Politics in 19th-century Minahasa and the role of Eduard Douwes Dekker

contribution to the seminar
CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN INDONESIA: ECHOES FROM THE PAST

Maria Johanna Schouten

Universitas Sam Ratulangi
Manado
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Cultural diversity:

Different criteria may be used, such as:

1. Between groups of belonging

2. Between historical periods

3. Between «lifestyles»: this may be transnational
A political perspective on cultural diversity:

The «haves» and the «have – nots»
Buku pertama yang membuka mata dunia tentang busuknya Kolonialisme Hindia-Belanda, dan memberi ilham bangsa Indonesia untuk merdeka.
Multatuli
Max Havelaar

Of de koffieveilingen
der Nederlandse
Handelmaatschappij
Eduard Douwes Dekker (Multatuli)

1820 Born in Amsterdam
1838 Leaves for «Nederlands Indië»
Until 1856 Civil servant in Batavia, Natal, Karawang, Purworejo, Manado, Ambon, Lebak
1857 Return to the Netherlands - unemployed.
1860 Publication of Max Havelaar.
Pramoedya Ananta Toer:

"Saya masih berpendapat bahwa Multatuli besar jasanya kepada bangsa Indonesia, karena dialah yang menyadarkan bangsa Indonesia bahwa mereka dijajah.

Sebelumnya, di bawah pengaruh Jawanisme, kebanyakan orang Indonesia bahkan tidak merasa bahwa mereka dijajah. (Saya Terbakar Amarah Sendirian! h. 15)"
Raden Adipati Karta Nata Negara
Lebak, tahun 1850an

Collectie
Tropenmuseum
Amsterdam
De roeping van de mens is mens te zijn

Multatuli

55 cent

1887 1987

nederland

Si Tou Timou
Tumou Tou
Douwes Dekker as secretary of the Residency of Manado, 1848-1852

Residency of Manado:

Provinces
- Sulawesi Utara
- Gorontalo
- Central Sulawesi
Woning van den zendingleeraar te Amoerang 1846
(in: Van Rhijn 1851)
Legal distinction within the population of Manado Residency (notes by Douwes Dekker, 19-08-1849)

- Europeans;
- Descendants of Europeans;
- Burger Islam;
- Arabs;
- Ternatans;
- Chinese;
- Native negorij Christians
- Native burger Christians
- Slaves
- Negorijmenschen («negorij people»)
- Vrije menschen («free people»)
- Negorijmenschen in the service of Europeans
- Unmarried negorijmenschen (orang berboedjang)
- Pagans

Dutch colonial system: legal plurality between categories of people based on «race», ascendence and tradition:

A HIGHLY RACIST SOCIETY
Fort and «Societeit» in Manado, 20th century

Collectie Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam
Manado, city of partying

«... as the Resident is not married, we are more or less the most prominent of this place; and in general, I have to say that the public treats us better than we probably deserve...»

«... in fact, Manado is somewhat too gaudy for us.. Every birthday, every baptism, every “nothing” seems to be a motive for a feast.»

Letter of 15-1-1851 to his brother, the Reverend Pieter Douwes Dekker
About his second house at Paal Dua

«A distance of three paal, by a poor road, seems to me a suitable obstacle between my thinking and their dancing.»

Letter of 15-1-1851 to Pieter Douwes Dekker
Some issues Douwes Dekker had to deal with:

• Earthquake of 1846 – its aftermath
• Whalers
• Piracy
• Health crises
• Adat
• Policy reform
Reform measures

Abolishment of compulsory rice deliveries:

«Proclamation» to leaders of Minahasa, 1851
Power, abuse of power and political dynasties

Minahasa: authority based on personal characteristics. (different from Java)

The case of Sonder

Woe, poor and hungry Sonder. Alas, may those poor souls be released from their scourge – the chief”. Nicolaas Graafland, 10-4-1852
Power, abuse of power and political dynasties (2)

The development of administrative dynasties (level of walak) in the 19th century.
Concluding:

Cultural diversity:

a. between Indonesians and Dutch, regarding government; but also between Javanese and Minahasans.

b. between the haves and have-nots: in the colonial era, as discussed in this presentation.

c. between periods; but surmising that certain aspects of political mechanism outlined above are still present now, in a different form.