

Youth nationalism is something that the youth who belong to the various youth associations, including the Indonesian Association and the Indonesian Youth, yearn for. They wanted the unification of all the regional groups currently operating into one national association or organization. As there were still youth organizations that considered regional organizations necessary, this goal was not met. Under these conditions, Jakarta hosted the Great Assembly of Indonesian Youth on April 30 to May 2, 1926. The Kerapatan Besar Pemuda Indonesia is also known as the First Youth Congress, according to historical records. Representatives from several youth organizations, most notably Jong Minahasa (Persatuan Minahasa), attended the First Youth Congress. The purpose of the First Youth Congress was to establish one youth organization with a purpose:

1. Promote unity and national awareness.
2. Improve relations between all national associations.

Youth from all regional organizations were urged to put nationalism and solidarity above racial, religious and personal interests during the convention. Nonetheless, no decisions that could unite Indonesian youth at the national level could be made at the First Youth Congress. Then, on August 15, 1926, Jong Minahasa again contributed to a conference with various youth associations held at the "Jawa" Cinema building. The topic of discussion was an attempt to form a federation between youth associations. There had

been talks, but the attempt to merge the various youth organizations had not been successful. The second meeting between youth organizations took place on 20 February 1927. PPPI, Jong Java, Jong Sumatranen Bond, Sekar Rukun, Jong Batak Bond, Jong Islamiten Bond, Jong Ambon, and Jong Minahasa were some of the youth organizations involved. The understanding of the plan to merge these youth organizations progressed slightly in this discussion, but the results did not reach consensus (Makkelo, 2023).

Then to form the National Army, all youth organizations participated in the Second Youth Congress held on 27 and 28 October 1928. Thus the unity of the Indonesian nation was strengthened. This second congress was more successful than the first, especially after Sugondo called for a movement to "Fight the influence of division and move forward towards the United Indonesia that we love". The enthusiasm of the youth who attended the Congress was reported to the Dutch authorities. Therefore, Dutch troops watched the Congress closely. Eventually, the youth took an oath and made a declaration known as the "Youth Pledge" at the end of the Congress. The First and Second Youth Congresses that resulted in the Youth Pledge became a tangible manifestation of the commitment of Indonesian youth in promoting national values and their role in the struggle for the unification of Indonesia (Sari, et al., 2024).

Many contemporary Indonesian organizations have their roots in youth involvement in the national struggle. It began with the establishment of the Budi Utomo organization, which had a cultural and educational foundation. Many organizations existed, including women and youth groups, religious groups such as Muhammadiyah, Ahmadiyah, Al-Irshad (Indonesian Arab Party), and Nahdlatul Ulama, and political organizations such as Sarekat Islam (SI) and Indische Partij. The Youth Pledge, a manifestation of the unity of Indonesian youth, was the end result of the youth's participation in national organizations and the Dutch youth struggle. This had a significant impact on the development of Indonesia's national consciousness (Sari, et al., 2024).

### **Causality of Change in Indonesian Nationalistic Insight Minahasa Unity**

Indonesia's national outlook, which provides space and opportunities for the growth of regional/local insights that are increasingly advanced and independent, is essentially based on the vast territory of the country, which is home to various ethnic groups, languages, religions, customs, and so on. To unite people and create a strong nation, diversity can actually be a strength. The cultural background of the Indonesian nation, which consists of various ethnic groups, has become the basis of Indonesia's national insight. Indonesians united and fought to establish an independent Indonesian "nation state" as a result of their common fate (Suebu, 1994). The Indonesian people have experienced numerous cultural exchanges with other nations, tribes and ethnic groups throughout its historical development. The position of the Indonesian archipelago, which is flanked by two continents and two oceans, allows for cultural exchanges that occur over time. Integration between external elements and regionally sourced aspects that are raised to enrich the national cultural repertoire can occur in cultural contact which is understood as cultural interaction.

In order to consolidate national culture, national development symbolized by the idea of Wawasan Nusantara as a political, economic, socio-cultural, and security unity, carries out the process in that direction (Suebu, 1994). The tribal nationalism dubbed "Minahasan nationalism" by Dr. David Henley is evident in the actions of the Minahasan people's struggle group, "Perserikatan Minahasa (1909-1927)" (Henley, 1996; Leirissa, 1997). However, in the Minahasan context, two prominent social categories in the early 20th century, the military and intellectuals, were involved in the process of transforming the tribal concept into the Indonesian national concept in society (Leirissa, 1997). To gain a good understanding of the transition of Minahasan society from tribalism to Indonesian nationalism, it is important to discuss the roles played by these two groups.

In the view of R.Z. Leirissa (1997), the two groups (military and social) differed in their social consciousness, but in many other respects they were well integrated and caused no or very little social conflict in Minahasa society. The interests of the two factions diverged under the colonial regime. While the intellectual group struggled to integrate into the multiethnic Dutch East Indies culture, the military group faced discrimination in their military duties. (Leirissa, 1997). The way the military and social classes were treated differently in the Dutch East Indies social structure became a strong incentive to unite the various forces of society in an organization to fight for the emergence of nationalism and the place of the Minahasa region in the broader Indonesian national movement.

### Supporting Factors for Change

From the description of the growth and development of regional social organizations previously established by Minahasa people, several things can be concluded. *Firstly*, in general, all social institutions established by Minahasa people have a tribal outlook, which prioritizes the welfare of its members (Minahasa people) and the progress of Minahasa land. However, what was fought for was actually the result of Dutch colonialism policies aimed at the Indonesian people, especially the Minahasa tribe, both in the region and overseas. *Secondly*, as the regional organizations grew, it was discovered that one of them, Persatuan Minahasa, had expanded its goal in 1928, which was to broaden the scope of the struggle for an independent Indonesia. The general situation faced by other regional organizations in that year, especially after the Second Youth Congress, which resulted in the "Sumpah Pemuda" pledge, led to a broadening of horizons. This was also due to the influence of Sam Ratulangi, the head of the organization, who was actively involved in the national political movement in Jakarta during the Dutch East Indies.

As a true reflection of the process of political education for the people, especially for the Minahasan intelligentsia, the establishment and development of political parties in Minahasa followed the dynamics of the national movement in Java. To understand the growth and development of regional organizations that paved the way for party politics and realized the national vision in the early 20th century, it is first necessary to define the terms "politics" and "education". In its broadest definition, "politics" refers to the methods of achieving certain goals. For example, political education includes policies or actions

intended to participate in the affairs of the state or government, including the determination of the form, duties and scope of state affairs. Various laws and regulations are utilized to implement this agenda, such as liberal democratic, authoritarian, dictatorial, Machiavellian, or ethical laws and regulations (Marbun, 1996). Based on this description, it is clear that Indonesian intellectuals at the beginning of the national movement needed time to socialize political education for the people, in order to bring the country towards a view that was in line with the ideals of independence. Furthermore, the political actions and policies of a country's government or organization are aligned with certain goals, so the way they are implemented is often different.

Authority and power are essential in political activities because politics is usually about achieving individual and societal goals. Consequently, political activities include both individual and group actions (Leirissa, 1997). When it comes to explaining the meaning of political action, the educated people's goal was simply to realize a common point of view, starting from the ethnic group and culminating in a unified national point of view. This was essential to deal with the powerful Dutch colonial power, hence the need for unity of struggle and consciousness consistent with the times. However, the few political groups, or "sarekat," that emerged in the early 20th century did not have the power to change the organizational framework of the colonial government (Leirissa, 1997). Thus, this study starts from the general conditions of the early Indonesian national movement and the rise of Minahasan intellectuals through regional organizations. These organizations served as a link to engage in political struggle within the political insight of Indonesian nationality as well as the political insight that gave color to the movement of intellectuals in Minahasa.

## Summary

The dynamics of Indonesia's rapidly growing national movement in the early 20th century provided an important backdrop for this shift in outlook, as Minahasan people who had previously focused on local welfare and tribal interests began to feel influenced by movements outside their region, particularly in Java. For example, movements such as Sarekat Islam and Indische Partij inspired groups in Minahasa to come together to fight for their rights within the larger framework of Indonesian independence. This shows that movements at the regional level greatly contributed to the broader process of transforming collective consciousness.

The increased awareness of national identity among the Minahasan people was influenced by their education and social activities, in which the influence of intellectual figures, particularly Sam Ratulangi, played a significant role. Through education and the organizations he formed, Ratulangi attempted to redirect people's attention from merely local interests to a greater goal. In this case, education was considered key to building political awareness, which in turn encouraged Minahasan people to engage in discussions and organizations that addressed the future of Indonesia as a whole. In addition, the socio-political conditions shaped by Dutch colonialism also became one of the important driving factors in this change. Unjust and discriminatory colonial policies united

Minahasan people in the struggle against oppression, leading to the realization that it was not enough for them to act for local interests alone, but also as part of a wider humanity. The oppression made them realize that their future was deeply intertwined with the fate of the Indonesian nation as a whole, which prompted local organizations such as "Persatuan Minahasa" to start adopting a more inclusive nationalistic outlook.

"Persatuan Minahasa" underwent a significant shift from a tribal to a nationalistic outlook, triggered by interactions with national organizations and the broader socio-political context in Indonesia

The active role of figures like Sam Ratulangi was instrumental in shaping collective awareness of national identity. They became the driving force in educating people on the importance of unity amidst ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity, and the need to contribute to the larger independence movement. Their involvement in political organizations and youth activities shows how important a role political education played in facilitating this change of mind. In addition, a sense of dissatisfaction with the injustice and oppression experienced made the Minahasan people realize that their struggle was not only limited to local interests, but also had to keep pace with the spirit of the struggle of the Indonesian nation. Important events, such as the Youth Pledge, simultaneously brought significant influence for organizations such as "Persatuan Minahasa" to direct the focus of their struggle to the independence and sovereignty of the Indonesian people.

This process not only highlights the power of regional organizations in strengthening national identity, but also shows the challenges faced in maintaining local identity. Thus, the "Persatuan Minahasa" movement was not just a manifestation of ethnic identity, but also a strategic step in uniting visions and missions among the Minahasan people. The insightful transformation experienced signifies that unity in diversity is the key to achieving the common goal of Indonesian independence

### Advice

1. For future researchers, it is hoped that this research can develop a comparative analysis with similar organizations in other regions of Indonesia to understand variations in the strategy and impact of national and regional insights.
2. Future research should also consider including analysis of social and economic data that can show the impact of this change in outlook on the development of Minahasa society in the post-independence era.

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