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Conversion and Colonialism: Islam and Christianity in North Sulawesi, c. 1700-1900

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Citation
Lopez, A. C. (2018, September 18). *Conversion and Colonialism: Islam and Christianity in North Sulawesi, c. 1700-1900*. Retrieved from https://hdl.handle.net/1887/65631

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Title: Conversion and Colonialism: Islam and Christianity in North Sulawesi, c. 1700-1900
Issue Date: 2018-09-18

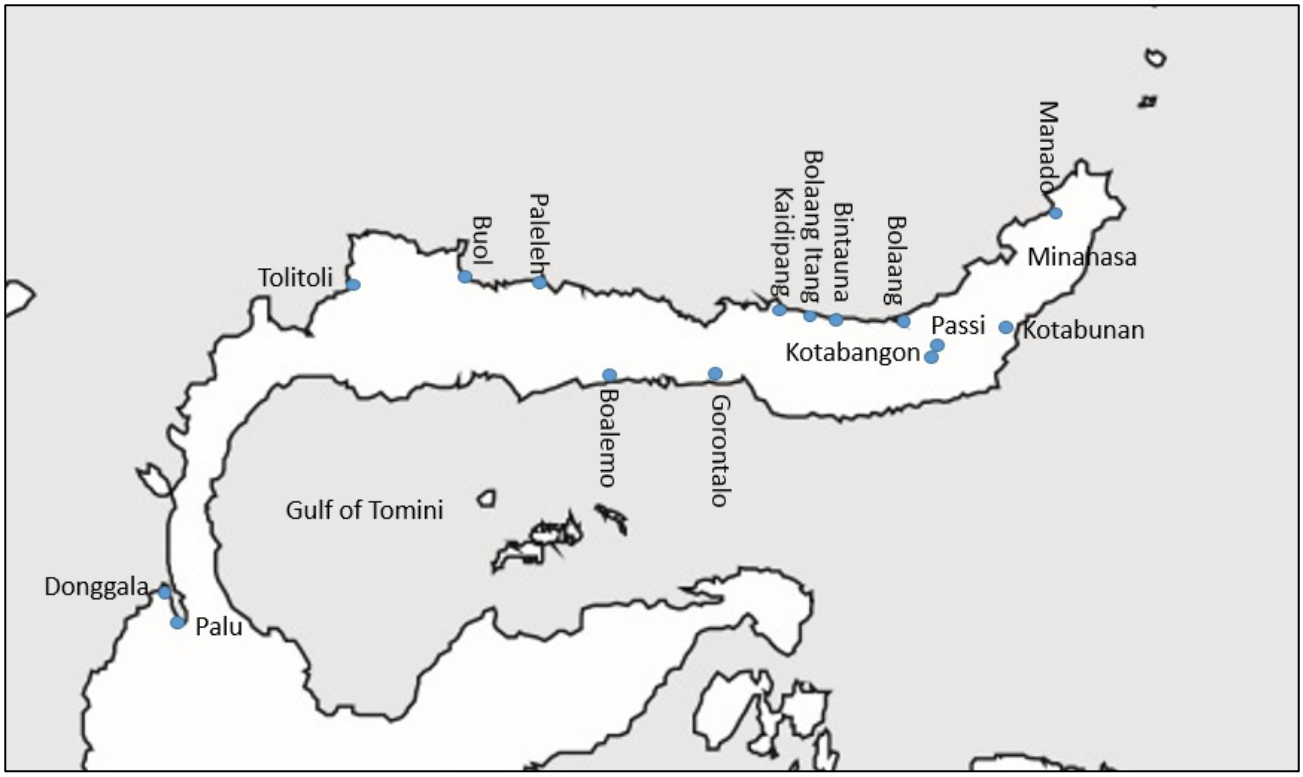
CHAPTER 4
Islamization in Bolaang-Mongondow

This chapter explores the causation of conversions to Islam in Bolaang-Mongondow. It argues that colonial state centralization through the imposition of monetary and census-based taxes *(hasil*) was the main driving force for the first-recorded and perhaps most crucial mass conversions to Islam in the densely populated highlands (Mongondow).

Although references to earlier elite and non-elite conversions to Islam exist, they appear to be few and isolated. Islam—like Christianity before it—seems to have functioned initially as an elite instrument to connect with influential foreign figures and to differentiate the elite from the rest of the population. For example, the unprecedented authority accorded by the colonial state to the raja of Bolaang-Mongondow in the 1850s allowed him to circumvent his peers. He promoted Islamic conversions at the same time that he was instituting monetary taxation. His policy tended to undercut the political, economic, and religious dominance of his peers by becoming the supreme leader—the sultan—of Bolaang-Mongondow's by then Islamized peoples.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first two sections emphasize that Christianity, and later Islam, tended to be absorbed by long-existing hierarchies based on kinship and status. This might explain why Christianity was limited to the political class and why there was a seeming late reception to Islam in Bolaang-Mongondow despite the increasing Islamic resurgence in the broader region from the late eighteenth century onwards.

The third section revisits the existing literature's account of the conversions to Islam in Bolaang-Mongondow. It focuses on the colonial policies around the 1850s, which ultimately sought to centralize colonial rule and resulted in aiding the Islamization of Bolaang-Mongondow. While in the previous decades—indeed centuries—religion seems to have been subverted by hierarchical regimes based on family, Islam provided a language for the raja to consolidate his rule and subvert competing claims to authority ultimately based on descent.



Map 4
Map of the northern arm of Sulawesi

1. Christianity and the Dutch East India Company

Before its Islamization, Bolaang-Mongondow belonged to one of the many Christian polities of north Sulawesi (see Map 4). From the late seventeenth until the early nineteenth centuries, all its rajas publicly professed the religion of the Dutch East India Company. Despite the long period of formal adherence to Christianity, the Christian religion seems to have been confined to the narrow coast of north Sulawesi and had not penetrated the populous interior. Exposure was limited to the political class.

Conversion to Protestant Christianity was a precondition to rule. It affirmed not only the legitimacy of a raja, but also secured the continued existence of his polity as an independent entity.[1] It protected the realm against the possible incursions of hostile forces in the region

[1] ANRI Manado inv. 65, no. 1, Contract between Marcus Manoppo and the VOC, 30 October 1773, "Fatsal yang kadalapan: Salagi oleh Panghoeloe tiada akan boleh mengambel istrinya atauw dikawinkan kaffir, melainkan dengan orang sabagitoe jang ada masaranij Christahon jang ada sasoengoe dan benar." In Dutch, the original reads as: "Wijders en zal de Regent niet vermogen een onchristen tot zijn gemalinne te nemen of trouwen, maar alleen

(notably the Bugis, Mandarese, Maguindanao, and Sulu). It also assured the elite's status difference from, and dominance over, their subjects as well as their horizontal equivalence with neighboring ruling families.

The rajas were required to welcome the very occasional visit of the head pastor (*predikant*) of Ternate and to provide provisions for a school and a locally hired (usually Malukan) religious teacher. The rajas and others from the ruling class were taught formal Malay and the basics of Christianity by the teacher (*schoolmeester*).[2] Classes were small and often subject to criticism by the visiting *predikant* for their supposed benightedness.[3]

The teaching of Malay was probably the most important role of these teachers.[4] Malay enabled the rajas to communicate with Company officials. After a century of Christian missionary presence, however, the Resident reports in 1833 stated that in Bolaang-Mongondow neither the "raja nor the other chiefs could read or write."[5] Even after the political elite's conversion to Islam, the schoolteacher remained in the *kerajaan*'s service, not for any religious purpose but for rather mundane clerical tasks.[6] On behalf of his illiterate clients, the schoolteacher wrote letters of reply to colonial authorities.[7] He also wrote the letters of chiefs

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zodanig ene die van de Christelijke gereformeerde religie zij." (Article 8: The chief is not allowed to have a non-Christian wife; he is only allowed to marry someone from the [Dutch] Reformed religion).

[2] For good material that reflects on what could have transpired in north Sulawesi during the period of the Dutch East India Company, see Enklaar, *Joseph Kam: "Apostel der Molukken."*

[3] For an accessible account of one these visits see, J. E. Heeres, "Bouwstoffen voor de Nederlandsch-Indische Kerkgeschiedenis," *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsche Zendelinggenootschap; bijdragen tot de kennis der zending en der taal-, land- en volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indië* 45, (1901). A rich and yet to be exploited source publication is Niemeijer et al., *Bronnen betreffende Kerk en School in de gouvernementen Ambon, Ternate en Banda ten tijde van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), 1605-1791: Gouvernement Ternate, 1698-1791.*

[4] These teachers—with long genealogies going back to the times of the Company and not merely to the colonial period—should be given due acknowledgment for their spread of "a form of Malay as a supra-local language of administration and education." Benedict R. Anderson, "Nationalism and Cultural Survival in Our Time: A Sketch," in *At the Risk of Being Heard: Identity, Indigenous Rights, and Postcolonial States*, ed. Bartholomew Dean and Jerome M. Levi (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2003), 178.

[5] This observation was likewise applicable to neighboring Bintauna.

[6] As Teh-Gallop remarks, "In the pre-modern Malay world—as in many other cultures—literacy was by no means assured amongst the ruling classes, and hence it was not the tradition for Malay letters to be signed." Annabel Teh Gallop, *The Legacy of the Malay Letter/ Warisan Warkah Melayu* (London: British Library, 1994), 55.

[7] ANRI Manado inv. 48, no. 4, Verslag van de rijkjes en negorijen ten westen van Manado gelegen, Resident Pietermaat, 31 December 1833. Indeed (official) Malay was not always at the ruler's ready disposal. In early eighteenth century (1705) Maguindanao, despite being one of the few notable polities that remained autonomous after the region's "age of commerce" the ruling sultan excused himself for addressing the Company in the Spanish language. He complained that his trusted scribes did not understand Malay. NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8074 Ternate, 1; ANRI VOC Hoge Regering, inv. 2527, 810.

complaining against each other and seeking arbitration for the resolution of these complaints from Manado.

An instructive, though not always reliable, sign of conversion was the adoption of a Christian (Dutch) name.[8] All rajas from the late seventeenth century carried a Christian name (for example, Cornelis, Johannes, Eugenius, Christoffel, etc.), a practice that continued after conversion to Islam and indeed well into the twentieth century. The rajas all came from the extended Manoppo family whose upland base was the village of Kotabangon[9] and who also maintained a royal house in the coastal port of Bolaang. The next ranking chiefs almost always carried the family names of Damopolii and Mokoagow.[10] These high-ranking leaders also carried Christian names.

A letter signed by the prominent village and district chiefs of Mongondow in 1865 provides clues into the pattern of Christian conversion a century earlier. [11] Of the 25 signatories, only six possessed a double name (with a Christian first name and a local family name): the four highest-ranking chiefs—raja, *jogugu*, president raja, and *kapitan laut*— and one *kapitan-raja* and the scribe. The rest did not have Christian names. The chiefs of the upland (Motoboi, Passi, Lolayan, etc.) only had indigenous names.[12] Those who had Christian names were only those

[8] For a brief discussion on this topic albeit on the modern period, see Joel Kuipers, "Personal Names and Changing Modes of Inscribing Identity in Sumba, Eastern Indonesia: 'Bloody Thursday' in Linguistic and Social Contexts," in *Personal Names in Asia: History, Culture and Identity*, ed. Zheng Yangwen and Charles J-H Macdonald, 175-198 (Singapore: NUS Press, 2010).

[9] The name, Kotabangon, seems to denote either the location where an important settlement was founded (*bangon* means "to establish" in Mongondorese) or as the geographic nucleus of the most important family in Mongondow (in Maranao for instance, *bangon* means the extended family house composed of "five or more nuclear families […] who contribute for the brideprice or receive it in turn, or organize retaliatory action in cases of injury, [living] under one roof, but eating separately"). W. Dunnebier, *Bolaang Mongondowsch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek* ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1951), 31; David B. Baradas, "Maranao Law: A Study of Conflict and Its Resolution in a Multicentric Power System," 6th Annual Seminar on Islam in the Philippines and Asia (Ateneo de Davao College, Davao City: Ateneo de Davao College and Mindanao State University, 1973), 311-312. Kotabangon is also the name given to the upland base of the ruler of Samarinda (Borneo). R. Broersma, *Handel en bedrijf in Zuid- en Oost-Borneo* ('s-Gravenhage: G. Naeff, 1927), 169.

[10] That particular positions are reserved to specific families is not distinct to Bolaang-Mongondow. In Ternate, the position immediately below the raja (that is, the *gugugu*) had long been reserved to members of the *soa (*village/family) of Marsaoli, at least up to 1976. Ch. F. van Fraassen, "Ternate, de Molukken en de Indonesische archipel van soa-organisatie en vierdeling: een studie van traditionele samenleving en cultuur in Indonesië, Deel 2" (PhD. dissertation, Leiden University, 1987), 53.

[11] ANRI Besluit GG, 19 August 1868 no. 14, Inilah disampejkan baserta hormath kapada Bangsawang Toewan jang moelija Resident Menado, Bil. 80, Soesongan Ampat.

[12] For instance: Paputungan, Tontuli, Bantaya, Bukut, Ponubu, Umbola, Daun, etc.

chiefs who lived along the coast and those who occupied relatively high positions in the hierarchy of the *kerajaan*. This suggests that even elite conversions were confined to the uppermost layer of chiefs.

Political loyalty to and support from the Company usually coincided with being Christian. Individuals who defied the authority of the coastal Christian raja—and by extension, the authority of the Company—were likely upland animists. In 1749, a certain *sadaha* (chief) of Mongondow named Yanbat united his fellow Mongondorese, who were likely pagan, to resist Company demands for gold tribute. He was likely more powerful than the Christian raja of Bolaang under whose authority the entire upland officially belonged, albeit in name only.[13] The Company knew that force was necessary to counter the power of Yanbat, but it was unprepared to launch an expensive and risky campaign in the upland. Instead, the Company decided to designate a new, hopefully more influential, Christian chief from the Manoppo family to which the deposed raja belonged.[14]

Conversion to Christianity by the chief and his people could also be described as a reification or formalization of patron-client bonds. In exchange for political and economic loyalty, the previously Muslim chief of Bintauna was acknowledged in the 1760s as a Christian raja who possessed an autonomous polity by his own right. While the people of the new polity originated from the Muslim-ruled Gorontalo, they eventually settled in a region ruled by the Christian raja of Bolaang-Mongondow.[15] The Raja of Bintauna, henceforth the "Regent of Bintauna Christians," eventually came to occupy a more favored political position vis-à-vis the then still animist Minahasans.[16]

Because exchanges—material or otherwise—between the local rulers and the Company always occurred through maritime channels, it was only beneficial to the Company when client-rulers settled along the coast. When the raja of Bolaang, Eugenius Manoppo, expressed his desire to transfer his residence to the interior, the Company refused because a coastal base was "convenient for gold procurement."[17]

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[13] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8119, Missive door den aantredende en afgaande Gouverneur Blokland en Mijlendonk benevens den raad in Ternaten, 20 August 1749, 41-42.
[14] Ibid.
[15] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8136 Kopie-missiven en -rapporten ingekomen bij gouverneur-generaal en raden uit Ternate, Letter of H. Munnik and Council to Batavia, July 1768, 15.
[16] Ibid.
[17] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8136, Letter of H. Munnik and Council to Batavia, July 1768, Ternate, 12.

In the late eighteenth century until the early decades of the nineteenth century, however, the privileges traditionally attached to Christianity faded gradually. Commerce under the banner of Islam gained increasing importance as the dominance of the Christian Company declined steadily. The feared "encroachment" of Muslim traders, often referred to in the sources as "pirates," became a reality. Islam began its seemingly natural but uneven expansion into the region's Christianized enclaves.

2. Maritime Islam, family alliances, and the Dutch

One of the earliest—if not the first—references to elite conversion to Islam in Bolaang-Mongondow was the marriage between Raja Cornelis Manoppo's daughter named Putri Sarah[18] and an Arab named Syarif Aluwi in 1832.[19] Some nineteenth century colonial observers pointed out that it marked the beginning of the area's Islamization. [20] Yet, a key detail seems to have been left out in the orthodox narrative[21]—Syarif Aluwi did not stay in Bolaang. The Arab merchant—likely related to the few but influential Arabs in the region—left for Singapore after refusing to pay the bride price demanded by the *kerajaan*'s second-in-command (*jogugu*) on behalf of the raja's family.[22] Syarif Aluwi eventually settled and died in Donggala. [23]

The absence of Syarif Aluwi in the aristocratic genealogies of Bolaang-Mongondow is striking. One of the extant ruler genealogies (see Figure 4.1) even omits any mention of the marriage between Syarif Aluwi and Putri Sarah. Instead, it highlights the ties of the Mongondow elite with powerful families in neighboring settlements, such as the Christianized Pontos from Siau and the animist Mokogintas from Passi. Unlike many royal genealogies (*silsilah*) in the Malay world, that of Bolaang-Mongondow and other Muslim polities in north Sulawesi seem to

[18] Riedel, "Het landschap Bolaang Mongondow," 277.
[19] Various references point to 1832 as the year of their marriage. This could have been so, but Cornelis Manoppo no longer ruled Bolaang. As early as 1823, it was already Jacobus Manoppo who was recognized as the ruler. See his letter Bolaang, 9 Ag 1829 to RM Wenzel, ANRI Manado 15. 1.
[20] See Het Utrechts Archief (HUA) Archief Raad van de Zending (ARvdZ) 1102-1, 1221, 25; Riedel, "Het landschap Bolaang Mongondow"; R. P. Notosoesanto, "Bolaäng Mongondow," *Koloniale Studien*, (1933).
[21] Kosel, "The History of Islam in Bolaang Mongondow, North Sulawesi: Rationalisation and Derationalisation of Religion," 52.
[22] The *jogugu* was the "most important chief after the raja" but according to tradition, "could not be raja himself." He often served as the raja's envoy to other chiefs. Dunnebier, *Bolaang Mongondowsch-Nederlandsch Woordenboek*, 89.
[23] See HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1221, 25.

be devoid of ascribed sacral qualities.[24] It suggests perhaps that the ruling elite was not as interested in claiming sacral legitimacy from a revered outsider or the religion he represented, as in assuring that indigenous allies (and likely foes) did not "fade into genealogical irrelevance."[25]

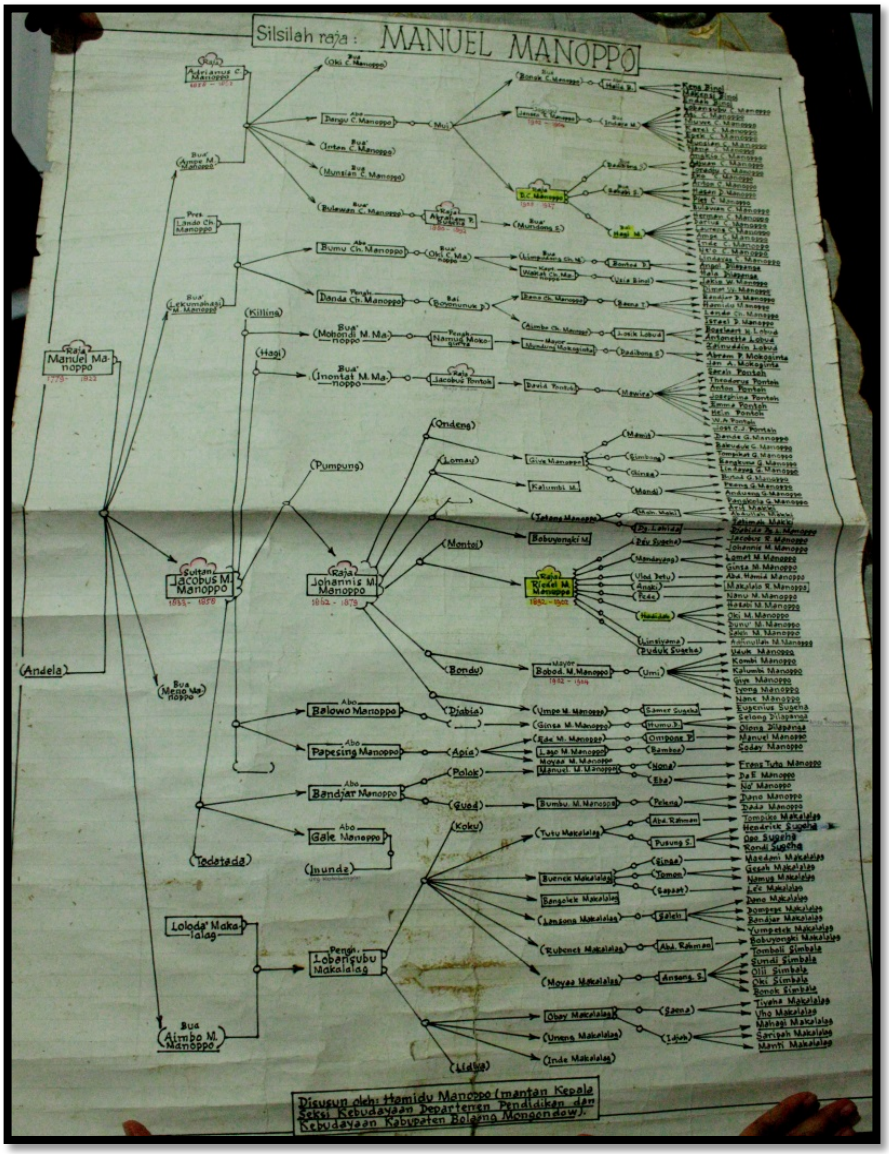

Figure 4.1. A genealogy of Bolaang-Mongondow chiefs (owned by Mr. Ferry Manoppo, Desa Ambang Satu, 2013)

[24] Fritz Schulze, *Abstammung und Islamisierung als Motive der Herrschaftslegitimation in der traditionellen malaiischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. Brend Nothofer, Mathias Diederich, and Fritz Schulze, Frankfurter Forschungen zu Südostasien (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2004), 37.
[25] William Cummings, "Re-Evaluating State, Society and the Dynamics of Expansion in Precolonial Gowa," in *Asian Expansions: The Historical Experiences of Polity Expansion in Asia*, ed. Geoff Wade (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), 217.

The conspicuous absence of Syarif Aluwi's marriage to Putri Sarah in the local histories of Bolaang-Mongondow indeed contrasts with the prominence of foreign (usually of Arab descent) figures in the narratives of Islamization in other parts of the region.[26]

The above section illustrates that the reception of Islam in north Sulawesi lagged behind that of other areas in the Indonesian archipelago. This lag can be explained by the Dutch East India Company's long-lasting influence in north Sulawesi. However, it can also be attributed to the likely absorption of Islam into the older and deeper regime of kinship networks and hierarchies that had long underpinned the authority of the region's political elite. As such, conversions would have been limited largely to the elites who regarded Islam as a mark of differentiation between themselves and their subjects and as a resource to compete with other elites for power, status, and position in a manner not dissimilar to their use of Christianity in earlier times. The next sections explore this idea.

2.1. Islam and the Dutch

As the eighteenth century drew to a close, Dutch East India Company functionaries pondered on possible scenarios once the financially troubled Company withdrew from the region.

> If this Residency [Manado] were to be dissolved, the entire coast of Sulawesi from Makassar to Manado would be open to the enemies. The piratical Maguindanao, Ilanun, Tidung and Berau would arrive once they know of the Company's withdrawal. From their own swampy and infertile lands they would come to these fertile and gold-rich coasts. Meanwhile the Alfurs [upland animists][27] of this region will retreat again to the uplands where their forefathers had lived for centuries. Otherwise they would become slaves to these pirates.[28]

In addition, the Sangir islands and those under the rule of Ternate would also not be "spared by the Maguindanao, Tidung and Ilanun" because of their abundance of sea-worthy timber. Also, Gorontalo and Minahasa, whose various chiefs had enjoyed Company protection

[26] See for instance the stories of Islamization of Brunei, Sulu and Mindanao.

[27] For a contextualization of the term, *alfur*, see Gene Moore, "Who are the Alfuros?," *Conradiana* 39, no. 3 (2007). This is the origin of the still-current Tagalog term, *alipores*, meaning henchmen. It probably originated from the Ternatan slaves brought to Luzon by the Spaniards after their defeat by the Dutch in the 1670s. For an introductory history, see Esteban A De Ocampo, *The Ternateños: Their History, Language, Customs, and Traditions* (Manila: National Historical Institute, 2007).

[28] NA Comité Oostindische Handel inv. 2.01.27.01, no. 88 (1794-1795).

and legitimation in exchange for gold or rice trade monopolies, "were to be conquered by the Mandar, Bugis and Parigi peoples."[29] Although these predictions did not materialize, they hint at what were then real possibilities. The decline of the Dutch East India Company broadened the economic space for greater participation by groups like the Bugis and Iranun, who were less organized but as ambitious as the Company.

The closing decades of the eighteenth century have been characterized both as a period of the Company's decline and the rise of indigenous commerce (which included practices that were regarded as acts of "piracy") in the Indonesian archipelago.[30] The growth of the archipelago's economy during these decades reflected a movement from a first stage—what Reid calls an "Age of Commerce"—to a "second stage of trade expansion."[31] The first stage, as mentioned above, saw the decline of the Dutch East India Company and the rise of indigenous commerce while the second stage saw the entrance of the Dutch colonial state as a major economic player. Earlier studies of increasing trade connectivity often reduce them to the restrictive trope of piracy bereft of any shared supra-local affiliation beyond the family[32] while Islam is generally seen as having little or no role in the economic growth of the period.

However, records from the Dutch East India archives show not only a growing concern with "piracy" but also with Islam. In 1769, the Company discovered that two Tombelo children were studying Islam in Maguindanao. The Tombelo chief, Marapati, who was the father of one

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[29] The Mandar and Bugis traders—often accused by the Company of engaging in predatory raids, cheating, and opium-addiction—occupied key settlements along the Tomini gulf. NA Comité Oostindische Handel inv. 2.01.27.01, no. 88 (1794-1795).

[30] Leonard Blussé, "Changes of Regime and Colonial State Formation in the Malay Archipelago, 1780-1830--an Invitation to an International Project" (ARI Working Paper No. 41: Asia Research Institute -Singapore: 2005); Anthony Reid, "Global and Local in Southeast Asian History," *International Journal of Asian Studies* 1, no. 1 (2004). For detailed studies of specific regions in Indonesia, Muridan Widjojo, *The Revolt of Prince Nuku: Cross-cultural Alliance-making in Maluku, c. 1780-1810* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009); Atsushi Ota, *Changes of Regime and Social Dynamics in West Java: Society, State and the Outer World of Banten, 1750-1830* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006). These changes were not in any way confined to Southeast Asia, see Alicia Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka, 1780-1815: Expansion and Reform* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007).

[31] Reid, "Global and Local in Southeast Asian History."

[32] See, for instance, Teddy Sim, *Piracy and Surreptitious Activities in the Malay Archipelago and Adjacent Seas, 1600-1840* (Singapore: Springer, 2014); Adrian B. Lapian, *Orang Laut, Bajak Laut, Raja Laut: Sejarah Kawasan Laut Sulawesi Abad XIX* (Jakarta: Komunitas Bambu, 2009); James Francis Warren, *The Sulu Zone, 1768-1898: The Dynamics of External Trade, Slavery and Ethnicity in the Transformation of a Southeast Asian Maritime State* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981); Joseph N. F. M. a Campo, "Discourse without Discussion: Representations of Piracy in Colonial Indonesia 1816-25," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 34, no. 2 (2003); G. Teitler, A. M. C. van Dissel, and J. N. F. M. a Campo, *Zeeroof en zeeroofbestrijding in de Indische archipel (19de eeuw)* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 2005).

of the children, had to reassure the Company that he was a Christian and to pretend that the children had been brought to Maguindanao without his knowledge by a brother-in-law who lived in Sulu.[33] However, it was very likely that Marapati consented to his child's education in Maguindanao, perhaps because he was aware of an able Islamic religious teacher living there—Abdul Majid Mindanawi, a *Shafiite* teacher who had written an introductory theological treatise while in Aceh[34] perhaps when he was returning to his Mindanao homeland.[35]

However, one could argue that the spread of Islam in north Sulawesi—especially in the extreme north-western coast—had started much earlier. In 1724 a Dutch *predikant*, Dominicus Sell, lamented that in Buol and various places along the north Sulawesi coast, several women had become Muslims through marriage with Maguindanao, Mandar, and Tolitoli men. He complained further that the Company-backed Christian raja of Kaidipang had permitted the daughter of his *jogugu* (the chief who served as the raja's second in-command) to marry and openly live with a Muslim man from Kaili.[36] However, such occurrences were stopped by the permanent presence of a Dutch outpost in the region.

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[33] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8137 (Ternate), Letter of Gov of Ternate Hermannus Munink to Gov Gen Albertus van der Parra, May 1770, 35-36. For the Company, a *leenman* (vassal) establishing close relations with the Maguindanaos was greatly alarming. The Maguindanaos had been long represented the unpacifiable Muslim "other." Robertus Padtbrugge described them as "*wargeesten, herdtvechtige moorsche papen, schijnheilige in haar godsdienst, en in der daat heijmelijke stokebranden als meede menige Chineesche…*" (*troublemakers, heartless Moorish papists, and indeed clandestine provocateurs in the same way as many Chinese)* [ANRI Ternate inv. 69, 154-155. A 1699 Company mission to Maguindanao described the people as *"t hier alle menschen eters en moordenaars zijn*" (*here are many cannibals and murderers)*. NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 1637, 101. They have also been described as "*...een volk, dat niet te betrouwen is, daaronder doorgaans eenige hartneckige Moorse papen en heymelyke stoockebranden en verspreiders." (a people that is untrustworthy, among whom are usually some obstinate Moorish papists and clandestine provocateurs),* Pieter van Dam, *Beschrijvinge van de Oostindische Compagnie*, vol. 2, no. 1 ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1931), 46. In the 1760s, the Maguindanaos launched daring expeditions in the Company's northernmost territories (the Sangir archipelago) propelled by the increasing commercial traffic with China and aided by the British presence in nearby Sulu.

[34] Midori Kawashima and Oman Fathurahman, "Islamic Manuscripts of Southern Philippines: A Research Note with Descriptions of Three Manuscripts," *The Journal of Sophia Asian Studies* 29, (2011): 254. Howard T. Fry, *Alexander Dalrymple (1737-1808) and the Expansion of British Trade* (London: Frank Cass and Company, 1970), 136-147. In the same year as sending the Tombelo children for religious studies, the Maguindanaos were also planning to invade Sangir and to install a captive Sangirese prince (Hendrik Paparang) as their own vassal chief in Siau. NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 3277 (Ternate), Secrete Missive from the Gov of Ternate (H. Munnik and Council) to Batavia (Albertus van der Parra), 25 July 1769, 8.

[35] That said, the children carried the Bugis aristocratic title *Daeng*—their names being Daeng Manaku and Daeng Waru—arguably pointing to Marapati's putative familial relations with the Bugis. NA VOC 8137 Ternate, Raad van Politie, 16 August 1769, 108.

[36] Niemeijer et al., *Bronnen betreffende Kerk en School in de gouvernementen Ambon, Ternate en Banda ten tijde van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), 1605-1791: Gouvernement Ternate, 1698-1791*. Rapport

At the height of the Company's influence in the region during the eighteenth century, a formidable string of outposts dotted the north Sulawesi peninsula. The muster-roll of 1,742 shows that the Company stationed 16 personnel, mostly soldiers, in Buol and seven in Tolitoli.[37] The *predikant* from Ternate, who occasionally visited north Sulawesi, noted the presence of a Christian community but often lamented the "deficiency" in numbers and "quality."[38] Because Christianity was broadly considered as an *agama kumpeni* (the Company's religion), it follows that its reach extended (only) as far as Company influence.[39] In the context of early modern north Sulawesi, that influence extended only to the uppermost layer of local society, the raja and his family in particular.

With the decline of the Company in the later eighteenth century, chiefs who professed Christianity likewise experienced weakened political influence. What has been described in the context of Sangir in the 1780s as Christian communities "almost completely disappeared after much [missionary] labor in the earlier period"[40] is true for the western end of north Sulawesi as well. In the 1760s, the "legitimate" Christian chief of Buol, Markus Ponto, complained of "disobedience" among his supposedly Muslim subaltern chiefs.[41] By 1781, the paramount chief of Buol was not a Christian but a Muslim with an explicitly Islamic name: Muhammad Syarafudin, also known as Balamogila. He was known to have completed a pilgrimage to Mecca.[42] Despite the clear preference of the Company for a Christian vassal, Muhammad Syarafudin was eventually confirmed as chief, although he took his oath with the Quran.[43]

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betreffende een visitatie van kerken en scholen in Noord-Sulawesi en de Sangihe-Talaud Archipel, Ds. Dominicus Sell, 1 November 1724, 153.

[37] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8144 (1742), 207-212.

[38] See for instance, Niemeijer et al., *Bronnen betreffende Kerk en School in de gouvernementen Ambon, Ternate en Banda ten tijde van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), 1605-1791: Gouvernement Ternate, 1612-1697*, 265.

[39] See Chr. G. F. de Jong, H. E. Niemeijer, and M. van Selm, "Nieuwe bronnen tot de geschiedenis van het christendom in Maluku (1605-1935), Vondsten, thema's en oriëntaties," *Documentatieblad voor de Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Zending en Overzeese Kerken* 4, no. 2 (1997).

[40] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 3597, Copie berigt van den predikant Huther wegens zijne gedane kerk en school visite in de Sangirsche Eilanden, Quandang, Gorontalo en de daar onder sorteerende contrijen, gedateerd 27 April 1781, 553-563.

[41] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8136 (1768), Letter of H. Munnik and Council to Batavia, July 1768, 14.

[42] F. A. E. van Wouden, "Mythen en maatschappij in Boeol," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 81, (1941): 389.

[43] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 3597 (Ternate), Meeting of the Raad van Politie, 15 August 1781, 545.

The Company's long-standing fear of north Sulawesi "falling into the hands of Islam" was gradually realized.[44] By the beginning of the nineteenth century, not only were Buol and Tolitoli's chiefs Muslims, the chief of Kaidipang had also converted to Islam during the British interlude.[45] However, Bolaang-Mongondow along with the micro-polity of Bolaang Itang still remained "nominal Christians"[46] as described by the colonial functionary, E. Francis, when he toured the region in 1846. What could explain this seeming delay?

2.2. Arabs in north Sulawesi

Coinciding with the rise of Islam was the more conspicuous presence of Arab figures in the region. Syarif Aluwi, who married Putri Sarah sometime in 1832,[47] was most likely one of the first Arabs to have substantial contact with inland Mongondow. By the 1860s, the *hakim*—the highest religious official in Mongondow based in Kotabangon—was also likely an Arab or a person of Arab-descent.[48] He was known only by the appellation, Tuan Syarif.[49] Alongside a certain Bugis hajji living in Bolaang, they were known to have wielded considerable political and religious influence among the populace.[50] However, their actual influence in Bolaang-Mongondow was incomparable to the high degree of authority other Arabs achieved elsewhere in north Sulawesi in an earlier or contemporaneous period.

It is difficult to ascertain when the Arabs began to penetrate the region. Although it is likely that as in other parts of the archipelago, they increased in number and influence "as Dutch power declined in the course of the eighteenth century."[51] In neighboring Sulu and

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[44] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 11253 (Ternate) Memorie wegens den presenten staat der Molucckos opgesteld door Jacob van Schoonderwoert afgaande Gouverneur en Directeur van Ternaten tot narigt van zijnen succeseur Hendrik Breton, 24 July 1766

[45] ANRI Manado inv. 48, no. 4; Bundle: Verslag van de rijkjes en negorijen ten westen van Manado gelegen, Pietermaat, Resident van Manado, 31 December 1833.

[46] ANRI Manado inv. 50, no.2, Register der aanteekeningen van den Kommissaris voor Menado, 1846 Verslag van den Kommissaris van Menado: Tweede Afdeeling, 22r.

[47] On doubts regarding the veracity of this year, see note 18 above.

[48] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1221, 28.

[49] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], Letter of RM Bosscher, Manado to GG, 27 April 1861.

[50] Ibid.

[51] William G. Clarence-Smith, "The Rise and Fall of Hadhrami Shipping in the Indian Ocean, c. 1750- c. 1940," in *Ships and the Development of Maritime Technology in the Indian Ocean*, ed. David Parkin and Ruth Barnes (Routledge Curzon, 2002), 230.

Maguindanao, as a few extant accounts show, Arabs with connections in the Indonesian archipelago had been active as early as the 1780s, though they had probably ventured into the region decades earlier. Paduka Sayyid Syarif Abdullah Magaribi, a merchant likely based in Sulu, distributed commercial passes to vessels, including Chinese ships, perhaps to endorse friendly merchants to his associates based in other ports.[52] A certain Syarif Hassan, "who was a close family member of the raja of Banten," was a trader in Sulu in 1780.[53] Another "*syarif*" named Makarik, who lived in Maguindanao, was recorded to have freed captured slaves in exchange for a later payment for manumission.[54]

These Arabs were likely "a distinct community with wealth and influence out of proportion to their numbers."[55] Their wealth was derived from inter-island commerce with ships that were the largest and longest ranging of any other fleet operating in Indonesian waters except that of the Dutch.[56] As a group, the Arabs had traditionally competed with European burgers. A mid-nineteenth century colonial report on north Sulawesi reveals that the Arabs had "inflicted much damage to European private trade" by offering textiles and other goods at a lower price.[57] One can extrapolate that such had been the case since their entrance into the scene in the closing decades of the previous century, especially after the Company divested itself of the textile monopoly in 1795 in favor of private traders.[58]

In the nineteenth century, Arabs were known to offer more competitive prices for cacao, coffee, and rice—the foremost products of the uplands— putting the Arabs in direct competition with European burgers (*borgo*).[59] The opening of Manado and Kema as free ports in 1849[60] and of other smaller ports in the so-called "self-governing regions"[61] in 1859[62] as well as the

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[52] NA Comite Oostindische Handel inv. 2.01.27.01, no. 91 (1794-1795), Letter from Ternate to Amsterdam, J. G. Budach, 30 July 1795.
[53] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8141 (Ternate), Report on the situation of the northern coast of Sulawesi (1780).
[54] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8141, (Ternate) Meeting of the Political Council, 15 February 1780, 47.
[55] Anthony Reid, "Nineteenth-century Pan-Islam Below the Winds," in *An Indonesian Frontier : Acehnese and Other Histories of Sumatra* (Singapore: NUS Publishing, 2005), 230.
[56] Clarence-Smith, "The Rise and Fall of Hadhrami Shipping in the Indian Ocean, c. 1750- c. 1940," *Ships and the Development of Maritime Technology in the Indian Ocean*, 230.
[57] ANRI Manado inv. 48, no. 4, Politiek Verslag 1859.
[58] NA Comité Oostindische Handel inv. 2.01.27.01, no. 88 (1794-1795), 21 February 1795 [Ternate], 103.
[59] Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society; Minahasa, 1677-1983*, 56.
[60] NA Ministry of Colonies inv. 2.10.01, no. 2710, 8 September 1848.
[61] "Zelfbesturende landschappen."
[62] NA Ministry of Colonies inv. 2.10.02, no. 9117 [Besluit Gouverneur-Generaal Geheim], 19 July 1859 La. E2.

legislation allowing Arab ships to participate in coastal trade in 1850[63]—all encouraged Arabs to settle in north Sulawesi,[64] although their freedom of movement was greatly curtailed.

As in other port towns of the colony, the Arabs had "to live in special cantonments in the main towns, and apply for a pass every time they wished to leave their place of residence."[65] Manado in the 1860s already had a separate *kampong cina* (Chinese quarter) and a *kampong Islam* (Muslim quarter).[66] By 1894, Manado had a *kampong Arab* that was separate from the original *kampong Islam*.[67] Arabs were allowed to establish shops in what seemed to have been a more secure neighborhood of the *kampong cina*, but they were forbidden to reside there.[68] Whereas the Chinese were permitted by the government to trade in upland Minahasa for short of periods of time, the Arabs as well as the Bugis were not.[69]

The prohibition to trade in the Minahasan uplands was rooted mainly in the colonial government's fear of Arab proselytization. The increasing number of Arabs in mid-nineteenth century north Sulawesi was deemed undesirable because of their "never slumbering proselytism."[70] A case in point is a certain "Tuan Arab" who stayed in Manado between 1864 and 1866 and who attempted to convert his Christian Minahasan laborers. He was popular and well respected by his native subordinates who praised him for generosity and kindness. One of the Minahasans was a certain Markus Tengko, who was most favored by the Tuan Arab and was seen as praying alongside the Tuan and donning Arab clothes. The news troubled the European

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[63] Clarence-Smith, "The Rise and Fall of Hadhrami Shipping in the Indian Ocean, c.1750-c.1940," *Ships and the Development of Maritime Technology in the Indian Ocean*, 231-232.

[64] See for instance the requests of the Syekh Ismail bin Umar Bawadjir and Syekh Ali bin Saleh bin Hara Hara to settle in Manado in 1857. ANRI Manado inv. 23, no. 3, Decisions of the Resident of Menado 1857, nos. 131-132.

[65] Anthony Reid, "Nineteenth Century Pan-Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 26, no. 2 (1967): 270.

[66] ANRI Manado inv. 30, no. 2, Besluit, 12 January 1860.

[67] Martin Slama, "Translocal Networks and Globalisation within Indonesia: Exploring the Hadhrami Diaspora from the Archipelago's North-East," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 39, (2011): 242; Martin Slama, "Paths of Institutionalization, Varying Divisions, and Contested Radicalisms: Comparing Hadhrami Communities in Java and Sulawesi," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 31, no. 2 (2011): 332.

[68] See the case of Syekh Ahmad Hamis bin Waber, a trader in Manado who requested the colonial government to be able to rent a house in *kampong cina* to "safely store goods and money." But his request was turned down. ANRI Manado inv. 30, no. 2, Besluit, 12 January 1860.

[69] ANRI Manado inv. 48, no. 4, Politiek Verslag 1859.

[70] Ibid.

Christian missionaries who sought and succeeded to pull Markus Tengko from Manado back to his upland village.[71]

The colonial government's anxiety over the Arabs' supposed detrimental influence, especially among the already Islamized population of north Sulawesi, was partly rooted in the natives' high regard for those Arabs living in their midst. In 1854, a certain Syekh Syarif Abdullah bin Umar Badip, who had been sentenced to chained labor by the colonial court in Ambon for homicide, was discovered to be roaming freely in north Sulawesi.[72] Non-elite locals venerated him while the Muslim chiefs of Bolaang-Uki permitted, if not assisted, his subsequent escape to southern Sulawesi.

However, the most illustrious of the Arabs during this period was perhaps Syarif Ali of Buol, who was considered of "sacred" descent (*cucu rasulullah orang berkati*). He was honored throughout north Sulawesi[73] like other Arabs scattered in Maluku, Java, Borneo, and elsewhere in the archipelago.[74] In 1875, Syarif Ali was reputed to be already 120 years old.[75] Reputed to have magical powers, he was widely believed to have originated from Mecca and to have journeyed to Sulawesi on his magical prayer mat that he also used to return for the *hajj*.[76]

Precise and extensive information on Syarif Ali in particular and Arabs in Sulawesi in general has traditionally been difficult to collect. Even J. G. F. Riedel, the *peranakan* European "enlightened scholar"[77] and colonial official[78] who possessed a broad information network, conceded that "accurate and reliable information" was difficult to acquire because the "chiefs

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[71] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1186, J. A. T. Schwarz, Letter to NZG Director 1877, 5.

[72] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], Letter of the Governor-General to the Minister of Colonies, 6 March 1876.

[73] The source mentions Buol, Limbotto, Gorontalo, Attingola, Kaidipan, Bolaang Itang, Bintauna, Bolaang Uki, and Bolaang Mongondow. NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], Letter of Asst. Resident Riedel, Gorontalo to the Resident of Menado, 16 September 1875.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid.

[76] NA Memories van Overgave inv. 2.10.39, no. 309, Onderafdeeling Bwool, Algemeene Memorie van Overgave, 27 July 1917, Gezaghebber W. J. D. van Andel.

[77] Riedel spent ten years of education in Germany, met the famed Alexander von Humboldt, and was in constant correspondence with European scholars of the day. Interestingly, the Filipino writer and hero, Jose Rizal, in his own correspondence with European scholars, was critical of Riedel's forays into Tagalog linguistics. See Benedict E. O'G. Anderson, *Why Counting Counts: A Study of Forms of Consciousness and Problems of Language in Noli Me Tangere and El Filibusterismo* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2008), 6.

[78] See M. J. C. Schouten, "Nineteenth-Century Ethnography in West Timor and the Wider World: The Case of J. G. F. Riedel," *Journal of Asian History* 48, no. 2 (2014).

remain silent or intentionally disseminate contradictory information."[79] However, Riedel learned that Syarif Ali "spent numerous years in Aceh" and that the events in troubled "Aceh is the usual topic of discussion among the chiefs, nobles, Arabs and Bugis in Buol."[80] The Dutch invasion of Aceh in 1873 very likely provoked one of Syarif Ali's sons named Mansur. He and members of his Sufi *tarekat* (brotherhood) launched a suicidal assault against the fort at Manado in 1875.[81] Contemporary eyewitness accounts seem to suggest that many of the participants in the attack practiced mystical rituals of invulnerability (*debus*).[82]

Aside from the colonial sources, patchy local histories reveal clues to Syarif Ali's background. The Syekh Syarif Ali identified in Mandarese sources[83] is almost certainly the same Syarif Ali of Buol. If so, it can be established that before Syarif Ali arrived in Buol around 1825,[84] he first settled in the Mandarese-speaking region of Majene, where he married a native named Manaq and fathered three sons who eventually lived in different Mandarese settlements.[85] Some Mandar people are known to have served as sailors for the Arabs[86] and were later settlers in Buol.[87] The Mandar region logically served as the waypoint for sojourners bound for north Sulawesi. Meanwhile, Syarif Ali's brother, Syarif Husein, settled in the well-known Arab enclave of Cikoang in south Sulawesi.[88]

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[79] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], Letter of Asst. Resident Riedel, Gorontalo to the Resident of Menado, 16 September 1875.
[80] Ibid.
[81] See NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal].
[82] Ibid. See also a lyric poem on the event: *Boek panton deri waktu Bwool masok di Menado pada tahoen 1876*, (Menado: Menadosche Drukkerij, 1900). On *debus*, see Martin van Bruinessen, "*Shari'a* Court, *Tarekat* and *Pesantren:* Religious Institutions in the Banten Sultanate," *Archipel* 50, (1995): 188.
[83] Suradi Yasil, *Ensiklopedi Sejarah, Tokoh dan Kebudayaan Mandar* (Makassar: Lembaga Advokasi dan Pendidikan Anak Rakyat/ Forum Studi dan Dokumentasi Sejarah dan Kebudayaan Mandar, 2004), 5.
[84] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], Letter of Asst. Resident Riedel, Gorontalo to the Resident of Menado, 16 September 1875.
[85] Yasil, *Ensiklopedi Sejarah, Tokoh dan Kebudayaan Mandar*, 5.
[86] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8141, Rapport bij wijse van dagverhaal opgesteld, ende overgegeven aan den Wel Edele Gestrenger Heer Mr. Jacob Roeland Thomaszen Gouverneur en Directeur benevens den Rade der Moluccos behelsende het voor gevallene op de door de ondergeteekende commissianten gedane expeditie en commissie langs Celebes Noord Westkust tot Dondo [Toli-toli],112.
[87] ANRI Manado inv. 51, no. 3, Politiek Verslag 1853.
[88] Yasil, *Ensiklopedi Sejarah, Tokoh dan Kebudayaan Mandar*, 5.On Cikoang's Arab community, see Muhamad Hisyam, *Sayyid-Jawi: Studi Kasus Jaringan Sosial de Desa Cikoang Kecamatan Mangarabombang, Kabupaten Takalar, Sulawesi Selatan* (Jung Pandang: Pusat Latihan Penelitian Ilmu-ilmu Sosial, Universitas Hasanuddin, 1983).

Riedel's report identifies Syarif Ali's three other sons: the famed Syarif Mansur of Buol, Syarif Mahmud of Attingola, and Syarif Muhammad of Paleleh. Syarif Ali married a daughter of the Buol raja and thus became related to the chiefly families of neighboring Kaidipang, Bolaang-Itang,[89] and Tolitoli.[90] It is thought that because of these ties, Syarif Ali and his sons were "convinced that they would not be betrayed by the rajas" despite their "open contempt for Europeans and Christians."[91]

After the failed invasion of the colonial fort of Manado by Syarif Mansur in 1875, Syarif Ali himself escaped to Bulungan in eastern Kalimantan for fear of retribution.[92] The colonial authorities eventually forbade the Arab "tuans" and their descendants in Buol to return to north Suluwesi although it is clear that Syarif Ali—at least his body—eventually returned. His grave in Tanjung Dako was considered sacred (*keramat*),[93] which locals visited on Fridays. (The graves of two ancient chiefs, Hulubalang and Kalimu were visited on Mondays and Thursdays.)[94] In 1938, Syarif Ali's grave was reportedly washed away by the Buol River.[95]

Syarif Ali and his sons were known to be active proselytizers, likely combining trade with proselytization. They were known to sail around north Sulawesi where they received honor and even gifts from the Muslim chiefs and their subjects.[96] They frequented Bintauna "to preach Islam" among "recent Muslim converts" (*orang Islam baru*).[97] One of Syarif Ali's sons, Muhammad, sponsored the building of a mosque in Paleleh and promoted the conversion of small, itinerant traders known in colonial sources as "rovers."[98]

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[89] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], Letter of Asst. Resident Riedel, Gorontalo to the Resident of Menado, 16 September 1875.

[90] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], Letter of the Posthouder of Tontoli, Gerrit van Zolingen to the Gov of Celebes en Onderhoorigheden. Tontoli 26 September 1875.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] NA Memories van Overgave inv. 2.10.39, no. 309, Onderafdeeling Bwool, Algemeene Memorie van Overgave, 27 July 1917, Gezaghebber W. J. D. van Andel.

[94] Riedel, "Het landschap Boeool; Korte aantekeningen," 206-207.

[95] NA Losse Aanwisten Indische Bestuursambtenaren inv. 2.22.09, no. 4 (2), Algemeene Memorie van den aftrendenden Controleur van Boeol R. Venema (7 Jui 1937- 14 September 1938), 10.

[96] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], Letter of Asst. Resident Riedel, Gorontalo to the Resident of Menado, 16 September 1875.

[97] Ibid.

[98] NA (Ministry of Colonies) inv. 2.10.02, inv. 6078, 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], Letter of Wolterbeek Muller, Commandant of the steamship *Z. M. Banca* to the Vice-Admiral of the Navy, Netherlands Indies, Menado, 5 October 1875.

The close relationship between Islam and trade was not specific to this region. It has been observed elsewhere that "independent coastal rulers allegedly accorded Hadhrami *sayyid* shippers a remission of duties, on account of their 'superior sanctity.'"[99] Also, Muslim merchants in eastern Indonesia were known to prefer ports ruled by Muslim chiefs who provided mosques as well as protection.[100] Mosques, in particular, offered a place where Muslim traders could meet and gain a deeper understanding of Islam in these coastal polities.

When trade had been the monopoly of the aristocratic elites, no actual trade could commence without the raja's consent. In seventeenth century Maguindanao, for instance, trading was particularly ritualistic and tedious. Foreign merchants had to first wait for an audience with the Sultan before actual trade could begin. The wait itself could take up to nine days, usually on board the merchants' vessels.[101] The mosques which the Arab *sayyids* of north Sulawesi had been eager to construct may be an indication of the emergence of a more open economy in which the aristocratic raja played a less direct and dominant role. This is because mosques became the meeting point for local and foreign traders to conduct business in an arguably less ritualistic and more casual manner that was largely autonomous from the raja.

The Arabs also traded in Bolaang-Mongondow. Syarif Mansur himself was known to have engaged in commerce in Bolaang prior to his infamous suicidal attack on Manado in 1875.[102] However, his and other Arabs' influence in Bolaang-Mongondow seemed muted compared with other regions. The "foreign" Arabs and Bugis did not achieve the same political prominence in Bolaang-Mongondow as they did in the polities in north Sulawesi's extreme west.[103] Instead, in Bolaang-Mongondow there was a continuity of the old tributary pattern of the raja relying on the Dutch to acquire prestige goods and firearms to centralize his rule.

Originals of the letters written by the raja to the Resident in Manado as late as the 1820s show fervent requests for firearms (*snapang*) and textiles (*barang-barang kain-kain*) in exchange

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[99] Clarence-Smith, "The Rise and Fall of Hadhrami Shipping in the Indian Ocean, c. 1750- c. 1940," *Ships and the Development of Maritime Technology in the Indian Ocean*, 232.

[100] Leonard Andaya, "Cultural State Formation in Eastern Indonesia," in *Southeast Asia in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Anthony Reid (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1993), 35.

[101] Ruurdje Laarhoven, *The Triumph of Moro Diplomacy: The Maguindanao Sultanate in the 17th Century* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1989), 167.

[102] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Besluit 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal], Perjalanan Hulu Jaksa menurut surat putusan [memorandum] Tuwan Resident Manado tanda 1 September 1875 No. 136 naik kapal api Eijron kapitein Bloem pada pergi kerajaan sebelah utara dari Pulau Celebes.

[103] Riedel, "Het landschap Boeool; Korte aantekeningen," 197.

for money (*kupang* or *rupia*).[104] These commodities were necessary to strengthen the raja's position as the paramount ruler. He complained that 123 villages (*kampung*) had not paid their taxes[105] and that even after six years after his ascension as raja, he had not visited the villages of Mongondow, perhaps because of the hostility of the villagers and their respective chiefs.[106]

However, the question remains: despite the presumably available economic, political, and religious capital offered by the Arabs, why did the raja's official conversion occur only in 1846 and widespread conversions only a decade later?

2.3. Islam and the indigenous elite

To understand why Bolaang-Mongondow seems to have been insulated from the earlier wave of Islamization in most of north Sulawesi, one could perhaps begin from a rather telling observation of an early twentieth century colonial official. He observed that the peoples of Buol and Tolitoli were particularly receptive to ideas of Islamic "modernism" originating from Java while those of the "more developed" regions of Bolaang-Mongondow and Gorontalo were not. The peoples of Bolaang-Mongdow "refused to be ensnared" by the "illusion of freedom from taxes and corvée labor," and their respective nobilities stood in opposition against the Muslim "modernists."[107]

This observation is helpful in highlighting the traditional opposition of the local nobility—or at least segments of it—to Islamizing forces. Bolaang-Mongondow and Gorontalo differ from other north Sulawesi polities in that the local nobility remained intact, and perhaps even stronger, after Islamization. On the other hand, the lack of an influential and enduring indigenous elite class in Buol and Tolitoli[108] prefigured not only the rise of the foreign Arabs in the nineteenth century but also of Islamic modernism in the twentieth century, both of which

[104] ANRI Manado inv. 15, no. 1, Letter (in Malay) of the raja of BM to the Resident, 30 August 1827.
[105] ANRI Manado inv. 15, no. 1, Letter (in Malay) of the raja of BM to Resident D. F. W. Pietermaat, Molobog Tanah Mera 3 September 1828.
[106] ANRI Manado inv. 15, no. 1, Letter (in Malay) of the raja of BM to Resident Wenzel, 9 August 1829.
[107] NA Memories van Overgave inv. 2.10.39, no. 306, Memorie van Overgave van de Residentie Menado, A. Ph. van Aken, 1932.
[108] See references concerning the political marginalization of the *omboe kilano* or the "descendants of the founders" who had been traditionally involved in the selection of the apical ruler (*madika*), Wouden, "Mythen en maatschappij in Boeol," 335-336; 389.

challenged the indigenous elite. A closer examination of Gorontalo might explain these dynamics further.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, foreign-born Arabs were precluded from occupying Gorontalo's uppermost chiefly offices traditionally reserved for the indigenous elite. The politics of legitimacy in Gorontalo continued to be dictated by the dynamics within and among the five major settlements—Gorontalo, Limbotto, Bolango[109], Bone,[110] and Attingola[111] —which constituted the *limo lo poholaa* (the confederacy of the five).[112] Whereas descent from Wadi Palapa, the Buginese[113] founder of the aforementioned confederacy of the *limo lo poholaa* had been a traditional prerequisite qualification to rule,[114] the Arab genealogical qualification seems to have been relatively recent.

Aluwi al-Habsyi, the reputed "Arab" ancestor[115] of the ruling family,[116] likely arrived in Gorontalo only between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries at the same time as Arab ascendancy in inter-island shipping.[117] He was likely related in some way to Habib Ali bin Abdullah Alhabsyi who is known to have "migrated to Gorontalo" in the early nineteenth

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[109] Also known as Boalemo.
[110] Composed of Suwawa and Bintauna.
[111] Otherwise known as Andagile.
[112] J. G. F. Riedel, "De landschappen Holontalo, Limoeto, Bone, Boalemo en Kattingola , or Andagile, geographische, statistische, historische en ethnographische aantekeningen," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 19, (1870).
[113] KIT Collection – UB Leiden, BrRG 26, Het Volk van Gorontalo, A. N. Datau, n.d., 36.
[114] ANRI Gorontalo inv. 18, no. 4, La. A, Bijlage Twee, Nota omtrent het tweehofdig bestuur in de landschappen Gorontalo, Limbotto en Boalemo, written by Resident Jansen, Menado, 17 December 1853. That myths function to unite settlements to form a confederacy, see Andaya, "Cultural State Formation in Eastern Indonesia,"*Southeast Asia in the Early Modern Era*. Wadi Palapa is believed to have founded an originary village in the uplands and eventually conquered four downstream settlements, naming himself "King of the Three Mountains" (from which the name Gorontalo is derived). "Lord of the Mountain" was a prestigious royal appellation in many parts of pre-colonial Southeast Asia. Jeya Kathirithamby-Wells, "Socio-political Structures and the Southeast Asian Ecosystem: An Historical Perspective up the Mid-Nineteenth Century," in *Asian Perceptions of Nature: A Critical Approach*, ed. Ole Bruun and Arne Kalland (Curzon Press, 1995), 27; Marie-Sybille de Vienne, *Brunei: From the Age of Commerce to the 21st Century* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2015), 29. It is revealing that several roads in Gorontalo are named after Wadi Palapa, while seemingly none are named after Aluwi al-Habsyi.
[115] He was most likely "Ethiopian" than "Arab."
[116] Riedel, "De landschappen Holontalo, Limoeto, Bone, Boalemo en Kattingola , or Andagile, geographische, statistische, historische en ethnographische aantekeningen," 66.
[117] Clarence-Smith, "The Rise and Fall of Hadhrami Shipping in the Indian Ocean, c. 1750- c. 1940," *Ships and the Development of Maritime Technology in the Indian Ocean*, 230. That Hadhrami shipping and commerce had not yet extended to Gorontalo by the mid-eighteenth century is hinted by repeated requests of the Gorontalo ruler to allow native Muslim pilgrims to be passengers on Company ships. NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 3181 (1766), Meeting Raad van Politie, 11 July 1766, 216.

century and was the uncle of Habib Ali Kwitang, a prominent religious leader (*ulama besar* [Bahasa Indonesia]; *alim* [Arabic]) in late colonial Batavia.[118]

As a group, the foremost leaders of the indigenous elite constituted the *bate-bate,* the 19-member council of local chiefly peers who were "more or less autonomous of the raja"[119] and were known among the locals as the "preservers of tradition."[120] In order to rise above the council and become the *primus inter pares*, an ambitious chief had to distinguish himself through social prestige, greater wealth, and superior military might. Islam—and claimed descent from a *sayyid*—likely provided the aspiring chief an instrument not only to differentiate himself from competing *bate-bate* peers, but also to question the authority of an antagonistic local chief. Monoarfa, the sagacious raja of Gorontalo from the late eighteenth century, exemplifies this.

In the 1760s, Monoarfa succeeded in negotiating the transport of six of his own subjects in a Company vessel for a pilgrimage to Mecca (at least for the Gorontalo-Batavia leg of the journey)[121] despite (or perhaps because) of the laxly enforced[122] prohibition to ferry Muslim pilgrims dating back to 1716.[123] From Batavia onwards, the pilgrims had three options: continue using a Company ship, proceed to Bengkulu to board an English East India Company vessel, or sail through the Straits of Malacca using a "Moorish" vessel via Coromandel and Surat.[124] Sources do not reveal which route the Gorontalo pilgrims took after arriving in Batavia. What is clear, however, is that the Company had a standing order that its own functionaries in Gorontalo should "always serve the pleasure" of Monoarfa.[125] Perhaps that included his desire for selected

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[118] Habib Abdurrahman bin Muhammad Al Habsyi and Prasetyo Sudrajat, *Sumur yang Tak Pernah Kering: Riwayat Habib Ali Alhabsyi Kwitang; 'Dari Kwitang menjadi Ulama Besar'* (Jakarta: Islamic Center Indonesia, 2010), 3.
[119] KIT Collection, UB, BrRG 26, A. N. Datau, Het Volk van Gorontalo, 34-35.
[120] KIT Collection – UB Leiden, BrRG 26, Het Volk van Gorontalo, A. N. Datau, n.d., 35. For an extensive discussion on this institution see, J. Bastiaans, "Batato's in het oude Gorontalo, in verband met den Gorontaleeschen staatsbouw," *TBG* 79, (1939).
[121] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 3181, Meeting Raad van Politie 11 July 1766.
[122] Johan Talens, *Een feodale samenleving in koloniaal vaarwater: Staatsvorming, koloniale expansie en economische onderontwikkeling in Banten, West-Java (1600-1750)* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1999), 157.
[123] Hooker, *Adat Law in Modern Indonesia*, 93; Henri Chambert-Loir et al., *Naik Haji di Masa Silam: Kisah-kisah Orang Indonesia Naik Haji, 1482-1964*, vol. I (1482-1890) (Jakarta: Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2013), 35.
[124] Talens, *Een feodale samenleving in koloniaal vaarwater: Staatsvorming, koloniale expansie en economische onderontwikkeling in Banten, West-Java (1600-1750)*, 157-158.
[125] NA Archief van J. Wttewael en H. van Staveren 1758-1804, inv. 1.10.86, no. 134, Memorie ofte berigt van den Onderkoopman en Afgaande Resident Jan Wttewaall aan desselfs vervanger den meede onderkoopman en aankomende Resident Reijnier Hoque [?], 6.

subjects to be ferried for the purpose of attending the hajj. Monoarfa was a powerful ruler without whose cooperation the Company's gold trade in Gorontalo could not succeed.

Monoarfa's support for the aspiring hajjis was likely meant to enhance his own legitimacy. Monoarfa had been considered by the other elites as inferior because he belonged to a "less illustrious family" in relation to his contemporary and competitor, Walanadi.[126] The later rajas descending from Monoarfa claimed to have descended from a *sayyid* ancestry. This seems to have been an attempt to compensate for their originally contentious entitlement to paramount rulership. Monoarfa's support of Islam in general and of pilgrimage in particular resonates with the contemporaneous attempts of migrant Bugis aristocrats in the Malay archipelago to achieve a "cloak of respectability" amidst political competition.[127] Indeed in the Malay archipelago, Makassar,[128] Gorontalo, and Maluku,[129] elite-sponsored pilgrimages became more frequent in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Monoarfa himself did not perform the pilgrimage, a disposition also shared by other archipelagic rajas, perhaps because as observed elsewhere "extensive absence from the throne and his kingdom might have jeopardized his political ambitions."[130]

One could extrapolate how Monoarfa's sponsorship of the aspiring hajjis benefitted his rule. First and more obviously, religious figures tended to symbolically legitimize the rule of the paramount raja. In Gorontalo, the Islamic religious hierarchy was led by a *kadi* assisted by four *hukum* who not only mediated conflicts[131] but also and more importantly, accompanied the raja in every religious ceremony.[132] The presence of the *kadi* and the *hukum* accorded or added implicit legitimacy to the raja that distinguished him from the rest of the *bate-bate*. Second, the hajjis themselves might undercut, if not directly contest, the power of the *bate-bate* or the other members of the indigenous elite, in effect strengthening the paramount ruler.

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[126] NA Archief van J. Wttewaal, inv. 1.10.86, no. 134, Memorie ofte berigt van den Onderkoopman en Afgaande Resident Jan Wttewaall aan desselfs vervanger den meede onderkoopman en aankomende Resident Reijnier Hoque [?], 10.

[127] Barnard, "The Hajj, Islam, and Power among the Bugis in Early Colonial Riau,"*Southeast Asia and the Middle East: Islam, Movement, and the Longue Durée*, 65-66.

[128] Rahilah Omar, "The History of Boné A.D. 1775-1795: The Diary of Sultan Ahmad as-Salleh Syamsuddin" (PHD. dissertation, University of Hull, 2003), 246.

[129] See for example the case of Hajji Umar (below).

[130] Omar, "The History of Boné A.D. 1775-1795: The Diary of Sultan Ahmad as-Salleh Syamsuddin", 247.

[131] KITLV H 70 Verslagen uit het Gouvernement der Molukken, Algemeen verslag afdeeling Gorontalo…1838, 1839, 1840, Scherius, Civiele Gezaghebber van Gorontalo, May 1840, 16.

[132] KIT Collection, UB, BrRG 26, A. N. Datau, Het Volk van Gorontalo, 34-35.

In Gorontalo, status differences based on familial descent remained a most salient social fact notwithstanding centuries of Islamic presence. [133] There was an elaborate class differentiation unparalleled in adjacent regions: a large nobility,[134] freemen, and several levels of slaves.[135] However, as a historian of south Sulawesi remarks "upward social mobility could also be achieved by those who had undertaken a pilgrimage."[136]

Individuals with religious credentials, hajjis especially, could theoretically disrupt traditional hierarchy based primarily on familial or status descent. As Islamization progressed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the number of religious practitioners (*saraädaä*) in various villages who led the performance of certain rituals likely increased.[137] Returning hajjis acquired social prominence and were even freed from village corvée labor that traditionally benefited the local chief.[138]

It is difficult to ascertain the real extent to which Islamizing figures unsettled the traditional hierarchy, but examples from neighboring Maluku might provide clues. In the late eighteenth century, various figures capitalized on Islamic legitimacy to circumvent the legal and political status quo. In Ternate, a Makassarese named Abdul Malik claimed that a hereditary slave-woman whom he married should be freed along with her children. He argued before the Dutch Political Council (*Raad van Politie*) that his wife and her children "had to be freed by virtue of the marriage and of the Islamic laws." The Sultan of Ternate concurred, but the sultan's concurrence was countered by the Company, which opposed implementing an Islamic proscription.[139] However, perhaps the best example would be Hajji Umar, a Ternate-born[140]

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[133] Gorontalo's rulers converted to Islam as early as 1525. Pelras, *The Bugis*, 130.

[134] In the 1859 census, around 6,500 of Gorontalo's total population (27,500) were of the noble class. ANRI Manado inv. 48, no. 4.

[135] R. Scherius, "Eenige bijdragen tot de kennis en den toestand der afdeeling Gorontalo (eiland Celebes)," *Verhandelingen en Berigten betrekkelijk het Zeewezen en de Zeevartkunde* 7, (1847): 402.

[136] Omar, "The history of Boné A.D. 1775-1795: The diary of Sultan Ahmad as-Salleh Syamsuddin", 247-248.

[137] Ibid.

[138] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 2684, Resumé van de rapporten der hoofden van geweestelijke bestuur op en buiten Java en Madura naar aanleiding van de geheime circulaire van den Directeur van Binnenlandsch Bestuur dd. 11 November 1872 no. 11323.

[139] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 3759, (Ternate) Meeting of the Political Council, 25 September 1786, 22-24.

[140] NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8141, 86; ANRI Ternate inv. 1, Decisions of the Political Council of Ternate, 13 September 1777; ANRI Ternate inv. 81, no. 4, Authentique Afschriften van de Crimineele Proces Papieren contra Hadjie Oemar; NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8141, 86; Andaya, *The World of Maluku: Eastern Indonesia in the Early Modern Period*, 231. D. K. Bassett, *British Trade and Policy in Indonesia and Malaysia in the Late Eighteenth Century*, Hull Monographs on Southeast Asia No. 3 (Hull: Centre for South-east Asian Studies, The University of

trader, royal emissary, and "pirate leader."[141] Likely from a commoner background, he was born in Ternate's Kampong Makassar—originally an enclave of Muslim merchants from south Sulawesi. He established political, commercial, and military connections among the various Muslim polities in the region from the Straits of Malacca to Maluku.[142] His *hajj* credentials—more than any familial link to a local elite family—seem to have allowed his mobility and acceptance among the different, unrelated, and distant polities of the archipelago.

While one can identify isolated figures like Hajji Umar, it is difficult to reconstruct how the hajjis and other religious personalities challenged the indigenous elite. However, the case of the Maranaos of southern Philippines might be a telling example. Religious titles (*imam* and *kadi*) like political titles were always assigned to specific descent lines. This practice was likely a response of the traditional elite to "localize" or "soften" Islam[143] in order for it to co-exist with or be subsumed under the older hierarchy based on familial descent. However, these religious titles were considered inferior to the ones containing a geographic referent (*sulutan* [chief] for example), effectively preserving the primacy of the traditional elite.[144]

If Islam diluted the descent-based hierarchy and legitimized the *primus inter pares*, was it sufficient to underpin the centralization of a fledgling polity?

The case of Gorontalo illustrates that Islamization was not a determining causal factor for political centralization; rather, the direction of causality was the reverse. Gorontalo's rulers—

Hull, 1971), 36. Thomas Forrest, *A Voyage to New Guinea, and the Moluccas from Balambangan, Including an Account of Magindano, Sooloo, and other Islands* (1799). Widjojo, *The Revolt of Prince Nuku: Cross-cultural Alliance-making in Maluku, c. 1780-1810*, 165-166.

[141] Andaya, *The World of Maluku: Eastern Indonesia in the Early Modern Period*, 231. Bassett, *British Trade and Policy in Indonesia and Malaysia in the Late Eighteenth Century*, 36.

[142] Hajji Umar's connections with an emerging regional alliance can be gleaned in his role in the "return"—more likely the ransom—of two European soldiers from Riau. In 1787, the Iranuns of northern Borneo, previously subjects of the sultan of Maguindanao, participated in the siege of Tanjung Pinang in Riau to remove the occupying Dutch forces. NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 3817, Secret Decisions of the Political Council (Ternate), 10 October 1787-6 August 1788, 58-59.

[143] On the issue of "localization, indigenization, or vernacularization" in Southeast Asia, see Craig J. Reynolds, "A New Look at Old Southeast Asia," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 54, no. 2 (1995): 433; Wolters, *History, Culture and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*.

[144] Melvin Mednick, "Encampent of the Lake: The Social Organization of a Moslem-Philipine (Moro) People" (PhD. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1965), 240-241. It is even possible that the Islamization of the Maranaos before the rise of any authority who could monopolize trade and violence was a contributing reason for the absence of a significant unified polity—for example, a sultanate like that of Maguindanao and Sulu. This is because even within the village-level, different families could draw different sources of legitimacy and authority (for example Islam vs. "traditional" authority) without a centralizing authority to reconcile these different claims.

Monoarfa, for instance—solidified his rule and promoted Islam through his tributary relationship with the Dutch East India Company. Without the Company and later the colonial government, the politically and militarily weak Gorontalo rajas "could not require their subjects to dig gold,"[145] Gorontalo's foremost export commodity. Gorontalo came under Company control in 1678 and continuously provided gold deliveries from that year on.[146] However, in exchange for the Company's monopoly, which offered less competitive prices for north Sulawesi gold,[147] Gorontalo's native hierarchy was protected by the Company from outside threats, thereby preserving traditional rule.

The Company—for the interest of greater control—required the construction of a main, organized settlement (*negeri*) where the foremost families should reside.[148] It monopolized the exchange of gold for textiles and later (copper) money through a harbor that it itself controlled.[149] It sheltered Gorontalo from the surge of Mandar, Bugis, and Parigi peoples who desired to "attack and invade Gorontalo." Amidst the rise of "external threats" —the Bugis especially[150]—in the late eighteenth century, one Company functionary wrote: "it is well-known that the Gorontalo peoples after the Menadonese *alfurs* are the most cowardly among those living along the [Tomini] bay, indeed even among those of the entire Sulawesi coast."[151] This remark may be obliquely referring to tension that resulted from Minahasan peoples freeing themselves in the distant past from the Bugis of south Sulawesi who had been their tributary overlords.[152] However, it might also reflect the Gorontalese and Minahasan peoples' inclination to seek political and military support from the Company. Indeed, Gorontalo's close political

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[145] Scherius, "Eenige bijdragen tot de kennis en den toestand der afdeeling Gorontalo (eiland Celebes)," 400.
[146] NA Archief van J. Wttewael en H. van Staveren 1758-1804, inv. 1.10.86, no. 134, Memorie ofte berigt van den Onderkoopman en Afgaande Resident Jan Wttewaall aan desselfs vervanger den meede onderkoopman en aankomende Resident Reijnier Hoque [?], 2.
[147] See for instance, NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 7461, Generaal Extract, 1793, First Quarter, Ternate, 106.
[148] Riedel, "De landschappen Holontalo, Limoeto, Bone, Boalemo en Kattingola , or Andagile, geographische, statistische, historische en ethnographische aantekeningen," 62.
[149] NA Ministry of Colonies inv. 2.10.02, no. 9117 [Besluit Gouverneur-Generaal Geheim], 19 July 1859 La. E2.
[150] See also the "Bugis threat" in the same period in Samarinda (Kalimantan), Broersma, *Handel en bedrijf in Zuid- en Oost-Borneo*, 168.
[151] Ibid.
[152] It is telling that some "indigenous" north Sulawesi aristocratic names were seemingly derived from the names of characters in the south Sulawesi epic, *I La Galigo*. For instance, Gorontalo's Queen Manila from *Bunga Manila* and the Sangirese raja, David Pandjara or Pantjallang, from the Bugis queen, Patyangjala. See further, Andi Zainal Abidin and C. C. Macknight, "The I La Galigo Epic Cycle of South Celebes and Its Diffusion," *Indonesia* 17, (1974), 160-169.

association with the Company caused it to be a prime target for the raids between ca. 1770-1780 by one of those "external threats"—the Maguindanaos.[153]

How does the above discussion on the indigenous elite, Islam, and the Dutch from a broader regional perspective enlighten the Islamic conversions in Bolaang-Mongondow?

Three conclusions can be drawn. First, despite the increasing importance of Islam and Islamizing figures, there was likely a delayed reception among the local elite especially because Islam might disrupt their status- and descent-based hierarchy. Second, an aspiring but politically weak ruler would likely find Islam a useful instrument to centralize previously dispersed power cornered by the indigenous elite. Third, Islam alone could not effectuate political centralization; rather—as in the case of Gorontalo—it was through its vassalage to the Company that Islam flourished. As such, one could say that the Company—as with later political configurations—was "structural in its power, but contingent in its effect."[154] These points resonate with the phenomenon of Islamic conversions in Bolaang-Mongondow in the nineteenth century.

3. Nineteenth-century conversions in Bolaang-Mongondow

Conversions to Islam in Bolaang-Mongondow before the crucial decade of the 1850s appear few and isolated. The incumbent raja and his predecessor appeared to have sought the conversion of their subjects but seem to have been hindered by their limited influence and the likely intransigence of the subaltern chiefs. However, the liberal reforms of the 1850s, colonial taxation especially, enhanced the authority of the coastal raja in upland areas traditionally ruled by the influential and often competitive chiefly class (*abo-abo*). It allowed the circumvention of the local chiefs who had monopolized and mediated trade, and opened the possibility for free individuals to trade along the coast. New converts were exempted from taxation and were allowed to trade in upland areas. These converts also shared the religion of the traditionally status-distant raja and of the increasingly influential *hajji* and *syarif*.

[153]See for example, NA VOC inv. 1.04.02, no. 8141 (Ternate), Generale Missive from Amsterdam to Batavia (1780), 59-60.

[154] Erik Martinez Kuhonta, "Southeast Asia and Comparative-Historical Analysis: Region, Theory, and Ontology on a Wide Canvas," *Pacific Affairs* 87, no. 3 (2014): 488.

3.1. Early conversions: traders and the raja

References to early conversions in the populous Mongondow uplands point to traders as bringers of Islam. Travelling to Mongondow in 1866, European missionaries N. P. Wilken and J. A. Schwarz learned that "in the beginning of this century, there were already a few converts in Kotabunan through the active proselytization of Bugis and Gorontalo traders."[155] Local history particularly identifies a certain Gorontalese trader named Imam Tueko as the bringer of Islam in the remote villages of the upland.[156] However, could traders alone have effectuated mass conversions in Mongondow?

One must perhaps first return to the case of the marriage of the Arab trader, Syarif Aluwi, and the raja's daughter, Putri Sarah, in 1832 (see above).[157] Syarif Aluwi left Bolaang because he did not fulfill the bride price following the Mongondow elite's tradition. What had been demanded would have resembled the bride price asked for in a roughly contemporaneous aristocratic wedding in Mongondow[158]—a large number of porcelain and golden plates, imported textiles, iron, gongs, golden jewelry, and slaves.[159]

The seemingly excessive demands of the Mongondow *mantris* (high-ranking chiefs) for a bride price might be attributed to the position of their polity relative to its neighbors. A reconstruction of inter-elite marriage alliances between adjacent polities in north Sulawesi (see Chart 4.1)[160] reveals that Mongondow and Kaidipang were "wife-givers" while Siau and especially Bolaang-Itang were "wife-takers." The reconstruction shows five Mongondow and six

[155] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1221, 22 March1867, Sonder, 24.
[156] Z. A. Lantong, *Mengenal Bolaang Mongondow* (Kotamobagu: U.D. Asli Totabuan, 1996), 63.
[157] Riedel, "Het landschap Bolaang Mongondow," 277.
[158] For example, the marriage of Jacob Ponto of Siau/Bolaang-Itang with Esther Manoppo of Mongondow sometime in the early 1850s.
[159] The raja and his family and other chiefs were entitled to: "4000 earthenware plates, 30 dozens of porcelain plates, 10 dozen platters, two chests of *madapollam* cloths, 2 chests of blue cotton, 12 slaves, 4 cannons, 5 *pikol* of iron, 12 gongs, 12 set of *kulintang* (each consisting of six pieces), 6 firearms, ½ *kodi* of silk patola; while the princess herself: a piece of golden jewelry and a pair of diamond earrings." HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1221, Wilken and Schwarz, 22 March 1867, Sonder, 25.
[160] For a similar but more detailed reconstruction of indigenous marriage patterns in a society at the eve of Islamization, see Ian Caldwell and Kathryn Wellen, "Family Matters: Bugis Genealogies and their Contribution to Austronesian Studies," *International Journal of Asia Pacific Studies* 12, no. Supp. 1 (2016).

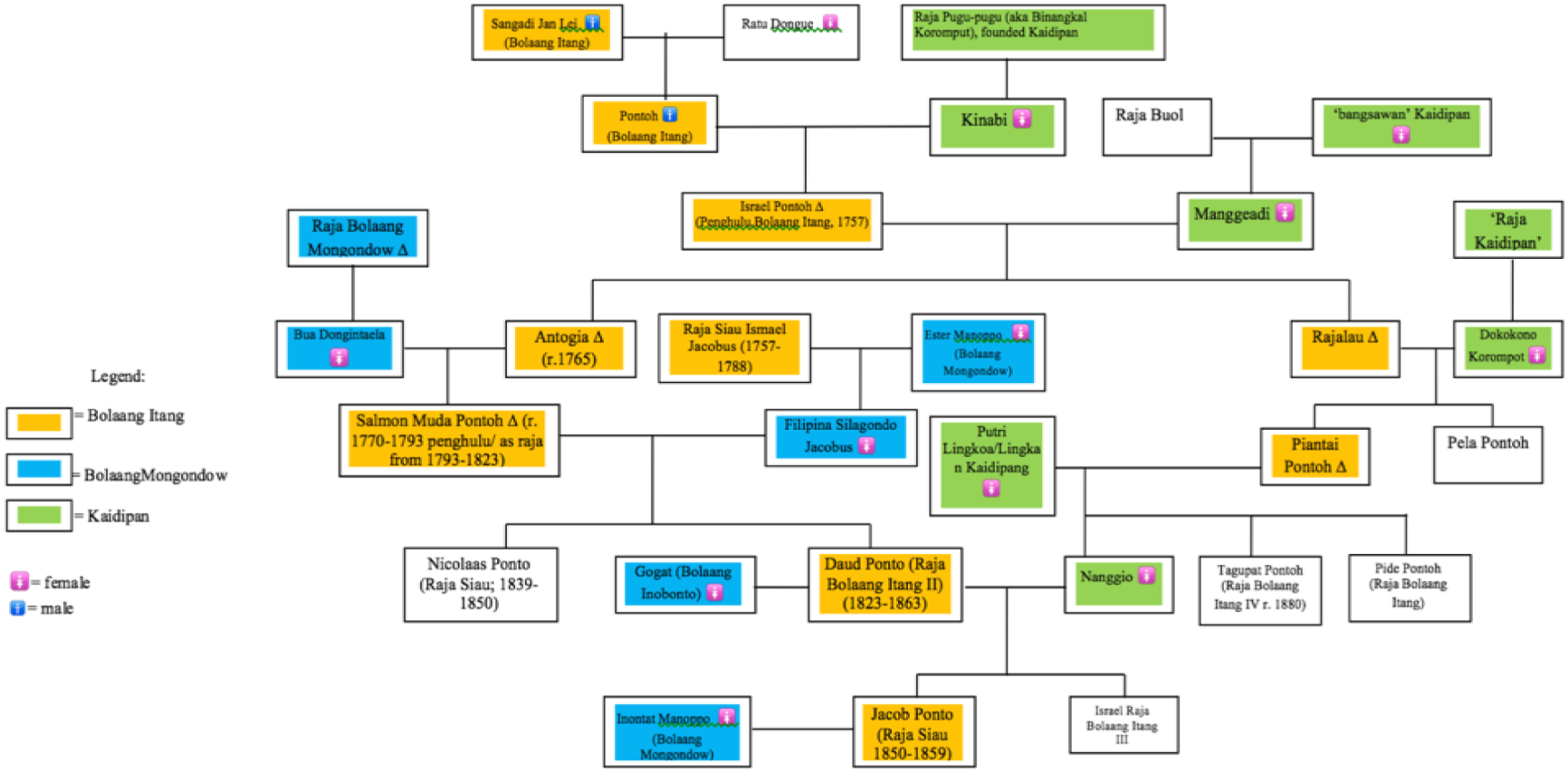
Kaidipang women marrying men from either Siau or Bolaang-Itang. Mongondow was the ultimate wife-giver as it also supplied brides to Kaidipang, a wife-giver polity.[161]

Wife-giver societies in Indonesia and elsewhere were regarded as possessing higher ritual status than their wife-taker counterparts.[162] Wife-giver societies were not only founded earlier[163] but also likely wealthier. The prohibitive bride price demands of the Mongondow elite for its aristocratic women might have served as a barrier for foreign Muslim traders to integrate with the polity's upper classes.

[161] Perpustakaan Nasional Indonesia (PNI), 111 D Sul 1/6, Korte aanteekeningen betreffende geschiedenis van de rigting der grenzen van het landschap Kaidipan in het oorspronkelijke met alsmede vertaling en aanteekeningen door Nederlandsche J. G. F. Riedel.

[162] See Tine Ruiter, "State Policy, Peasantization and Ethnicity: Changes in the Karo Area of Langkat in Colonial Times," in *Tribal Communities in the Malay World: Historical, Cultural and Social Perspectives*, ed. Geoffrey Benjamin and Cynthia Chou(Leiden and Singapore: IIAS and ISEAS, 2002), 411; Gibson, "Egalitarian Islands in a Predatory Sea," in *Anarchic Solidarity: Autonomy, Equality, and Fellowship in Southeast Asia*, 278; James J. Fox, "Precedence in Practice Among the Atoni Pah Meto of Timor," in *Structuralism's Transformations: Order and Revision in Indonesian and Malaysian Societies*, ed. Lorraine V. Aragon and Susan D. Russell, 3-36 (Tempe: Arizona State University, 1999).

[163] It is clear for instance that wife-giver Kaidipan was founded earlier than wife-taker Bolaang-Itang. See ANRI Ternate 18, Raad van Politie, 16 Ag 1769, 13; H. T. Usup, *Sejarah Singkat Kerajaan Kaidipang Besar (Kaidipang dan Bolaang-Itang)*, 2nd ed. (n.p,: no publishers listed, 1979), 30-31.



Source: Usup, H. T. (1979). *Sejarah Singkat Kerajaan Kaidipang Besar (Kaidipang dan Bolaang-Itang* (Second ed.); Elias, H. B. (1973). *Sejarah pergerakan kebangsaan Indonesia di Pulau Siau*. Manado: Markas cabang Legiun Veteran R.I. Kotamadya Manado.

Chart 4.1. Marriage ties between north Sulawesi rulers, 18th-19th centuries

However, for Syarif Aluwi, who left never to return to Bolaang, it was perhaps a case of the "trader's dilemma" or the "dilemma faced by traders aris[ing] out of their moral obligation to share proceeds with kinsfolk and neighbors, on the one hand, and the necessity to make profits and accumulate trading capital, on the other."[164] Syarif Aluwi perhaps lacked the means to pay the bride price or simply saw such an economic exchange (the bride price) as too much capital to pay for access in the Mongondow market. Besides there was no significant market economy to penetrate. The only market places that used monetary exchange at the time were in Manado and Kema.[165]

The local elite appear to have been embedding religion within the deeper economic and political structures in Mongondow through marriages between Muslim outsiders and local women and the maintenance of a high bride price which helped to ensure that only Muslim men with sufficient wealth would enter Mongondow society. In the marriage of a certain Bugis merchant, Anti Latai, with the Mongondorese noblewoman, Hontinimbang, sometime in the second half of the nineteenth century, economic exchange also played an important criterion. In contrast to Syarif Aluwi's marriage with Putri Sarah, that of Andi Latai and Hontinimbang turned out well because the Bugis "succeeded in fulfilling a most expensive dowry" (*perkawinan itupun dapat terlaksana karena Andi Latai dapat memenuhi mas kawin yang sangat mahal sebagai persyaratan)*.[166] The marriage between the Mongondorese and Bugis nobles paved the way for their son, Abraham Sugeha, to be educated in Islam in the Bugis heartland of south

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[164] Hans-Dieter Evers, "The Trader's Dilemma: A Theory of the Social Formation of Markets and Society," in *The Moral Economy of Trade: Ethnicity and Developing Markets*, ed. Hans-Dieter Evers and Heiko Schrader(London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 5. See also Roy Ellen, "Arab Traders and Land Settlers in the Geser-Gorom Archipelago," *Indonesia Circle* 70, (1996); Hans-Dieter Evers and Heiko Schrader, "Introduction," in *The Moral Economy of Trade: Ethnicity and Developing Markets*, ed. Hans-Dieter Evers and Heiko Schrader, 95-103 (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

[165] KITLV H 70 Verslagen uit het Gouvernement der MolukkenVerslag van de Residentie Manado over den jaar 1829; Resident D. W. Pietermaat, 31 December 1829.

[166] Lantong, *Mengenal Bolaang Mongondow*, 64. On the question of whether Andi Latai or Andi Panungkelan and Hontinimbang were likely the parents of Abraham Sugeha, see W. Dunnebier, "Over de vorsten van Bolaang-Mongondow," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 105, no. 1 (1949): 261. In that case the one referred to in the local genealogy as Bua Bulawan C. Manoppo is likely to have been Hontinimbang. See genealogy, Mr. Ferry Manoppo, Sangadi, Desa Ambang Satu, BM, 2013.

Sulawesi for 14 years. He returned and ruled as raja of Bolaang-Mongondow (1880-1893) and was known to have been a staunch promoter of Islam.[167]

The cases of Syarif Aluwi and Andi Latai show that Muslim traders alone could not effectuate mass conversions because not only were they expected to first integrate into the existing and persistent traditional elite hierarchy, but also because very few natives were participants in the market economy. There was no permanent market place where Muslim traders and most of the native population could regularly meet and converse with each other. The native chiefs controlled not only commerce but also labor[168] —a situation that prevailed in much of Indonesia before 1850.[169]

It is instructive that the Bugis and Gorontalo traders, who were said to have succeeded converting others, were found mainly, if not solely, in Kotabunan—the center of gold mining in Mongondow where an incipient market economy was first likely to have flourished. The early Gorontalese traders led by Imam Tueko also eventually settled in the remote village of Simboy Tagadan.[170] However, these traders succeeded in converting only a few slaves and the low-ranking women with whom they married.

Whereas the Gorontalese traders settled in inland Mongondow, the Bugis—travelling from the sea[171]—naturally settled along the coast and, therefore, far from the major population centers in the upland. They fanned out from their south Sulawesi homeland while their "maritime enterprise…became the most effective Indonesian competition for European and Chinese shipping throughout the Archipelago in the nineteenth century."[172] They traded with the Mongondow chiefs, especially the raja, but probably did not settled en masse in Mongondow proper. By 1860, there was only one Bugis hajji in coastal Bolaang by the name of Supu.[173]

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[167] Parengkuan, "Pengaruh Penyebaran Agama Islam Terhadap Kehidupan Sosial Politik di Daerah Sulawesi Utara," 20.

[168] KITLV H 70 Verslagen uit het Gouvernement der MolukkenVerslag van de Residentie Manado over den jaar 1829; Verslag van de Residentie Manado over den jaar 1829; Resident D. W. Pietermaat, 31 December 1829.

[169] Peter Boomgaard, "Labour, Land, and Capital Markets in Early Modern Southeast Asia from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century," *Continuity and Change* 24, no. 1 (2009): 60-61.

[170] Local histories can still trace the descendants of some of these traders. The family names of Datao, Datau, or Detu in Molinow are said to have originated from these early Gorontalese Muslim traders. Lantong, *Mengenal Bolaang Mongondow*, 63. A. N. Datau, Het Volk van Gorontalo, KIT Collection, UB, BrRG 26.

[171] On early modern Bugis trade, see Chapter 4 of Kathryn Anderson Wellen, *The Open Door: Early Modern Wajorese Statecraft and Diaspora* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2014).

[172] Anthony Reid, "Review of *The Open Door: Early Modern Wajorese Statecraft and Diaspora* by Kathryn Anderson Wellen," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 47, no. 2 (2016): 313.

[173] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Letter of RM Bosscher, Manado, 25 September 1860.

Elsewhere in north Sulawesi, the Bugis established distinct communities along the coast—in Kima Bajo (Manado)[174], Kampung Bugis (Gorontalo) and Sitadong (Tolitoli).[175]

That the Bugis remained separate from the "indigenous" population perhaps reflects not only a strategy that they employed for cultural survival,[176] but also as a strategy that the indigenous elites used to counter the Bugis' threat to their political power. In the late eighteenth century, the chief of the Bugis traders in Kwandang named Lawani achieved sufficient influence so that he was able to demand the cession of rights to Togean islands in the name of the raja of Bone in south Sulawesi from the incumbent owner of the islands, the raja of Gorontalo.[177] It was only through the presence of their Dutch patrons that the rights and power of the traditional hierarchy of Gorontalo were protected from the perennial "Bugis threat" that remained well into the latter half of the nineteenth century.[178]

However, while Gorontalo survived the Bugis onslaught, other regions did not. The Bugis would either directly attack[179] or peacefully intermarry with the ruling elite[180] to capture a polity. Without the support of a trusting ruling elite, Bugis traders often relied on the threat of violence or on the Dutch to extract payment from local debtors.[181] Colonial regulations in the nineteenth century explicitly sought to strengthen the political position of the local rulers against the Bugis.[182] Therefore, as outsiders with a distinct and separate community from the host

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[174] ANRI Manado 13.4, 15 October 1853 no. 456 Jansen to the Raja of Tagulandang and 15 October 1853 no. 457 to the Hukum Besar of Aris and Bantik. In Kima Bajo off Manado, the Bugis mixed with and pretended to be Bajau to escape taxation. On the close relationship between the Bajo and the Bugis, see Esther Velthoen and Gregory L. Acciaioli, "Fluctuating States, Mobile Populations: Shifting Relations of Bajo to Local Rulers and Bugis Traders in Colonial Eastern Sulawesi" (paper presented at the International Seminar on Bajau Communities, Jakarta - LIPI, 22-25 November 1993, 1993).

[175] R. Boonstra van Heerdt, "De noorderarm van het eiland Celebes, van Paloe tot Bwool," *Tijdschrift van het Koninklijk Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap* 31, (1914): 739.

[176] On the Bugis diaspora in the Indonesian archipelago, see Wellen, *The Open Door: Early Modern Wajorese Statecraft and Diaspora*.

[177] Hutagalung, *Limo Lo Pohalaa: Sejarah Kerajaan Gorontalo*, 203-207.

[178] NA Mailrapporten 1876, no. 109, Invoering van rechtstreeks bestuur in de afd. Gorontalo, Letter of RM [van Musschenbroek?] 15 Jan 1876 to GG, Menado.

[179] Broersma, *Handel en bedrijf in Zuid- en Oost-Borneo*, 163.

[180] Wellen, *The Open Door: Early Modern Wajorese Statecraft and Diaspora*.

[181] ANRI Manado inv. 48, no. 4, Politiek Verslag der Residentie Menado, 1859; ANRI Manado inv. 42, no. 5, Schuld Mongondowezen Lamoto, Laingi, cs.aan Daeng Pateka te Wajo, 1892-93.

[182] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 5910A, Treaty BM and Buol, RM Jansen, Manado 5 Nov 1857, to the Gouverneur der Moluksche Eilanden in Ambon.

society and generally mistrusted by local rulers, it was unlikely that the Bugis were responsible for the mass conversion of the Mongondorese.

So, if Muslim traders—whether Arabs, Gorontalese or Bugis—were incapable of inducing the population of north Suluwesi to convert, was the raja able to do so?

To begin with, the first raja of Bolaang-Mongondow to convert "officially" to Islam was Jacobus Manuel Manoppo. In 1848,[183] he was said to have personally asked the permission of A. J. van Olpen, Resident of Menado and J. B. Cleerens, Governor of Moluccas "whether the Government would be opposed if the Christians in Bolaang become Muslims". The Resident supposedly replied "completely not—Christian or Muslim—the people of Bolaang-Mongondow would nonetheless remain obedient."[184]

Van Olpen and Cleerens were high-ranking colonial functionaries committed to the idea of non-interference in religious affairs—Christian or Muslim.[185] Together they established village schools (*negorjischolen*) in Minahasa which did not provide religious instruction that ran directly counter with the program of Christian missionary schools. Van Olpen's opposition to the increasingly influential European missionaries in Minahasa would eventually force him to resign from office.[186]

When Raja J. M. Manoppo returned to his realm, he began practicing Islam openly—and if one is to believe later Christian missionary visitors—even ordered his subjects to convert "in the name of the Government."[187] The raja and a certain *syarif* who was based in upland Kotabangon, were supposed to have threatened or coerced others to convert. They required parents to have their children circumcised and promoted the wearing of headscarves to replace the traditional headwear (*tulus*).[188] Furthermore, the *syarif* supposedly exhorted the pagans to

[183] Some accounts indicate 1844, yet others 1848. I am inclined to believe the former following the observation of Commissioner E. Francis who noted that the raja of Bolaang-Mongondow was "still Christian" in 1846. ANRI Manado 50.2, Register der aanteekeningen van den Kommissaris voor Menado, 1846, 22r. See also "Acten-stukken in zake de vestiging van den Islam in Bolaan-Mongondou," *MNZG* 25, (1881): 83.
[184] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no.1221, Gedachten over het stichten eener zending in Bolaang Mongondow, Wilken en Schwarz, 23 Dec 1866, 2.
[185] See Van Olpen's liberal economic reforms in Minahasa (chapter 2).
[186] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1210, N.P. Wilken 4 February 1868, 5.
[187] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1221, 22 March1867, Sonder, 26.
[188] The *tulus* is a headdress to protect against both sun and rain. A. J. van Delden, "De Sangir-eilanden in 1825," *Indisch Magazijn* 1, no. 7-9 (1844): 24.

convert after an earthquake around 1854[189] that shook north Sulawesi, interpreting it as a sign of the end of times.[190]

Despite these measures, however, the converted remained few because—according to later Christian missionaries—the natives had a great "attachment to their ancestors' tradition."[191] While one cannot discount such sentimental attachment of the locals to older religious traditions, it is very clear that the raja himself was too inefficacious to convince, much less coerce, his claimed subjects to convert. He was the same previously mentioned raja who complained that he could not visit the villages under his rule even six years after he assuming power[192]—a sign of weak authority given the traditionally peripatetic nature of rulers.[193] He complained explicitly to the Dutch of the disobedience of numerous settlements who evaded taxation.[194] A visiting colonial official in 1846 noted that only 3,000 of the 25,000 Bolaang-Mongondow's inhabitants obeyed followed the raja.[195] The raja's perennial failure to command authority among his subjects and collect taxes would be one of the reasons why he was later dismissed.[196]

However, in 1860, a decade after the raja J. M. Manoppo's crucial[197] though seemingly inconsequential act of conversion, a colonial official noted perceptively that "a large number of people had converted to Islam—[constituting] nearly three-fourths of the inhabitants of the 24 [densely-populated] villages that surround Kotabangon…and the rest will follow them."[198]

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[189] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1212, N.P. Wilken, c. 1854.
[190] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1221, 22 March 1867, Sonder, 26.
[191] Ibid.
[192] ANRI Manado inv. 15, no. 1, Letter of raja J. M. Manoppo, Bolaang, 9 August 1829 to RM Wenzel.
[193] Henley, *Fertility, Food and Fever: Population, Economy and Environment in North and Central Sulawesi, 1600-1930*, 77, note 95.
[194] ANRI Manado inv. 15, no. 1, Letter of raja J. M. Manoppo, to Resident D. F. W. Pietermaat, Molobog Tanah Mera 3 September 1828.
[195] ANRI Manado inv. 50, no. 2, Register der aanteekeningen van den Kommissaris voor Menado, 1846, Verslag van den Kommissaris van Menado: Tweede Afdeeling, 19v.
[196] ANRI Manado inv. 51, no. 3, Politiek Verslag 1854.
[197] As R. Jones remarks, "the conversion of the ruler would be an important step, but not necessarily the first one." R. Jones, "Ten Conversion Myths from Indonesia," in *Conversion to Islam* (New York and London: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1979), 154.
[198] NA MvK 2.10.02, inv. 6078, 26 April 1876, L10 no. 38 [Kabinetsverbaal]Letter of RM Bosscher, Manado, 25 September 1860.

3.2. Liberal colonial reforms and Islamic conversions

Within a short period in the latter half of the 1850s, the first large-scale conversions in Bolaang-Mongondow occurred. These can be attributed to the liberal colonial offensive that promoted direct taxation and political centralization, and allowed freedom of religion. The raja of Bolaang-Mongondow above all benefited from these reforms. He promoted Islamic conversions at the same time as his fiscal and political authority was underpinned and amplified by the colonial state.

3.2.1. The Francis Commission and the reforms of Resident Jansen

One could argue that the inspection tour of the colonial commissioner E. M. Francis[199] throughout Sulawesi in 1846 was a crucial turning point in the political, economic, and religious life of the natives. His recommendations constituted the foundation of an open economy built upon a more encompassing and effective, if intrusive, colonial governance. It led the avoidant native subjects closer to the colonial state[200] and therefore the rajas—as agents of the colonial state—closer to their people.[201] It was achieved primarily through the shift from an ineffective and inefficient tributary system to a direct system of taxation. However, because the people were obligated to confront this emerging economic and political order, they were incentivized to become participants in a new form of social affiliation (that is, religion), which appears to have subdued the impacts of these changes.

In 1846, the colonial government commissioned E. M. Francis to travel and investigate the Residency of Menado, with special attention to the fertile region of Minahasa in particular, with the aim of improving its economy. Although his mandate was to investigate taxation and cash-crop cultivation in Minahasa,[202] his voluminous report thoroughly covered politics not only in Minahasa but also in north Sulawesi including Bolaang-Mongondow. This is a likely reason why officials in Batavia complained that Francis "exceeded the points he was supposed to

[199] Francis was an Englishman born in Cochin (India) and one of the first directors of the *Javasche Bank*. Bosma, "Het cultuurstelsel en zijn buitenlandse ondernemers: Java tussen oud en nieuw kolonialisme," 17.
[200] See a discussion on this time from the following: Michael Adas, "From Avoidance to Confrontation: Peasant Protest in Precolonial and Colonial Southeast Asia," in *Colonialism and Culture*, ed. Nicholas B. Dirks, 89-126 (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992).
[201] Adas, "From Avoidance to Confrontation: Peasant Protest in Precolonial and Colonial Southeast Asia," *Colonialism and Culture*.
[202] ANRI Besluit Governeur-Generaal, 9 January 1846, no. 1.

investigate."[203] At any rate, his findings and recommendations were to be implemented beyond Minahasa in the succeeding decade.

Following Francis' recommendations and despite stringent opposition from the government-owned *Nederlandsche Handel Maatschappij* (NHM),[204] the ports of Kema and Manado were declared free ports in 1849 following the model of Singapore.[205] Chinese and Arab traders were free to trade and stay in Manado albeit in their respective designated quarters (*kampung*). Previously controlled items such as firearms and opium were allowed as trade commodities.[206]

Francis also recommended the termination of forced deliveries of rice in Minahasa. He opined that like in Java the policy "leaves nothing worthy in those places" and as such was "a hindrance to the development of trade."[207] As Francis had advocated, compulsory rice deliveries in exchange for blue and white *salemporis* (a kind of textile)[208] were to be ended in Minahasa in 1852. Instead a monetary tax of *f* 5 per household was instituted.[209]

In Bolaang-Mongondow, Francis noted in his inspection that the rajas had difficulty mustering people for gold mining[210] and that the raja and his chiefs could only command the following of 3,000 of the 25,000 Mongondorese.[211] He recommended that in Bolaang-Mongondow as in other regions of north Sulawesi, a head tax instead of a land tax (as in Java) was more appropriate.[212] He likewise suggested the appointment of a *posthouder* or a low-ranking European colonial official in Bolaang for purposes of effective colonial governance and taxation.[213]

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[203] ANRI Besluit Governeur-Generaal, 3 September 1850 no. 10, M.A.S. 31/5/1848 to RM.
[204] ANRI Besluit Governeur-Generaal, 3 September 1850 no. 10, Advies van de Factorij der Nederlandsche Handel Maatschappij, 6 July 1847.
[205] NA MvK inv. 2.10.01, no. 2710, 8 September 1848.
[206] NA MvK inv. 2.10.01, no. 2710, 8 September 1848.
[207] ANRI Manado inv. 50, no. 2, Verslag van den Kommissaris voor Menado, Vijfde Afdeling.
[208] ANRI Besluit Governeur-Generaal, 9 January 1846 no 1.
[209] Schouten, *Leadership and Social Mobility in a Southeast Asian Society: Minahasa, 1677-1983*, 64-65.
[210] ANRI Besluit 3 September 1850 no. 10, Missive van de Generale Directie van Financien, 5 February 1848, no. 50.
[211] ANRI Manado inv. 50, no. 2, Register der aanteekeningen van den Kommissaris voor Menado, 1846, Verslag van den Kommissaris van Menado: Tweede Afdeeling, 19v.
[212] ANRI Besluit 3 September 1850 no. 10, Missive van de Generale Directie van Financien, 5 February 1848, no. 50.
[213] ANRI Besluit 3 September 1850 no. 10, Missive van de Generale Directie van Financien, 5 February 1848, no. 50.

Francis' mission to north Sulawesi can be viewed within the broader colonial policy of economic openness alongside more stringent political control. While the government was opening pockets of ports to foreign trade, it was also actively seeking to expand and maintain political and fiscal supremacy through its local agents (the chiefs, rajas, and sultans). Government control and support of local rulers were crucial in maintaining order amidst increasing economic flows that often challenged existing political borders and social hierarchies.

These reforms were made more urgent by perceived external threats especially from the British who the Dutch feared might collude with local rulers. In 1846, the colonial government required the south Sulawesi chiefs to renew the 1667 Treaty of Bungaya[214] to assert Dutch authority beyond the coast and "to protect the integrity of the colony" against possible "intruders" like the settler-raja James Brooke of Borneo.[215] The government also undertook a survey of Tidorese vassal possessions in New Guinea to counter a supposed British threat in 1848.[216]

However, it was during the tenure of the Resident of Menado, A. J. F. Jansen (1853-1859), that the implementation of these reforms witnessed its peak. [217] Jansen had been most concerned in enacting policies that would benefit the well-being of the majority while maintaining and even strengthening the authority of local chiefs. He widely promoted the cultivation of cash crops by tightly controlling and propping up the Minahasan chiefs.[218] He oversaw the first years of implementation of a monetary taxation of *f* 5 per household in Minahasa that replaced obligatory rice deliveries.

In August 1857, Jansen notified the chiefs of the dependencies located along northern Sulawesi coast (*di sablah fihakh oetara deri poeloh Selebes*) of his forthcoming visit and

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[214] See Leonard Andaya, *The Heritage of Arung Palakka: A History of South Sulawesi (Celebes) in the Seventeenth Century* (Den Haag: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981), 305.
[215] C. Lulofs and C. Lulofs, *Onze politiek tegenover de buitenbezittingen* (Batavia : Van Dorp & Co, 1908), 17.
[216] F. Huizinga, "Relations between Tidore and the North Coast of New Guinea in the Nineteenth Century," in *Perspectives on the Bird's Head of Irian Jaya, Indonesia*, ed. Jelle Miedema, Cecilia Ode, and Rien A. C. Dam, (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1998), 388.
[217] MvK 2.10.02, 5922, Geheim Verbaal, 3 March 1863, no. 41, Rapport van den Commissaris voor de Residentie Menado to GG, M. W. Scheltema, 19 Ag 1862. Jansen previously served in Buitenzorg as a high-ranking member (*kommies*) of the General Secretariat (*Algemeene Secretarie*) from 1844-1853. See Almanak en Naam-Register van Nederlandsch-Indie, (Batavia: Lands-Drukkerij, [various years]).
[218] MvK 2.10.02, 5922, Geheim Verbaal, 3 March 1863, no. 41, Rapport van den Commissaris voor de Residentie Menado to GG, M. W. Scheltema, 19 Ag 1862.

specifically his plan to visit the Mongondow uplands.[219] The interest in expanding the reach of the colonial state during his tenure is evident. By 1857 he had visited the Sangir archipelago twice.[220] He also favored the extension of colonial rule to the unoccupied regions around Tomini Gulf.[221]

Jansen together with the junior functionary J. G. F. Riedel,[222] and most likely accompanied by a large native entourage undertook the first colonial expedition to the uplands of Mongondow in September 1857.[223] Jansen's main objective was to investigate the demographic, political, and economic conditions in Mongondow to prepare for the fiscal reforms similar to those that had been implemented in adjacent Gorontalo. In 1850 the government had ordered that the smaller polities that constituted the *kerajaan* of Gorontalo shift from (panned) gold (dust) delivery to a monetary taxation.[224]

Jansen's findings in the uplands were striking. He marveled that the Mongondow chiefs had "succeeded in hiding the real situation of their land until the second half of the nineteenth century."[225] In 1829 the chiefs reported that their subjects numbered only 2,000.[226] Just prior to Jansen's expedition, the chiefs related that the entire population of Mongondow totaled 3,336.

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[219] ANRI Manado inv. 23, no. 3, Afgaande Brieven Manado 3de kwaartal, 13 Augustus 1857, no. 806 to the rajas and mantris of BM, BUki, Bintauna, Bolaang-Itang, Kaidipang, Buol, Tontoli.

[220] First was in 1853 (with the Dutch missionary L. J. Van Rhijn?), 2.10.02, 7170, Oost-Indische Besluit, 21 June 1855. Second was in 1857. ANRI Manado inv. 23, no. 3, Afgaande Brieven Manado 3de kwaartal, 13 Aug 1857, no. 812 to the GG.

[221] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 5891, Exh. 1 July 1857 No. 333 Geh., Letter of RM Jansen, 6 Jul 1855 to Gouverneur der Moluksche Eilanden te Amboina.

[222] Jansen's letters to local chiefs were most likely penned by the European-educated functionary and son of pioneer missionary in Minahasa, J. G. F. Riedel, who Jansen praised as possessing an "unusual capability" in writing Malay. Riedel was employed in the Resident's office. NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 5891, Exh. 1 July 1857 No. 333 Geh., Letter of RM Jansen, 6 Jul 1855 to Gouverneur der Moluksche Eilanden te Amboina. See for instance, J. G. F. Riedel's collection of stories written in Manadonese Malay. J. G. F. Riedel, *Inilah pintu gerbang pengatahuwan itu apatah dibukakan guna orang-orang padudokh tanah Minahasa ini*, 10 vols. (Batavia: Lands-Drukkerij, 1862-1874).

[223] They became the first Europeans to journey to Mongondow in the modern period. F. S. A. de Clerq, "Schets van het Landschap Bolaang-Mongondow," *Tijdschrift van het Aardrijkskundig Genootschap* 7, (1883): 116.

[224] ANRI Besluit Gouverneur-Generaal 3 April 1850, no. 29.

[225] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 5910A, RM Jansen, Manado 5 Nov 1857, to the Gouverneur der Moluksche Eilanden in Ambon.

[226] KITLV H 70 Verslagen uit het Gouvernement der Molukken, Verslag van de Residentie Manado over den jaar 1829; Resident D. W. Pietermaat, 31 December 1829.

Dubious of the number, Jansen himself counted the houses and estimated that there were 12,000 Mongondorese.[227]

Jansen drew up a contract with the new raja of Bolaang-Mongondow, A. C. Manoppo[228] suspending the old gold tribute and requiring each household to pay *f* 5 per year. Of the total collection, 10 percent was to be shared between the raja and his subordinate chiefs while the rest of the proceeds went to the colonial treasury.[229] After the Mongondow chiefs pled for a reduction of taxes, Jansen reduced the total taxes by half from *f* 8000 to *f* 4000 because the goal of taxation, according to Jansen, was "not material exploitation but to show evidence of vassalage" to the colonial state.[230]

Jansen, like his predecessor Francis, also advised the posting of a colonial officer in Bolaang. However, while direct taxation was successfully implemented almost immediately after Jansen's travel, the plan of posting a colonial functionary was realized only in 1901.[231] These reforms, therefore, were necessarily channeled through the traditional political hierarchy.

3.2.2. Conversion and the contingent effect of taxation

The visits of Francis and Jansen and their subsequent policies had a contingent effect on Bolaang-Mongondow. As the government enforced direct taxation, it indirectly strengthened the authority of the uppermost layer of the political elite—the raja especially—who successfully launched an Islamizing campaign.

The decision of Raja Jacobus Manoppo in 1848 to officially become Muslim occurred a year or two after Francis' visit.[232] Several reasons are conceivable to account for the timing of his decision. First, Manoppo was likely aware of Francis' suggestion to install a European *posthouder* in Bolaang. Considering that such a *posthouder* would have been the first colonial official to reside permanently in Bolaang-Mongondow and given what Jansen later described as

[227] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 5910A, RM Jansen, Manado 5 Nov 1857, to the Gouverneur der Moluksche Eilanden in Ambon.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Out of this 10 percent, 20 percent went to the raja, 10 percent to the *jogugu* (first minister), 10 percent to the *president-raja*, 10 percent to the *kapitan-laut,* 20 percent to the three *panghulus,* and 30 percent to the various *kampung* chiefs. Ibid.
[230] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 5910A, RM Jansen, Manado 5 Nov 1857, to the Gouverneur der Moluksche Eilanden in Ambon.
[231] "Bolaäng-Mongondou," in *Encyclopedië van Nederlandsch-Indië*, 343.
[232] See note 154.

the "devotion of the Mongondow chiefs to their autonomy,"[233] then conversion to Islam might have offered a political sphere that was beyond the research of the Dutch colonial state in the face of colonial expansion.

Second, Manoppo was perhaps following, or if not, anticipating the conversion to Islam of his fellow chiefs. During his visit to upland Mongondow, Resident Jansen noted that the people had been "lost" to Islam. He was likely referring to the converted Mongondow chiefs.[234] For the raja to remain officially Christian while claiming to be the *primus inter pares* among Muslim chiefs did not bode well for the raja's future. The subaltern chiefs' economic, and by extension, religious connection with the often proselytizing Bugis would have undermined the power of a non-Muslim raja among an Islamizing aristocracy.

Third, Manoppo must have sensed the "liberal" disregard to religious matters by colonial officials. In the previous treaty of subjugation that he signed in 1829, no explicit mention of Christianity was made.[235] No Christian religious teacher had been appointed in Bolaang since 1831[236] and even before then the number of pupils in the Christian school had already been dismally low.[237] As mentioned above, when Manoppo requested official approval for his conversion, the colonial officials were only concerned exclusively with the political subjugation of Mongondow.[238] Only a few years later in 1855, the colonial government in its *Reglement op het beleid der regeering van Nederlandsch-Indië* officially enshrined the freedom of religion or more precisely, the abstention of the government from involvement in religious matters. It was based ultimately on the liberal ideas current in the Netherlands at the time.[239] In contrast, the

[233] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 5910A, RM Jansen, Manado 5 Nov 1857, to the Gouverneur der Moluksche Eilanden in Ambon.
[234] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 5910A, RM Jansen, Manado 5 Nov 1857, to the Gouverneur der Moluksche Eilanden in Ambon.
[235] ANRI Manado 50.2, Register der aanteekeningen van den Kommissaris voor Menado, 1846, 20r.
[236]"Acten-stukken in zake de vestiging van den Islam in Bolaan-Mongondou." Letter of MvK van Goltstein to NZG, 1 Jan 1881, 80.
[237] KITLV H 70 Verslagen uit het Gouvernement der Molukken, Verslag van de Residentie Manado over den jaar 1829; Resident D. W. Pietermaat, 31 December 1829.
[238] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1221, Gedachten over het stichten eener zending in Bolaang Mongondow, Wilken en Schwarz, 23 December 1866, 2.
[239] G. F. Pijper, "De Islampolitiek der Nederlandse Regering," in *Balans van Beleid: Terugblik op de laatste halve eeuw van Nederlandsch-Indië*, ed. H. Baudet en I.J. Brugmans (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1961), 210.

treaties during the time of the Dutch East India Company had been unequivocal in requiring Protestant Christianity as the religion of the local rulers.[240]

Whatever the reason for the timing might have been, it is clear that the raja had tangible and symbolic advantages to gain from the widespread conversion of his subjects. Materially, it likely translated to enhanced authority on taxation and other privileges that were either simply absent or previously withheld by competing chiefs. Symbolically, he could claim the distinguishing title of Sultan—the highest political and religious leader of the realm which no other chiefly peer could claim. It remains unclear whether Raja Jacobus Manoppo appropriated the title of Sultan during his lifetime. However, it is clear that he came to be known as Sultan Jacobus Manoppo in local popular memory[241] (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2. Tomb of Sultan Jacobus Manuel Manoppo, Desa Bolaang (2013)

[240] ANRI Manado inv. 65, no. 1, Contract between Marcus Manoppo and the VOC, 30 October 1773.

[241] See Dunnebier, "Over de vorsten van Bolaang-Mongondow," 255. His contemporary tombstone might likewise provide a hint (see below).

Although the first attempts of Raja J. M. Manoppo to promote widespread conversion in the late 1840s failed,[242] those of his successor, A. C. Manoppo, succeeded by around 1857. As noted by the Resident in 1860,

> In the last three or four years, a large number of people converted to Islam that now nearly 3/4 of the inhabitants of the 24 kampong which surround Kotabangon [Mongondow] are Muslim… and the rest will follow them…The pagans have long resisted the attempts of conversion by the chiefs and Islamic missionaries …[B]ut because of the regulation instituted [by the raja] which only allows Muslims to trade with the coastal peoples and foreign traders without the mediation of [the lower] chiefs, as well as because of the tax exemption to the new converts and to those who send their children to religious schools, many have denounced their ancestral beliefs and embrace the teachings of Islam.[243]

Resident Jansen's visit and consequent imposition of a monetary tax in 1857 clearly empowered the raja and his highest-ranking chiefs (*mantris*) not only to effectively tax the wider population but also to promote conversion. In fact, the Mongondow elite's instrumentalization of colonial authority to extend their own political agenda was observed by Riedel, Jansen's fellow traveler to Mongondow. Riedel notes that the visits of the high-ranking chiefs in the uplands to "extort" tribute and taxes from its inhabitants "were carried out in the name of the Company."[244] The use of a foreign power by the elite to centralize local authority was not exceptional to north Sulawesi;[245] nor was the use of a foreign power by the local rulers to promote Islamization a feature particular to Bolaang-Mongondow. Examples from the early modern and modern periods mirror that of Bolaang-Mongondow. [246]

Given the above situation, did the raja and his *mantris* benefit in concrete terms from a centralized authority arising from taxation and Islamic conversion?

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[242] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1221, 22 March 1867, Sonder, 26.
[243] NA MvK 2.10.02, 6078, Letter of the Resident Bosscher, Manado, 25 September 1860 to the GG.
[244] Riedel, "Het landschap Bolaang Mongondow," 282.
[245] Luc Nagtegaal, *Riding the Dutch Tiger: The Dutch East Indies Company and the Northeast Coast of Java, 1680-1743* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1996); Hans Hagerdal, "Expansion in the Shadow of the Company: Concurrent Representations of Karangasem," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 172, no. 1 (2016).
[246] Alb. C. Kruyt and J. H. Kruyt-Moulijn, "Het Mohammedanisme op Midden-Celebes," in *Brieven van den Zendeling Dr. Alb. C. Kruyt en zijne echtgenoote, uitgezonden door het Ned. Zend. Genootschap, aan hunne vrienden* (Leeuwarden: C. C. Hoekstein, 1926), 7. Johan Talens, "Het sultanaat Banten en de VOC, circa 1680-1720: Nieuwe tijden, nieuwe verhoudingen," in *Hof en handel: Aziatische vorsten en de VOC 1620-1720*, ed. Elsbeth Locher-Scholten and Peter Rietbergen (Leiden KITLV Press, 2004). See also, Reid, "Nineteenth Century Pan-Islam in Indonesia and Malaysia," 268; Sri Margana, "Java's last frontier : the struggle for hegemony of Blambangan, c. 1763-1813" (PhD. Dissertation, Leiden University, 2007).

Riding the *force majeure* of colonial authority, the Mongondow raja encouraged the expansion of trade in order to collect monetary tax required by the government. The raja and his *mantris* were so successful that complaints immediately reached Manado of the raja's oppressive double taxation.[247] The raja—A. C. Manoppo—likely required the payment not only of the monetary tax for the government (that is, *hasil* [tax] or *uang kepala* [poll tax]) but also of the so–called *kupang dapur* (household tax) that benefitted solely himself.[248] His capacity to extract taxation is in sharp contrast to his predecessor—J. M. Manoppo—who had been removed from office by colonial authorities because of his failure to collect the arguably more extractable tribute.

The successful collection of monetary taxes ultimately hinged upon the central authority's enabling of more subjects to trade "without the mediation of chiefs."[249] The subaltern chiefs of Mongondow—like their Gorontalo counterparts from a few years before—had likely resisted direct monetary taxation because of their already profitable trade with the Bugis who brought textiles and opium from Singapore via Palu or Donggala.[250] The chiefs' attitude would be seen much later in Central Sulawesi where it was observed that the "people 'would be entirely content in this money-less society were it not for the troublesome government, which demands taxes in hard cash.'"[251]

Colonial monetary taxation through the raja was all the more conducive to Islamization given that the source of actual cash (coins) was not exclusively the colonial government. It also did not bind the Mongondorese to a monopolistic colonial cultivation system like the Minahasans. Rather, taxation likely facilitated the connection of the Mongondorese with various Muslim various traders like the Bugis and Arabs.

These chiefs *cum* traders were themselves likely Muslim converts although their subjects in the villages were not. It was a situation reminiscent of the Philippines where "Christian

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[247] ANRI Manado inv. 49, no. 2, Politieke Verslag der Residentie Menado, 1861.

[248] Departement van Binnenlandsch Bestuur (Nederlandsch-Indië), *Overeenkomsten met de zelfbesturen in de residentie Menado* (S.l. : s.n., 1913). Contract bet E. J. Jellesma and Riedel Manuel Manoppo, 8 July 1896

[249] NA MvK 2.10.02, 6078, Letter of the Resident Bosscher, Manado, 25 September 1860 to the GG.

[250] Riedel, "Het landschap Bolaang Mongondow," 283.

[251] Henley, *Fertility, Food and Fever: Population, Economy and Environment in North and Central Sulawesi, 1600-1930*, 74.

lowlanders resisted efforts by Spanish missionaries to convert the highlanders because they found it useful to have unadministered population with whom to trade."[252]

The resistance of the leaders of the district of Passi in upland Mongondow to the raja's attempts to collect taxes provides a case in point. A few years after the imposition of the monetary tax and strengthening of the raja's authority, the dissatisfied chief of Passi, Lomotu Mokoginta, "went around different villages and held meetings with the chiefs and people to plan a rebellion against the raja."[253] The subaltern chiefs made Mokoginta their ruler and offered him tributes "traditionally given exclusively to the raja."[254] They ceased paying the *hasil* to the government, and the *uang dapur* to the raja, and they refused to deliver manpower for corvée labor.

These were the chiefs who were likely circumvented by the centralizing colonial policy. Their leader (Mokoginta), despite repeated appeals for leniency to the Resident, was detained for five years in Manado.[255] Mokoginta and four other village chiefs were seen by the government as "rebels" and "usurpers of authority" of the legitimate raja.[256] This resistance to the raja and central rule by the leaders of Passi persisted up to the eve of formal colonial rule. Passi was one of two districts (the other was Lolayan) where gangs under the protection of aristocratic sons (the *abo* or *anak raja*) originated to terrorize neighboring settlements including notably, Kotabangon, the seat of the raja.[257] The raja had had persistent difficulties extracting *uang dapur,* specifically in Passi and Lolayan.[258]

Islamization was also notably slow in Passi. While Passi's leader, Mokoginta, and his allies were first-generation Muslims,[259] most of their subjects were not. There was very little effort among the leaders of Passi to Islamize their followers in the nineteenth century that one Christian missionary remarked indicatively and with a tone of relief years later that "thankfully,

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[252] Gibson, "Egalitarian Islands in a Predatory Sea," *Anarchic Solidarity: Autonomy, Equality, and Fellowship in Southeast Asia*, 282.
[253] ANRI, Besluit Gouverneur-Generaal 29 September 1867 no. 18.
[254] ANRI, Besluit Gouverneur-Generaal 29 Sept 1867 no 18.
[255] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1186, Sonder 2 Dec 1874 to the Bestuurders of NZG in Rotterdam.
[256] ANRI, Besluit Gouverneur-Generaal 19 Ag 1868 no 14.
[257] NA Politieke Verslagen en Berichten uit de Buitengewesten, 1898-1940, 2.10.52.01, Mailrapport 1902, no. 836, Kwaadwillige doen een aanval op de gevangenis te Popo (Mongondow), 19 Augustus, Letter of the Resident of Menado, E. J. Jellesma, 31 August 1902 to the Gov. General.
[258]NA Politieke Verslagen en Berichten uit de Buitengewesten, 1898-1940, 2.10.52.01, Mailrapport 1902, no. 1115, Raja R. M. Manoppo ontslagen, Letter of the RM, Jellesma to GG, 19 July 1902, 3.
[259] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1186, Sonder 2 December 1874 to the Bestuurders of NZG in Rotterdam.

there are still many pagans, especially in the district of Passi."[260] Because of this, Passi was chosen as the missionary base of W. Dunnebier, the first Christian missionary in Mongondow.[261]

A notable chief of Passi and Lomotu Mokoginta's descendant, the *jogugu*, Abraham P. Mokoginta, became known as an arch-rival of Raja D. C. Manoppo in the early nineteenth-century. Although Abraham Mokoginta himself was a Muslim, the Christian missionary in Mongondow noted that he was very helpful to the missions.[262] Dunnebier remarked that "no one among the chiefs is more liberal towards Islam than him [Mokoginta]."[263]

In contrast, Islam was closely identified with the raja. Dunnebier observed that the raja's upland base (Kotabangon) was where "Islam has the deepest and strongest roots because this is where the raja lives."[264] Kotabangon and the settlements known to be ruled by the raja's close relatives (Bolaang and Kotabunan) were the only places where there were mosques in 1867.[265] This pattern continued well into the twentieth century. Raja D. C. Manoppo—Abraham Mokoginta's contemporary and rival—travelled to Java in 1907 and "returned more Muslim than before." He opined that (Muslim) Javanese teachers were superior to their Christian Minahasan counterparts. He also urged his subordinates to facilitate the building of more Islamic prayer houses.[266] (see Figure 4.3).

[260] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1113, Sonder 4 April 1905, to NZG, 5.
[261] HUA ArvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1496, Geschiedenis van de komst en de ontwikkeling der Zending in Bolaang-Mongondou.
[262] HUA ArvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1113, Het zendingswerk in Bolaang-Mongondow (Aanvulling op de Mededeling no 59 blz. 97 v.v. afgedrukte lezing van 8 juli 1913], 2.
[263] HUA ArvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1113, Het zendingswerk in Bolaang-Mongondow (Aanvulling op de Mededeling no 59 blz. 97 v.v. afgedrukte lezing van 8 juli 1913], 4.
[264] HUA ArvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1308, Jaarverslag 1928.
[265] Although smaller *langgars* were found in Motoboi-Besar, Moyag, Bintau, and Motoli Besar. HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1221, 22 March 1867, Sonder.
[266] HUA ARvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1113, Het zendingswerk in Bolaang-Mongondow (Aanvulling op de Mededeling no 59 blz. 97 v.v. afgedrukte lezing van 8 juli 1913], 8.

Figure 4.3. A *masjid* in Desa Bongkudai, Mongondow, 1922
(Walter Kaudern Collection, Världskulturmuseerna, Gothenburg)

Because Islam buttressed the raja's symbolic authority especially against competing chiefs, he not only promoted conversion to Islam but also patronized Islamic figures. The raja (A. C. Manoppo) hosted an Arab religious teacher and trader in his settlement (Kotabangon) in 1860.[267] He also hosted the itinerant preacher and trader, Syekh Abdullah bin Razak Imam Syafudi (also known as Imam Syafii), between 1872 and 1874.[268] Imam Syafii came to north-west Sulawesi (Donggala) via Singapore and eastern Kalimantan (Pontianak, Kutai) between 1869 and1871. After he arrived in Mongondow, he married a local noble woman,[269] travelled and proselytized in remote villages often—and most importantly—accompanied by the raja himself.[270] The imam was reputed to have "merged two separate mountains, threw water on

[267] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Letter of RM Bosscher, Manado, 25 September 1860.
[268] NA Memorie van Overgave inv. 2.10.39, no. 299, Resident of Menado P. van der Crab (1875), 13.
[269] Parengkuan, "Pengaruh Penyebaran Agama Islam Terhadap Kehidupan Sosial Politik di Daerah Sulawesi Utara."
[270] Around 1875, he was supposed to have returned to Arabia via Batavia after writing a book for his followers in north Sulawesi.

criminals who immediately died but lived again at the command of the Imam, to confess to their crimes."[271] He was popular among the inhabitants of Mongondow and was thought to have helped in converting locals.

Through his Islamizing campaign, the raja was able to solidify his stand against Christian missionization and therefore his position as both the religious and political leader of his realm. Raja A. C. Manoppo was consulted by the Resident of Menado on the wish of missionaries N. P. Wilken and J. G. F. Schwarz to travel in preparation for a mission post. The raja was said to have strongly expressed his opposition and exclaimed that the "Mongondow people want independence!"[272]

The raja likewise continued to engage, probably in more limited capacity, in the traditional chiefly activity of commerce. For instance, the Mongondow raja could still influence the terms of trade for Mongondow coffee because he was directly involved in the coffee trade in its various stages from acquisition to selling to middle men. However, in neighboring Minahasa, the coffee trade had been a monopoly of the Dutch government from the early nineteenth century while trade for Minahasan coffee had long been a government monopoly. In 1880 the raja at the time agreed that the Chinese *kapitan* (captain) of Amurang named Ong Hee Liong could transport Mongondow coffee to Makassar for *f* 1 a pikol.[273] In contrast, the Christianized Minahasan chiefs likely made higher gross earnings, but their political role was increasingly detached from commerce and bureaucratized. Indeed, at the height of Resident Stakman's reforms in the 1890s which sought to remove *corvée* labor that benefitted the chiefs,[274] the Minahasan chiefs expressed discontent that they were "persecuted and trampled down because [they] accepted Christianity, [while] the Muslims and pagans of the adjacent polity of Bolaang-Mongondow have a more peaceful and pleasant existence."[275]

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[271] Memorie van Overgave, Resident of Menado, 1875. NA MvK 2.10.02, 299; 1112, Letter of J. A. T. Schwarz and M. Brouwer to the Bestuurders NZG, Sonder 10 January 1874, 7.

[272] HUA ArvdZ inv. 1102-1, no. 1210, N. P. Wilken, 1 September, 1864 Tomohon.

[273] NA MvO, 1852-1962, inv. 2.10.39, no. 300, RM Matthes, 1881.

[274] See discussion in Chapter 3 in particular the reference: M. C. E. Stakman, *De Minahassa; Bezwaarschrift opgemaakt naar aanleiding van het rapport nopens den staat van zaken in de Minahassa uitgebracht door W.O. Gallois, lid van den raad van Nederlandsch-Indië* (Amsterdam: Van Holkema en Warendorf, 1893), Bijlage 4, Nota omtrent de opheffing der persoonlijke- en cultuurdiensten voor de inlandsche bevolking in de Minahassa, in verband met mijn rapport van 24 April 1890 No. 923 en mijne missive aan den Directeurvan Binnenlandsch Bestuur van 25 Februari 1892, no. 582; see also Schouten, "Myth and Reality in Minahasan History: The Waworuntu-Gallois Confrontation," 119-141.

[275] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 4554, Verbaal 10 March 1892, Letter of Resident Stakman to the Governor-General, Menado, 27 September 1891.

While the conversion of the raja and his later promotion of conversion had clear material and symbolic advantages, what could have been the motivation of the many who converted?

While the conversion of the raja and his later promotion of conversion had clear material and symbolic advantages, what could have been the motivation of the many who converted?

There are several possible reasons but there are at least two more prominent ones. The first is the explanation that focuses on material incentives. It has two components: the incentive to a (temporary) relief of taxation accorded by the raja[276] and the freedom to trade unbridled by their immediate chiefs. The payment of exorbitant taxes and oppression by those with fiscal authority had long been a barrier to conversion. Evidence from the Philippines shows that Spanish-imposed taxes upon colonized natives prevented the conversion of many to Catholicism.[277] Numerous inhabitants from Minahasa migrated to Mongondow to escape the forced coffee cultivation.[278] In Mongondow itself, there were rumors of higher taxation (*f* 7) for Christians as opposed to (*f* .50) for Muslims once the supposedly "invading Turks" defeated the Dutch in the Netherlands Indies [279] Because of this, locals who were about to be baptized as Christians by a European missionary retreated.

The second reason is the explanation that emphasizes the social and more symbolic gains of the converts. Given Islam's association with the raja and given the promise of social advancement attached to religion and especially attendance in a religious school (*pondok*), conversion to Islam offered obvious advantages. This new situation has to be understood in the context where Christianity in particular and religious education in general had traditionally been associated with the numerically small political elite.[280] The establishment of a *pondok* in Kotabangon where new converts were supposed to have been required "to send their children"[281] seems to have been part of a broader renewal of Islamic education throughout the archipelago.[282]

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[276] Letter of the Resident Bosscher, Manado, 25 September 1860 to the GG, NA MvK 2.10.02, 6078.
[277] See Damon L. Woods, "Out of the Silence, the Men of Naujan Speak: Tagalog Texts from the Seventeenth Century," *Philippine Studies* 63, no. 3 (2015); Cesar Adib Majul, *Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1973).
[278] Riedel, "Het landschap Bolaang Mongondow," 481.
[279] HUA ArvdZ inv. 1102-1, no, 1113, Report 1910.
[280] See Part 1 above.
[281] NA MvK inv. 2.10.02, no. 6078, Letter of the Resident Bosscher, Manado, 25 September 1860 to the GG.
[282] Ali, "Transmission of Islamic Knowledge in Kelantan"; Azyumardi Azra, *Surau: Pendidikan Islam Tradisional dalam Transisi dan Modernisasi* (Jakarta: Logos, 2003).

As such, Islam provided an additional, if not an alternative, form of social affiliation that transcended older and often oppressive social identities that benefitted only the aristocratic elite. Mongondow tradition (*adat*) dictated that other classes were forbidden to own various sorts of clothing, house furniture, and decorations.[283] When one repeatedly disobeyed these sumptuary laws, then gangs of aristocratic sons (*abo-abo*) confiscated the goods that people were not supposed to possess, given their social status.[284]

An exhaustive list of these sumptuary laws and related regulations affirming the ascendancy of Mongondow's traditional chiefly elite (*bangsa*) were put in writing (and later published) probably under the instigation of the missionary-born and scholar-official J. G. F. Riedel who had accompanied Resident Jansen in his 1857 trip to Mongondow.[285] The Mongondorese law book (*wetboek*) stipulated, for instance, that the display of such prestige goods as Central Asian textiles (Atlas silk), diamonds, and gold jewelry were prohibited among the people "far away from the aristocratic class" (*bangsa soedah djaoeh di mertabat Radja*) and that whoever transgressed this prohibition would be "punished heavily" (*dapat hoekoeman jang berat*).[286] This seemingly entrenched cultural logic underpinned the numerous instances of extortion and violence committed by the aristocratic class against the non-elites up until the eve of direct colonial rule in the early twentieth century.[287]

Conversion to Islam was not a zero-sum game where only the raja or the masses benefitted. Even though it was promoted by a centralizing raja who rode, as it were, on the back

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[283] See Perpustakaan Nasional Indonesia (PNI), Afschrift van het Bolaang Mongondowsche wetboek, 27 VT. There are at least four traditional social classes in Mongondow: *mododatu* (raja class), *kohongian* (lower nobility), *simpal* (free people), and *tahig* (slaves). *Adat Istiadat Daerah Sulawesi Utara*, ([Jakarta]: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1977/1978), 105.

[284] J. A. T. Schwarz, HUA 1102-1 1186, Sonder, 1 May 1871.

[285] Johanis Manuel Menopo, "Menambahi deri kaoel dan perdjandjian diboeat pengakoewan dan di bertegoehken segala hal-hal diantara oleh akoe Padoeka Radja Johanis Manuel Menopo serta mantri2 koe jang bergoena sekarang soedah mengakoe dan mengarti hadat2 di tanah Karadjaan Bolaang Mongondo [...]," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 35, (1893). A manuscript (original?) of this document is available at the Perpustakaan Nasional Indonesia (PNI) in Jakarta. See inv. 27 VT, "Afschrift van het Bolaang Mongondowsche wetboek," 1855 [?] which formed part of what was perhaps the scholarly collection of J. G. F. Riedel that came to the former *Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen*. See *Katalog Naskah Aneka Bahasa Koleksi Museum Nasional*, ([Jakarta]: Museum Nasional, 1983).

[286] Menopo, "Menambahi deri kaoel dan perdjandjian diboeat pengakoewan dan di bertegoehken segala hal-hal diantara oleh akoe Padoeka Radja Johanis Manuel Menopo serta mantri2 koe jang bergoena sekarang soedah mengakoe dan mengarti hadat2 di tanah Karadjaan Bolaang Mongondo [...]," 490-491.

[287] See cases, HUA 1186, Letter to the Bestuurders NZG, Sonder, 1 September 1875, 15; Mailrapport 1902, 836 Kwaadwillige doen een aanval op de gevangenis te Popo (Mongondow), 19 Augustus, Letter of the Resident of Menado, E. J. Jellesma, 31 August 1902 to the Gov. General; Memorie van Overgave, 302, S. J. M. van Geuns 1906; Rayat Bolaäng Mongondow, 31 October 1932.

of colonial fiscal and political centralization, the incentives for the raja were clear—subverting the lower chiefs, facilitating monetary taxation among the greater populace, and pleasing his colonial patrons by enriching their coffers.

Yet at the same time, conversion to Islam by the greater majority not only enabled this majority to trade and accumulate wealth with fewer restrictions. It also created pathways for social advancement outside the old cultural logic of fixed social status and restricted property rights. That Islam functioned as a liberating force in an indigenous society in its initial phases of Islamization was also noted by A. C. Kruyt among the Torajas of central Sulawesi more than half a century later.[288]

4. Concluding remarks

This chapter has pointed to the close connection between the colonial liberal reforms of the 1850s and the large-scale conversions to Islam in Bolaang-Mongondow. While Islamic traders and preachers—whether Arab, Gorontalese, or Bugis—were likely important as sources of religious orthodoxy and orthopraxy, the conversion of the many depended upon the bureaucratic power of the colonial state as intrumentalized by the raja. Direct colonial taxation carried out by the Islamizing leaders of Mongondow not only allowed more subjects to trade but also to become part of the raja's religion (Islam). It meant the circumvention of the various local chiefs who had hitherto controlled trade and had likely prevented the conversion of their respective subjects.

The chiefly strategy of the Mongondorese raja, A. C. Manoppo, of relying upon the political support of the Dutch while drawing legitimacy through Islamization to centralize authority was not exceptional in the region. As seen in the discussion on the eighteenth-century Gorontalese raja, Monoarfa, political and military support from the avowedly Christian Dutch East India Company and chiefly patronage of Islam could conveniently co-exist as a strategy of maintaining legitimacy and sovereignty vis-à-vis enemies from within and without.

That it was Islam (and not Christianity) that had been the choice of A. C. Manoppo of Bolaang-Mongondow to centralize his rule in the mid-nineteenth century seemed to have hinged on several factors—yet the most crucial among these had been the Islamic conversion of the

[288] Kruyt and Kruyt-Moulijn, "Het Mohammedanisme op Midden-Celebes," *Brieven van den Zendeling Dr. Alb. C. Kruyt en zijne echtgenoote, uitgezonden door het Ned. Zend. Genootschap, aan hunne vrienden*, 10.

region's political elite following the decline of the Company in the late eighteenth-century. Conversion to Islam very likely afforded the region's mutually competing elites access to the bourgeoning Islamic trade in the region, even as they likely prevented their subjects to trade themselves. The apical ruler of Bolaang-Mongondow likely saw the usefulness of Islam to counterbalance the increasing competition from his chiefly peers. As one can extrapolate from contemporaneous Dutch sources, the raja opened the channels of trade and Islam to ordinary Mongondorese. This was only possible because the Dutch colonial state channeled political and, especially fiscal, power through the raja.

The raja of Bolaang-Mongondow, therefore, came to closely resemble the *hukum majoor* (district chief) of Tonsea, O. J. Pelenkahu, who was also empowered by the colonial state and who likewise promoted the mass conversion of his claimed subjects at exactly the same period. The difference lies not only in the choice of religion but also in the more powerful apical chiefs whom the colonial state-induced centralization in Mongondow had created.

The following chapter on Sangir-Talaud illustrates how the mix of competitive local chiefly politics, uncommitted Christian missionization, and the absence of modern colonial governance delayed the religious transformations that occurred in Mongondow and Minahasa.