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THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOLS IN THE MANDAR AFDELING DURING THE COLONIAL PERIOD, 1911–1942

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the development of schools in the Mandar Afdeling during the Dutch East Indies colonial period from 1911 to 1942 and their impact on the social life of local society. The study aims to analyze the background of the introduction of formal education, the growth patterns of schools managed by the colonial government, missionary (zending) institutions, and nationalist organizations, as well as their implications for changes in social structure and local power relations. The research employs the historical method, encompassing heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography, and is supported by a social history approach. The findings indicate that colonial education in Mandar did not merely function as a means of intellectual advancement, but also served as an instrument for bureaucratic formation and social control. Schools contributed to the emergence of an educated bureaucratic elite and facilitated a theological shift from local belief systems toward Christianity in inland areas through zending schools. Meanwhile, schools established by nationalist organizations played a role in fostering social awareness and national consciousness. Thus, education became a crucial factor in the social change of Mandar society in the early twentieth century.

I. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesian historiography, education emerges as a crucial theme because it provides an entry point for understanding broader social transformations. Education is not only concerned with the transfer of knowledge, but also with the formation of a community's way of thinking, values, and life orientations (2018)(Seeley, 2019). Through educational institutions, particularly since the introduction of modern schools during the colonial period, indigenous societies were introduced to administrative systems, bureaucratic rationality, and ideas of progress and

nationhood. For this reason, the history of education is often regarded as a crucial foundation for interpreting the birth of modern Indonesian society.

During the nineteenth century, educational institutions for the indigenous population, especially formal schools modeled on European learning systems began to be introduced alongside the implementation of liberal political policies by the colonial government in the Dutch east Indies. At this initial stage, however, education was not intended as a means of social emancipation, but rather as a pragmatic effort to supply inexpensive educated labor to sustain the colonial bureaucratic structure at its lowest levels. Moreover, the expansion of education was closely tied to colonial economic interests, particularly as the plantation industry grew rapidly following the implementation of the Cultivation System (*cultuurstelsel*) under the administration of Van den Bosch. In this context, basic education was considered essential so that the indigenous population would possess the minimum skills required to serve as laborers in various industrial sectors, especially in Java and Sumatra (Rifa'i, 2011).

A shift in the orientation of colonial education became visible in the early twentieth century, marked by the transition in Dutch political policy from the liberal system to the Ethical Policy. This shift had significant consequences for many aspects of social life in the colony, including the growth and expansion of educational institutions throughout the Dutch east Indies. Within this framework, education began to be projected as part of the moral responsibility of the colonial government, although its implementation remained limited and selective (Husain, 2015). In Mandar, educational development took a clearer direction following the establishment of the *Mandar Afdeling* in 1911.

The expansion of schooling carried complex social implications. European-style modern education introduced new patterns of thought that emphasized administrative rationality, literacy, and familiarity with modern legal and bureaucratic systems. For certain segments of Mandar society, particularly the emerging educated class, schools opened opportunities for social mobility that had previously been unavailable within traditional social frameworks. Through education, a new group emerged whose authority was based on knowledge and administrative competence, gradually shifting the sources of social legitimacy from hereditary lineage toward intellectual capacity and proximity to the colonial structure (Van Niel, 1984).

Studies on the history of education in the Mandar region have received relatively limited attention from historians, as most existing works tend to focus on other aspects of Mandar's social and cultural history rather than specifically examining the development of educational institutions. Early studies primarily discuss traditional forms of education, particularly Islamic learning institutions such as boarding schools (*pesnatren*), which emphasize religious instruction and the Islamic scholars networking who played a crucial role in the transmission of knowledge. The works of Sayadi and Musaddad, for instance, highlight how Islamic education developed through teaching activities conducted in mosques and Islamic boarding schools led by teachers known

locally as Annangguru. These studies provide valuable insights into how religious education shaped the intellectual and cultural life of Mandar society (Musaddad, 2018; Sayadi, 2022). Meanwhile, discussions on education during the colonial period appear in the works of Aini Achmad and Amir, both of which largely focus on the development of formal education managed by private institutions. Their studies emphasize the role of organizations such as Muhammadiyah and the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk, which established schools while promoting ethical principles and reformist ideas that were emerging in the early decades of the twentieth century (Achmad, 1984; Amir, 2016). Further discussions on formal schools during the colonial period can also be found in the works of Harvey and Pawiloy. However, because these studies examine the broader region of South Sulawesi, their analysis primarily concentrates on major urban centers such as Makassar, Pare-Pare, and Bone. Consequently, Afdeling Mandar receives relatively limited attention, indicating that the history of education in the region remains insufficiently explored. Therefore, this study aims to contribute to filling this gap by reconstructing the development of schools in Mandar during the colonial period (Harvey, 1974; Pawiloy et al., 1980).

Departing from the main issues mentioned above, this study is directed toward examining in greater detail the development of formal education since the arrival of the colonial government in the Mandar region. The main objectives expected from this research are: (1) to explain the socio-political background that accompanied the emergence of formal schools in Afdeling Mandar, (2) to explain how the development of schools involved three actors, namely missionary institutions, the colonial government, and early twentieth-century nationalist movements, and (3) to describe the impact of the introduction of the formal education system brought by modern schools. This research begins in 1911, marked by the initial establishment of schools, and ends in 1942, which marks the end of the Dutch East Indies colonial administration. It is hoped that this research can serve as a bridge leading to more comprehensive studies on the history of education in Mandar.

II. METHODS

The study entitled “The Development of Schools in the Afdeling Mandar during the Colonial Period, 1911–1942” is a qualitative research project employing the historical method as formulated by Kuntowijoyo, which consists of topic selection, heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography (Kuntowijoyo, 2013). The first stage, topic selection, was carried out by analyzing previously published works in order to determine the theme and identify the research gap within existing scholarship. Determining the topic is also crucial for producing the element of novelty offered by the study.

The second stage is heuristics, or the collection of sources. At this stage, the author gathered various materials related to education during the colonial period, including primary sources such as colonial reports, newspapers, and contemporary photographs preserved in the collections of the Tomadio Institute and the Wereld Museum, as well as secondary sources such as books, articles,

and other academic works obtained both online and offline. To ensure the validity of the collected data, the author then conducted source criticism or verification. In historical research, source criticism comprises two principal phases: external and internal criticism. External criticism aims to assess the authenticity of sources through examination of their physical aspects, including the type and size of paper, handwriting, ink, and other material elements related to the physical condition of the source apart from its content. Internal criticism, meanwhile, is directed toward evaluating the credibility and validity of the source based on its content, by scrutinizing the accuracy, consistency, and reliability of the information presented.

Interpretation constitutes the stage of analyzing the data obtained throughout the research. This phase seeks to reveal historical facts in order to construct a logical and meaningful understanding. The process of interpretation involves two main steps: analysis and synthesis. Analysis is undertaken to select and establish facts from the available data, considering that each piece of evidence may contain multiple possibilities of interpretation. Synthesis, on the other hand, is the process of unification, collecting, categorizing, and connecting the analyzed data so that comprehensive conclusions can be drawn.

Historiography represents the final stage of historical research, namely the writing of the research findings. At this stage, the chronological aspect plays a vital role in presenting historical events in a coherent sequence. Facts that have passed through the processes of analysis and synthesis are woven into a chronologically organized narrative, resulting in a systematic historical work that is both methodologically sound and academically rigorous.

This research also employs a social history approach focusing on dynamics of social change to examine the development and impact of educational institutions in the *Mandar Afdeling* between 1911 and 1942. This approach is essential for gaining a comprehensive understanding of the structural transformations that reshaped local community life (Kartodirdjo, 2017).

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Historical Background of the Establishment of Formal Education in the Mandar Afdeling

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the education sector in the Dutch East Indies began to receive more serious attention from the colonial government. This shift in policy orientation originated from sharp criticism put forward by C. Th. van Deventer through his article in *Utrechtsche Courant en het Handelsblad*, later reviewed in *De Indische Gids* in 1899 ((Anonim), 1899). In that writing, van Deventer emphasized the moral obligation of the Netherlands to repay a “debt of honor” to its colonies, considering that the prosperity long enjoyed by the Dutch had been derived from the exploitation of resources in the colonial territories, particularly the Dutch East Indies.

Van Deventer's argument proved capable of awakening public awareness in the Netherlands regarding the actual conditions of colonial society. This situation eventually encouraged Queen Wilhelmina, in her state speech of September 1901, to declare that the Netherlands bore a moral responsibility toward the people of the Dutch East Indies. The message delivered in the speech ultimately stimulated the birth of a political policy that was later institutionalized as the Ethical Policy (Van Niel, 1984).

Fundamentally, the Ethical Policy can be understood as an effort to promote welfare and equality for all inhabitants of the colony. In pursuing this goal, the policy focused on three principal aspects: population redistribution, agricultural expansion, and the provision of educational access to the broader population. These priorities later became known as the Ethical Trilogy of emigration, irrigation, and education (Husain, 2015).

In accordance with these principles, the expansion of access to educational institutions (schools) became one of the most crucial elements in the implementation of the Ethical Policy. At the level of primary education, the colonial government, which had previously established First-Class Primary Schools (*De Eerste Klasse School*) for indigenous aristocratic groups and Second-Class Primary Schools (*De Tweede Klasse School*) for the general indigenous population, was eventually required to readjust the educational system within both types of institutions (Makmur et al., 1993).

For the *De Eerste Klasse School*, in 1914 the government transformed it into the *Hollandsch-Inlandsche School* (H.I.S.), which enabled indigenous students to pursue further education after completing their studies there. Meanwhile, the *De Tweede Klasse School* was eventually abolished due to concerns that it might produce a group of educated individuals who would become frustrated if they failed to obtain employment within the colonial administration. To replace its function, the government established the Village School (*Volkschool*) in 1907, which was considered more suited to the needs of the population, particularly in rural areas (Husain, 2015).

The colonial government also opened many secondary-level institutions and several vocational schools specializing in particular skills. As a transitional level bridging primary and secondary education, the *vervolgschool* was established in 1914 with a three-year period of study. After completing the *vervolgschool*, indigenous students could continue to junior secondary institutions such as the Meer Uitgebreid Lager Onderwijs (MULO), founded in 1914, and the Algemeene Middelbare School (AMS), founded in 1919. There was also the upper secondary institution known as the *Hoogere Burgerschool* (HBS) for those wishing to complete the highest stage of secondary education (Husain, 2015).

In addition to general schools, a number of institutions were established for specific vocational purposes. Their aim was to produce skilled and trained workers who could later be employed in industrial sectors. These included the *Ambachtsschool* (trade school), *Technisch Onderwijs* (technical school), *Handel Onderwijs* (commercial school), *Landbouw Onderwijs*

(agricultural school), *Meisjes Onderwijs* (vocational education for women), *Kweekschool* (teacher training school), and various other vocational institutions (Husain, 2015).

Although the establishment of these various schools appeared to pursue laudable goals, in practice, discriminatory tendencies emerged, although not always openly declared. This discrimination manifested clearly in admission mechanisms that imposed high tuition fees and explicitly prioritized children from noble families, such as those belonging to the *Puang* and *Daeng* strata. Consequently, access to formal education, especially at higher levels, remained an exclusive privilege for social groups with sufficient economic means. In contrast, families from lower socioeconomic backgrounds had little opportunity to access these schools. They were instead compelled to seek alternative educational paths, primarily through religious institutions like Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*). Ultimately, the Dutch colonial educational apparatus was not designed to genuinely enlighten or empower the indigenous population. Rather, it was a calculated effort to produce bureaucratic personnel tailored to their level of schooling, who were then recruited to fill vital technical positions within the colonial administrative machinery. (Rismawidiawati, 2016).

The expansion of educational access was initially concentrated in Java and several urban areas direct colonial administration (*Gouvernementslanden*). In contrast, outer regions experienced a much slower development. Within the Governorate of Celebes and Dependencies (*Gouvernement Celebes en Onderhoorigheden*), formal schooling was primarily confined to major urban centers like Makassar. The European educational model had already been introduced to South Sulawesi as early as 1875 through a *kweekschool* (teacher training school) founded by Benjamin Frederik Matthes. Known locally as the '*Sikola Raja*', this school was designed to train teachers. The designation '*Sikola Raja*' can be understood as a form of respect for the teaching profession as well as a reflection of the involvement of local rulers in supporting its establishment. Consequently, the student body consisted almost exclusively of noble families. In the teaching process, Matthes collaborated with La Mangewa and a local language instructor named Daeng Manassa. At the same time, the Governor of Celebes, Tromp, served as President of the *Schoolcommissie* (Pawiloy et al., 1980).

When Matthes returned to the Netherlands in 1880, management of the school passed directly to the Dutch East Indies government. Under state control, the *kweekschool* expanded its mandate beyond teacher training to prepare indigenous civil servants (*pribumi* bureaucrats) for the colonial apparatus. Driven by the Ethical Policy, the government established *Tweede Klasse* (second-class) schools in 1904, located in the Butung Weg area (now Jalan Butung) and on Jalan Amanagappa near Karebosi Square, officially designated as *Gouvernements Inlandsche School Tweede Klasse*. A year later, in 1905, the institution was renamed *Inlandsche School*, though it remained popularly known among the local population as the *Sikola Malayu* (Pawiloy et al., 1980).

Educational development in South Sulawesi stagnated as the attention of the Dutch East Indies government was consumed by efforts to pacify the outer regions. The colonial focus was primarily directed toward military pacification operations against several local kingdoms, including those in Mandar, which were only fully subjugated in 1909. Consequently, until the first decade of the twentieth century, reports from the Governor of Celebes and Dependencies (*Gouvernement Celebes en Onderhoorigheden*) indicated that no formal schools had yet been established in Mandar. The foundation of these educational institutions began only after the formal administrative creation of the Mandar *Afdeling* in 1911 (Quarles de Quarles, 1910). The colonial government increasingly recognized the urgency of introducing education in Mandar, particularly because upland communities in areas like Mamasa still adhered to local belief systems. Consequently, colonial authorities deemed it necessary to deploy religious teachers and establish Protestant missionary (*zending*) schools, intentionally using education as a mechanism to encourage conversion to Christianity (Ilmi, 2022).

Furthermore, following the abolition of the status of local kingdoms in 1916, a fundamental transformation occurred in Mandar's power structure. The colonial government began to implement a system of administration based on legal-rational principles that demanded the formation of a more orderly and professional bureaucracy. This need encouraged the authorities to expand the provision of formal educational institutions as a means of producing prospective bureaucratic employees who would occupy positions within the colonial governmental apparatus. Within this context, during the 1920s education in Mandar, particularly at the primary level, such as the *Inlandsche School* and the *Volkschool*, experienced significant growth. Through these institutions, students were shaped as colonial subjects by being equipped with basic skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic, all of which were intended to prepare them to assume lower-ranking positions within the administrative structure of the Dutch East Indies.

The Growth of Schools in the Mandar Afdeling.

The emergence of education in the Mandar *Afdeling* during the first half of the twentieth century was inextricably linked to a complex configuration of competing interests involving the colonial government, missionary bodies, and indigenous political organizations. For the colonial authorities, education served as a strategic instrument to construct a modern bureaucracy and maintain institutional stability by supplying a steady stream of native personnel loyal to the regime. Concurrently, Protestant missionary institutions utilized education as a primary vehicle for the dissemination of religious values (*zending*), aimed at instilling social discipline within local communities. Conversely, emerging indigenous political organizations viewed educational access as a vital means to elevate intellectual capacity and foster political consciousness, thereby creating a transformative space for articulating broader anti-colonial and nationalist aspirations.

The interaction and ongoing dynamics among these three actors ultimately shaped the character of education in the Mandar *Afdeling*, rendering it far more than a merely pedagogical endeavor; it became a contested domain heavily laden with ideological content and political interests. To provide a structured analysis of this educational expansion, this section is divided into three distinct parts: schools managed by *zending* institutions, schools administered by the colonial government, and schools organized by indigenous political movements.

a. Schools managed by Zending

The first formal educational institutions established in Mandar were Protestant missionary (*zending*) schools. Their introduction was tightly intertwined with policies enacted by the Governor of Celebes and Dependencies, W. J. Coenen (1910–1913), who initiated the deployment of Christian teachers to the highland regions of Boven Binoeang and Pitoe Oeloena Saloe. This initiative served a dual purpose: expanding the colonial state's educational footprint while anchoring a geopolitical base in the Mandar highlands. Architecturally, the strategy stemmed from a 1912 report by the Assistant Resident of Mandar, J. Seyne Kok, who advocated for highland religious schools to arrest the spreading influence of Islam, which was beginning to penetrate local communities that historically adhered to the indigenous *aluk* religion. This strategic recommendation was further reinforced by the Military Civil Commander, Lieutenant G. A. J. Beukers; operating within the interior, Beukers urged the colonial government (*gouvernement*) to allocate 5,000 guilders (\$f. \,5,000\$) explicitly to win the allegiance of the highland Toraja populations residing in the territory (Coenen, 1913).

The colonial government's recognition of the importance of this policy cannot be separated from its concerns regarding the spread of Islam among inland communities. Islam was regarded as a religion with the potential to generate a spirit of resistance and political mobilization, developments feared to culminate in rebellions that would exhaust governmental resources and finances. Therefore, the colonial authorities sought to construct various barrier mechanisms in order to restrict the intensity of interaction between Muslim communities and those who adhered to local religious traditions. As part of the effort to create such barriers, education became one of the principal means chosen to extend Christian influence within society. Coenen subsequently issued a Decree of the Governor of Celebes en Onderhoorighede dated 19 March 1913. This decree regulated the allocation of educational funds intended for the payment of teachers' salaries and the construction of simple school buildings. The colonial government allocated *f.* 3,000 to finance ten teachers, three of whom were assigned to the Mamasa region. As needs in the field expanded, the budgetary decision was revised on 1 August 1913 with the addition of *f.* 4,000, making it possible to increase the number of teachers to thirteen and to establish twenty-five *zending* schools across various locations (Coenen, 1913).

The policies implemented by the colonial government proved highly successful. During the administration of Governor A. L. Heyting (1913–1916), particularly toward the end of 1914, it was recorded that 9,000 people had been baptized in the Onderafdeling of Boven Binoeang and Pitoe Oeloena Saloe. These encouraging results quickly drew the attention of the Indische Kerk (the Indies Church), which in 1915 allocated f. 10,000 for the development of religious education among the Toraja population and surrounding communities (Heyting, 1916).

Since 1916, the Mission activities in the Mandar Afdeling were transferred entirely to the Indische Kerk (Dutch East Indies Church Institution) to conduct missionary outreach alongside formal education. This condition began to destabilized 1928 because the economic conditions in the Dutch East Indies began to experience a significant decline due to symptoms of economic depression. As a result of this condition, the Mission activities in the Mandar Afdeling, which were previously managed by the Indische Kerk, stagnated due to financial problems which caused the distribution of religious teachers to be no longer as large as before. This was also exacerbated by the fact that a large number of baptized residents in the highlands of the Mandar Afdeling still did not carry out the obligations of their Christian religion and preferred to follow the advice of local religious leaders in carrying out their daily lives (Caron, 1934).

Confronted with this decline, *Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk* (Dutch Reformed Church Institution) argued that evangelical operations in the Mandar highlands required immediate reinvigoration. In 1928, the colonial administration instructed the state-backed *Indische Kerk* to scale back its operations, granting the Reformed mission greater autonomy to execute its agenda. Consequently, in 1929 the Indische Kerk Missie activities finally stopped in Mandar and were completely taken over by the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk (Asperen, 1947).

The Mission activities in the Mandar Afdeling, managed by the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk, were led by Pastor A. Bikker. During his duties in this region, Bikker realized that the Mandar population, which still adhered to local religions, was very extensive. Therefore, the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk reassigned M. Geleynse in 1930 to assist Bikker in implementing his program in Mandar. The two pastors then divided their work areas into two areas: the Boven Binoeang area (centered in Mamasa) became Pastor A. Bikker's work area, while the Pitoe Oeloena Saloe area (centered in Mambi) became Pastor M. Geleynse's work area (ANRI, 1933).

The Mission activities carried out by these two pastors ultimately attracted the interest of the people in the Mandar Afdeling highlands. In 1930, it was discovered from a report by the Assistant Resident of Mandar, W.E.C. Veen (1929-1933) who reported that the people in the Bambang district which was the Geleynse's working area were successfully baptized completely, the number of districts that were successfully baptized also slowly increased to include Talate, Nosoe, Sepang, Kajoe Barang, Taboelahan and Galoempang which in 1933

reached 20,000 people (ANRI, 1933). This number certainly indicates that the baptism process went smoothly even though in the report of the Governor of Celebes en Onderhoorigheden, L.J.J. Caron (1929-1933) it was known that the people who had been baptized had not fully implemented religious laws properly (Caron, 1934).

In the field of education, the Missie activities carried out by the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk in the Mandar Afdeling succeeded in collecting a number of ethnographic and historical data published in many journals and magazines managed by the colonial government, from a number of these works it can then be concluded that the openness of society to these Missie activities has improved over time (Bikker, 1931, 1932). Schools that became the basis of Christian religious education in the Mandar Afdeling also increased rapidly during the Missie activities taken over by the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk. From the report of Governor J.L.M Swaab (1933-1936) it is known that 34 missionary schools have been established in Onderafdeling Boven Binoeang en Pitoe Oeloena Saloe, these schools consist of 29 subsidized missionary schools, 9 non-subsidized missionary schools and 1 secondary school (*Vervolgschool*) which actually belongs to the government but is managed by the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk, these schools are supervised by an education official, namely A.C. Noort whose office is in Mamasa (Swaab, 1936).



Figure 1: Photo after a service at the Sepang District Church, circa 1930s
(Source: World Museum Collection)

Curriculum delivery in these missionary schools integrated religious instruction with general subjects; courses such as physical education, geography, and mathematics were included to cultivate a skilled workforce capable of serving the colonial administration as clerks and laborers. Because the learning process also involves general sciences, Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk which is considered to be short of teachers ultimately recruited local individuals who had completed basic education at state-run institutions like the *Volksschool* (village school) and the *Inlandsche School Tweede Klasse*. These indigenous graduates were subsequently integrated as instructors within the missionary school network (Leyds, 2006).

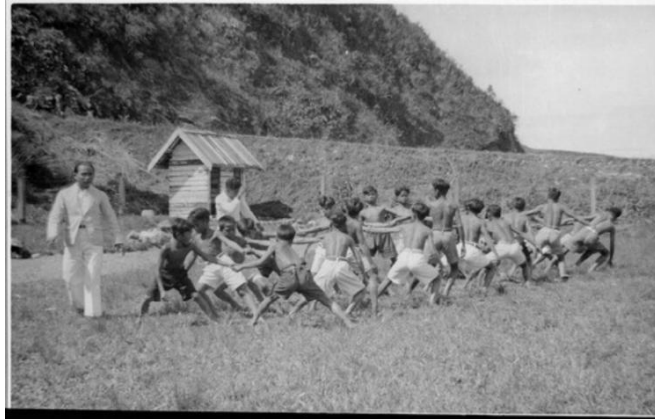


Figure 2: Physical Education at the Missionary School in Mamasa circa 1930s

(Source: World Museum Collection)

Educational expansion under the stewardship of the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk continued to show good signs, with student enrollment in missionary schools reaching approximately 900 and steadily increasing each year. Problems began to occur when competing Christian denominations began arriving in the Mandar *Afdeling*. In 1938, a Roman Catholic mission (*Roomsch-Katholieke Missie*) entered the *Onderafdeling* of Boven Binoeang and Pitoe Oeloena Saloe to launch its own evangelical campaign. This created confusion among the local community (Swaab, 1936).

Operating out of the Messawa district, the Roman Catholic Mission (*Roomsch-Katholieke Missie*) began re-baptizing individuals who had already received Protestant baptism. This aggressive proselytization alienated many locals, prompting them to distance themselves from Christian activities entirely to avoid the escalating political friction between the two competing denominations. Furthermore, a larger problem arose when the priests of the *Roomsch-Katholieke Mission* introduced theological doctrines using a highly confrontational approach. This led to the village heads (*Parengge* and *Tobara*), who had previously sympathized with Christian teachings, they reverted to active resistance, concluding that Christianity was fundamentally incompatible with their ancestral spiritual values. This situation then had a significant impact on education, particularly schools, as many village heads ultimately forbade their children from returning to missionary schools (Leyds, 2006).

In response, Reverend A. Bikker, the head of the Reformed mission, challenged Father Robert, the leader of the *Roomsch-Katholieke Missie*, to a public debate at his residence in late 1938. It was witnessed by the entire community. Reverend Robert, who had just arrived in Mandar, was easily defeated by Reverend Bikker. As a consequence, the *Roomsch-Katholieke Missie* the Roman Catholic Mission withdrew from the Mandar region to seek alternative territories for their evangelical campaigns. Following this confrontation, the situation gradually subsided and this development of education that was fostered by the missionaries in

the Afdeling Mandar region continued to develop until finally they were forced to leave after the arrival of the Japanese in 1942 (Leyds, 2006).

b. Schools managed by Colonial Government

The presence of schools directly managed by the government in the Afdeling Mandar region can be said to be quite late when compared to other areas in the Sulawesi region. These schools were only established around the 1920s after changes in the power structure that allowed indigenous people to enter the government bureaucracy. The colonial administration in Makassar faced a stark reality: native officials appointed as district heads and chiefs of sub-districts (*onderdistrict*) exhibited profound deficiencies in performing their administrative duties. This was closely related to the inability to read and write, which severely hindered the colonial government's ability to gather reliable field reports. This is clearly documented in the report compiled by Governor Vorstman (1920-1924) who directly instructed to provide education to the descendants of nobles who held positions so that in the future they could be used as government officials at the local level better than their predecessors.

“A positive educational policy should be directed, and as far as possible the rulers of the government itself and the royal officials should be recruited from among the young people who have graduated from OSVIA in Makassar or other schools. I am aware of the idea of considering local governments, which are expected to have little or no vitality in the future, as something that needs to be changed and converted into local administrative areas in accordance with the provisions of decentralization legislation.” (ANRI, 1924).

Based on these complaints, in the 1920s elementary education institutions began to open in Mandar. In 1923 a village school (*volkschool*) was opened with Malay as the language of instruction in Onderafdeeling Madjene (ANRI, 1924), although this school was open to the public and had been given a substantial subsidy taken from Afdeeling funds (Makmur et al., 1993), the number of people studying here was still very small at the beginning of its establishment, most of those who studied here were children of local officials whose parents were required to send their children here.

Another type of elementary institution established in the early 1920s was the *Gouvernement Inlandsche School Tweede Klasse* (Second-Class State Elementary School), established in three onderafdeeling areas (Mamoedjoe, Madjene, and Polewali) (ANRI, 1924). These Second-Class State Elementary Schools were initially established primarily as educational institutions to train prospective teachers who would later teach in village schools. Generally, Second-Class Elementary Schools had a five-year study period. Because of their central location in the Onderafdeeling area, the students attending these schools were generally middle-class, with parents mostly businessmen (Makmur et al., 1993).

The development of educational institutions managed directly by the government reached its peak in the period 1926-1927, during which the government established dozens of schools

consisting of Village Schools (*Volkschoolen*), Second Grade Elementary Schools (*Inlandsch Schoolen 2 Klassen*), Liaison Schools (*Vervolgschoolen*) and several vocational teacher schools (*Kweekschool*), Trade Schools (*Handel Onderwijs*) and special schools for women (*Meisje Volksonderwijs*) (Bigalke, 2016). During this period, education in Mandar was almost all public education, meaning that everyone who had enough money to pay school fees was allowed to study at educational institutions managed by the colonial government.

Education costs from 1923 to 1927 were almost entirely subsidized, derived from income tax allocations (*Sima Assapparang Atuwang*) managed by the Afdeeling Mandar Government (Amir, 2016). Children of civil servants (*Ambtenaar*) deemed to have the potential to become colonial officials at higher levels than district heads were given the opportunity to pursue basic education in the language of instruction at H.I.S. and MULO in Makassar and Pare-pare, respectively, and were provided with monthly scholarships during their studies (Leyds, 2006).

As 1928 approached, the initial tremors of the global economic depression (*Malaise*) began to ripple through several key sectors, triggering a sharp reduction in state educational funding. Almost all educational institutions managed by the colonial government experienced difficulties due to budget cuts, which resulted in the closure of several vocational schools and a drastic reduction in student quotas across both elementary and linking schools (*schakelschoolen*). The intensification economic crisis in 1929 also led to a shift in the education policies adopted by the colonial government in Mandar. Initially, elementary education was made publicly available to the entire community as an effort to eradicate illiteracy. However, when budget cuts began to be implemented, the reduced student quotas led to stricter selection processes, resulting in students generally being accepted mostly from aristocratic families whose parents were colonial government employees.

One of the requirements for children wishing to pursue government-run education was a letter of recommendation from the district head or controller in their area. Noble families seeking educational subsidies were also required to submit a family tree, which the government would then consider to determine whether they came from a loyal family. The worsening economic crisis of 1930-1931 forced many colonial-run schools to close to streamline Afdeling funds. The girls' schools (*Meisje Volksonderwijs*) in Madjene and Bababoelo were forced to close in 1931, as were the Trade School (*Handel Onderwijs*) in Madjene, and several liaison schools (*Vervolgschool*) with dwindling student numbers, such as those in Polewali and Tjampalagian (ANRI, 1933).

The widespread closure of schools during the economic crisis ultimately catalyzed the emergence of a disillusioned, educated proletariat, such as prospective teachers who were disillusioned with the Dutch East Indies colonial system. The closure of numerous government schools led to the rise of prospective teachers forced into unemployment due to a lack of

teaching positions. This unemployed, educated proletariat ultimately channeled its frustration by establishing movement organizations in the Mandar Afdeling (Caron, 1934).

To compensate for the closure of several schools during the crisis, the colonial government began planning the construction of multiple Village Schools (*Volkschool*) across several districts starting in 1938. This initiative ensured that children wishing to attend school would not have to travel too far from home. Consequently, between 1938 and 1941, Village Schools were built in the districts of Limboro, Tubie, Kenje, and Tenggeling. Additionally, a Transition School (*Schakelschool*) and a H.I.S. (Hollandsch-Inlandsche School) were established in 1940 in Majene to accommodate highly motivated students. The construction of these local schools meant that children of the nobility no longer needed to be sent to an HIS in Makassar or Parepare to continue their education, directly addressing the economic strain that had been draining government funds. (Leyds, 2006).

Efforts to establish schools managed by the colonial government came to a stop after the 1942 Japanese invasion of the Indonesian archipelago. During the Japanese era, several schools built by the Dutch East Indies government had their functions changed to serve the Japanese government's political interests.

c. Schools managed by Modernist Movement

The implementation of ethical politics, which expanded access to education for many, led to the growth of political awareness among people in the Dutch East Indies against colonial rule. This awareness ultimately manifested itself in the formation of movement organizations, the publication of newspapers, labor strikes, and similar actions. In the period after 1909, a number of modernist organizations emerged among the educated elite throughout the Dutch East Indies. These organizations became the primary channels for political agitation, reaching even remote areas (Ricklefs, 2008).

Within the Sulawesi Governorate and its subordinate regions, national political awareness was first driven by a number of modern organizations that expanded their branches beyond Java into Sulawesi. Some of these organizations were of the Nationalist-Islamist persuasion, such as Sarekat Islam (SI), Muhammadiyah, and the Jong Islamieten Bond (JIB). There were also several political parties with diverse ideologies, including the Partai Nasional Indonesia (PNI) and the Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI), as well as several local movement organizations such as Badji Minasa, the Perserikatan Pegawai Bumiputera Selebes (PPBS), Perserikatan Minahasa, and Sarekat Ambon. A report by Governor F.C. Vorstman (1920–1924) revealed that 19 movement organizations had been established throughout the Sulawesi governorate by 1924 (ANRI, 1924).

These modernist organizations eventually expanded their coverage area to the entire Sulawesi governorate, including the Mandar *Afdeling*. By 1940, several branches of movement organizations had been established in the Mandar *Afdeling* region. These included

Muhammadiyah (Majene and Pamboang), the Jong Islamieten Bond (Majene and Pamboang), the Dutch-Indies Teachers' Association (Majene), the Partai Syarekat Islam Indonesia (Polewali), the Indo-Chinese School (Polewali), Taman Siswa (Polewali), and several other local modernist organizations such as Persatuan Assitoeroengeng (Polewali) and Persatuan Pitu Ba'bana Binanga (Majene).

Through these organizations, the spirit of nationalism was spread in various ways, including through the education provided by the schools they founded. Because these schools were not formally run like those managed by the government and missionaries, they were categorized by the administration as "wild schools" (*wilde scholen*). However, the Onderwijs Ordonnantie (Education Ordinance), which served as the basis for standardizing private schools, was eventually abolished in 1935 (Bosra et al., 2015).

Muhammadiyah became one of the modern Islamic organizations active in education in the Mandar *Afdeling* region. Muhammadiyah in Mandar was initially an expansion of the Rappang Muhammadiyah branch, which established several branches throughout Mandar. In 1930, Kyai Haji Abdullah was elected as the Muhammadiyah consul for the South Sulawesi region. One of Abdullah's programs was to accelerate the elevation of sub-branches (*Ranting*) into full branches for those that had sufficient membership. Through this program, the Majene and Pamboang sub-branches were finally transformed into full branches in 1931 (Bosra et al., 2015, p. 108).

During its existence as a Ranting of the Rappang branch and as its own branch, Muhammadiyah in Mandar has presented many innovations, especially in the field of education. In 1929, Muhammadiyah succeeded in establishing three Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, each located in Madjene, Karama (Balanipa), and Tjampalagian. Furthermore, in 1933, Madrasah Tsanawiyah was established in Madjene. This educational institution developed quite rapidly until the beginning of the Japanese occupation (Tamsil, 2012, p. 32). This progress was inseparable from the support of local traders and the contributions of experienced teachers brought in from Java and Sumatra. Among them were H. Kamaluddin, H. Darwis Amini, and Ahmad Chatib, who taught religious education, while general subjects were taught by R. Soedarmo, Masaji, and Suaji. The Madrasah Tsanawiyah Muhammadiyah Madjene subsequently became widely known throughout the Eastern Indonesia region, as evidenced by the origins of its students, who came not only from Mandar and South Sulawesi, but also from the Toli-Toli, Halmahera, and Bima regions. (Achmad, 1984).



Figure 3: Students and Administrators of the Tjampalagian Muhammadiyah Branch in 1929

(Source: Tomadio Institute Collection)

Meanwhile, the Pamboang branch of Muhammadiyah was established in 1933 and soon opened an Islamic elementary school (*Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*). Its pioneering figures included H. Djuhaeni, Darwis, H. Binuaman, Abd. Djalil Kanna Manusia, H. Tulis, and Djuraeba Kanna Marotani. During the same period, the Aisiyiah organization, the women's wing of Muhammadiyah was established, alongside the Hizbul Wathan scouting group, led by M. Dahlan Sanoesi and M. Amin Bien. In addition to providing basic education, the Pamboang branch also offered various courses, particularly a literacy program for women through Aisiyiah.

In 1936, the Pamboang branch of Muhammadiyah established the Diniyah School, a junior high school, under the leadership of Ustadz H. Darwis Zakaria, a graduate of Al-Azhar University in Egypt who was brought from Payakumbuh, West Sumatra. Religious instruction was handled by H. Bahrnun Sultani, Abd. Syukur Rahim, Arsyuddin, and H.M. Soenoesi, MS, all of whom were graduates of the Muhammadiyah Kulliyatul Muballighin School in Padang Panjang. General subjects were taught by Yusuf Madjid, a graduate of MULO Muhammadiyah from Makassar. The Diniyah School only graduated one class, in 1941. After the Japanese entered the Mandar region, particularly Pamboang, in early 1942, the school was closed and not permitted to reopen.

Some of the Diniyah School students recorded during that period include M. Idris Radha, M. Amir, Djamaluddin Pangerang, and H. Musytari Djuhaeni, who later continued their education in Egypt at Al-Azhar University. Also attending were Abd. Rifai (former *Pabicara* Bonde), Nur Aini Achmad, and Husein Langa. The latter two continued their education at the Muhammadiyah Makassar Muallimin (*Kweekschool*) and graduated in 1941. That same year, Hamusta Ibrahim and Abd. Halim A.E., who had previously studied at the Muhammadiyah Majene Junior High School, also graduated from the Makassar institution (Achmad, 1984).

Another modernist organization active in education in the Mandar Afdeling (Afdeling Mandar) was the Taman Siswa School, founded in Polewali in 1930 by A. Patiroi and continued by M. Dahlan and several of his friends. The founders of the Taman Siswa school in Polewali were descendants of aristocrats who had previously received their primary education at the *Volkschool*. Some teachers known to have taught at this school were Manai Sophian and Mulyono (Achmad, 1984).

Because of its tendency to integrate with the Taman Siswa identity, which strongly emphasized Javanese ethnicity in the learning process, the school had a relatively small student population, with only 19 students, compared to an average of 80–320 students at other schools, particularly those run by the government (ANRI, 1933). Consequently, Taman Siswa's educational and organizational development in the Mandar Afdeling (Mandar Afdeling) slowed down and ultimately ceased operations after the school building was used as a military headquarters following the Japanese invasion.

Furthermore, several other modernist organizations existed locally, such as the Chinese Organization in Polewali and the Persatuan Persatuan Pitu Ba'bana Binanga (PPBB) in Madjene. The first organization only has very little information, among them they founded the '*Indo Chineesche School*' in Polewali which was managed by Liem Heng Gie (trader), Soen Eng Kie (stall owner) and Jo Hong Giat (head of the Chinese district in Polewali) (ANRI, 1933). For the second organization, namely PPBB, it is known to be a change from '*Perserikatan Oesaha Negeri*' (PON) which changed its form since the strengthening of the spirit of the 'Anti Java' movement in South-West Sulawesi in the 1930s, in 1938 this organization founded a school with the name Noormalschool in Madjene which was hoped to be an effort to stem the penetration of Muhammadiyah in Mandar which was considered to introduce Islam which was not in accordance with the social conditions of the community (Leyds, 2006).

The Noormalschool then expanded significantly in the late 1940s following the arrival of a principal from West Sumatra who had studied in Cairo, Egypt. The school was funded entirely by donations from parents. The school administrators were given a maximum salary of f. 70, a salary that was only given to the principal, while many other teachers were said to be inadequate to cover living expenses. After the Japanese invasion, no information was available about the Noormalschool, so it can be concluded that its development ceased during the Japanese occupation in 1942 (Amir, 2016).

In fact, several other modern organizations were also active in the field of education in the Mandar Afdeling, such as the Sarekat Islam (SI) and *Jong Islamieten Bond* (JIB). However, these organizations eventually evolved into political party movements in 1926, resulting in educational activities being channeled solely through scouting activities held at internal party meetings and by members who became teachers at several government-owned schools. So the establishment of schools was not really a priority in these organizations, but

the most important thing about the education initiated through the scouting activities of these organizations was the birth of an anti-imperialist political spirit.

The Social Impact of School in Mandar Community

The emergence of schools in the early 20th century in Mandar marked a significant turning point in the social and political dynamics of the local community. Formal education, introduced by the colonial government and various non-state institutions, served not only as an instrument for transmitting knowledge but also as a means of establishing a new social order with direct implications for local power structures. Schools became the production space for a new elite whose social legitimacy no longer rested solely on aristocratic lineage, but rather on the intellectual capacity and administrative skills required by the colonial system.

In this context, education then served as a key indicator in the elite circulation process, particularly in the bureaucratic realm (Kerstiens, 1966). The colonial government gradually required literacy and formal educational experience as basic skills for indigenous individuals to be recruited or retained within government structures (Sutherland, 1983). Consequently, a new bureaucratic elite emerged in Mandar, drawn from educated circles, both from the lower nobility and non-nobles, who attained strategic positions through access to education. This situation gradually shifted primordial power patterns that were previously more exclusive and based on genealogical legitimacy (Mattulada, 1991).

On the other hand, education managed by missionary institutions had a significant impact on the religious sphere, particularly in the Onderafdeling Boven Binoeang en Pitoe Oeloena Saloe region. Missionary schools served not only as educational institutions but also as effective means of Christianization through curriculum, school discipline, and intensive teacher-student relationships. Through this process, a theological shift occurred from local beliefs (*aluk*) to Christianity in most of these remote areas. This transformation was not merely spiritual in nature, but also altered patterns of customary authority and the role of local religious leaders, who previously held central positions in community social life (Buijs, 2016).

Meanwhile, schools managed by modernist organizations provided a different direction in shaping the socio-political awareness of the Mandar people. Education provided by organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Islamic youth movement networks emphasized not only academic aspects but also instilled the values of national consciousness, social justice, and criticism of imperialist domination. Schools became spaces for the articulation of anti-colonial ideas, fostering the development of an educated generation with a broader political orientation beyond merely local interests (Noer, 1991).

The anti-imperialist awareness fostered through these movement education ultimately became one of the initial foundations for the decolonization process in Mandar during the revolution. The educated elites produced by these schools served not only as catalysts for discourse but also as actors directly involved in social and political mobilization against colonial rule. Thus,

education in Mandar in the early 20th century can be understood as a strategic arena producing structural change: from the circulation of bureaucratic elites, to religious transformation, to the growth of political consciousness that underpinned the process of liberation from colonialism.

IV. CONCLUSION

The development of schools in the Mandar Afdeling during the colonial period (1911–1942) demonstrates the fact that formal education emerged as part of colonial policy to regulate and manage the newly established territory under the full control of the Dutch East Indies government. Schools run by the colonial government primarily served to meet local administrative and bureaucratic needs by developing native workers with basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. This educational presence opened opportunities for social mobility for some Mandar residents and gradually gave rise to an educated elite who gained positions within the colonial government structure, making education a crucial factor in changing the power structure at the local level. Furthermore, education provided by missionary institutions and movement organizations had a distinct social impact. Missionary schools served as both educational facilities and a medium for the spread of Christianity, encouraging a shift from aluk (*aluk*) to Christianity in much of the interior of the Mandar Afdeling. Meanwhile, schools run by movement organizations contributed to broadening the community's horizons and social awareness through religious instruction, general knowledge, and national values. Thus, education in the Mandar Afdeling in the early 20th century not only brought changes in the field of education itself, but also had an impact on the social, religious, and political dynamics of Mandar society more broadly.

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